

LampLighter

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Kedoshim
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

At the very beginning of this week's Torah portion, Kedoshim, there are three commandments: 1) "You shall be holy"; 2) "Every person shall fear his mother and his father"; and 3) "You shall keep My Sabbaths." The fact that these three mitzvot (commandments) follow one another is significant and indicates that they are interrelated.

The term "holy" in this instance means separation, as it says at the end of our Torah portion, "You shall be holy to Me, for [I, G-d, am holy, and] I have separated you from the nations..." The Jewish people must be separate from the nations of the world. And they must be separate specifically in those areas in which we are seemingly similar, such as eating, drinking, conducting business and so forth.

The ultimate purpose of a Jew's holiness and spirituality, though, is not egocentric - to be holy just for himself. Rather, as the Torah says of our ancestor Abraham, "in order that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of G-d..." So, one of the reasons for our remaining separate from the other nations is to be able to guide our children to walk in the ways of our ancestors. And this is why the mitzva to be holy is followed by "every person shall fear his mother and his father" - which alludes to the obligation of Jewish education.

Parents are the first educators. The mother and father must instill in their children the feeling that they are different from the rest of the world, that they are part of a holy nation.

The sequence in that verse is "his mother and his father," mentioning first the mother. For the mother is the foundation of the house, and the major part of the actual education is in her hands.

How does a person imbue his children, and himself, with the consciousness of being a holy nation? This is brought out by the third commandment, "You shall keep My Sabbaths."

The Sabbath is a sign between the Alm-ghty and Israel. It signifies belief in the creation of the universe. It strengthens and reinforces the certainty that the Alm-ghty is the Creator of the universe and continuously sustains and conducts it.

Shabbat was given only to the Jewish people, and not to the nations of the world. Observing Shabbat thus means to keep and guard the sign and covenant between Israel and G-d. This is done by strengthening our faith in the fact that Jews are not subject to the forces of nature but are under the specific and individual providence of G-d.

This, in turn, will bring us full circle. It will reinforce in ourselves and our children the mitzva of "You shall be holy," to the point where our everyday activities will be infused with holiness.

(Based on the teachings on the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Does G-d Want Us To Enjoy Ourselves?

By Yanki Tauber

One thing I haven't figured out yet: Does G-d want us to enjoy ourselves, or not?

I've looked at the classical sources, and the message is mixed. Here's a sampling of what I found:

The biblical command, "You shall be holy" (Leviticus 19:2), is understood by the sages of the Talmud as an injunction to "sanctify yourself by abstaining also from that which is permitted to you" (Yevamot 20a); Nachmanides goes so far as to count this as one of the 613 mitzvot.

On the other hand, the Torah calls the Nazirite (a person who takes a vow to abstain from wine) a "sinner". What's his sin? The fact that he renounced one of the pleasures of G-d's world. "Is what the Torah has forbidden you not enough," explains the Talmud, "that you assume further prohibitions upon yourself?" If a person is a "sinner" because he abstains from wine, the Talmud goes on to deduce, imagine what the Torah would say about those ascetic-types who are constantly fasting and otherwise depriving themselves.

On the other hand, the Torah also calls the Nazirite "holy", prompting another Talmudic sage to apply the reasoning of his colleagues in reverse: if the Torah calls a person "holy" just for abstaining from wine, imagine the praises it would bestow on one who abstains from all worldly pleasures... (Both opinions are cited in Nedarim 10a.)

How about this one, from *Ethics of the Fathers* 6:4: "This is the way of Torah: Eat bread with salt, drink water in small measure, sleep on the ground, and live a life of hardship." Contrast that with Rav Nachman's assertion that a point of Torah law can be properly understood after enjoying a juicy beefsteak (Bava Kama 72a), or Rabbi Chizkiah's declaration, "A person will have to answer for everything that his eye beheld and he did not consume" (Jerusalem Talmud, Kiddushin 4:12).

So which is it? Is it conquering the animal self, transcending the mundane, revealing the supremacy of spirit over matter? Or is it goodness and virtue to be found in every part of G-d's world and every aspect of G-d-given life?

I think there may be a hint of a solution in the Torah's laws of vows (Numbers 30), and the way that their deeper significance is understood in Chassidic teaching. The Torah speaks about a young woman, on the threshold of maturity, who vows to abstain from a certain indulgence (e.g., "I swear, no chocolate for week!"), and her father's legal right to annul her vow.

The idea is that there are circumstances and stages in our lives in which we are still in our spiritual adolescence. In this state "vows" are necessary, because a full exploration of our material nature is more than we can safely handle. But in a more advanced state of spiritual maturity (represented by the "father" in the Torah's account) these vows are annulled. Indeed, even as the "daughter" in us is struggling with our physical self, the "father" in us embraces it.

That's the concept. How it's to be applied is another matter—like I said, I haven't figured it out yet.



The Rebbe Helped Me Kosher My Kitchen

The Yom Kippur war (1973) left Israel with thousands of casualties, and one of them was Mr. Sadon.

He had been lying for weeks in critical condition in Tzrifim Hospital and the doctors weren't optimistic. But his wife, sitting by his bedside, knew better. Somehow she was sure that against all odds everything would be all right.....she was writing a letter to the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Mr. Sadon had never been an observant Jew, but his wife had. In fact her grandparents had been Chabad Chassidim, but she left it all when she was just a young girl; that's the way things went in Israel. Nevertheless, writing to the Rebbe was not strange to her.

In the bed next to Mr. Sadon lay a Moroccan Jew called Mr. Shapir who also had been severely wounded and had a dim prognosis. When he saw that Mrs. Sadon was writing to the Rebbe his eyes lit up. He motioned her to come close and handed her a small book of Psalms (3 sq. cm.), a family heirloom given to him by his grandfather. He begged her to send it to the Rebbe and request that he sign it. So Mrs. Sadon added the T'hillim to her letter and mailed them off.

Things began to improve for Sadon to the degree that two weeks later the hospital informed him that he was well enough to leave! They needed the bed for more serious cases.

After a few months at home they had almost forgotten the entire incident, and things began to return to normal, until one day Mrs. Sadon received a small envelope in the mail from the office of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Inside was Mr. Shapir's tiny book of Psalms inscribed and signed by the Rebbe in extremely small print, and a letter addressed to her.

The Rebbe repeated the blessings he wrote in the T'hillim, added a few more, and explained that although it was not his custom to sign holy books he had made an exception, and then signed his name once again. But at the bottom of the letter a footnote caught Mrs. Sadon's eye:

"P.S. Apparently you already light Shabbat Candles like every Kosher Jewish woman."

The next morning Mrs. Sadon called the hospital, only to discover that Mr. Shapir had also recovered, and left weeks earlier. She got his number from the phonebook, but there was no answer at his house. So she mailed him a letter telling him about his T'hillim, and waited for a response.

Sure enough two weeks later she heard a knock at her door and it was none other than a beaming Mr. Shapir. He had been in a recuperation centre for the last few weeks, and as soon as he arrived home and saw her letter he took a taxi to her house. It wasn't long before he was joyously reporting the stages of his miraculous recovery, and marvelling over the Rebbe's inscription in his little book.

But the Rebbe's footnote still burned in her mind.

On one hand, she left Jewish observance years ago for very good reasons; it was old-fashioned, closed minded, unpopular etc. why should she start now? Who needs it??

But something inside her kept repeating:

"Light candles like every Jewish woman".

Little by little she warmed up to the idea. After all, the Rebbe did write it to her, and it was the same Rebbe that just helped her and so many others...so it can't be THAT bad.

After a few weeks of this she decided that she would do it! This Friday she would light Shabbos candles!!

She even went to the store and bought candles and two small candleholders. But when she arrived

home she realized that she didn't know what to do.

She didn't know when to light them, or where to put them. She didn't know the blessing, and most embarrassing of all; she didn't even know whom to ask!

She stood there confused for several minutes and she felt a tremendous urge to just put it off for another week, when suddenly the phone rang.

It was her oldest son calling from the army; his weekend leave had been cancelled, and before he could continue she said, "Oh that's too bad, I was looking forward to seeing you. Tell me son, is the Army Rabbi there? I want to ask him something."

A few minutes later the Rabbi had gladly answered her questions, dictated to her the blessing, and even promised that he would mail her a "Kitzur Shulchan Aruch" (Jewish Law book). Mrs. Sadon hung up the phone and did what he said.

She lit the candles, put her hands over her eyes, slowly said the blessing and just stood there.

When she uncovered her eyes suddenly everything was different. Suddenly everything was so pure and quiet.

She was so happy...She cried.

Of course it didn't stop there; little by little the flames began changing their lives.

The next Friday, after lighting the candles she felt that some of the pictures and statues in the room sort-of "clashed" with the Shabbos lights. So she moved the offenders to a different room altogether.

Then they bought a few Torah books for their bookcase, and the T.V. became silent on Shabbos.

Finally she decided to contact the local Chabad House to make her Kitchen Kosher.

Then things really began to move. It wasn't long before there were Mezuzas on all the doors. Mr. Sadon bought himself his first pair of T'fillin, and even began attending Torah classes a few times a week. And that was only the beginning.

The Rebbe and the Shabbos candles made the change.

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ISSUE 980

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Because the Jewish people were exiled from their land on account of their causeless hatred for one another, the antidote which will bring the Redemption is an overabundance of brotherly love and harmony. As we find ourselves on the very threshold of the Messianic Era, when the greatest love between all Jews will be felt, the time has come for a new phase in our relations with one another: We must strive to "taste" beforehand, while still in exile, the wonderful atmosphere which will reign then. This, in itself, will hasten Moshiach's arrival. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



Rosh Chodesh Iyar, 5731 [1971]

To All Participants in the "Evening with Lubavitch" in Philadelphia, Pa.

G-d bless you -

Greeting and Blessing:

I am please to extend greetings and prayerful wishes to all participants in the Evening with Lubavitch, and particularly to the honoured guests.

Inasmuch as the event is taking place in the days of Sefira ("Counting of the Omer"), it is well to reflect on the significance of this Mitzvah [commandment].

At first glance, the counting of days seems to be of no consequence, since the flow of time is beyond man's control. Yet, it is obviously very significant in that it lends emphasis to the period connecting the two most important events in Jewish history:

Pesach - the liberation from Egyptian bondage, marking the birth of the Jewish people; and Shavuot - the Receiving of the Torah at Sinai, where the Jewish people became a truly free and mature nation.

Like all things with Torah, the Counting of the Omer has many aspects.

Generally, the counting of things by the unit, rather than by approximation of the total, indicates the importance of the thing. The fact that each day, day after day for forty-nine days, a Brocho [blessing] is said before the counting, further emphasizes the importance of this thing - in this case the value of time. The Brocho we make expresses not only our gratitude to G-d forgiving us the Mitzvah of Sefira, but also our gratitude for each day which He gives us. We must learn to appreciate the precious gift of each day by making the proper use of it. The tasks we have to accomplish today cannot be postponed for tomorrow, since a day gone by is irretrievable.

Secondly, while it is true that the flow of time is beyond our control, since we can neither slow it or quicken it, expand it nor shrink it; yet, in a way we can directly affect time by the content with which we fill each day of our life. When a person makes a far-reaching discovery, or reaches an important resolution, he can in effect put "ages" into minutes. On the other hand, time allowed to go by without proper content, has no reality at all, however long it may last.

Correspondingly, the Torah tells us that man has been given unlimited powers not only in regard to shaping his own destiny, but also the destiny of the world in which he lives. Just as in the case of time, the real length of it is not measured in terms of quantity but in terms of quality, so also in regard to a man's efforts. Every good effort can further be expanded by the vitality and enthusiasm which he puts into it.

Indeed, the period of seven weeks connecting the above mentioned two greatest historic events in Jewish life, illustrates the Torah concept of time and effort as indicated above. In the course of only seven weeks, a people which has been enslaved for 210 years to most depraved taskmasters, were transformed into a "Kingdom of Priests and Holy Nation," who witnessed the Divine Revelation at Sinai and received the Torah and Mitzvoth from G-d Himself.

"Lubavitch" teaches and exemplifies the principle of the predominance of form over matter, of the soul over the body. It is not the quantity - in terms of physical capacity and length of time - that is the essential factor, but it is the quality of the effort and the infinite capacity of the soul that determine the results.

I trust that the spirit of Lubavitch will stimulate each and all of the participants to ever greater accomplishments in all areas of Jewish life, both personal and communal.

With blessing for Hatzlocho [success].

A WORD from the Director

This Shabbat we will bless the new month of Iyar. In the Torah, the months of the year aren't referred to by name but by sequential order, to teach us that the yearly cycle is an ongoing, continual process. Nisan, the month when the Jews left Egypt, is "the first month"; Iyar is "the second month." Each month is a preparation for the one that follows.

The month of Iyar is an especially auspicious time for healing. Indeed, its Hebrew letters are an acronym for "Ani G-d Rofecha," "I am G-d your Healer." The healing G-d provides, however, is very different from that of a human doctor. A regular doctor is given the ability and power to cure illness, but the cure is not retroactive. By contrast, G-d can remove the illness retroactively, so that it seems as if the person was never sick!

The month of Nisan, characterized by the miraculous redemption of the Jews from Egypt, "spills over" and influences the month of Iyar, to ensure that the healing will be in a G-dly manner. Only G-d, Who is above nature, can utterly root out illness as if it never existed.

In the same way that there is physical illness and health, so too is there spiritual illness and healing. During the time between Passover and Shavuot, it is customary to learn Ethics of the Fathers on Shabbat afternoons. Its pithy teachings inspire us to acquire positive character attributes and "heal" the soul. "Armed" with the miraculous month of Nisan, and further fortified by our Sages' teachings, the month of Iyar provides us with an opportunity for "super-natural" spiritual wellness. For now is the perfect time to heal any infirmities that might exist, and work toward true spiritual liberation.

J. I. Gutnick

The source for the custom to study Ethics of our Fathers during the Omer period:

Pirkei Avot (Ethics of our Fathers) contains six chapters, and there are six Shabbatot between Passover and Shavuot. Every Shabbat (customarily after Minchah), one chapter is studied. Many (including Chabad) continue this chapter-a-week regiment, until Rosh Hashanah.

After the Jews left Egypt, they embarked on a period of self-

refinement and character improvement. This was critical, in order they should be worthy of receiving the Torah on Shavuot.

While counting the Omer, we too try to perfect our character. To achieve this, we study Avot, the tractate which is devoted to piety, humility, kindness and ethics.

CUSTOMS CORNER

It Happened Once...



Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vizhnitz once told the story of a chasid who came to Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev with the sorry account of his financial misfortunes. He had been extremely wealthy, but because of a number of calamitous investments had fallen deep into debt, though no one yet knew of it.

"My advice," said the *tzadik*, "is that you should buy a lottery ticket, and, God willing, you will be helped thereby."

Replied the chasid: "I do not doubt for a moment that your promise will be fulfilled - but who knows when? For it may take years to win with lottery tickets, and in the meantime my creditors will be after me. Besides, my daughter is not getting any younger, and I must marry her off."

Rabbi Levi Yitzchak thereupon promised him that the Almighty would soon make money come his way, even before he won the lottery.

The chasid, of course, immediately bought a lottery ticket. On the way home, he stayed the night at a wayside inn. So, too, did a certain powerful noble, who had been riding about in his carriage. In the dead of night the noble dreamt that in the same inn there was a Jew who owned a lottery ticket that was destined to win; he should therefore find a way of exchanging his own worthless ticket with the one that was bound to bring riches to its bearer.

The noble awoke, and behold, it was but a dream - but when he fell asleep again, exactly the same dream repeated itself. This time he got out of bed, and ordered his servant to investigate whether there was any Jewish stranger about, and if there was, to bring him at once. The Jew was found soon enough, and bought to the rich man's room.

The noble asked whether he held a lottery ticket, and then said: "I also have one of those tickets. Let us exchange tickets, and I will add a few gold roubles to whatever it cost you."

The Jew refused: "Even if you give me that number of roubles several times over, I will not exchange tickets with you."

The noble was so eager to settle his transaction that he kept on increasing his offer until it reached one thousand roubles, but the Jew would not budge. By this time the noble was fuming. He ordered his servant to seize the ticket by force - which he did, and handed the ticket to his master.

Then, thinking better of it, the noble said: "Look, I don't want to really rob you altogether. Here, take the thousand gold rubbles that I offered you before, as well as my lottery ticket."

The Jew reluctantly accepted the money and the ticket from the noble, and soon resigned himself gladly to the workings of divine Providence, thinking that, anyway this is certainly enough even for a fancy wedding, so: "This, too, is for the best."

He continued his journey home, where he married off his daughter in grand style. Not long after, the ticket which the noble foisted upon him

against his will won a vast sum of money. The chasid decided it was appropriate to visit his rebbe.

When he arrived, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak said: "I saw that your luck was running low indeed, so I had to send along the angelic Master of Dreams to persuade the noble to exchange tickets with you; I could see that his ticket was going to win, not yours. As for the thousand gold roubles that he gave you in addition, that is because you said you had to marry off your daughter soon; and that is why you granted a little salvation first, then later a great salvation."

When the chasid returned home, he became more prosperous than he had ever been before.

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

Speak to all the congregation of the Children of Israel and say: You shall be holy. (Lev. 19:2)

Rashi, the great Torah commentator, notes that this portion was said at a time when all the Jews were assembled together. During the last century, the proponents of the Enlightenment originated the phrase, "Be a Jew at home and a person in the street." Rashi's comment, however, teaches that a Jew must never be ashamed of his Jewishness nor try to conceal it, for at all times we are proud members of the holy Jewish nation and must conduct ourselves according to G-d's instructions.

You shall not stand [idly] by the blood of your neighbour. (Lev. 19:16)

In addition to a command concerning someone in physical danger, this verse is also an instruction for spiritual rescue. If one sees a Jew who is in danger of spiritual "drowning," it is forbidden to just stand there and watch. You must do all you can to help him. And, if you say, "Who am I to go out and save a soul?" the very fact that you are aware that the other person needs help and is in danger is proof that you have the ability to save him. (*Likutei Sichot*)

You shall not go up and down as a talebearer among your people. (Lev. 19:16)

A person's eyes and ears are not under his control, but his mouth is. (*Zohar*)

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

PARSHAS KEDOSHIM • 26 NISSAN • 30 APRIL

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	5:19 PM
	MINCHA:	5:30 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	6:00 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	TEHILIM:	8:30 AM
	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:38 AM
	THE MOLAD OF THE MONTH OF IYAR	
	IS TUESDAY MAY 3	1:28 AND 9 CHALAKIM AM
	MINCHA:	5:20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	6:16 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:20 PM
	MAARIV:	6:10 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 29 APRIL 2011



Begins	Ends
5:19	MELBOURNE 6:16
5:18	ADELAIDE 6:14
5:01	BRISBANE 5:54
6:17	DARWIN 7:07
4:59	GOLD COAST 5:52
5:24	PERTH 6:18
5:00	SYDNEY 5:55
5:06	CANBERRA 6:02
5:04	LAUNCESTON 6:03
5:21	AUCKLAND 6:18
5:14	WELLINGTON 6:13

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

צוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

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