

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



To receive this via email or for sponsorship opportunities please email us info@torahactionlife.com www.torahactionlife.com

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



THOUGHTS ON PESACH AND ALIYAT REGEL

What a wonderful sight it must have been; all of Am Yisrael gathering before the Chag of Pesach in Yerushalayim!

Before Pesach, untold numbers of Am Yisrael, would gird their loins and ascend to Yerushalayim in fulfilment of the Torah's command, "Three times during the year shall all your males appear before the Lord G-d" (Shemot 23:17).

On Pesach there was an additional Mitzva. "You shall slaughter the Passover-offering... in the place where G-d will choose to rest His Name" (Devarim 16:2).

Three times a year, from near and far, colourful caravans of Olei Regel, men, women, and children, mounted on donkeys, camels, horses and accompanied by thousands of others on foot, wended their way to Jerusalem.

Singing "I rejoiced when they said to me, we are going to the house of G-d" (Tehilim 122:1), they jammed the winding roads that led through the verdant flower-covered hills of Eretz Yisrael in springtime.

Though many would buy their sacrificial animals in the teeming markets of the Holy City, others drove cattle, sheep and goats to be offered as Korbanot. Wives joined their husbands, daughters their fathers and brothers, as they all ascended to Yerushalayim. "The rejoicing (during the the Pilgrimage Festivals) applied both to men and women" (Chagiga 6b).

By the time the Korban Pesach was to be slaughtered, all circumcised Jewish males above the age of 13, and all women and girls above the age of 12, who were "not distant" from Jerusalem, were required to join a Chavura. A Chavura was usually an extended family together with friends and neighbours - that united to offer and eat the Korban Pesach as a group.

When a caravan of Olei Regel drew near to Jerusalem, "they sent messengers before them (to inform the Mikdash authorities of their presence)... the rulers and the prefects (the leading Kohanim and Leviyim) and the Temple treasurers went forth to meet them. According to the honour due to the Olei Regel, so did they go out" (Bikkurim 3:3).

From the descriptions in various Mishnayot and other sources, it appears that as soon as the ritually pure Olei Regel entered Jerusalem, they immersed in a Mikva, changed into fresh white garments, and marched straight to the Mikdash. They were careful to come up to Jerusalem on roads approved by the Mikdash authorities known to be free of graves and other sources of impurity that might defile them. Olei Regel who were T'mei Meit (ritually impure because of contact with a corpse) had to arrive in Jerusalem early enough to complete the purification process in time. Once they arrived in Jerusalem, the Halacha mandated that they be purified with Mei Nida (water mixed with the ashes of the Para Aduma, the red heifer) on the third and seventh day, immerse in a Mikva and only the next morning enter the Mikdash complex.

How many Olei Regel actually came to Jerusalem and ate of the Korban Pesach?

The Gemara Pesachim relates: "Our rabbis taught: King Agrippa once wanted to cast his eyes on the populations of Israel (i.e. take a census). He said to the Kohein Gadol, 'Cast your eyes on the Korbanot Pesach (brought by the Olei Regel). He (the Kohein Gadol) thereupon took a kidney from each (sacrificial animal) and 600,000 pairs of kidneys (Zugei Kelayot) were found there, twice as many as those who departed from Egypt (600,000 x 2 = 1,200,000) excluding those who were ritually impure, and those who were on a distant journey. ▶

> SPONSOR

This week's edition is sponsored
Lirfua Sheleima
Rachel bat Rita Betoch Shar Cholei Yisrael

> UPCOMING EVENTS

Family weekend away 19TH-21TH MAY
@ RG24 8FY (more info online)

” THE WEEKLY QUOTE

«Remember that not
getting what you want is sometimes
a wonderful stroke of luck.»

> MAZAL TOV TO

Netanel Cohen & Daniella Tamir
on their engagement.

Antoine & Jessica Arama
on the birth of their daughter.



DVAR TORAH

Thoughts on Pesach and Aliyat Regel
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

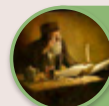
P1



DVAR TORAH

Korbanot - idolatry related or not?
RABBI ELI GABAY

P2



OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI MENACHEM ZEMBA
OF POLAND

P3



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

P3



Q&A AND CARTOON

P4

This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimot - Please dispose of accordingly

B.R.E.
BRAMPTON REAL ESTATE
SALES - RENTALS - MANAGEMENT
Tel: 020 7101 3737
www.bramptonrealestate.co.uk
Shommer Shabbat
PROUD SPONSORS OF TAL

elias
LONDON'S PREMIER DRY CLEANER
www.eliascleaners.co.uk

סופר סת"ם
כתובה בדיקה ותיקון
Certified Scribe
020 8455 7700
3 Russell Parade
Golders Green Road, NW11
benaroch@soferstank.co.uk
www.sofertank.co.uk

There was not a single Korban Pesach for which more than ten people had not registered" (Pesachim 64b).

Josephus gives his version. "So these high priests, upon the coming of that feast which is called the Passover... when they slay their sacrifices (i.e. the Korban Pesach)... a company (a Chavura) of not less than ten belong to every sacrifice ...and many of us are twenty in a company. (The high priests) found the number of sacrifices to be 256,500; which, upon the allowance of no more than ten that feast together, amounts to (at the very least) 2,700,200 that were pure and holy (Wars Bk 6 Ch.9:6). Josephus also emphasized that there were large numbers of Israelites who were ritually impure and therefore were barred from partaking of Korban Pesach.

The Torah excuses those "on a distant journey" from the Mitzva of Korban Pesach (Bamidbar 9:10).

An undeservedly little known Mishna asks, "What counts as a distant journey? Beyond Modi'im or a like distance in any direction. So says R. Akiva. R.

Eliezer says: Beyond the threshold of the Temple Court (Iskupa Ha'azara).

R. Yossi said: Therefore there is a dot over the (Hebrew letter) Hei (in the word Rechokah), as if to say, not because it is indeed far off, (but only far off as) the threshold of the Temple Court and beyond" (Pesachim 9:2).

Though their rulings were not accepted as normative Halacha, it is interesting to note how prominent these latter two dissenting sages were.

R. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus is the only Tanna in the Mishna to have HaGadol (the "Great") added to his name. His teacher (R. Yochanan) compared him to a "sealed cistern which does not lose a drop"... R. Yossi is described by his teacher as a Chassid, a saint, a righteous man (Avot 2:12). However, the Halacha is according to the ruling of R. Akiva, the leader of the next generation.

Rambam summarizes, "Someone who was at a distance of 15 miles or more from Jerusalem at

sunrise on the 14th of Nisan is considered 'on a distant journey' (and is exempt from bringing Korban Pesach). If he was at a distance of less (than 15 miles from Jerusalem), he is not considered on a distant journey because he is able to arrive in Jerusalem by Chatzot, midday (Hil. Korban Pesach 1:1). What is the Halachic significance of Chatzot, midday? "It is a Mitzvat Asei (a positive commandment) to slaughter the (Korban) Pesach on the 14th of Nisan after Chatzot" (Hil. Korban Pesach 5:9). In practice, it was only about 2 hours after Chatzot, after the Kohanim finished offering the afternoon Tamid, burned the Ketoret (incense), and lit the Menorah that the first of three groups of Olei Regel were admitted to the Azara to slaughter their Korbanot Pesach. On Erev Shabbat, they began Korbanot Pesach an hour earlier to allow enough time for them to be completely roasted before Shabbat.

Happy is the eye that saw this. May we merit to go up to Yerushalayim and the Bet Hamikdash speedily in our days. Amen. ■

RABBI ELI GABAY

DVAR
TORAH



KORBANOT - IDOLATRY RELATED OR NOT?

There are three seemingly contradictory reasons brought by Rambam for the commandments regarding sacrifices. In Moreh Nevuchim (*The Guide for the Perplexed*) he purports two different reasons. Firstly, he states that the sacrificial service is the product of the need for a gradual transition from a world of paganism to a world of true service of Hashem (3:32). The contribution of the sacrifices to our spiritual level is not in the aspect of "doing good," but rather "keeping away from evil"; the sacrifices are meant to wean *Bnei Yisrael* off of pagan worship.

At that time, everyone in the world served different gods through sacrifice, so the Israelites could not accept a Torah that did not include sacrifice. Therefore Hashem commanded that sacrifices be offered to Him, rather than to pagan gods. Had the Torah instructed that His service not include sacrifice, it would have created a similar impression to being told that we should serve Hashem in thought, and not by any action. He then brings a second, contradictory reason! He says that we sacrifice specific animals that were worshipped by pagan races – sheep, goats and cows (which, he comments, are still worshipped in India) – in order to live through the experience of destroying an idol and seeing that, rather than being punished for desecration as the pagans would believe, Hashem will in fact reward us.

"Thus the very act which is considered by the heathen as the greatest crime, is the means of approaching Hashem, and obtaining pardon for our sins. This is also the reason why we

were commanded to kill the god of the Egyptians (the lamb) on Passover, and sprinkle the blood on the doorposts (3:46)." So Ch.32 of the *Guide* says that it was a redirection of service of idols towards service of Hashem, but Ch.46 says that it was a destruction of idols to show that they had no power.

The Ramban quotes Rambam's second reason (Ch.46) and opposes it strongly: "...these are nonsensical words ...[whose] only purpose is to address the potential misunderstanding of the wicked and the foolish." He does not quote the first reason in Ch.32, although he would clearly not agree with that either.

Can we answer in defence of the Rambam? Some say that the *Guide* was only written to draw back the Jews who had been led astray by Greek philosophy, and so its content is insincere to the Rambam's true beliefs. If you're not "perplexed," then the book is not for you!

Alternatively, the *Guide* may, in fact, answer the contradiction for us. He says that sometimes an author will conceal the truth in order not to mislead the unlearned people, and that he expects his readers to find inconsistencies in his book (*Introduction of the Guide*).

Sefer Sheva Chochmot says that the *Guide* is a dangerous book for the average person to learn due to its Greek philosophy, and was only written for the Chachamim of perfect faith who needed to know how to answer non-Jewish heretics. Rav Yaakov Emden (1697-1776) concluded that it was not possible that the Rambam, compiler of the *Mishneh Torah*, was also the author of the *Guide*.

He writes: "How could one imagine that these two works (i.e., the *Mishneh Torah* and the *Guide for the Perplexed*) were written by the same author? For according to the *Guide*, all of the extensive and profound laws of sacrifices are as if worthless acts; the philosophers who follow this view will certainly consider them nonsense and a waste of time... Similarly the numerous, impenetrably profound and extensive laws of ritual purity, etc... will likewise be viewed as empty and meaningless by the stubborn and misled, who are lost [lit. "perplexed"] in the treachery of the book *Guide for the Perplexed*. They are not to be blamed for their view, since

they have found support for their errant understanding in the words of their teacher... Therefore the book *Guide for the Perplexed* cannot be attributed to the Rambam, who merited to bring merit to others, since anyone who brings merit to the collective does not come to sin. A lapse such as the *Guide for the Perplexed*, which has undoubtedly caused many people in the world to stumble in Torah – who knows how many hundreds or thousands have abandoned the religion for this reason – is the direct cause of the destruction and uprooting of many great and mighty Jewish communities throughout Spain and France... And had the *Guide for the Perplexed* contained just this one subject, i.e. – what it says concerning the reason for the sacrifices – it would be worthy of condemning it to the flames." (*Mitpachat Sefarim*, chapter 8, p.88).

What did the Rambam really believe? Probably the third reason: In *Mishneh Torah*, he states that sacrifices belong to the realm of "*Chukim*" – statutes, i.e. those laws "whose reason is unknown." A reason does exist, but we are not capable of knowing or understanding the reason. We merit a greater reward for keeping those laws that we do not understand, because we thereby exercise a greater level of faith and trust in Hashem's unfathomable wisdom. (*Laws of Me'ila* 8:8)

Hashem owns everything in the universe and he certainly does not receive any benefit from the sacrifice of his animals as offerings to him. However, it is an indisputable fact that he commanded us to bring sacrifices when he gave us the Torah, for reasons known only to Him. Now that we no longer have a temple, our study of these laws, and our prayers, replace the offerings that were once brought, and create the same divine favour that existed in temple times.

May Hashem speedily rebuild the Bet Hamikdash with the coming of Moshiach, when we will reach the spiritual heights that can only be achieved with temple service. One last question: When Moshiach comes, how will Rabbis end their speeches?! ■

TAL is sponsored by

mojo

020
8458
1234

THE BUILDING AGENCY

phonecity

90 Golders Green Road, London NW11 8LN
02087318887



OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI MENACHEM ZEMBA
OF POLAND

The light of the gaon Rabbi Menachem Zemba Zatzal began to shine in 5644. Born in the Polish capital of Warsaw, he was known as a child prodigy from his earliest years, surpassing by far the other children of the cheder. His renown was such that the greatest Torah scholars of the generation came to see his father in order to discuss Torah with the boy. After his marriage, Rabbi Menachem Zemba continued to devote himself to Torah and Chassidut, as the light of his Torah spread to all corners of Poland, Lithuania, and Russia. The Torah greats of the generation also wanted to see him, including the Avnei Nezer of Sochatchov, the Brisker Rav, and the Rebbe of Ostrova. Whoever was knowledgeable in Torah knew that during that time, the citadel of Torah was found in the home of Rabbi Menachem.

Rabbi Menachem Zemba was a Ger chassid, and he clung to his holy Rebbe the Sefat Emet of Ger, and later to his son the Imrei Emet. Along with his friend the gaon Rabbi Avraham Luftbir (the son-in-law of the gaon Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk), Rabbi Menachem wrote Zera Avraham, which created a great stir upon its publication. At the same time, he was constantly corresponding with the Torah greats of the generation.

Rabbi Menachem Zemba later devoted himself to community matters, and he helped as many people as he could. He was among the Jews in the community of Warsaw, suffering greatly when the Nazis took the city. He was arrested several times under various pretexts, yet immediately released. On Nissan 19, 5703, during Chol HaMoed, he escaped from his home when a fire broke out in the Warsaw ghetto. It was then that a bullet struck him in the street, and there he died for the sanctification of the Divine Name. May Hashem avenge his blood, which was shed before our very eyes. May the memory of the tzaddik be blessed for life in the World to Come. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

TOSEFET SHABBAT:

ACCEPTING SHABBAT SEVERAL MINUTES BEFORE SUNSET

The Halacha of “Tosefot Shabbat” (adding onto Shabbat) requires extending Shabbat on either end, both before sundown on Friday, and after dark on Saturday evening. Therefore, a person must accept upon himself the Shabbat prohibitions several minutes before sundown on Friday afternoon, rather than waiting for these laws to take effect automatically at sundown.

Practically speaking, this means that one must accept Shabbat immediately after reciting Minha in the synagogue on Friday afternoon. One cannot accept Shabbat before reciting Minha, because Minha is a weekday prayer, and thus it must be recited before the onset of Shabbat. Therefore, immediately after reciting the silent Amida of Minha, when a few minutes still remain until sundown, one should accept upon himself the Shabbat prohibitions. According to Halacha, one does not have to verbally declare his acceptance of Shabbat; mental acceptance suffices to fulfill the requirement of Tosefet Shabbat. According to Kabbala, however, it is proper to verbalize one’s acceptance of Shabbat, and therefore upon completing the Amida of Minha on Shabbat afternoon, one should declare “Bo’i Kala” (“Come, O bride!”) to verbally accept Shabbat and thereby fulfill the obligation of Tosefet Shabbat.

Summary: Halacha requires one to accept the Shabbat prohibitions several minutes before sundown on Friday afternoon. Therefore, after reciting the Amida of Minha before Shabbat, one should declare “Bo’i Kala” and thereby accept upon himself the onset of Shabbat. ■



- ① What separated the kohen's skin from the priestly garments?
- ② How often were the ashes removed from upon the mizbe'ach? How often were they removed from next to the mizbe'ach?
- ③ If someone extinguishes the fire on the mizbe'ach, how many Torah violations has he transgressed?
- ④ The portion of a flour-offering offered on the mizbe'ach may not be chametz. But is the kohen's portion allowed to be chametz?
- ⑤ When a kohen is inaugurated, what offering must he bring?
- ⑥ What three baking processes were used to prepare the korban of Aharon and his sons?
- ⑦ What is the difference between a minchat kohen and a minchat Yisrael?

Answer

⑥:14 - Boiling, baking in an oven and frying in a pan.
 ⑦:15 - The minchat kohen is burnt completely. Only a handful of the minchat Yisrael is burnt, and the remainder is eaten by the kohanim.

⑥:13 - A korban minchah - A tenth part of an ephah of flour.
 ⑦:10 - No.
 ⑥:6 - Two.
 ⑥:4 - A) Every day. B) Whenever there were a lot.
 ⑥:3 - Nothing.

I DID NOT KNOW THAT!

"Their portion shall not be baked as chametz..." (6:10)

By eating the flour offering, the kohen brings atonement to the owner of the offering. Therefore, the kohen's portion requires the same restrictions as the portion brought upon the altar itself; i.e., it may not be chametz.

* Abarbanel

Upcoming EVENTS & Lectures

FRIDAY 19TH - SUNDAY 21TH MAY 2017



TAL FAMILY WEEKEND AWAY

★★★★★

THE HAMPSHIRE COURT HOTEL
 FRIDAY 19TH - SUNDAY 21TH MAY 2017

RENOWNED SPEAKER RABBI EPHRAIM ELIYAHU SHAPIRO
 FROM MIAMI
 FULL BOARD CATERED BY REICH

INDOOR SWIMMING POOL
 JACUZZI & SPA
 KIDS CLUB & BABYSITTING SERVICES AVAILABLE

Early bird Adult only £210,
 Children £110, by Feb 17th
 Thereafter Adult £260,
 Children £150
 Second Room £50