



Parshas Vayikra Parshas Zachor

For the week ending 13 Adar II 5757
21 & 22 March 1997

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Overview

The Book of *Vayikra* (Leviticus) which we start reading this week, is also known as *Toras Kohanim* – the Laws of the Priests. It deals largely with the *korbanos* (offerings) that are 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 entrance of the *Mishkan*. Regarding cattle, the one who brought 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 these are burned on the Altar, and the remainder 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 *cheilev* (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.

MONKEY BUSINESS

“When a soul will sin by mistake...” (4:1)

You pull up to the traffic light. Behind you, you hear the screeching of brakes. You look up to see a car careening off the road. It mounts the sidewalk, narrowly misses two pedestrians and like some old Keystone Cops movie, crashes to an ignominious halt in a vegetable stand, a cloud of steam and smoke rising upwards. Perched on the hood, dressed with papaya and pineapple, is a sign ‘Tropical Fruits Fresh from the Jungle!’ You look through the window to see what kind of idiot was responsible for this mess and you see the unmistakable features of a chimpanzee grinning back at you. **When a person lets his physical side dominate him, he’s allowing the monkey into the driver’s seat.** Monkeys make good pets. They’re entertaining, they smile a lot, but you can’t let them drive your car around town. A human being is a miraculous combination of body and soul. The body comes from the lower elements. The soul from on high. From these two disparate elements, Hashem creates a miraculous coexistence called Man.

Continued on the other side

Insights

WHAT’S IN A NAME

“And He called to Moshe...” (1:1)

Moshe had ten names: *Moshe, Yered, Chaver, Yekusiel, Avigdor, Avi Socho, Avi Zanuach, Tuvia, Shemaya, Halevi.*

Why wasn’t one enough?

And of all his names, the only one that Hashem used was *Moshe*, the name he was given by Pharaoh’s daughter, *Basia*.

Another question. If Hashem called him by the name ‘*Moshe*,’ it must be that this name defines *Moshe* more than any of his other names. Why?

When Hashem created the first man, the ministering angels inquired of Him “This ‘Man,’ what is his nature?” Hashem replied to them “His wisdom is greater than your intellect.”

Hashem then brought various animals before the angels. He said to the angels “What are their names?” The angels didn’t know. Hashem then showed the animals to Man. “What are their names?” He asked. Man replied “This one’s name is ox, and this one, donkey. This is a horse, and this a camel.”

“And you,” said Hashem, “What is your name?”

“I should be called *Adam* because I have been created from the earth (Heb. *adamah*).”

“And I” said Hashem “What should I be called?”

“You should be called *Adon-oy*. For you are the Lord (Heb. *Adon*) of all.”

The Holy One, blessed be He, said “I am *Adon-oy*. That is My Name. For that is what the first man called me.”

A name is more than a way of attracting someone’s attention. A name is more than a conventional method of reference. The wisdom of being able to name something is higher than the angels, **for a name defines and describes the very essence.**

For this reason one name was not sufficient for *Moshe*. To define him, to bound his greatness in words, required *ten* names.

However, Hashem said to *Moshe* that of all his names, He would only call him by the name *Basia* named him. What was so special about this name?

The name *Moshe* comes from the word meaning ‘to be drawn,’ for *Moshe* was drawn from the water by *Basia*.

When *Basia* took *Moshe* out of the river, she was flouting her father’s will. Pharaoh wanted to kill all the Jewish baby boys. By saving *Moshe*, she put her life on the line.

Because *Basia* risked her life to save *Moshe*, that quality was embedded in *Moshe*’s personality and in his soul. It was this quality of self-sacrifice that typified *Moshe* more than all his other qualities, and for this reason *Moshe* was the name that Hashem would call him.

This was the characteristic that made *Moshe* the quintessential leader of the Jewish People. For more than any other trait, a leader of the Jewish People needs self-sacrifice to care and worry over each one of his flock.

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Continue from the reverse

Man cannot exist in this world without a body, but if he allows the body to stage a palace coup and take over the government he loses the second and more important chapter of his life, the world to come, and the eternal life where the body and soul will again be united to live eternally. How could a person regain control of his body once he had forfeited it to the monkey?

Through bringing an offering in the *Mishkan*.

The *Mishkan* was a space which was totally spiritual. A place which was not a 'place' in the physical sense. And because it was totally spiritual, the soul was able to exist there without recourse to its physical frame.

On Yom Kippur, when the *Kohen Gadol* would enter the Holy of Holies, he was totally removed from the physical world. He was like one of the angels, deriving his entire existence from this innermost Holy space.

For there was one place on this earth where the soul could exist without the body. That is the place where Hashem 'dwelled' on this earth. In the innermost Holy space. The *Mishkan*.

MORE MONKEY BUSINESS

What does it mean when someone does an 'unintentional' sin?

"Whoops. Sorry — I somehow seem to have stolen your wallet. I've no idea how it ended up in my pocket!"

Is that called an unintentional sin?

No. An unintentional sin is when the physical part of a person transgresses. His intellect, however, his *neschama*, didn't want any part of it. The monkey grabbed the car keys.

When the body sins, it forfeits its right to an eternal partnership with the soul. It loses its passport to join the soul in their eventual re-union in the world-to-come.

For this reason when a person sins, he is obliged to bring an animal as a sacrifice to impress upon himself that the body alone without the intellect in the driver's seat is like the animal on the Altar, devoid of an eternal existence, nothing more than a large steak.

When a person brought a sacrifice, he had to visualize his own body burning on the Altar.

But, then, if a person has offered up his body, all that's left of him is his *neschama*. And how can he exist in this physical world as a soul without a body?

There was one place which could sustain the *neschama* without the body. The *Mishkan*.

For this reason the only place that a sacrifice could be brought was in the *Mishkan*. For the *Mishkan* was a place of undiluted spirituality. It was the only place where the *neschama* could exist without the body, as did the *Kohen Gadol* on Yom Kippur. When a person witnessed the animal that he had brought as an offering going up in smoke, he internalized that really it was *his* body that should have been on the Altar instead. This would lead him to thoughts of *teshuva*, of returning to Hashem. He would resolve to be a changed person.

When a person experiences true repentance he becomes a totally new creation.

Thus the bringing of the sacrifice gave him a new 'incarnation.' It was as though he was given a new body which was now under the control of the *neschama*.

And thus he could now re-enter the physical world outside the *Mishkan* as a new creation.

Now. Where are the car keys?

Haftorah for Parshas Zachor: Shmuel I 15:1-34

THE LAST OF THE AMALEKI

The second of the Four *Parshios* that we read in the months of Adar and Nissan is *Parshas Zachor*. *Zachor* means "Remember." The Torah tells us "Remember what Amalek did to you on the way, when you came out of Egypt." On Shabbos *Zachor* we fulfill the mitzvah to "destroy the remembrance of Amalek from under the heaven" by reading this section of the Torah.

Parshas Zachor is always read the week before Purim, because on Purim we celebrate our deliverance from Amalek's most notorious descendant, Haman.

The reading of *Parshas Zachor* is a Torah obligation, and the person who is called up to the Torah for '*maftir*' must have in mind that his *berachos* and the reading will also be on behalf of the congregation. Similarly, the listeners must have the intention that this reading should fulfill their obligation.

The Haftorah of *Parshas Zachor* depicts another encounter with the descendants of Amalek: King Shaul was commanded to annihilate Amalek, but he failed to kill their king, Agag. While in captivity, the last of the Amaleki, Agag, managed to sire a child, and it was from this child that Haman was descended.

LIGHTS OUT!

"For you were tired and weary and didn't fear Hashem" (Devarim 25:18)

The students were bent over their Talmuds, engrossed in thought and discussion. Suddenly, at the stroke of midnight, the lights went out. A voice came from the back of the *Beis Medrash* (study hall): "Bed!"

The Chafetz Chaim would always turn out the lights in the yeshiva in Radin at midnight. No matter how much the *talmidim* wanted to continue their learning, when midnight came, they had to go to bed.

In the *maftir* of this week's *Parsha*, *Zachor*, we read of Amalek's attacks on the Jewish People. Rashi explains that the above verse should be read "You were tired and weary and he (Amalek) didn't fear Hashem." The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh, however, says that the verse should be read as follows: "You were tired and weary and you (the Jewish People) didn't fear Hashem."

If the deprivation of sleep and proper rest can reduce a person to a gibbering wreck, as is demonstrated by the use of sleep deprivation in more sophisticated methods of torture, how much more can it distort one's vision and take from us our fear of Heaven.

Sources:

"What's In A Name" Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz; Rabbi C.J. Senter
"Monkey Business" - 'Moser Derech' - Rabbi Simcha Wasserman ז"ל; Rabbi Yaakov Niman; Rabbi Meir Chadash



INSIGHTS INTO THE ZEMIROS
SUNG AT THE SHABBOS TABLE
THROUGHOUT THE GENERATIONS.

צור משלו - TZUR MISHLO
"THE ROCK FROM WHOM..."

"Over a full goblet of wine worthy of Hashem's blessing" על כוס יין מלא כברכת ה' "al kos yayin malay k'virkas Hashem"

In our projection of the rebuilding of the Temple and the replenishing of the City of Zion we envision ourselves exalting Hashem by singing a new song over a full goblet of wine.

Our Sages insisted that the *Kiddush* which the Torah commanded us to say in order to sanctify the Shabbos be recited over a full goblet of wine. On one level, the very sight of the wine and the anticipation of the joy of imbibing it inspire the holder of the goblet to recite his *Kiddush* with more intense feeling. There is, however, another dimension to wine which makes it the perfect accessory for ushering in the sanctity of Shabbos.

The juice of any fruit is considered a mere byproduct of the fruit, and the blessing pronounced before drinking it is the general "*Shehakol*" rather than the more specific "*Borei Pri Haeitz*." Wine is an exception. It is considered to be an elevation of the grape and therefore deserves a special blessing of "*Borei Pri Hagafen*."

It is this spirit of the essence of the grape reaching its fulfillment in wine which forms the perfect framework for the Jew whose spiritual essence finds fulfillment in the Sabbath.

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