

# L'Chaim

The Yeshiva Centre - Chabad NSW Headquarters

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## Living with the Rebbe



This week we begin reading from the Book of Vayikra (Leviticus), which deals primarily with the laws of sacrifices. In connection to the sacrifices, the Torah repeatedly uses the phrase "rei'ach nichoach la'Hashem," generally translated as "a pleasing fragrance to G-d."

Rashi, the foremost Torah commentator, interprets the word "nichoach" in the sense of "nachat ruach," pleasure or contentment. "It is a source of contentment to Me, that I said [to bring the offering] and My will was done."

Some commentators (the Mizrahi, for one) explain Rashi's comment as intending to repudiate the mistaken notion that G-d enjoys the odor of the burning sacrifices. For this reason, Rashi emphasizes that G-d derives pleasure not from the odor, but from the fact that His will is obeyed.

However, if that were Rashi's intent, the above-mentioned comment would have been made the first time the phrase "rei'ach nichoach" appears in the Torah - back in the Book of Genesis, when Noah offered a sacrifice after the Great Flood: "And G-d smelled the pleasing fragrance." In that instance, Rashi offers no comment at all!

Accordingly, we must conclude that Rashi is not repudiating something that is so self-evident, i.e., that G-d does not enjoy the physical aroma of the sacrifices. What possible enjoyment could be derived from the smell of an animal burning, an odor that even humans consider loathsome?

It is therefore obvious that the contentment being derived is spiritual, from the fact that the Jewish people are fulfilling G-d's will. In truth, Rashi's comment is intended to explain why G-d derives pleasure from the sacrifices, as opposed to any other of the Torah's commandments.

The difference between the sacrifices and all other mitzvot is that all other commandments contain an element of reason or benefit. Even the super-rational mitzvot, such as the red heifer, while we do not understand them intellectually, serve to strengthen a Jew's acceptance of the yoke of Heaven.

By contrast, the sacrifices (and particularly the olah offering, which was completely burnt) do not have any perceptible "reason" in human terms. On the contrary, they seem completely illogical: Why "waste" one's hard-earned money in such a fashion?

Rashi consequently stresses that G-d's pleasure is derived from the fulfillment of His will. A Jew brings sacrifices only because G-d wants him to. The sacrifices are thus the purest form of obedience to G-d, without regard for personal benefit or other considerations. And the highest expression of this is the olah, which was completely consumed.

From this we learn that the greatest pleasure a Jew can bring G-d is to obey Him, purely and simply.

*Adapted from Vol. 32 of Likutei Sichot*

## GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE INNER EWE

There is a war going on. Neither side will settle for less than complete domination of our very lives. The two camps are two forces within us, two souls that keep us alive. The G-dly soul is selfless, peaceful and unwaveringly dedicated to the service of the Divine. This soul is enthralled by spiritual matters only and finds mundane pleasures repellent. Then there's the animal soul. Ego-driven, unsettled, given over to the pursuit of pleasure. He thrives on stimuli and seeks out all things physical. All notions of any "higher purpose" leave him terrifically bored. If we are to approach the Infinite, to cling to G-d, we must see to it that the G-dly soul forever dominates its animalistic counterpart. This is the war.

But after the smoke is clear, how shall we deal with the vanquished beast? To set him free would be dangerous. To eliminate him entirely may be imprudent. (After all, who'll remind us to eat lunch the next day?)

Chasidic thought offers us an ideal game plan for dealing with the animal soul - an age-old dynamic mastered by zookeepers and farmers long ago. The animal soul left unchecked will disrupt, even oppose the attainment of spiritual goals. Could we expect any different? But if we master the animal, put him under the yoke, train him - at once his intensity and might become our own. We teach him to take pleasure in the Divine. Redirect his focus. Now he pulls the wagon and we ride.

This week's Torah portion, Vayikra, describes the Jew and his offering that he brings to G-d upon the altar of the Temple. The Torah tells us that the offering shall be from him, the Jew. The Chasidic masters teach that this is the animal each one of us must bring to G-d, the animal inside us whose sublimation is a most unique and pleasant offering to G-d. Everyone's animal is different. Some of us have a rowdy ox. Others exhibit the distinct qualities of a stubborn goat. And some people have an indulgent, little sheep inside. But these traits, all of the animal's special quirks, can become assets in serving G-d.

When pointed in the right direction, our animals become the most energetic, staunch, and persistent workers in reaching spiritual goals. And who knows? Once the animal gets going, he might even teach the mellow G-dly soul a thing or two.

## Aliyot Summery

**General Overview:** This week's Torah reading, *Vayikra*, begins the third book of the Torah, Leviticus. Last week we completed the reading of the book of Exodus, which concluded with a description of the construction of the Tabernacle. This week's portion will provide a description of the various sacrifices – animal, fowl, and meal-offerings – offered by the priests in this newly constructed Sanctuary.

First Aliyah: G-d calls out to Moses from the Tabernacle and teaches him the laws of the elective burnt offering, the *Olah* sacrifice. This aliyah discusses the laws of the cattle, sheep, or goat *Olah*.

Second Aliyah: G-d then teaches Moses the laws of the fowl *Olah*. This aliyah then continues with a description of three types of voluntary meal offerings: unbaked flour, baked loaves, and the shallow-fried meal offering. All voluntary meal offerings also contained olive oil and frankincense.

Third Aliyah: The Torah describes the last type of voluntary meal offerings -- the deep-fried meal offering -- and the mandatory barley offering, the *Omer* offering, brought on the second day of Passover. G-d instructs the Jews to add salt to every animal sacrifice or meal offering, a symbol of our everlasting "salt covenant" with G-d. We are also commanded not to include any leavened items or anything which contains honey in any Temple offering (there are two exclusions to the leaven prohibition).

Fourth Aliyah: The "Peace Offering," the *Shelamim* sacrifice, is described in this Aliyah. The *Shelamim* -- which could be brought from cattle, sheep, or goats -- was shared by the altar, which consumed some of the animal's fats, the *Kohanim*, and the donors of the sacrifice who were given the bulk of the meat. The aliyah ends with the

prohibitions against consuming blood and the specific fats which were offered on the altar. These prohibitions apply to all animals, even those not offered in the Temple.

Fifth Aliyah: We now begin learning about the "Sin Offering," the *Chatat* sacrifice, brought by an individual who is guilty of inadvertently transgressing a sin. This section discusses the unique *Chatat* sacrifices brought by a High Priest who sins, by the *Sanhedrin* (Jewish Supreme Court) who issue an erroneous ruling which causes the populace to sin, and a monarch who sins.

Sixth Aliyah: The Torah discusses the fourth and final type of *Chatat*, that of a common person who sins. Also discussed is the *Korban Oleh Viyored*, a "vacillating" Sin Offering, brought by an individual guilty of certain specific sins. The *Korban Oleh Viyored* depended on the financial position of the transgressor -- a wealthy person brought a sheep or goat, a person of lesser means brought two birds, and a pauper brought a meal offering.

Seventh Aliyah: This section concludes the laws of the *Korban Oleh Viyored*. We then move on to the last sacrifice discussed in this week's Torah reading, the "Guilt Offering," the *Asham* Sacrifice. Three types of *Asham* Sacrifices are discussed: a) an *Asham* brought by one who inadvertently misappropriates Temple property. b) An *Asham* brought by one who falsely swears regarding money owed to another. (Aside for bringing a sacrifice, these two individuals must repay the principal amount, and pay a punitive fine equal to one fourth of the principle.) c) An *Asham* brought by a person who is uncertain whether he violated a Torah prohibition.

## Thoughts that Count

And [G-d] called to Moses (Lev. 1:1)

It is traditional to begin a young child's study of Torah with the Book of Leviticus, which deals primarily with the laws of the sacrifices. From this we learn that Jewish education is so important to the perpetuation of our people that parents should not hesitate to make even the greatest financial "sacrifices" to ensure that their children receive the proper instruction.

(*Avnei Ezel*)

For this reason, our Sages stated (Nedarim 81): "Be cautious with the children of the poor, for from them the Torah will go forth." When poor parents demonstrate self-sacrifice to pay their children's tuition, their strength is inherited by their offspring, who become giants in Torah.

(*Rabbi Meir Shapiro*)

And he shall slaughter the bull before G-d (Lev. 1:5)

As explained in the Talmud (Chulin 30), "And he shall slaughter" implies drawing or pulling. The act of slaughtering (according to Torah law) "draws" the animal or bird upward, rendering it capable of being elevated from the realm of the animal kingdom to the realm of man, when it is ingested and transformed into the blood and flesh of the person who partakes of it. The animal soul of man must likewise be "slaughtered," by drawing and elevating it upward until it is subsumed in the holiness of the G-dly soul.

(*Likutei Sichot*)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN AND SPIRITUAL LEADER



Today, the second of the month of Nissan, is the anniversary of the passing in 1920 of the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Shalom Dovber. Only hours before his passing, the Rebbe Rashab told his Chasidim, "I am going to heaven, but my writings I am leaving with you." Although the Rebbe wouldn't be physically present, the Chasidim could still connect to him through his holy writings and teachings.

In 1914, after World War I broke out, the Rebbe Rashab (the fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe) sent a minyan of yeshiva students to the gravesites of his father and grandfather to recite a special prayer every day. As the words of a tzadik are eternal, there is no doubt that the Rebbe's prayer still reverberates in the celestial spheres, and is especially relevant in light of the world situation today.

In free translation: "May your mercies be aroused, O Source of all mercy, for the sake of our brothers, the Children of Israel, who are in grave danger. It is already several months since a war has broken out...with the kingdom of Ishmael. Many Jews have been killed in the terrible warfare...among them are married men, the fathers of children. May Jacob be redeemed from this current horror!

"May the light of Israel succeed in imploring G-d's mercy for the Congregation of Israel who live in lands affected by the strife. May G-d protect them and save them from the sword and from all enemies who lie in wait. May they succeed in all their endeavors and return in full health to their homes. May G-d implant the desire for peace in the hearts of the kings responsible for this bloodshed, so that the world will be spared this great and terrible destruction ...And may we be worthy of greeting the Final Redeemer, speedily in our days, Amen."

*Pinchus Feldman*

Rabbi Pinchus Feldman OAM

**Smile! It's Friday** - A guy wanted to get in the temple on Yom Kippur, but without a ticket they don't let you in. He said, "Look, I just want to give a message to a friend in there." The guy at the door says, "Sorry, you got to have a ticket." The first guy replies, "Just let me in for one minute, then I'll be right out." "Alright," says the guy at the door, "but I better not catch you praying."

## Sowing Seeds - By Esther Muellejans

My husband, children and I live in Northampton, Massachusetts. Dubbed the "paradise of America," it's been listed as the number one small city in America, known for its cultural and art offerings, its fine public schools and higher education, and its small town ambiance, being a city of 30,000, surrounded by lush farmland.

In 1993, our oldest daughter, Ruth, was about to begin kindergarten in the local public school. We had been exploring Judaism with friends and acquaintances, at the various Jewish institutions in our area, and through reading.

That summer we contacted Rabbi Chaim and Yocheved Adelman, of Chabad House at Amherst, because we wanted to start keeping kosher. They graciously helped us set up a kosher kitchen. Yocheved taught me everything about this fundamental mitzva and was there for all my questions. As I enrolled in study groups and we began attending family events, the Adelmans asked if we wanted to send Ruth to their Sunday Hebrew school program. We jumped at the idea.

Jewish education for my children, something I somehow knew was important, now became a reality. And what a wonderful experience it was. I volunteered to "help," essentially passing out and collecting supplies. But secretly I was Yocheved's oldest student, absorbing information and inspiration, and learning my Hebrew alphabet. What happened at the Chabad House that year paved the way for the many steps we have taken as a family.

We soon discovered that the Adelman children attended Lubavitcher Yeshiva Academy (LYA). We enjoyed the Adelmans, and their children had a special something about them. Their politeness and respectful attitude were impressive. Their strong sense of values (all Torah-based as we were learning) and their chesed, their willingness and desire to treat one another and their peers with love and kindness, touched us, and we knew that this was what we wanted for our children. We had been feeling great trepidation about sending Ruth to public school. We already felt the challenge of being the only family keeping kosher in her public school class. And then there were the social events, the non-Jewish holidays, the lack of Torah perspective in a pluralistic setting. Through the Adelmans we had discovered another option.

After several meetings and discussions, Ruth began first grade at LYA. Everything fell into place. Yocheved taught there and was able to transport Ruth to and from school.

In the years that ensued, Ruth absorbed her Torah and secular studies like a sponge. She would come home singing songs about the Jewish holidays - some of which we had never heard about, such as the birthday of the trees. But we were open and we enthusiastically shared in Ruth's learning process. To this day I credit Ruth with enabling me to say the Grace After Meals, otherwise known as bentching, due to her steadfast teaching. I proved a very slow learner, much less agile mentally than my "teacher." Each and every word remains precious to me to this day.

As we were growing (both spiritually and in number), so was LYA. We happened to be the first family to send our children to LYA from the Amherst-Northampton area. As the Adelmans continued to touch the lives of others, the number of families making that commute to Longmeadow has grown to seven.

Slowly, over time, many seeds were sown. LYA was founded in 1946 by the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe. With just a handful of students in one room in Springfield, Massachusetts, Rabbi David Edelman (current dean of LYA) planted the seeds of love for Torah and Chasidut in many young hearts.

Since then, many people have benefitted from and supported the school. They too have planted seeds of Torah in the hearts of children, grandchildren, family and friends. In fact, we are these very people!

Eventually, a new building in Longmeadow was built which includes a

preschool, elementary school and a middle school wing, with numerous community outreach and education programs taking place there as well.

The school recently embarked on yet a new adventure - experiential learning of the best kind - in Israel. Ruth, now a middle school student, spent two glorious weeks in Israel with her classmates last spring. The single most meaningful part of the trip to the students, universally, was being at the Western Wall on Friday night, welcoming the Shabbat Queen (yes, Ruth taught me to daven these prayers as well). Everything they were learning was affirmed in all its meaning and importance on this trip.

The trip had special meaning for my husband and me. Through G-d's guiding hand we had met one another in Jerusalem back in 1985. And now, here was our 13-year-old daughter visiting the very spot where our lives first intersected! Little did we imagine then where we would be today. As I look back, I marvel at how the circle continues to spiral upwards, towards Torah.

Our pathway to Torah has been to grow and learn with and through our children. Where will they lead us next? Ruth is in her eighth and final year at LYA. And once again, we find ourselves going deeper into our commitment to an observant life. A group of parents are now working with the school to create a Lubavitcher girls' high school, which would provide the same outstanding educational excellence and nurturing atmosphere that distinguishes LYA, a place in which a Jewish girl's full potential is able to blossom.

*Women of Valour - N'shei Chabad invite all Ladies to a*

### Pre-Pesach Shiur

with

**Rabbi Pinchus Feldman OAM**

*"Practical Aspects of Pesach"*

*Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April – 7<sup>th</sup> Nissan*

*8.15pm*

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*For more information call Elka on 0415953770*



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# Moshiaich

Jewish teachings state, "The Land of Israel is destined to spread forth over the whole world." (Yalkut Shimoni on Isaiah) How will this be accomplished? In the future, when the world is refined and all unclean shells are annulled, nothing will obstruct Divinity. The lands of the Diaspora will thus also be refined, and will become elevated to the level of the Land of Israel. In this sense, then, "The Land of Israel is destined to spread forth over the whole world."

*(Likutei Torah, Masei)*

# It Happened Once

There was once a poor melamed (teacher) who was a follower of Rabbi Yechezkel Landau of Prague. Unable to provide a dowry for his daughter, he decided to look for a job in Hungary. He found a teaching position in a small village, where most of the town's income came from the production of wine. The melamed stayed there for several years, until he saved up what he hoped was enough money.

Now, at that time a wealthy wine merchant from Prague had just arrived in town to buy wine for Passover. He agreed to take the melamed back to Prague, provided he supervised the wine barrels along the way (to make sure they weren't tampered with, which would render them not kosher). The melamed was grateful for the offer and they set out.

That Friday afternoon they stopped at an inn. The melamed, who was carrying a large bundle of money and was afraid to entrust it to just anyone, decided to hide it among the wine barrels for the duration of the Sabbath, after which he would retrieve it after sundown on Saturday night. Satisfied that his money was secure, he went off to prepare for the holy Sabbath.

The following evening he was shocked to discover that the bundle was gone. It did not take him long to figure out that the only person who could have stolen it was the wine merchant, who must have seen him hiding the money and was unable to withstand the temptation. Although his first impulse was to directly confront him, he decided to appeal to the man's conscience instead.

Explaining that he had worked hard to provide a dowry for his daughter, the melamed asked the merchant if he had perhaps hidden the money in a more secure location. But the merchant made a show of being insulted by the very idea. He denied the theft, and even blamed the melamed for having been foolish enough to leave his money where it was unsafe. When the melamed came right out and begged, the merchant threatened to leave him and continue on to Prague by himself if he did not stop "all that nonsense." He was perfectly willing, however, to make a donation toward the girl's wedding expenses.

"I'm not looking for charity," the melamed replied. "If you didn't take my money, I apologize." Seeing that there was nothing to gain by pursuing the matter, he resolved to consult with Rabbi Landau upon returning to Prague.

After listening to the melamed's sad tale, Rabbi Yechezkel Landau promised to intervene. The wine merchant, he revealed, was due to arrive shortly to ask for his rabbinical approval that the wine was "kosher for Passover." In the meantime, he suggested that the melamed go into an adjoining room and rest.

A few minutes later the wine merchant showed up at the Rabbi's house. "As in years past," he explained, "I have just returned from Hungary with a large quantity of wine for Passover. I can assure you that it was completely supervised throughout all stages of its production, from the crushing of the grapes until its arrival in Prague in sealed barrels. And as one of your own disciples acted as supervisor, may I assume that you will approve it?"

"Yes, well," the Rabbi hesitated, "there seems to be a slight problem ..."

"What kind of problem?" the merchant asked nervously.

"Your supervisor has told me that he hid some money among the

barrels and it disappeared."

"But surely you don't suspect me of having stolen it!" the merchant said.

"G-d forbid that I would accuse you," the Rabbi assured him. "But if you didn't take it, or let us say 'borrow,' then someone else did. And if a stranger had access to the wine, well, then there's no way to ensure that it wasn't tampered with. In a case like this, I just couldn't vouch for it..."

The merchant paled when he realized that the money he would lose from the potential sale of the wine was far more than the amount he had stolen. He immediately admitted the theft and promised to make restitution.

But the Rabbi wasn't finished. "It's more complicated than that. If you stole on Shabbat, the kashrut of the wine is still in question." The merchant insisted that the theft had occurred before sundown, but the Rabbi refused to believe him. "How do I know that you aren't admitting to something you didn't do, and are willing to pay the melamed to receive my authorization?"

At that point the merchant broke down in tears and declared that he was willing to swear he spoke the truth. "I will do anything you say," he cried.

"All right," the Rabbi replied. "I can see that you are sincere. However, this is what you must do: In addition to returning the money, you must make a large contribution towards the girl's dowry. This will partially atone for your transgression and the aggravation you caused an innocent man. Provided, of course, that he is willing to forgive you."

Needless to say, both parties were more than happy with the decision. And the wine merchant learned a valuable lesson.

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via large screen broadcast  
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**Candle Lighting Times**  
**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

City	In	Out
<b>Sydney</b>	6:41pm	7:34pm
<b>Brisbane</b>	5:35pm	6:26pm
<b>Surfers Par</b>	5:33pm	6:25pm
<b>Melbourne</b>	7:05pm	8:00pm

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