

OHRNET

SHABBAT PARSHAT VAYIKRA · 3 NISSAN 5769 · MAR. 28, 2009 · VOL. 16 NO. 23

PARSHA INSIGHTS

THE BIGGEST BAR-B-Q IN THE WORLD

“When a man among you brings an offering...” (1:2)

Imagine you're an intergalactic alien traveler flying over Jerusalem some two and a half thousand years ago. Your 3D scanner picks up a beautiful building. Opening your intergalactic GPS, you enter: “Earth on five dollars-a-day”, and read about what you're seeing. “...The Beit Hamikdash is the most spiritual place on earth...” Something doesn't seem quite accurate about this description because everywhere you aim your scanner all you can see are very physical things.

For a start, animals are being slaughtered, dissected and burned on what looks like the world's biggest bar-b-q. Wine is being poured down two holes on top of a square monolith on which the meat is being burned. Nearby, bread is being baked. Oil is being mixed with flour and fried in open pans. There are animals in pens, along with birds. Everywhere there are all kinds of cooking utensils. Men are washing their hands and feet. There is a column of black smoke rising perpendicularly into the sky.

This is spirituality?

You make a mental note to write to the editors of “Earth on five-dollars-a-day” that their description of this tourist spot is way off the mark. Our intergalactic traveler could be forgiven for mistaking what he saw, for indeed the Beit Hamikdash ostensibly was a very physical place. Our fearless voyager, however, failed to notice a key item in the Beit Hamikdash: the Aron, the Holy Ark. Inside the Ark was the Torah. It was only through the Holy Torah that the Divine Presence rested on the Beit Hamikdash and turned the most physical of places into the most spiritual.

The Beit Hamikdash is a microcosm of the Universe, and a macrocosm of the body of a human. If you look at a person he seems to be a very physical thing.

He consists of sinew and flesh, fluids and membrane. And yet, he is so much more.

Just as the Torah caused the Divine Presence to rest on the Beit Hamikdash and the Mishkan, similarly the Torah turns flesh and blood into a dwelling place for the Most High.

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OHRNET magazine is published by OHR SOMAYACH Tanenbaum College

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PARSHA OVERVIEW

The Book of *Vayikra* (Leviticus), also known as *Torat Kohanim* — the Laws of the Priests — deals largely with the *korbanot* (offerings) brought in the Mishkan (Tent of Meeting). The first group of offerings is called *korban olah*, a burnt offering. The animal is brought to the Mishkan's entrance. For cattle, the one bringing the offering sets his hands on the animal. Afterwards it is slaughtered and the *kohen* sprinkles its blood on the altar. The animal is skinned and cut into pieces. The pieces are arranged, washed and burned on the altar. A similar process is described involving burnt offerings of other animals and birds. The various meal offerings are described. Part of the meal offering is burned on the altar, and the remaining part is eaten by the *kohanim*. Mixing leaven or

honey into the offerings is prohibited. The peace offering, part of which is burnt on the altar and part eaten, can be either from cattle, sheep or goats. The Torah prohibits eating blood or *chelev* (certain fats in animals). The offerings that atone for inadvertent sins committed by the *Kohen Gadol*, by the entire community, by the prince and by the average citizen are detailed. Laws of the guilt-offering, which atones for certain verbal transgressions and for transgressing laws of ritual purity, are listed. The meal offering for those who cannot afford the normal guilt offering, the offering to atone for misusing sanctified property, laws of the “questionable guilt” offering, and offerings for dishonesty are detailed.

ISRAEL Forever

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

“Let the pure come and study the laws of the pure (sacrifices).” This is how our Sages explain the custom of Jewish children beginning their study of Chumash with this week’s Torah portion dealing with sacrifices.

While this is a tribute to the purity of tots not yet responsible for their mistakes, it can perhaps also be seen as a lesson regarding the sacrifices a Jew must make in order to learn and live Torah.

These pure children are the future of our people and they

must be given the opportunity to develop their purity through Torah study. It is the responsibility of all Jews to do their utmost to see that the institutions providing such education have the means to carry on their sacred work.

It is hoped that the government in Israel will appreciate the opportunity Heaven has given it to support the Torah institutions on an equal basis with the regular government schools. This is the best investment in the future of Israel forever.

LOVE OF THE LAND- THE PLACES

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

GILGAL, SHILOH, NOV AND GIVON – SITES OF SACRIFICE

When our ancestors entered Eretz Yisrael and wished to offer the sacrifices of which we read in this week’s Torah portion, they did so in the Mishkan, which served as the home of the sacrificial altar for over four centuries until the establishment of the Beit Hamikdash in Jerusalem.



For most of that time the Mishkan sanctuary was located in Shiloh (369 years), until it was destroyed in the war with the Philistines. It was then transferred to Nov and Givon (57 years) before finally becoming the Beit Hamikdash in Jerusalem.

The Torah refers (*Devarim 12:9*) to Shiloh as “the resting place” and to Jerusalem as “the heritage”.

לע"נ
מרת רחל בת ר' הזרש ז"ל
ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

PARSHA Q&A ?

1. Who does the word “*eilav*” in verse 1:1 exclude?
2. Name all the types of animals and birds mentioned in this week’s Parsha.
3. What two types of sin does an *olah* atone for?
4. Where was the *olah* slaughtered?
5. What procedure of an animal-offering can a non-*kohen* perform?
6. Besides the fire the *kohanim* bring on the altar, where else did the fire come from?
7. At what stage of development are *torim* (turtledoves) and *bnei yona* (young pigeons) unfit as offerings?
8. What is *melika*?
9. Why are animal innards offered on the altar, while bird innards are not?
10. Why does the Torah describe both the animal and bird offerings as a “satisfying aroma”?
11. Why is the term “*nefesh*” used regarding the flour offering?
12. Which part of the free-will *mincha* offering is burned on the altar?
13. The Torah forbids bringing honey with the *mincha*. What is meant by “honey”?
14. When does the Torah permit bringing a leavened bread offering?
15. Concerning *shelamim*, why does the Torah teach about sheep and goats separately?
16. For most offerings the *kohen* may use a service vessel to apply the blood on the *mizbe’ach*. For which *korban* may he apply the blood using only his finger?
17. Who is obligated to bring a *chatat*?
18. Where were the remains of the bull burnt while in the wilderness? Where were they burnt during the time of the *Beit Hamikdash*?
19. What two things does a voluntary *mincha* have that a *minchat chatat* lacks?
20. What is the minimum value of a *korban asham*?

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this week’s Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi’s commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 1:1 - Aharon.
2. 1:2,14, 3:12 - Cattle, sheep, goats, turtledoves (*torim*), and doves (*bnei yona*).
3. 1:4 - Neglecting a positive command, and violating a negative command which is rectified by a positive command.
4. 1:5 - In the *Mishkan* Courtyard (*azarah*).
5. 1:55. - Ritual slaughter.
6. 1:7 - It descended from Heaven.
7. 1:14 - When their plumage turns golden. At that stage, *bnei yona* are too old and *torim* are too young.
8. 1:15 - Slaughtering a bird from the back of the neck using one’s fingernail.
9. 1:16 - An animal’s food is provided by its owner, so its innards are “kosher.” Birds, however, eat food that they scavenge, so their innards are tainted with “theft.”
10. 1:17 - To indicate that the size of the offering is irrelevant, provided your heart is directed toward G-d.
11. 2:1 - Usually, it is a poor person who brings a flour offering. Therefore, G-d regards it as if he had offered his *nefesh* (soul).
12. 2:1 - The *kometz* (fistful).
13. 2:11 - Any sweet fruit derivative.
14. 2:12 - On Shavuot.
15. 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.
16. 3:8 - The *chatat*.
17. 4:2 - One who accidentally transgresses a negative commandment whose willing violation carries the *karet* (excision) penalty.
18. 4:12 - a) Outside the three camps. b) Outside Jerusalem.
19. 5:11 - *Levona* and oil.
20. 5:15 - Two *shekalim*.

S U B S C R I B E !

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- When one invites another to harm him or his property
- How the change in an item affects compensation for theft and other halachic issues
- The break given to repentant thieves and usurers
- When the stolen item increased in value while in the thief's possession
- Changes in stolen slaves, animals and coins
- Compensation for unauthorized use of someone's slave or ship
- Which coins are valid for redeeming second tithe produce
- Damages for which there is no need to compensate
- Returning a stolen item which no longer has any value
- Craftsmen who damage the item they were given to create or repair
- When one is guilty of violating the Torah ban on belated payment of wages
- When payment is due for one contracted to create jewelry or other items
- Responsibility of the coin expert who mistakenly misleads a client regarding value of coins

HELPING THE REPENTANT SINNER

Helping a sinner repent his ways has been a major concern of Torah Sages throughout the generations. A striking example of such concern is the decree issued in the time of Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi (Rebbie) that advised victims to refuse payment from thieves and usurers in order to avoid discouraging them from mending their ways.

Our *gemara* cites an incident which serves as a background for this initiative. A thief who told his wife that he intended to repent and compensate his victims was given this strange warning: "You empty one, if you repent even

your belt will no longer belong to you." His abandonment of his plan to repent led to the above-mentioned decree.

Maharsha explains the use of the terms "empty one" and "your belt" used by the wife in the following manner:

It was the custom to carry money in a hollow belt. The amount of compensation that this repentant thief would have taken upon himself would have required him to empty out all the money from his belt and give up his belt as well.

Although this story did not have a happy ending for this particular thief, it did provide a happy ending for future thieves bent on repentance.

• *Bava Kama 94b*

What the SAGES Say

"One who calls upon Heaven to act against his adversary is punished first as we find in the case of Sarah who expressed a complaint against Avraham and died before him."

• *Rabbi Chanan - Bava Kama 93a*

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NO CHILD'S PLAY

From: Stephanie in Tucson, AZ

Dear Rabbi,

This past Shabbat I was with my children in the shul playground and a boy came up to my son and started pushing him and wouldn't let him down the slide. I asked him to stop and told him it wasn't nice, but he wouldn't listen. So I forcibly took the boy off the slide and shook him as I reprimanded him for how badly he was behaving. Then his mother came over and started shouting at me and accusing me of the worst things, when it was really her fault for not watching after her own child. Needless to say, the incident ruined my family's entire Shabbat and I couldn't help wondering if I was wrong for being right. Do you have any advice on how I should have dealt with this and what I should do if this situation ever happens again, G-d forbid?

Dear Stephanie,

It's very good that you're asking advice on what may mistakenly seem a 'minor' issue. The intensity of your feelings as well as the reaction of the other mother shows that this is not just kid's play. Everything that has to do with parents and their children is a very sensitive issue and has a significant bearing on the child's education and what type of person he will eventually be. So it's very important to know how to deal with these types of situations. And the reality is that they often arise.

The overriding guiding principle is that, aside from situations of danger, one must not use or resort to physical force with others' children. This means that if a child is doing something physically dangerous or harmful to himself or to others, one may use physical means, i.e. force, to stop or prevent the danger or harm. This is not punishment but prevention. Otherwise, a person may not use physical force against another child for typical playground pushing, shoving and pestering. This is too close to punishing, which may only be done by the parents.

This makes sense for several reasons. A non-parent and non-educator of the child has no educational or disciplinary effect on the child in such a scenario. A violent reaction will just cause a child to rebel against what he's being told and resent the way he's being "treated". Also, a forceful reaction, even if intended to knock some sense into the kid, only reinforces and validates violence – not only in the child's eyes, but for other children as well, including our own. They learn by example that force is the way to solve even non-dangerous problems. They also learn that the application of force is a function of size: if adults can shake kids, larger kids can shake smaller ones.

We are all very eager to come to the defense of our kids

and usually become quickly excited and indignant over wrongs against them (although when our kids are not involved we usually see it as "normal" playground mischief). It's therefore very important to keep your cool. The first thing to do is to try to speak nicely to the child and think of creative ways to encourage sharing or at least to diffuse tensions. If that doesn't work, it's not worth fighting about. Take your child to another part of the playground. Has the offensive child won or been rewarded by getting what he wanted? No. His anti-social behavior has won him one less playmate. If he continues this way he'll find himself alone.

If the offensive child is very mean or persists in pursuing your child, you must still keep your calm, but take recourse by speaking to his parents.

If the parents are good people, and you respectfully explain what's happened, hopefully they'll deal responsibly with the situation. However, often these children are problematic precisely because their situations are problematic. He might have good parents but a behavioral problem that they are aware of and can do little about in immediate terms. His parents might not be around at all, which is the source of his misbehaving, or this might even be a child who is left unattended on a regular basis for any number of unfortunate reasons. Another possibility is that his parents may be there, but are themselves the source of his obnoxious behavior.

Regarding any of the above, you are entitled and should approach the parents. But just be aware of the possibilities and accept the likelihood that the parents probably won't deal with the problem to your full satisfaction. It's human nature for them to de-nature complaints against their kids, just like it's human nature for you to over-champion the rights of yours. Calmly and respectfully explain what their child has done. State your interest in everyone playing together. And express your hope that they will encourage their child to act appropriately. If they are receptive, great. If not, at least you tried, and you'll realize whom you're dealing with.

Just as you distanced your child from theirs, so you'll distance yourself from them. No aggression, no hard feelings, just a realization that these are not the type of people you need to interact with nor the type to get bent out of shape over or to let ruin your Shabbat or your family.

To conclude on an optimistic note, offspring are often compared to fruit. Indeed, the Torah states, "Be fruitful and multiply". We usually associate children with the sweetness of fruit. However, when you think about it, the childhood years should correspond to the unripe stage when fruit is hard and bitter. From this unpalatable state, properly nurtured fruit becomes tasty and luscious. This teaches that all children have bitter streaks. Yet if tended to and nurtured properly, even seemingly bitter fruit is so only because it's unripe, but it can still grow and mature to a sweet and pleasant yield.

SORRY, WRONG NUMBER

Question: No one is very pleased when he drops whatever he is doing at home in order to answer the telephone only to discover that the caller dialed the wrong number. But what is the right thing to do as a reaction to such a disturbance?

Answer: The first thing to keep in mind is that the caller cannot be held responsible for causing you an inconvenience through a human error. The understanding must be reflected in the tone of your response.

You may even be of help to the caller by asking him or her which number they are trying to reach. The difference between that number and yours may be in a single digit and you are likely to recognize to whom it belongs as a result of previous mistaken calls or because it is the number of a neighbor you know.

In any event be as gentle as possible despite your irritation and don't hang up before politely saying, "Sorry, wrong number."

THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE STORY _____

TRIUMPHAL POSTSCRIPT TO TRAGEDY

During the *shiva* mourning period for her daughter, who was a victim of the Mumbai massacre in Chabad House, Mrs. Yehudit Rosenberg received a package from a female visitor. To her great surprise it contained a dress and a diamond ring that had belonged to Rebbetzin Rivkie Holzberg, may G-d avenge her blood.

In explaining how these things came to her the visitor related that she had run afoul of the law while touring India and landed in prison. As soon as she was out she ran to Chabad House where Rivkie welcomed her but urged her to leave the country as soon as possible. When she expressed

concern that she might be stopped by police at the airport, Rivkie provided her with one of her Shabbat dresses and her diamond ring so that she would look respectable and not like a fugitive.

The strategy worked and now she had come to return these borrowed items to her benefactor's mother. Mrs. Rosenberg then told her that she had once asked her daughter where her ring was and the reply was that it, like its owner, was on *shlichut*, the term used in Chabad circles for the kind of sacred work the Holzbergs were doing.

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