

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



CHILDS SACRIFICE!

Have you ever wondered what is the best part of the Torah to start to teach your child? The obvious start would be at the beginning – Bereishit, or perhaps you would prefer to start it with the first mitzvah given to Klal Yisrael as a nation?

It is interesting to note that Kol Bo and Rokeach bring the Midrash Tanchuma which states that when a child first starts to learn, they should begin with the book of Vayikra!

The Kli Yakar, also brings this tradition, stating that it is for this reason the first word Vayikra is spelt with a small Aleph.

The letter Aleph represents the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet. The fact that it is small hints to the fact that small children should start to learn the Torah (represented by the Aleph, and the fact that Aleph can also imply Limud see lyov 33:33) from here.

What is so special about beginning with the book of Vayikra; surely this seems a bit out of touch and technical for a young child?

The Midrash states that children are pure and free from sin therefore, G-d said, they should start with the sacrificial section; these pure children should delve in pure matters (the sacrifices). The Midrash continues that nowadays after the Temple was destroyed and the sacrifices were terminated, if not for the

children who learn about the sacrifices, the world would cease to exist.

What is the deeper meaning of this Midrash, that children are pure so they should learn about pure matters?

The Pardes Yosef explains the reason we teach them from Vayikra, is to teach them that in life there will be sacrifices. At the moment they are pure, they have not experienced the trials and tribulations of this world. Our aim is to see that they stay pure. We send a message to them that when it comes to Avodat Hashem, the path is not easy, there will come times when they will need to make difficult decisions, sacrificing their own desire for that of G-d.

This message is actually two way; at the same time we are also teaching the parent, that when it comes to Chinuch – education, there will be sacrifices. A mother and father are being told that educating children is not a simple matter. There are times when the father has to leave his business activities behind in order to focus on his family, and there are times where the mother has to forgo her business and social activities.

The Ben Ish Chai gives a Mashal of a person who went into the store to buy a mirror. He wanted a fancy mirror and was willing to pay any price. The owner showed him a few of his most splendid mirrors. Each time however, the buyer declined. After showing him several different mirrors and being denied each time, the owner asked the man what was wrong with those mirrors. The man answered: "Look, can you see that ugly image in the mirror, it's rough, and unattractive."

The owner looked on in amazement. Do you not understand, a mirror shows the exact image that is looking into it? You are looking into it so you are seeing yourself. ►

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Lirfuat Rachel Bat Rita
Betoch Shaar Cholei Yisrael

> UPCOMING EVENTS

SPECIAL MONDAY NIGHT

Dinner + Talk

7.30pm Ladies - 8.30pm Men *see P4*

” THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any."

> MAZAL TOV TO

Naim Cohen & Shontal Shamash
on their wedding



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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

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

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If you wish the image in the mirror to change, then you need to change yourself, not the mirror!

By focusing on ourselves and making those extra sacrifices in life for Hashem, we benefit ourselves. Our children see us and follow suit. When a child begins to learn, he is full of enthusiasm, he is willing to forgo everything for the chance to sit and learn from the same book his father beautifully studies from. The message to him, is to take that enthusiasm and know that there will be sacrifices along the way, keep that enthusiasm dear to him and always focus on Avodat Hashem.

Sacrificing time might be hard, but we should know that the more a person sacrifices for Hashem the more Hashem pays him back.

The Sefer Barchi Nafshi, brings a story of a man who boarded a plane to a certain city in the US. He noticed the person next to him had a name tag on him, and was called Mr Weinstein. They struck up conversation, and when the meals were served, he took Kosher, but Mr Weinstein didn't. He asked Mr

Weinstein in a casual way, why it was that he didn't order Kosher. Kosher meals are so tasty on flights!?! Mr Weinstein answered that he had survived the Holocaust. Unfortunately all his family had been killed by the Nazis, apart from one son. He survived for a few years with his son, but then near the end of the war, they took his son away and presumably killed him. He never saw him again, and that was the last straw. Why should he keep Kosher?

The man was startled and had no response.

Four years later, and on Yom Kippur the man was going to Shul and noticed an elderly Jewish looking figure smoking, sitting on the bench.

As he approached he was surprised to see it was the same man he had met a few years earlier on the plane. He saw this as no coincidence, and decided to go up to him and strike a conversation. He told him that he should come in to Shul, just to say Kadish and remember the dead by saying Yizkor over their names in synagogue.

The man reluctantly agreed. They entered the synagogue and for the first time in years he said Kadish. He was moved. Then he approached the Chazan to say over the name of his son at Yizkor, Katriel Menachem Ben Yechezkel Shraga. The Chazan heard the name and fainted. A few minutes later they awoke him. What's the matter? They asked are you ok? The Chazan said that that was his name! It turned out that the Chazan was none other than Mr Weinstein's son, which he had presumed dead. The Chazan would never have known, were it not for that decision to enter the Shul and those few extra steps taken by the father. What jubilation in the synagogue that Yom Kippur!

Our daily lives are full of decisions. Our Avoda in this world is to serve Hashem, place our priority in His Service and sacrifice our decisions for His commandments.

The child begins to learn the Torah from Vayikra as represented by the small Aleph, to show that in life sacrifices will follow, but in the end, these will lead to Kiruv Hashem, coming close to Hashem, and Him calling (Vayikra) us! ■

RABBI AVRAHAM CITRON - WALFORD ROAD SYNAGOGUE, SHAARE MAZAL TOV

DVAR TORAH



"WHO DOES G-D SPEAK TO?"

"And He called to Moses, and the Lord spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying." (Vayikra, 1, 1) Where did the voice of G-d emanate from? "I will speak with you from ... between the two cherubim that are upon the Ark". (Shemot, 25, 22)

The Ark is called the Ark of the Covenant as it contained within it the Covenant – the Ten Commandments given by G-d to Moses at Mount Sinai. Everything about the room that housed the Ark radiates the ultimate holiness. It is, after all, the 'Holy of Holies' – a place where only the holiest person can enter on the holiest day of the year...

It sounds too simple and straightforward. Everything adds up perfectly. Actually, Rashi points out that some rabbis derive from the verse "At the entrance of the Tent of Meeting before the Lord, where I will arrange meetings with you to speak to you there" (Shemot, 29, 42) that "Since the time the Mishkan was erected, the Holy One, blessed is He, spoke to Moses from above the copper altar" (and not from between the Cherubim). (Rashi ibid)

Hmm. The Altar was not even in the Mishkan; it was in the courtyard in front of it! Besides, all Jews

(men, women, children, Kohanim, Levyim, converts etc.) were allowed there. How is it that Moshe heard the voice of G-d coming from the copper altar while those standing beside him heard nothing?!

As a child, a family friend took me to see The Raiders of the Lost Ark (the first and last time I saw a movie in a theatre, IMAX aside, – there were scenes that a six-year-old should not see, especially on a huge Hollywood screen). Since then I have been fascinated by the thought that somewhere it still exists. Where is it now? Ethiopia? Zimbabwe? Actually, no foreign hand has control over it. G-d wrote the Ten Commandments and nothing in the world can have power over it or the ark that contained it.

"After the destruction, G-d only has the four cubits of Halachah" (Talmud, Brachot 8a). The tablets, which signify Hashem's word, are accessible to all. You can study at home, at the Beit Knesset; wherever you are you can hear the voice of Hashem. R' Moshe Katzenelenbogen z"l of London spent a few years in Siberia. When he came out of Russia, he was brought as a speaker to an event in New York where the Gaon Rav Moshe Feinstein ztz"l was in attendance. In his speech he mentioned that somehow a volume of Rav Moshe's Igrot Moshe made it to Russia. He had studied it until he knew it verbatim (he also knew Shas, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch and more by heart – any of the few books that were available in the USSR). Rav Moshe was very touched; he invited the Rabbi to his home and gave him the remaining volumes of his magnum opus. Yes, even in Siberia you can hear Hashem's voice.

Yet some of us have sinned, how do we get to the Holy of Holies? We all can do Teshuvah. The copper altar represents Teshuvah as it was used for sacrifices (after sinning). It also represents humility which is the first step in Teshuvah – being humble enough to accept that one is in the wrong. Unlike other Temple-vessels it could not become impure as it was filled with earth. We may feel like nothings. We may feel distant from Hashem. Whatever level we are at, whether just starting, returning etc., we can come close to Hashem and hear His voice through the Copper Altar -humility and repentance or through the Cherubim – the study of the Holy Torah.

In many communities the children begin the study of Torah with the book of Vayikra, the book of sacrifices and purity which starts with the small Aleph.

We can hear the voice. We can hear the voice and closeness to G-d emanating from the Copper Altar. We have not reached the level of Moshe but we were not asked to reach that level. We cannot enter the Holy of Holies but we can enter the 'Courtyard'. We can fix ourselves and we certainly can have humility. By making ourselves an 'empty vessel', we can absorb Hashem's word.

May we soon hear (literally) the voice of Hashem, "Because, from Zion shall Torah go forth and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem". (Isiah, 2, 3) ■

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI MEIR BEN GEDALIAH

THE AV BEIT DIN OF LUBLIN

Rabbi Meir of Lublin, known as the Maharam (“Our Teacher Rabbi Meir”), was among the greatest Poskim of his generation. Born to Rabbi Gedaliah of Lublin in the year 5318, the Maharam studied Torah in his youth with the Rosh Yeshiva of Krakow, Rabbi Yitzchak Hacohen Shapira Zatzal, who later became his father-in-law. The Maharam greatly elevated himself in Torah and Halachah, and as early as 5342, being just 24 years old, he was named as the Rosh Yeshiva of Lublin. In 5347 he was named as the Rav of Krakow, and around 5355 he traveled to Lemberg and headed its large yeshivot. In fact hundreds of young men learned their Torah from him. Finally in 5373 he returned to Lublin, where he served as its Rav and Av Beit Din until his dying day. The name of the city has since become attached to his own (“the Maharam of Lublin”). People sent him questions from all corners of the country, and he graciously answered them all. He made many disciples, including individuals who became great Torah figures in their own right, men such as the Shelah and the Megale Amukot. The Maharam wrote many books, some of which were printed while others were not. Among his works are Maor HaGadol, Maor HaKatan, Ner Mitzvah on the Smag, Torah Ohr, and Ohr Shivat HaYamim. His greatest work, entitled Meir Einai Chachamim, consists of his explanations and commentaries on the entire Talmud. It is printed after the gemarot themselves, right next to the Maharsha’s commentary. Today many scholars still use his commentary, a work that is truly faithful to its name, for it enlightens the eyes of scholars in its explanation of the Gemara.

On Iyar 16, 5376, the Maharam’s soul departed for the celestial academy, and his body was laid to rest in the old cemetery of Lublin. May the memory of the Tzaddik be blessed ! ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

WALKING IN A PUBLIC DOMAIN ON SHABBAT WITH FOOD IN ONE’S MOUTH

Is it permissible to walk in a Reshut Ha’rabim (public domain) on Shabbat with food in one’s mouth, or does this violate the prohibition against carrying in a public domain on Shabbat?

The Mishna in Masechet Eruvin (Daf 98) records the view of Rabbi Yehuda that if a person has in his mouth any kind of discharge that he must expectorate, he may not walk four Amot (6-8 feet) in a public domain until he expectorates. Once the given substance is destined to be expelled from one’s mouth, it is considered external to his body, and therefore walking with it in his mouth constitutes carrying. The Shulchan Aruch codifies this Halacha (350:3).

By extension, one must ensure not to walk in a public domain on Shabbat with food in his mouth. One violates the prohibition of carrying not only by holding an item in one’s hand or having it in his pocket, but also by walking with an external object in his mouth. By the same token, one may not walk from a public domain to a private domain, or vice versa, with food in his mouth. This applies also to areas classified as a “Karmelit,” where carrying on Shabbat is forbidden only by force of Rabbinic enactment (as opposed to Torah law).

The Kaf Ha’chayim cites from the Sefer Ha’chasidim that due to this concern, some people had the custom not to eat sesame seeds on Shabbat. Sesame seeds have the tendency to become wedged in between one’s teeth, and a person who walks in a public domain with sesame seeds in his mouth violates Shabbat. Therefore, it is commendable to be stringent in this regard and refrain from eating sesame seeds on Shabbat.

Summary: A person who needs to expectorate may not walk on Shabbat in an area where carrying is forbidden before he expels the given substance from his mouth; likewise, one may not walk in such areas with food in his mouth. Due to this concern, there is a laudable custom among some people to refrain from eating sesame seeds on Shabbat. ■

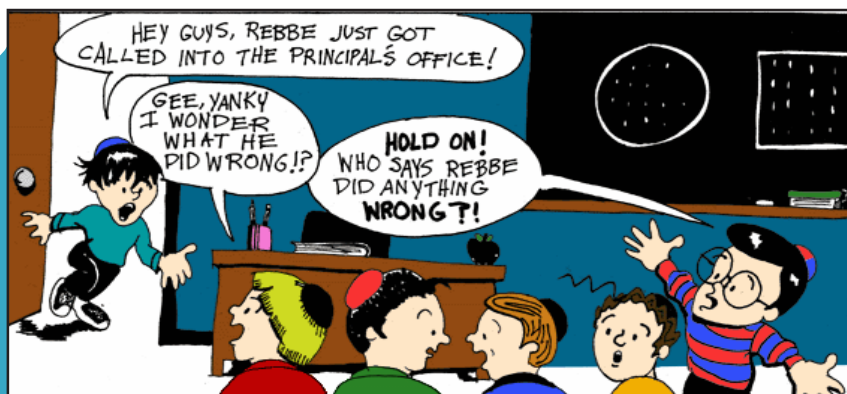


- ① Who does the word “eilav” in verse 1:1 exclude?
- ② At what stage of development are torim (turtledoves) and bnei yona (young pigeons) unfit as offerings?
- ③ Concerning shelamim, why does the Torah teach about sheep and goats separately?
- ④ What is the minimum value of a korban asham?
- ⑤ What is melika?
- ⑥ Why is the term “nefesh” used regarding the flour offering?

Answer

① 1:1 - Aharon. ② 1:14 - When their plumage turns golden. At that stage, bnei yona are too old and torim are too young. ③ 3:7 - Because they differ regarding the alya (fat tail). The lamb's alya is burned on the altar but the goat's is not. ④ 5:15 - Two shekalim. ⑤ 1:15 - Slaughtering a bird from the back of the neck using one's fingernail. ⑥ 2:1 - Usually, it is a poor person who brings a flour offering. Therefore, Hashem regards it as if he had offered his nefesh (soul).

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