

WEEK OF
May 07, 2017
11 Iyar, 5777



Parshat Emor

By: Rabanit
K. Sarah Cohen

PARSHA

HALACHA

STORY

Q&A

SHIURIM

JOKE

RIDDLE

QUOTES

DAVEN FOR

PARSHAT EMOR

Toward the end of Parshat Emor, the Torah Hakedoshah tells the troubling story of the “Megadef” - the blasphemer, who committed the capital offense of publicly cursing the Name of Hashem. What could have led a member of Bnei Yisrael to commit such a grave sin?

This incident could have been as a result of his upbringing. The Torah identifies the Megadef as the son of a woman named Shelomit bat Divri.

Chachamim explain that the name “Divri” is an allusion to her talkative and flirtatious nature. Shelomit’s conduct caught the attention of an Egyptian taskmaster who violated her. The Megadef was the child born of this union.

Rabeinu Bechayeh (a”h) states that children often develop the traits of their mother. In this case, Shelomit’s son developed the characteristic of unrestrained speech. Just as she overindulged in speaking, similarly, her son grew with a lack of discipline in the area of speech and this is what allowed him to curse Hashem.

The question however remains. What led the Megadef to this act? What was it specifically that evoked his anger to

the point where he lashed out against the Creator?

The chachamim note that just before this story, the Torah presents us with the mitzvah of the “Lechem Hapanim,” the bread that was placed on the table in the Mishkan. The Kohanim would arrange twelve loaves on the table each Shabat. The bread would remain on the table for a week after which they would be removed and replaced by new, fresh loaves.

This mitzvah, explain the chachamim, bothered the Megadef. He felt it was disrespectful to Hashem to leave stale bread on the table. It was his opinion that it would be far more proper to bake fresh loaves every day, rather than have stale bread sit on the table for a week.

This mitzvah ignited his anger to the point where he cursed Hashem. This sequence of events at first glance, seems very difficult to understand. If this man was so committed to Hashem’s honor, then how did he come to the point of blasphemy?

The Megadef argued that the laws taught by Moshe Rabeinu (a”h) did not go far enough in respecting Hashem. How could he then turn around and curse Hashem?

Some Rabanim explain that this incident warns us of the dangers of extreme, intemperate behavior in the observance of mitzvot.

REFUAH SHLEIMAH
&
HATZLACHAH

Yonah bat Henya

Michael ben Yonah

Ro'ee ben Rachel

May bat Ilana

Ben Tzvi ben Ilana

Gidon ben Esther

Esther bat Mazal

Yosef ben Devorah

Yaffa bat Rivka

Baruch Chai ben Zoya

Rivkah bat Malkah

Nissan ben Liza

Gavriel ben Toviyo

David ben Liza

Baila Chava
bat
SorkaFreida Leah
bat
Pesha RachelYehoshuah Mordechai
ben
Leah GitaChaim Yehudah
ben
AidelEfrat
bat
Shifra Tanya

Religious commitment requires sensibility and moderation. People who veer to an extreme are at risk of quickly shifting to the other extreme. The Megadef, at one point, seemed "more religious" than Moshe Rabeinu (a"h). He felt that Moshe Rabeinu did not give enough honor to Hashem. But soon enough however, this man found himself at the opposite end of the spectrum, and cursed Hashem.

We should always be fervent and vigilant in our Torah devotion. But the manner in which we do so must be done sensibly, not in an extreme manner. If a Rabbi rules that something is permissible, there is no sense in trying to be more religious than the Rabbi himself and insisting that it is forbidden while degrading others and making them feel worthless.

If we see people who do not follow our standards, there is no value in reacting with anger or disdain. To the contrary, as the unfortunate story of the Megadef demonstrates, extremism in one direction often leads to extremism in the opposite direction. We must go about our Torah observance with moderation and common sense, without resorting to extreme conduct.

In addition, there are times that our strict observance creates in others an uncomfortable feeling and they are left feeling insignificant. We should try and create a Kidush Hashem whether in the privacy of our own home, at a Shabat table and especially in public. The Torah is meant to mold the neshamah and elevate her status.

If our reaction to those around us seems extreme or even hurtful - then the Torah that we are learning and trying to observe stringently has not penetrated our neshamah or heart deeply enough.

There is yet another lesson that we can learn from the story of the Megadef. The Megadef curses Hashem. The sin as explained by the Sefer Ha'chinuch was the following:

Speech is a gift from shamayim. As a matter of fact speech is the one item that separates us from the animal kingdom. Even though the Animal Rights Activists want to convince us that animals speak and that they do communicate on their level - nevertheless, it is not regarded as "dibur" on the level that humans were granted.

Animals cannot control their communication - in this lies the major difference between the world of humanity and the animal kingdom. A dolphin cannot make a conscious decision and say, "You know what? I'm not going to say what I was going to say." The dog does not stand their deciding if he should bark or not bark. The dog does not utter the words, "You know what? I won't bark and scare the poor old woman!"

A dog barks instinctively and automatically. Although animals do have an ability to communicate, they do not have the ability to control it. Human beings however, were bestowed the gift of speech. It is within their control to speak or not to speak. This is what separates us from the animal kingdom. Therefore, Hashem says: "I gave you a gift. This is what makes you a human being. You're defined by the power of speech and you took that gift and you cursed Me?"

Imagine you gave someone a gift - the gift of teshuvah. You assisted that person in finding his way back to Hashem and what did he do? He took the pesukim you taught him and threw them back in your face to hurt you. He hurt you with the gift you bestowed upon him!

For this reason Hashem exclaims that the sins of speech are quite detrimental since they are unlike any other sin. In the case of the speaking individual - this is what defines him and makes him who he is. This is what renders him a human being. Hashem says, "I elevated you and you took that matanah tova and threw it back in my face and cursed Me with it? This is intolerable."

This is the sin of the Megadef.

It is interesting to note that following the story of the Megadef who curses Hashem the Torah informs us of a very odd law: a person who kills his neighbor's animal must pay the total worth of that animal. The placement of this law is strange. We just learned about the Megadef who cursed Hashem and now we are suddenly transitioning to a law concerning a man who kills his neighbors pet? What is the connection between the two subjects?

Chachamim explain that the problem with the Megadef was that he forgot that he is a human being. He forgot the defining quality in which speech separates him

from the animal world. He placed himself in the animal kingdom. Therefore, the Torah is informing the Megadef of his serious error. If a person kills his neighbor's animal the halachah states that he must pay the price of replacement. We do not execute a person for killing his friend's animal.

But if a person murders a human being, he may face the death penalty. There is a great lesson to be learned from this: a human being is not an animal. A human being is on a much higher level.

Therefore, the Torah specifically mentions the law of killing your friend's animal immediately following the incident of the Megadef in order to teach us a valuable lesson. The lesson is: do not degrade yourself. Remember that as a human being you have a higher calling. You are on a higher spiritual plane.

There is a story told regarding Reb Shlomo Zalmen Auerbach (a"h) that demonstrates exactly what it means to be careful with our speech.



One day, Rav Auerbach was sitting in his apartment with his wife and sister. His sister asked him a question about a particular boy who was learning in his yeshivah. Rav Auerbach replied, "The boy is a good boy who comes from a good family."

His sister stood up and said, "Thank you for the information. I'm going now to go visit our sister." And she left.

After visiting with her other sibling, Rav Auerbach's sister came out of the building and noticed that her brother, the famed tzadik, Rav Auerbach, was standing outside waiting for her. When she approached him he said, "My dear sister, I assumed that when you asked me about that boy, it was for your daughter because of a possible shiduch.

"For this reason, I couldn't say anything in front of my wife. I came all this way to tell you that this boy is not for you. I couldn't say this in front of my wife because she was sitting with us. Even though I'm permitted to provide you with information because it is le'toelet inyan - nevertheless, the information only affects you not my wife. Therefore, my wife has no right to hear any negative information concerning that boy."

What an amazing story regarding the sensitivity that tzadikim displayed when it concerned one's speech.

Rav Auerbach was willing to go out of his way, walk to his sister's home, wait for her to come out - in order to provide her with the information in person - as long as no one else was privy to the negative material. This is how important speech is. This is how careful we have to be with our mouth.

The manner in which we are careful in using our speech, demonstrates the real level of humanity that we are on. If we want to see who a person really is,



we should pay close to attention to the words that emanate from his mouth.

Shelomit bat Divri was a flirtatious talker. Unfortunately, the trait of her excessive speech and the additional words she uttered, was passed down to her son who in turn took his mother's trait to a whole new level. He degraded himself and behaved like a person who belonged in the animal kingdom.

Let us take the lessons of the parshah and try to be more careful to create Kidushei Hashem. Let us strive to be more cautious when it concerns our speech. And B'ezrat Hashem as a result of our efforts we will be granted a tremendous reward for having used the defining quality of humanity in the appropriate and elevated manner.

A HEAVENLY VOICE

It was the winter of 1753 in Yerushalayim's old city. Rav Shalom Sharabi (a"h) sat with his two students, Rav Chaim Yosef David Azoulay (The Chida a"h) and Rav Chaim Delarosa (Author of Torat Ha'cham a"h), in a cramped attic overlooking Hat Habayit. The three mekubalim were all great, well known tzadikim.

All the chachamim saw that it was an auspiciously good time and Rav Shalom and his students therefore sought to hasten the time of the final redemption. For three days in a row, under Rav Shalom's instructions, the chachamim had afflicted themselves according to kabalistic secrets, fasted, and recited special tefilot. They had cut themselves off from all worldly matters, sanctifying their bodies with a fast of three complete days. At the end of the third day, as they made the final consecrations in the attic, a sudden stormy wind passed over their faces, enveloping them in a thick cloud.

A Bat Kol pierced the cloud, calling out, "The time of the redemption has not arrived, and you are not permitted to hasten the end of days. It is decreed that you will never be together again; one of you will die this year, one will go into exile, and the third will remain in Eretz Yisrael and not in Yerushalayim."

The Bat Kol did not specify who would die and who would go into exile. Therefore, the chachamim drew lots among themselves, according to the tradition known to Rav Shalom. The Chida drew the lot of the exile, Rav Shalom drew the lot of death (he passed away that year), and the Torat Ha'cham remained alone, learning and teaching the other mekubalim of Eretz Yisrael.

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QUOTES

** "A ship is safe in harbor, but that's not what ships are for." **

** "To understand the heart and mind of a person, look not at what he has already achieved, but at what he aspires to." **

** "It is never too late to be what we might have been."

THE SIGN

I wake to find a scene unkind, on a vessel I do stand.
Adrift at sea; lost, scared and cold; in desperate need of land.

From where did I come? What is my purpose here? Which course should I set sail?
My heart longs for a safer home, yet all my senses fail.

Rotating, searching, looking out; no means to tell the way.
And so I drift with every wind, more helpless day by day.

Shall this continue endlessly? Shall sea become despair?
A purpose there must surely be, a course to chart - but where?

Then pausing, pondering, opening up - a prompting, "Look above."
Up in the sky, a wisp of white, a sign of hope: a dove.

"Set sail," my heart cries. "Follow it for it will guide you to the shore".
Yet speed I've not. I fall behind. The sign I see no more.

But all's not lost. The way I know and to this course I'm true.
Then home I shall be, my safety built - with a precious soul anew.



RIDDLE

If a man carried my burden, he would break his back.
I am not big but I leave Silver in my tracks.

What Am I?

Answer on page 7



JOKE

At the supermarket, a man noticed a woman with four boys and a baby.

Her patience was wearing thin as the boys called out, "Mommy! Mommy!" while she tried to shop.

Finally, she blurted out, "I don't want to hear the word mommy for at least ten minutes!"

The boys fell silent for a few seconds. Then one tugged on his mother's dress and said softly, "Excuse me, miss."

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Everything you do in some way affects everyone else in the world.

(Rabeinu Yerucham a"h)

Of The Mirrer Yeshivah

**ATTENTION LADIES**

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Rabanit K. Sarah Cohen will be speaking on the following dates:

Date: May 17, 2017 - Shabat Series Pt. 2
Time: 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, Bklyn, NY

Date: May 20, 2017 - Shabat
Time: 5:00pm
Place: 1222 Ave I, Bklyn, NY

Date: May 21, 2017
Time: 7:45pm
Place: 275 Taft Court, Paramus NJ

Date: May 24, 2017
Time: 8:15pm
Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, Bklyn, NY

Date: May 27, 2017 - Shabat
Time: 5:00pm
Place: 1364 E7th - Bklyn, NY

Date: June ?? - To Be Announced
Time: 7:45pm
Place: Teaneck NJ

Date: July 1, 2017 - Shabat
Time: 5:00pm
Place: 1364 E7th - Bklyn, NY

Date: July ?? - To Be Announced
Time: 7:45pm
Place: 1288 West Laurelton Parkway
Teaneck, NJ 07666

Date: August 26, 2017 - Shabat
Time: 5:00pm
Place: 1364 E7th - Bklyn, NY

Date: August ?? - To Be Announced
Time: 7:45pm
Place: 115 Addison Rd.
Bergenfield, NJ 07621

ANSWER TO
RIDDLE

A snail

INTRODUCING...

A SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR LADIES

The Rabanit will now be offering INDIVIDUAL, one-on-one classes on the phone for women who wish like to learn ONE topic in depth.

The advantage of the private classes is the ability to learn the subject of your choice in a deep and detailed manner - and the opportunity to ask questions and receive undivided attention.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:

1. Choose a topic from the list below
2. Call our office and schedule your appointment for the time and day that best suits you
3. Depending on the topic you choose, an email with any materials you require for the lectures will be sent to you so you can follow along as you learn together with the Rabanit.
4. Payment for the series is made at the commencement of your classes.
5. You are now ready to begin your enlightening journey!!

Below is the list of topics:

**SHABAT
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TEFILAH
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BREISHIT
THE LIFE OF THE ARI HA'KADOSH**

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Shiur Already Posted

Parshat Emor
Chilul Hashem

Log on and enjoy the live lectures and be inspired.

Newsletter Dedication

Sara Bat Mimon Ha'Kohen (A"H)

Ohel Sara is named after this tzadikah (my grandmother). May the inspiration that women draw from this weekly newsletter benefit her neshamah in Gan Eden and may we all be redeemed as a result.



Ohel Sara wishes all it's readers a Shabbat Shalom u'Mevorach!



Candlelighting Time

7:45PM
NY TIME



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