



OHIEL SARA

THE FEMALE VOICE OF TORAH & SONG

Parshat Vayikra

By: Rabanit
K. Sarah Cohen

PARSHA

HALACHA

STORY

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SHIURIM

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DAVEN FOR

PARSHAT VAYIKRA

This week the Torah Hakedoshah teaches us about sins and offerings. It tells us about how a human is meant to respond to misdeeds. It describes all kinds of people who err and sin. Kohanim Gedolim and princes as well as simple Jews are subject to failures and so, in addition to penitence, each sinner on every level must bring a korban.

When referring to the average sinner, the Torah teaches the halachah by beginning the laws with the words, "If a man shall sin" or "when a man shall sin." It uses the Hebrew word "im," (Vayikra 4:27) or "ki" (Vayikra 5:21).

However when it comes to "a prince amongst the tribes" who is the sinner, the Torah uses a different expression. It does not use the standard words, "if" and "when," rather it uses a completely different expression - "asher." "Asher nasi yecheta" - if a prince sins and commits one from among all the commandments of Hashem that may not be done, unintentionally - and becomes guilty" (Vayikra 4:22).

The word "asher," is quite similar to the word "ashrei," which means praiseworthy. Rashi Hakadosh (a"h) quotes the Sifra (a"h): "If that a prince sinned" - The word "Asher" is connected in meaning with the word "Ashrei."

The pasuk implies the following connotation: Praiseworthy and fortunate is the generation whose prince (King) takes care to bring an atonement sacrifice even for his inadvertent misdeeds." This is indeed praiseworthy, especially to those of us who live in a generation marked with scandals of denials and cover-ups.

But if that is the case, why not use the term "asher" in reference to the bringing of his penitence, not referring to the sin itself? Isn't it the admission of guilt that merits praise, not the actual misdeed? There are many variations to this story. The basic premise, however, is well known and the answer can be explained with a story.

In the city of Bnei Brak there are many Bar Mitzvah celebrations every Shabat. It became very difficult for Rav Yaakov Yisrael Kanievski (a"h), known as the Steipler Gaon to attend every Bar Mitzvah. He had grown old and weak and hardly had the strength to go to shul. One week, a Bar Mitzvah boy was honored with the maftir. Immediately after the davening, the Steipler Gaon was standing there in line, waiting to wish him Mazal Tov.

He bent down and began speaking in such a sincere manner with the young boy. It seemed to the hushed crowd that this was much more than a regular Mazal Tov wish. The boy paled as he shook his head several times in amazement.

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
Aidel

"Of course, Rebbe!" he exclaimed. "Of course! There is no question. I feel terrible that the Rebbe felt he had to discuss this with me!"

The Steipler thanked the young boy, wished him Mazal Tov again, blessed him, and left the shul. The entire congregation was shocked. What did the Steipler want? The Bar Mitzvah boy began to explain.

"Six years ago I was davening in this shul with a very large sidur. The Steipler approached me and rebuked me for learning Gemara in the middle of the Tefilah. I showed him that it was a Sidur and that I actually was davening. He apologized and left. Today the Steipler came to my Bar Mitzvah and reminded me of the story. He explained that even though he apologized for the mistake he made six years ago, it was not enough. Because, at that time I was just a child under Bar Mitzvah and therefore I did not have the frame of mind to truly forgive him. And even if I did forgive him, it had no halachic validity. The Steipler found out when my birthday was and waited for six years until my Bar Mitzvah. Today, I am old enough according to halachah, to truly forgive him, and so, he came back today to ask me for mechilah!"

Sometimes the praise of our leaders is not the fact that they bring a sin offering, but rather in the entire sin and absolution process. It is important for us to understand, not only that they ask forgiveness, but what they did wrong and how they rectified their misdeed.

We are praiseworthy when we have leaders that understand what is considered wrong and openly teach us through their actions how to respond. When the process is comprehensive, then the combination of the mistake and the absolution can be considered praiseworthy, for they are acts we can all learn from.

HALACHAH CORNER

QUESTION: Must one search for chametz in the areas containing the chametz that he sells?

ANSWER: Prior to Pesach we arrange for the sale of the chametz in our home. The chametz is stored in certain locations in the home that one closes off before the chag and on Erev Pesach the sale of chametz to a goy takes effect, such that the chametz is not in the Jew's ownership during Pesach.

The question arises as to whether the obligation of Bedikat Chametz - searching one's home for chametz on the night before Pesach, applies to these areas. Since one knows that these areas will contain chametz, and that chametz will in any event be sold the following day, it would appear unnecessary to search these areas for chametz.

The Chatam Sofer (a"h) ruled that one who sells his chametz does not need to search through the areas of the house where the sold chametz is stored. The Chayei Adam (a"h), however, disagreed. He argued that since the sale of chametz takes effect only the following day, on the morning of Erev Pesach, it does not impact upon the obligation of Bedikat Chametz, which applies the previous night.

At the time of Bedikat Chametz, no chametz has been sold, and therefore the obligation to search for chametz applies to the entirety of one's home, including those areas where he will store the chametz that will be sold the following day.

Ha'Rav Ovadyah Yosef (a"h) agrees with the Chatam Sofer, who held that one need not search the areas in the home where he will store chametz that he plans to sell to a gentile.



BLUNT OUT HIS TEETH

The Hagadah speaks of four sons. Concerning the wicked son, the response given to him is that we blunt out his teeth. Chachamim ask, why punch out his teeth? Why not provide him with an explanation in an attempt to return him to the proper path?

The holy Ben Ish Chai explained it with a story.

There was once a man who lived in a city whose residents were wicked, corrupt scoffers. The man's daughter had come of age and it was time for the man to now travel to the big city and choose an outstanding scholar from the yeshivah who would become her husband.

The man found just the right boy and brought him back to the city preparing the attic in his large home for the newly married couple. In the attic he prepared a room full of sefarim which lined the walls. He told his son-in-law, "You should be warned that this city is corrupt and all its people are wicked. Do not become friendly with them or go near them. Seclude yourself in this room and immerse yourself in the study of Torah."

The young man refused to hear the admonition. "Can a person isolate himself from the world? The holy Torah is compared to light. A small amount of light can illuminate much darkness. I am certain that if I befriend the corrupt men, I will be able to bring them close to Torah and they will better their ways."

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THE FAUCET AND THE FILTER

Full of anger, shouts the faucet,
Rushing, gushing in a stream,
"You're a bother, you old filter,
You're a nuisance, you make me scream!"

"Always there and in the way,
When my waters wish to play,
When we want to dance and leap,
First through you we have to seep.
And you tell us, 'what's the rush?
What's the noise? Why don't you hush?"

"Oh you filter full of holes,
Can't you let my waters roll?
Can't you let my waters spray
Up and down and every way?
It's so much fun to make a splash,
But through you they cannot crash."

Continued on page 5

QUOTES

** "Just as a candle cannot burn without fire, men cannot live without a spiritual life."

** "A spiritual relationship is far more precious than physical. A physical relationship is divorced from spiritual just as a body would be without a soul."

** "Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact."

WHAT'S WITH THE SHOELACE?

Aware of the dreadful state of American public schools, Murray Cooper, a totally unaffiliated Jew, felt he had no choice but to send his 6-year old son Alvin to a private Jewish school. One day, during the second week of school, Murray noticed Alvin putting on his shoes and then making a point of tying the left one before the right one. "Why did you do that?" he asked.

"That's what they taught us in school, dad," Alvin answered.

"I knew it!" Murray yelled angrily, "Those orthodox Jews are a bunch of superstitious crazy people. I'm pulling you out of that school immediately."

Seventeen years later, Alvin was engaged to Donna, a wonderful girl in every way...except that she was Catholic. On the day of the wedding, as Alvin was getting dressed to go to the ceremony, his shoelace tore. This one little occurrence sent his mind wandering - and he remembered learning about the significance of how one ties his shoelaces. As unbelievable as it sounds, he called off the wedding at the last moment and several weeks later, he found himself in a yeshivah



for baalei teshuvah. It took only a few months before Alvin became a full-fledged baal teshuvah.

After 3 years of a solid commitment, he went to the local shadchan and a shiduch was set up with a girl named Berachah. Alvin, now Avraham Yitzchak, was waiting at a table in the hotel lobby looking in a sefer. Suddenly, he heard a female voice say, "Hello."

Looking up, he got the biggest shock of his life as he immediately recognized...Donna! He tried to say something but he could not find the right words. After all, what could you possibly say to someone you left at the "altar"?

She smiled, "I'm Berachah."

"Whaaaaat? What are you talking about?" was all he could manage getting a bigger shock than the first.

"When you broke off our wedding," continued Donna (Berachah), "I decided I had to check out what was going on. Eventually I became a full-fledged giyoret and here I am."

Every mitzvah we do has some effect on us. Sometimes we see it tangibly and sometimes we do not - but it is always there. Needless to say, Avraham Yitzchak and Berachah send their children to a private Yeshivah.

Ladies, the mitzvot of Torah are not merely there to restrict us or to tame the natural urges of the yetzer hara. The mitzvot and the meticulous observance of Torah is there to create life-changing events.

One never knows how one mitzvah can lead him towards his destiny's path. We must have faith that as difficult as a decision may be concerning a mitzvah we must observe - with it is a door that Hashem fashions that will one day be waiting for us to open. Behind that door will be all the berachot and yeshuot we have earned as well as the understanding of why things had to happen in the way they did.

Every mitzvah has a purpose. Every mitzvah has an address. Every mitzvah has a journey that if you specifically embark upon it, it will lead you to the most wonderful and exalted places.

This is the idea of cleaning for Pesach. This is why we are so meticulous and careful about the cleaning in our home. Every speck of dirt that we remove; every item of chametz we discard from our hearts and minds has a purpose and a future.

We may be exhausted from the cleaning and perhaps we do not understand why we have to be so thorough in our observance if this mitzvah - but B'ezrat Hashem, there will come a time when all will be revealed to you. You will look back upon those moments in life, the moments that were confusing and difficult - and you will discover a new world of hope and blessings.

Behind every door you must close in order to come closer to Hashem, there is another door waiting for you to open. And we hope that this year, when we open that door at our Seder table, Eliyahu Ha'navi Zachur La'tov, will be waiting for us with the ultimate gift of redemption.

THE FAUCET AND THE FILTER

Continued

Says the filter soft and quiet, "Faucet, faucet, stop your riot.
Stop your splashing in the sink, listen well and stop to think.
"I was put here for good use, to filter out dirt that's always loose -

To get rid of little bugs, and the sand that tries to plug up -
All the pipes that stop the flow.
Drinking bugs, is a sin you know?

"I stand watch - I stand guard, day and night, I work so hard.
To make sure that the water's pure, and what you drink is clean for sure.
So that when you take those sips, you won't need to watch your lips."

Use the filter that is yours, locked behind your own closed doors.
Filter words before they leave your lips, and make sure you never slip.
Don't be in a rush to speak, inspect the words still in your cheek.



RIDDLE

What is Red and Blue, and Purple and Green?
No one can reach it, not even the queen?

WHAT IS IT?

Answer on page 9



JOKE

BLONDE: "Excuse me, what time
is it right now?"

WOMAN: "It's 11:25PM."

BLONDE: (with a confused look on
her face) "You know, it's the
weirdest thing, I've asked that
question thirty times today, and
every time someone gives me a
different answer."

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Make Hashem's will your
own, so that He will make
your desire - His.

(Pirkei Avot 2:4)

**ATTENTION LADIES**

Call us to host a learning group in your community.

(347) 430-5700

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

Date: April 26, 2017

Time: 8:15pm

Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, Bklyn, NY

Date: April 29, 2017 - Shabat

Time: 5:00pm

Place: 1364 E7th - Bklyn, NY

Date: April 30, 2017

Time: 7:45pm

Place: 1100 Trafalgar St. - Teaneck NJ

Date: May 10, 2017

Time: 8:15pm

Place: 902 Ocean Prkwy #6D, 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

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
EMUNAH & BITACHON
THE SECRET OF THE MIKVEH
SHALOM BAYIT
TEFILAH
THE PARSHAH IN DEPTH
BREISHIT
THE LIFE OF THE ARI HA'KADOSH**

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Shiur To Post Sunday, April 2
B'ezrat Hashem

Pesach

Elevation & The Children

Log on and enjoy the live lectures and be inspired.

THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

7 NISAN

JEWS CROSS THE JORDAN RIVER

Three days after the two spies dispatched by Yehoshuah scouted the city of Yericho, Bnei Yisrael were ready to enter the land promised by Hashem to their ancestors as their eternal heritage.

As they approached the Jordan River with the Aron Kodesh carried by the Kohanim in their lead, the river parted for them, as the waters of the Red Sea had split when their fathers and mothers marched out of Egypt 40 years earlier.



Q & A

Dear Rabanit,

I was in one of the speeches that you gave before Pesach where you encouraged the women to choose a spiritual mentor and guide in order to progress in and rise in levels of spirituality. I would like to know if you can provide a more detailed answer as to why this is so important. I feel I am doing fine without guidance.

RESPONSE: Thank you for writing amid all the Pesach preparations. Each and every one of us needs a spiritual teacher and mentor, a mashpiah that will help us maximize our neshamah's potential in our avodat kodesh.

The Mishnah states in Pirkei Avot, "Aseh lecha Rav - acquire for yourself a teacher." Here are some of the reasons why a spiritual guide or mentor may be beneficial.

The chachamim in the Mishnah inform us that

"one cannot examine his own defects." Although this is referring to someone who wishes to diagnose himself with tzoraat, this statement is also understood allegorically. It is explained that it is difficult for us to be objective about our weaknesses and our strengths. We often underestimate or over-estimate what we can or cannot do. A mentor who knows us well can help us see ourselves objectively and guide us to use our strengths and work on our weaknesses so that we grow in Yahadut.

The Gemara of Sanhedrin tells us that "a prisoner cannot free himself from his prison." So too, a mentor provides us with the outside help necessary for us to lift ourselves up from the prison imposed upon us by our own destructive instincts.

The Baal Ha'Tanya (a"h) explains that there are two distinct neshamot animating the body and fighting for dominion. There is an "animal soul" and a "G-dly soul." The animal soul is driven by the self-centered desires of physical life, while the G-dly soul seeks to serve Hashem.

The animal soul has no interest in the triumph of someone else's animal soul; by contrast, the G-dly soul's only desire is that the will of Hashem

be fulfilled, so it desires the success of the G-dly soul in others as well.

When a person grapples alone with his spiritual failings, there is a one-on-one struggle between these two selves. But when two people get together, the animal soul of each is overwhelmed by a double onslaught of the two G-dly souls working together.

While any good friend can help us, a spiritual mentor is someone who knows us well and has the wisdom, experience and Torah knowledge that makes his guidance much more effective.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe (a"h), Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson said, "If you want to learn how to improve your spiritual life and standing, you must not be embarrassed to ask about and discuss all your concerns with someone who can guide you."

BLUNT OUT HIS TEETH

Continued

But the father-in-law insisted, "G-d forbid that you do such a thing. The corrupt ones will ruin you and you will not improve them." The father-in-law and son-in-law continued to argue with each holding strong to his views.

One day, the father-in-law visited his son-in-law in the attic and asked him a question in halachah. "A serious question concerning halachah has come up and I'm not sure how to rule on it. You, who are immersed in Torah study might be able to guide me correctly as to this halachah."

"What is the question?" asked the son-in-law.

"A gentile came into the kitchen and accidentally dropped a piece of non-kosher meat into a pot. The piece of meat was small and it doesn't make sense that such a small piece should make the entire pot of food forbidden!"

The son-in-law replied, "There is no place here for discussion. The halachah is clear. I must go down to the kitchen and see the pot, the food, and the non-kosher piece of meat in order to determine the outcome."

The two went down to the kitchen and the father-in-law showed the son-in-law the piece of meat. The son-in-law ruled, "Non-kosher! You have to throw away all the cooked food and clean the pot with scalding water."

The father-in-law wondered, "What? All this over such a small piece of meat?"

ANSWER TO RIDDLE

A Rainbow.



"Yes," replied the son-in-law, "I looked and saw that the dropped piece of non-kosher meat is in the category of 'adding flavor' to the food!"

"If this is your ruling," replied the father-in-law, "I accept it."

The following day, the son-in-law was sitting and studying in his room when his father-in-law once again came to see him. "Excuse me my dear son-in-law for disturbing your learning but something happened to me and I acted according to the halachah I learned from you yesterday and I wanted to receive your approval."

Surprised, the son-in-law asked, "What happened?"

"I was walking in the marketplace to buy meat, since yesterday I had to pour out the entire pot of food. I purchased a small amount of meat and was walking past the counter where meat is cooked for the non-Jewish merchants, when my piece of meat fell in their cooking pot! I was overjoyed and went to buy the entire pot from the owner. Today we will have a wonderful stew for lunch!"

The son-in-law was shocked. "What have you done? This is non-kosher meat!"

"What are you talking about?" laughed the father-in-law. "True, the meat was non-kosher, but a large piece of kosher meat fell into it! And did you not rule yesterday that if a piece of non-kosher meat falls into a kosher pot, it makes the entire pot non-kosher? If so, a piece of kosher meat that falls into a non-kosher pot, koshers it as well. It couldn't be simpler."

The son-in-law rose from his place pale and trembling and asked, "What have you done? Was such a thing ever heard? Since when can a piece of kosher meat make a forbidden pot kosher? The opposite is true. Non-kosher meat can make a kosher pot forbidden!"

The father-in-law smiled and said, "Then forgive me for my ignorance. Of course you are right. Isn't this what I have been telling you day and night, that one kosher young man cannot improve and make kosher a forbidden 'pot' full of scoffers, while one scoffer can ruin an entire group of kosher young men!"

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

7:02PM
NY TIME



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