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PARSHA INSIGHTS

by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

Burning Heart! – Do Not Extinguish!

“Moshe said to Aharon, ‘Come near to the Altar...’ (9:7)

I remember some years ago, someone came up to Rabbi Noach Orloweck after he'd given a shiur and said, “Thanks Rabbi, that was really inspirational!” To which he replied, “Thanks. Rabbis need encouragement too!”

Thanks to Hashem, I have been empowered by Hashem to write for Ohrnet for more than thirty years and make Torah videos for more than five years now, and I want to thank everyone for all their feedback and their encouragement. Some weeks, the old creative juices seem to be running a little thin – like this week. But when someone leaves an encouraging word, or comes up to me and gives me a verbal pat on the back, it makes a big difference.

There's a gemara in Kiddushin that says: When farmers do the mitzvah of bringing their first-fruits to Jerusalem, all craftsmen and workers stand up and greet them, saying to them: Our brothers from such and such a place: Welcome! And this is done even though they would be taking time out of their day and lose money by doing it. The gemara says that the reason they are obliged to give this welcome is if they don't treat those who bring first fruits with such honor, maybe the farmers won't want to bring their fruits next year. And so, the Sages instituted a special decree, that those bringing first fruits should be treated with special honor.

This might seem difficult to understand. Since bringing the first fruits is a Torah mitzvah, why would the mere lack of a reception committee and a red carpet deter the farmers from fulfilling their Torah obligation?

The answer is that failing to encourage someone when you have the opportunity to do so, is like pouring water on the fire of enthusiasm, and might lead someone to neglect even a Torah mitzvah.

“Moshe said to Aharon, ‘Come near to the Altar...’ (9:7)

It says in the Torah, “A permanent fire should remain aflame on the Altar; it shall not be extinguished.” The Gemara in Zevachim 91 says that anyone who extinguishes a single coal from the fire of the Altar has transgressed a negative Torah commandment. If the extinguishing of a single physical coal is such a serious matter, surely one should never extinguish even one hope or aspiration on the altar of the heart.

In the troubled times in which we live, let us reach out and encourage with words and love every aspiration and hope in the hearts of others.

Q & A

Questions

1. What date was "yom hashemini"?
2. Which of Aharon's *korbanot* atoned for the Golden Calf?
3. What *korbanot* did Aharon offer for the Jewish People?
4. What was unique about the *chatat* offered during the induction of the *Mishkan*?
5. When did Aharon bless the people with the *birkat kohanim*?
6. Why did Moshe go into the *Ohel Mo'ed* with Aharon?
7. Why did Nadav and Avihu die?
8. Aharon quietly accepted his sons' death. What reward did he receive for this?
9. What prohibitions apply to a person who is intoxicated?
10. Name the three *chatat* goat offerings that were sacrificed on the day of the inauguration of the *Mishkan*.
11. Which he-goat *chatat* did Aharon burn completely and why?
12. Why did Moshe direct his harsh words at Aharon's sons?
13. Moshe was upset that Aharon and his sons did not eat the *chatat*. Why?
14. Why did G-d choose Moshe, Aharon, Elazar and Itamar as His messengers to tell the Jewish People the laws of *kashrut*?
15. What are the signs of a kosher land animal?
16. How many non-kosher animals display only *one* sign of *kashrut*? What are they?
17. If a fish sheds its fins and scales when out of the water, is it kosher?
18. Why is a stork called *chasida* in Hebrew?
19. The *chagav* is a kosher insect. Why don't we eat it?
20. What requirements must be met in order for water to maintain its status of purity?

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

Answers

1. 9:1 - First of *Nissan*.
2. 9:2 - The calf offered as a *korban chatat*.
3. 9:3,4 - A he-goat as a *chatat*, a calf and a lamb for an *olah*, an ox and a ram for *shelamim*, and a *mincha*.
4. 9:11 - It's the only example of a *chatat* offered on the courtyard *mizbe'ach* that was burned.
5. 9:22 - When he finished offering the *korbanot*, before descending from the *mizbe'ach*.
6. 9:23 - For one of two reasons: Either to teach Aharon about the service of the incense, or to pray for the *Shechina* to dwell with Israel.
7. 10:2 - Rashi offers two reasons: Either because they gave a halachic ruling in Moshe's presence, or because they entered the *Mishkan* after drinking intoxicating wine.
8. 10:3 - A portion of the Torah was given solely through Aharon.
9. 10:9-11 - He may not give a *halachic* ruling. Also, a *kohen* is forbidden to enter the *Ohel Mo'ed*, approach the *mizbe'ach*, or perform the *avoda*.
10. 10:16 - The goat offerings of the inauguration ceremony, of *Rosh Chodesh*, and of Nachshon ben Aminadav.
11. 10:16 - The *Rosh Chodesh chatat*: Either because it became *tamei*, or because the *kohanim* were forbidden to eat from it while in the state of *animut* (mourning).
12. 10:16 - Out of respect for Aharon, Moshe directed his anger at his sons and not directly at Aharon.
13. 10:17 - Because only when the *kohanim* eat the *chatat* are the sins of the owners atoned.
14. 11:2 - Because they accepted the deaths of Nadav and Avihu in silence.
15. 11:3 - An animal whose hooves are completely split and who chews its cud.
16. 11:4,5,6,7 - Four: Camel, *shafan*, hare, and pig.
17. 11:12 - Yes.
18. 11:19 - Because it acts with *chesed* (kindness) toward other storks.
19. 11:21 - We have lost the tradition and are not able to identify the kosher *chagav*.
20. 11:36 - It must be connected to the ground (i.e., a spring or a cistern).

COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS

by Rabbi Reuven Lauffer

BIRKAT HAMAZON (PART 20)

BLUEPRINT OF JEWISH DESTINY

“Anyone who recites Birkat HaMazon is blessed through it.”
(Zohar HaKadosh to Parshat Terumah)

Birkat HaMazon continues: **On high, may merit be pleaded upon them and upon us, for a safeguard of peace. May we receive a blessing from Hashem and just kindness from the G-d of our salvation, and find favor and good understanding in the Eyes of G-d and man.**

Our paragraph is a direct continuation of all the requests that we just asked of Hashem. The mention of “them” and “us” in the opening sentence is referring to the hosts and to anyone else who is present at the meal, even though they have already been blessed in the previous requests. Even when a person has eaten alone and is reciting Birkat HaMazon by themselves this sentence must be included because it is also referring to the Jewish Nation.

There really is no greater blessing for a Jewish home than for it be founded on shalom – on peace and tranquility. It is not always so simple to build such a home. It takes determination and emotional effort to make it happen. But when done successfully it brings unparalleled pleasure to our Father in Heaven.

Rabbi Gershon Edelstein (1923-2023), the late venerated head of the Ponovezh Yeshivah in Bene Brak, related that he heard from his father-in-law, Rabbi Yehoshua Zelig Diskin (1898-1970), about a person who came to discuss with Rabbi Diskin his lack of Shalom Bayit [marital harmony] and his wish to divorce his wife. Rabbi Diskin told him the following sage advice: When you go to Bet Din the Dayanim [judges] must hear both sides of the story. They will listen carefully to what you have to say about your wife and your claims that you are not compatible. Then the Dayanim will listen just as carefully to what your wife has to say about you. And it is entirely possible that her claims will be even more persuasive than yours, and the Bet Din will find in her favor. Therefore, advised Rabbi Diskin, you must go home and treat your wife with respect. You must honor her and be patient with her. That way, when you get to Bet Din, she will not have any claims against you. Explained Rabbi Edelstein that it was clear, after the husband followed his father-in-law’s advice, that he no longer had any reason to divorce his wife. His wife appreciated how he treated her with respect and dignity, causing her to do the same to him. And they merited to live together for many more years together with true Shalom Bayit.

The Chozeh of Lublin would say that false shalom is better than having real arguments and disagreements!

Our Sages teach (Brachot 56b) teach that when a person dreams about a pot they will merit to have shalom in their life. Rabbi Mordechai Banet (1753-1829), the Chief Rabbi of Moravia, asks why our Sages make a connection between a pot and shalom. He answers that fire and water cannot exist together. But when a pot is placed in between them they don’t just coexist together they actually work together.

Rabbi Moshe Soloveitchik (1914-1995) was once counselling a couple who were having marital problems. The husband came to Rabbi Soloveitchik and said “My wife is making a mistake. She just isn’t right! We can’t come to terms.”

Rabbi Soloveitchik responded, “Maybe your wife is not right. But if you create Shalom Bayit and your home is tranquil, your children and grandchildren will grow up in a harmonious environment. And that will turn them into better and emotionally healthier people. Take the long view of life. The outlook of a Jew needs to always be the long-term view. Granted, your wife may be wrong in this argument. But if you take the long view of

things and consider the effects of long-term Shalom Bayit, it is far more important than the short-term victory over your wife in proclaiming ‘I was right!’”

Or, in the words of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Hager (1830-1884) the first Rebbe of Vizhnitz known as the Ahavat Shalom, when two people live in harmony it is because [at least] one of them is happy to acquiesce to the other.

To be continued...

WHAT'S IN A WORD?

Synonyms in the Hebrew Language

by Rabbi Reuven Chaim Klein

The Nosey Truth

When Nadab and Abihu offered a “foreign fire” that was not prescribed by the Torah, a fire came out from before Hashem and consumed them (Lev. 10:1-2). The Talmud (Sanhedrin 52a) describes that what happened was that two fiery livewires exited from the Holy of Holies and then split into four, before each fire entered one of the four “nostrils” of Nadab of Abihu and killed them. In that passage, the Talmud uses the word *chotem* to describe their respective “noses/nostrils.” This essay explores the Hebrew word *chotem* alongside its apparent synonyms *af* and *nichirayim*, which also refer to “noses/nostrils.”

Let’s start with the most common word in Biblical Hebrew for “nose”: *af*. The early grammarians disagreed about what the exact root of *af* might be, as Menachem Ibn Saruk (920-970) and Rabbi Yonah Ibn Janach (990-1050) argued that its root is ALEPH-PEH, while Radak (1160-1235) saw its root as ALEPH-NUN-PEH. Either way, a whole slew of other terms might be etymologically-related to *af*, which include words that mean “anger,” “face,” “even/also,” “although,” and “baking,” in addition to the aforementioned meaning of “nose/nostril.”

Rabbi Yehudah Aryeh of Carpentras (in Aholei Yehuda) writes that the core meaning of *af* is actually “face,” but that the word also means “nose” because the nose serves as the symbol of a person’s overall mood in the sense that anger is physically discernable on a person’s nose. Either way, the meaning of the word *af/apayim* is sometimes ambiguous, such that it could be unclear whether it means “nose” or “face” (see Rashi to Song of Songs 7:5).

Now we can talk about the word *chotem*. Although that word does not appear in the Bible, it does appear several times in the Mishnah: Firstly, the Mishnah (Yevamot 16:3) states that in order to positively identify the body of a dead man (for the purposes of allowing his widow to remarry), one must see his *chotem* (“nose”). Moreover, the word *chotem* appears twice when the Mishnah (Negaim 6:7-8) discusses which body parts are or are not susceptible to *tzaraat* (roughly “leprosy”). Additionally, the Mishnah (Machshirin 6:5) uses the word *chotem* in discussing whether the liquid that comes from one’s nose renders a fruit or vegetable susceptible to ritual impurity.

Moreover, the Mishna (Middot 3:2) describes the southwestern corner of the altar in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem as having “two holes [for pipes], which are like sorts of two thin *chotmin*” meaning that these two holes resembled the two nostrils of a nose. The Talmud (Niddah 25a) similarly uses this term when detailing how a miscarried fetus might look if its limbs already began to develop, stating that its two *chotmim* might resembles the two eyes of a fly. In these last two cases, the word *chotem* is clearly being used in the sense of “nostril,” and not as “nose” (because people do not typically have two noses!).

Finally, we discuss the word *nichirayim* (“nostrils”), which appears only once in the Bible, in the verse “And from His nostrils [*nichirayim*] goes out smoke” (Job 41:12). The classical lexicographers like Menachem Ibn Saruk, Yonah Ibn Janach, Shlomo Ibn Parchon (the 12th century author of *Machberet HeAruch*), and Radak trace the word *nichirayim* to the trilateral root NUN-CHET-REISH. That root also gives us various verbs related to the nose, like “snorting/snoring/braying” (see Job 39:20, Jer. 6:29, 8:16).

But Rabbi Shlomo Pappenheim (1740–1814) has a different way of looking at it. He traces *nichirayim* to the two-letter root CHET-REISH, whose core meaning he defines as “other than the one in front of us.” Based on this, Rabbi Pappenheim writes that the word *acher* (“other/another”) derives from this root, as does *machar* (“tomorrow,” i.e., another day that is not today), *achar* (“after,” i.e., a time other than the present), and *achor* (“back,” i.e., a side other than the one currently facing me). Taking this a step further, Rabbi Pappenheim explains that *chor* (“hole”) also derives from that root as a derivative of *achor* because all human beings have a *chor* on their “backside.” Taking this even further, Rabbi Pappenheim adds that *nichirayim* is a tributary of the word *chor*, as essentially a “nostril” is just a “hole” in one’s face. Rabbi Pappenheim further argues that two more words from this root derive from *nichirayim*: *charon* (“anger”) because the “nostrils” of an angry person flare up, and *charum* (Lev. 21:18) – in reference to the physical blemish of a “droopy nose” – because it directly relates to the nose.

*To read the full version of this abbreviated article, visit us online at:

https://ohr.edu/this_week/whats_in_a_word/

TALMUD TIPS

by Rabbi Moshe Newman

Bava Metzia 37-43

Rav Kahana said, “A person prefers to have one ‘kav’ (a certain measure) of his own produce instead of nine ‘kavim’ that belong to someone else.”

This facet of human nature is one explanation cited on our *daf* to explain a statement of the Tana Kama in the *mishna*: “If one gives his fruit to another person for guarding, then even if they begin to rot the guard may not touch (i.e., sell) them.” Rav Kahana reasons that since the owner personally toiled to succeed in bringing his fruit into existence, they are especially dear to him. Therefore, he would prefer having one measure of *them* rather than “nine times” as much that came from someone else. (Rashi)

A “measured,” tangential note: The word “*kav*” is a measure mentioned in the Torah in Melachim II 6:25. It is equal to four “*lug*” and is somewhat more than a liter in volume. The measure of a “*revi’it*” that is often mentioned with regard to the size of a kiddush cup, and is the amount of liquid drink requiring an after-blessing, is one-quarter of a *lug*, or one-sixteenth of a *kav*.

▪ *Bava Metzia 38a*

TAAMEI HAMITZVOS

Reasons behind the Mitzvos

by Rabbi Shmuel Kraines

“Study improves the quality of the act and completes it, and a mitzvah is more beautiful when it emerges from someone who understands its significance.” (Meiri, Bava Kama 17a)

THE PESACH OFFERING

Mitzvos #5-8 and #16; Shemos Ch.12

We have a mitzvah to commemorate the Exodus by offering a young sheep or goat on the 14th of Nissan and eating its meat on the eve of the 15th. We will explore some of the reasons for the various elements of this mitzvah:

Lamb or kid: The Egyptians would worship sheep and goats. By slaughtering the god of the Egyptians, we were rejecting idol worship and taking for ourselves monotheism instead.

One of the reasons why the Egyptians would worship these animals is that they were Zodiac signs. The lamb is first and foremost of the twelve Zodiac signs that is known as “Aries,” and the kid is the seventh sign that is known as “Capricorn.” During the month of Nissan, the lamb usually rises in the morning and the kid usually rises at midnight. The Exodus began at midnight with the slaughtering of the Egyptian firstborns that compelled Pharaoh to let us go, and the redemption concluded at sunrise when we left Egypt. Thus, we may take either a young goat, which symbolizes the beginning of the redemption, or a young sheep, which symbolizes the culmination of the redemption (*Rav Chaim Paltiel* and *Chasam Sofer*).

Roasted: We must specifically roast the meat and not cook it. One idea behind this is that there is a commandment to burn idols, so we subject the symbol of the Egyptian idol to fire. In addition, roasting emits a far greater aroma than cooking, so it is a more public demonstration of our breaking away from Egyptian idolatry (*Zohar* Vol. II 18a). Roasting is how meat is prepared for royalty, and the Pesach offering must therefore be roasted to symbolize our becoming a royal nation. Roasting is the quickest way to prepare meat, and this reminds us of the hasty manner in which Hashem took us out of Egypt on that day. We may not leave over the meat to be eaten on the next day for the same two reasons, that the way of royalty is to eat fresh meat, and that we need to eat it hastily (*Sefer HaChinuch*).

In families: Each Jewish family in Egypt ate the Pesach offering together. This requirement alludes to the fact that the bondage in Egypt had been decreed because Yosef’s brothers sold him to slavery. Now that this sin had been rectified and the Jewish people were going free, they had to demonstrate the value of a family bond (*Rav Menachem HaBavli*).

Without breaking bones: The meat had to be eaten hastily, with no time to break bones in order to extract the marrow (*Rashbam*). In addition, it is not respectful of the offering to break bones in the manner of gluttons. It is therefore eaten on a full stomach so that nobody will come to break bones to extract their marrow out of hunger (*Chizkuni*).

PARSHA OVERVIEW

On the eighth day of the dedication of the Mishkan, Aharon, his sons, and the entire nation bring various *korbanot* (offerings) as commanded by Moshe. Aharon and Moshe bless the nation. Hashem allows the Jewish People to sense His Presence after they complete the Mishkan. Aharon's sons, Nadav and Avihu, innovate an offering not commanded by Hashem. A fire comes from before Hashem, consuming them and stressing the need to perform the commandments only as Moshe directs. Moshe consoles Aharon, who grieves in silence. Moshe directs the *kohanim* regarding their behavior during the mourning period, and warns them that they must not drink intoxicating beverages before serving in the Mishkan. The Torah lists the two characteristics of a kosher animal: It has split hooves, and it chews, regurgitates, and re-chews its food. The Torah specifies by name those non-kosher animals which have only one of these two signs. A kosher fish has fins and easily removable scales. All birds not included in the list of forbidden families are permitted. The Torah forbids all types of insects except for four species of locusts. Details are given of the purification process after coming in contact with ritually impure species. The Jewish People are commanded to be separate and holy – like Hashem.

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