

# LampLighter

5 Adar II  
Vayikra  
**973**  
11 March  
5771/2011

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week we read the first portion of the third book of the Torah, Vayikra (Leviticus). The Hebrew letters of the Torah are written in three sizes: the standard, intermediate letters with which most of the Torah is written, a smaller size and a larger size. The first word of Vayikra is written with the Hebrew letter Alef in the smaller size.

When Rabbi Menachem Mendel (the third Chabad Rebbe) was a young boy, his grandfather, Rabbi Shneur Zalman (founder of Chabad Chasidism) instructed the child's teacher to begin his formal Jewish education by teaching him the first chapter of the Book of Leviticus.

When little Menachem Mendel returned from school he asked his grandfather why the "Alef" of vayikra was so small. Rabbi Shneur Zalman pondered the question deeply for some time and then replied:

"In the beginning of the Book of Chronicles (one of the 24 books of the Bible), Adam's name is written with a large Alef. This alludes to the fact that Adam considered himself to be very important. After all, none other than G-d Himself had created him! Adam was aware of his own significance, which was a contributing factor in the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

"By contrast, in the verse 'And [G-d] called to Moses' ['Vayikra'], the Alef is small, which alludes to Moses' humility. Even though Moses was aware of his many extraordinary talents, he did not perceive himself as being great, nor did he take pride in his abilities. It states in the Torah, 'And the man Moses was very humble.' Moses was modest and unassuming. He felt that if someone else had been blessed with the same abilities as he, the other person would have utilized them better.

"The Torah is written in intermediate-sized letters, for a Jew must always strive to be a Beinoni [a Chasidic term meaning a person with complete mastery over his Evil Inclination]. By means of the Torah, every Jew can attain that level."

With this answer, Rabbi Shneur Zalman taught his grandson, and by extension all of us, an important lesson in the service of G-d:

On the one hand, we must learn from Adam and correctly perceive our own qualities: We possess a G-dly soul, and have inherited many positive character traits from our ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

On the other hand, we must emulate Moses and not be overly proud of ourselves. For if someone else were blessed with the very same qualities it is possible that he would make use of them to an even greater degree.

Thus we must always have a sense of our own significance, yet temper our pride with humility.

*(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)*

## Calling Moses

By Yanki Tauber

Grab a pencil and a piece of paper. This is one of those insta-quizzes that psychoanalyse your personality, improve your marriage and solve the world's problems — all in a single go.

Ready? Here goes: Write down the most negative sentence that comes to mind. It should be a short (3-to-10 word) common phrase you might use every day with no particularly malevolent intensions, but which does untold damage to your inner self and outer universe.

Examples: "I hate you." "What's in it for me?" "I couldn't care less." "Everyone does it." "It's hopeless." You get the idea.

Here's what I wrote:

*"It so happened that..."*

Sounds pretty benign, doesn't it? But according to the Chassidic masters, these four seemingly innocuous words are at the root of the difference between the holy and the profane, and—ultimately—between good and evil.

Holiness is purposeful; profanity is arbitrary. In the realm of the sacred, actions and events have significance; in the realm of the profane, they are adrift in a void of futility. Goodness is the faith that life has meaning and the commitment to actualize it; evil is the denial of meaning and the absence of commitment.

The difference will often be quite subtle. Two people will look at the same set of occurrences, and one will see a splatter of coincidences while the other sees an intricate and purposeful process. Two people will contemplate an earth-shaking event; one will regard it as a hiccup of history, while the other discerns a milestone in the unfolding purpose of Creation. But they are really not that far apart: the merest shift in perspective will take one from one view to the other. Yet that tiny shift will make all the difference in the world.

In the Holy Tongue, this paradigm shift is represented by a pair of words: *vayikar* and *vayikra*. *Vayikar* means "and he happened upon"; *vayikra* means "and he called upon." When G-d talks to the evil prophet Bilaam, the Torah uses the term *vayikar*—"And G-d happened upon Bilaam"; when G-d talks to Moses, it is in the form of *vayikra*—"And G-d called upon Moses."

The difference between these two words hinges upon the presence of a single letter—the Hebrew letter *aleph*—which transforms *vayikar* into *vayikra*. In fact, in the opening verse of the Book of Leviticus, *vayikra* is written in the Torah with a miniature *aleph*, further emphasizing how ostensibly similar the two words are. Yet the apparent similarity enfolds within it a vast difference: the difference between arbitrary happenstance and purposeful engagement.

We all stand poised, every moment of time, on the cusp of these two faces of reality. At every juncture of our lives we face a choice: Do we surrender to the anti-truth of happenstance? Or do we embrace the divine calling of meaningful life?



## It Was Brotherly Love

Once at a Chassidic gathering, Rabbi Avraham Zaltzman told a story about his wild childhood in the Yeshiva in the town of Lubavitch about one hundred years ago. (Chassidic gatherings, called *Farbrengans*, often celebrate important occasions).

Rabbi Mendel Futerfass, a well known Chassid who had been imprisoned many years in Siberia was also present at the Farbrengan, and often his comments 'made the evening' as would be the case here.

Rabbi Zaltzman began his story: When he was only twelve years old he was such an uncontrollable child that it was very difficult for him to sit and learn Torah. So he and two other boys in the Yeshiva with similar natures were given various odd jobs to keep them busy in positive ways.

One of these jobs was to milk a few goats in a nearby farm and supply milk to the pupils. But this too became boring and one terrible day, desperate for action, they somehow managed to get one of the goats to drink vodka and then led the intoxicated animal to the entrance of the large study hall where all the pupils were diligently immersed in Talmudic studies, and pushed it in.

The goat, totally oblivious of the holiness of the place, jumped on tables, knocked over several rabbis and scattered books and papers in all directions. It was hours before the studies could be restored and, of course, it was no secret who was to blame.

The three boys were summoned to the supervisor of the Yeshiva, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson (*The son of the Rebbe 'Resha'b the 5<sup>th</sup> Rebbe of Chabad*), and were told to pack up their belongings and leave.

With no other choice they did as they were told and several hours later were waiting in the train station in the nearby city of Rodna, with their suitcases in hand to return to their homes.

But suddenly Avraham turned to his friends and said, "What are we doing?! We

can't leave! We have to go back and plead for mercy!" But the others just shook their heads 'no'.

"It won't work. Did you see the look on the supervisor's face? He doesn't want to see us again. We're finished!" One answered

The other boy agreed. "We were living on mercy as it is. He's not going to take us back this time."

"Yeah, we're out for sure!"

But Avraham didn't give up and before the train arrived he succeeded in convincing one of the boys to come back with him and give it a try.

They said good bye to their friend and trudged back to Lubavitch with no real idea what their next step was but Avraham wouldn't go down without a battle.

They couldn't go back to the Supervisor; he was too angry. And the Rebbe, the supervisor's father, also wasn't the one to approach; he would never override his son's decision... especially here.

Their only chance was the supervisor's grandmother, the Rebbe's mother, Rabbinit Rivka. She had a wonderful warm heart and was a mother for all the boys in the yeshiva; she cooked, sewed and washed for them as well as being there in times of illness and need. Maybe she could help.

They went to her house, knocked on the door and when she answered Avraham poured out his heart. When he was finished, her answer was to the point.

"I can't go against the decision of my grandson; he's the supervisor of the Yeshiva. The only one that might be able to do that is my son, the Rebbe. But I can't talk to him about this either. I simply can't mix in.

"But, what I can do is this: every morning at ten my son, The Rebbe sits in his room and drinks a cup of tea. Come tomorrow morning and I'll show you where the room is ... but you will have to do the talking."

The two boys found some place to sleep that night and the next morning little Avraham reported to Rabbinit Rivka while his friend, who was simply too afraid, waited outside.

She let him in, pointed him to the room where the Rebbe was sitting, whispered 'good luck' and watched as he bravely approached the door.

The door was open and when the Rebbe saw him standing there he looked up, stared at him for a moment and asked him what he wanted.

"I want to learn in Lubavitch." He was

almost crying.

"Lubavitch?" smiled the Rebbe as he motioned him to come closer, "But there are so many other good yeshivas! There is Slovodka, Navordak" and he listed all the other Torah academies, about twenty of them, in the area.

"But I want to learn here, in Lubavitch!" The young boy began to whine. When the Rebbe saw this he began to smile and when Avraham saw the smile he began to cry. This, in turn, caused the Rebbe to laugh, which made Avraham cry even harder.

Suddenly the Rebbe became serious and said, "We will think about it... come back later today."

Avraham backed out of the office, sniffing and wiping his eyes with his sleeve but suddenly he stopped, took two steps forward, which put him back in entrance of the room, and just stood there looking sheepishly at the ground.

"Nu? What do you want now?" The Rebbe asked.

"Err, I have a friend." Avraham answered. "He's waiting outside."

"A friend is it? Well, we will think about him also." The Rebbe replied. "Come back in a few hours."

"Well, the story has a happy ending" Rabbi Avraham concluded to his listeners. "We returned to the Rebbe a few hours later, the Rebbe took us into his son; Yosef Yitzchak's office, said a few words and left.

"His son imposed a stiff fine on us; we had to learn tens of pages of Talmud and Chassidut by heart. But he accepted us back in! And that's the story! How my broken heart got me back into yeshiva."

Rabbi Mendel Futerfass who had been listening with interest was the first to comment.

"Tell me, Reb Avraham, why do you think he did that? What made him accept you back into the yeshiva?"

"Like I said," He replied "That's the point of the story. Because I wanted so much to learn in Lubavitch that I actually wept! That's how much a person should want Chassidut; that his heart is breaking!!

"Nope!" Said Reb Mendel. "You're wrong. Your broken heart is not what got you into Lubavitch.

"The reason the Rebbe took you back was because you worried for your friend! You thought of another Jew! That's why he took you back!! Because of your Ahavat Yisroel! (Brotherly love)."

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ISSUE 973

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

At the present time, when the world trembles, when all the world shudders with the birth-pangs of Moshiach, for Hashem has set fire to the wall of the exile... it is the duty of every Jew, man and woman, old and young, to ask themselves: What have I done and what am I doing to alleviate the birth-pangs of Moshiach, and to merit the total redemption which will come through our righteous Moshiach. (From a letter of the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe written during World War II)

# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



## A WORD from the Director

The third and central book of the Torah, Vayikra, is named after the opening word of the book, which translates as “and He called.” What is so significant about G-d calling Moses? Rashi explains that G-d calling of Moses was a sign of the affection He had for Moses. Accordingly, “Vayikra” reflects the love G-d has for Moses, and by extension, his people—the Jewish people. It also follows that the central theme of this book, which is Korbonot, which we usually translate as sacrifices, is also an expression of G-d’s love for us. Why is the offering of sacrifices an expression of love and affection?

The real translation of the word Korban is “closeness” rather than sacrifice. The korban was G-d’s way of letting us get close to Him. There is no greater sign of affection for another than allowing that person to get close to us. This is especially true with regard to getting close to G-d who is Infinite. G-d, who transcends the finite and the infinite, allows us to get close to Him because of His love for the Jewish people.

What is the difference between a sacrifice and a korban? A sacrifice implies destroying one thing to preserve something else that we deem more important. A korban, by contrast, represents preserving the original, albeit in a different and higher form.

When a child grows and develops into an adolescent and then an adult they do not sacrifice their childhood so that they can become adults. Rather, a child takes his or her childhood identity and elevates it into a higher form of life. So that while the child remains in the adult personality, it is now a child that is elevated and absorbed within the more sophisticated state of adulthood.

The ultimate manifestation of the korban ideal will be realized in the Messianic Age. All of existence will undergo the process of korban-elevation, not sacrifice. The changes that will occur will not negate who we are today. Rather we will experience a gradual and seamless growth; we will take our present state of mind into a higher and more delightful state—the ultimate korban!

J.I. Gutnick

### Moral Outrage

The following is a freely-translated excerpt from a letter dated Iyar 14, 5723 (May 8, 1963) by the Rebbe to a young woman who wrote to him with several questions regarding faith and religion, and prefaced her letter with the statement, “I do not believe in G-d, having found no convincing proof of His existence.” In his reply, the Rebbe discusses, at some length, the logical and moral necessity for belief in G-d, and addresses her questions, which included the protestation, “Where was G-d during the Holocaust?” He then adds:

I have written all of the above in reply to your letter. In truth, however, not only do I not believe you when you say that you do not believe in G-d (G-d forbid), but it is also clear to me that you do not believe so either.

My proof of this is that on every occasion that you witness injustice in your surroundings, or when you think of the Holocaust perpetrated by Hitler (may his name be blotted out), as you mention in your letter, you are outraged. But if it were the case that the world has no Ruler and Planner, why should it surprise you that there transpire unjust things, and that whoever is bigger and more powerful than his fellow swallows him alive?

This applies not only to events on the scale of the Holocaust, but to the routine flow of our daily lives, in which every time we perceive something that is wrong and unjust, this disturbs our tranquillity, since we are convinced that things should not be this way. But why shouldn’t they? The physical substance of the universe is not moral, and neither are the plants and animals... Obviously, our outrage over the injustice we see derives from something higher than the physical reality—higher, even, than man. This “something” exists within every human heart and is the source of the conviction, shared by every human being, that there is right and wrong, and that the world ought to conform to what is right. Thus, when we witness a wrong, we immediately seek an explanation: Why is it so? What has caused something to be other than what it ought to be?

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### The Touchstone

The following is a free translation of an excerpt from a letter by the Rebbe dated Elul 22, 5721 (September 3, 1961)

The Torah, our guide to life, tells us that regarding all matters “[G-d] has set before you life and good, and death and evil” with the hope that, as the verse concludes, “you shall choose life”...

But the evil inclination often garbs itself in nice and virtuous garments, enticing the person with arguments that on the surface seem righteous and just. How then goes the famous question—might a person know if a certain argument has been put forth by the good drives in the heart or by the evil ones?

One way is to examine your long-term feelings about what you have done. When a person is driven to do an evil act by a surge of lust and desire, he inevitably has feelings of regret afterwards; indeed, the more time goes by (taking him further away from the temporal rewards of his evil deed), the stronger these feelings grow. On the other hand, with a good deed, a person only becomes more and more satisfied over time with the choice he made...

### Fast of Esther

Because Adar 13 (the day before Purim) falls on a Shabbat this year, the “Fast of Esther,” usually observed on that date, is moved back to this Thursday the 17th of March. The fast — which is observed today by all adults (i.e., over bar or bat mitzvah age) — is in commemoration of the three-day fast called at Esther’s behest before she risked her life to appear unsummoned before King Achashveirosh to save the Jewish people from Haman’s evil decree (as related in the Book of Esther, chapter 4). The fast also commemorates Esther’s fasting on the 13th of Adar, as the Jews fought their enemies. No food or drink is partaken of from daybreak to nightfall.

### Giving of “Half Coins”

In commemoration of the half shekel contributed by each Jew to the Holy Temple — and which the Talmud credits as having counteracted the 10,000 silver coins Haman gave to King Achashverosh to obtain the royal decree calling for the extermination of the Jewish people — it is customary to give three coins in “half denomination” (e.g., the half-dollar coins) to charity on the afternoon of the Fast of Esther. (In many synagogues, plates are set out with half-dollars, so that all could purchase them to use in observance of this custom).

# It Happened Once...



To the town of Shchedrin there arrived a messenger, sent by the leading rabbis of the day, to raise money for a worthy cause. A meeting was convened by the town's elders to discuss how to aid the guest in his holy mission.

At the meeting it was suggested that the messenger be accompanied in his door-to-door visits by a respected member of the community. This way, those who would give only grudgingly to a stranger might be more generous in the presence of someone they knew and respected.

All faces naturally turned to Reb Peretz the mill-owner, who neatly fitted the bill: learned, pious and wealthy, he was by far the most prestigious burgher in the room.

Reb Peretz, however, was not quite as enthusiastic. "Listen," he finally said, "I was thinking: how much will we collect by knocking on the door of every small-time shopkeeper and wagon-driver? I know this town. I estimate that we will raise, at most, eighteen silver roubles. I'll tell you what, I'm ready to contribute the eighteen roubles myself, if you'll exempt me from this 'honour'..."

Present at the meeting was the town's rabbi, Rabbi Shaul DovBer Zislin. At this point, Rabbi Shaul DovBer interrupted. "Reb Peretz," he said, "you just explained something that was puzzling me all evening. I was wondering: why was this meeting called? Surely the dear Jews of Shchedrin are charitable souls, who will give whatever they can to a worthy cause. Why didn't the messenger simply go about his rounds, raising the money?"

"I'll tell you why. When our friend came to town, the yetzer hara (evil inclination) was frantic. Hundreds of mitzvot were about to be performed in Shchedrin! Never mind the eighteen roubles that will be raised-considering the sums of money that the yetzer hara deals with, this is a mere pittance. But the mitzvot! Yankel the water-carrier, Shepsel the innkeeper, Mina the laundress, and hundreds of others, are going to joyfully give their hard-earned pennies to aid their brethren in distress. What work awaited the yetzer hara! He must now finagle his way into the heart of each of Shchedrin's precious Jews and seek to dampen their generosity, to convince them to reduce their contribution or to refuse the messenger altogether, G-d forbid.

"Then the yetzer hara had an idea. Call a meeting! Yes-call a meeting of Shchedrin's influential householders, a meeting to aid the messenger in his holy mission. At this meeting, it will inevitably be suggested that Reb Peretz accompany the messenger to stimulate an even more generous response. Now, the yetzer hara's job will be much, much easier-all he has to do is to convince Reb Peretz to give the eighteen roubles himself..."

## THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

**A burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor to G-d.** (Lev. 1:9)

Obviously, explains Rashi, the foremost Torah commentator, the pleasure G-d derives from our sacrifices is not because of their smell. Rather, His pleasure ("nachot ruach," a play on the words "rei'ach nicho'ach" - "sweet savor") is simply because His will is being fulfilled - without question and without regard for personal benefit. In fact, there is no greater example of pure "acceptance of the yoke of heaven" than bringing a burnt-sacrifice that is entirely consumed by fire. For there is no rational reason to do so other than its being G-d's command. (*Likutei Sichot Vol. 32*)

**And if you bring a meal-offering baked in the oven.** (Lev. 2:4)

In order to become closer to G-d, a person should arouse his innate, fiery love of Him by contemplating the greatness of the Creator. For in the same way that an oven's heat causes the liquid to separate from the dough, so too does a burning love of G-d separate a person from his attraction to material things and strengthen his connection with the infinite. (*Likutei Sichot*)

**Every one of your offerings you shall season with salt.** (Lev. 2:13)

Just as food which is not salted is tasteless and unpalatable, so too must the Jew's service of G-d and performance of the Torah's commandments be "well-seasoned" and filled with enthusiasm. (*Otzar Chaim*)

**And it shall be that when he has sinned and is conscious of his guilt, he shall restore that which he took by robbery.** (Lev. 5:23)

Our Sages note that whenever the Torah uses the phrase "And it shall be," it indicates joy and happiness. But what possible joy can there be in a discussion of robbery? Rather, the positive point in this verse is that the robber "is conscious of his guilt." It is a good thing that he recognizes the need to repent of his sin and bring an offering to atone for his misdeed. (*Ilana D'Chayei*)

### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

#### PARSHAS VAYIKRA • 6 ADAR II • 12 MARCH

<b>FRIDAY NIGHT:</b>	CANDLE LIGHTING:	7:29 PM
	MINCHA:	7:40 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:10 PM
<b>SHABBOS MORNING:</b>	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:22 AM
	MINCHA:	7:30 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	8:25 PM
<b>WEEKDAYS:</b>	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:30 PM
	MAARIV:	8:20 PM
<b>THURSDAY FAST OF ESTHER:</b>	FAST BEGINS:	6:02 AM
	SHACHARIS:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	7:20 PM
	FAST END - MAARIV:	8:04 PM

#### CANDLE LIGHTING: 11 MARCH 2011



Begins	Ends
7:29 ..... MELBOURNE .....	8:25
7:23 ..... ADELAIDE .....	8:18
5:52 ..... BRISBANE .....	6:44
6:46 ..... DARWIN .....	7:35
5:51 ..... GOLD COAST .....	6:43
6:23 ..... PERTH .....	7:16
7:02 ..... SYDNEY .....	7:56
7:11 ..... CANBERRA .....	8:06
7:22 ..... LAUNCESTON .....	8:20
7:30 ..... AUCKLAND .....	8:25
7:32 ..... WELLINGTON .....	8:30

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

### The Lubavitcher Rebbe

צוקללה"ה נב"מ ז"ע

May he succeed in imploring the Almighty to redeem His people speedily in our days.