INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON VAYIKRA PARSHAS HACHODESH - 5758

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Insights THE BIG A "And He called." (1:1) Michaelangelo may have known a thing or two about sculpture, but when it came to Jewish anatomy he was a bit off. When he sculpted Moses he gave him little horns. Michaelangelo's problem came from a mistranslation of the Hebrew word keren. It's true, keren does mean a "horn," but it also means a "ray of light." The English word "corona," meaning a 'glowing halo,' is probably a derivation of keren. How did Moshe get his "horns?" When Moshe had finished writing the Torah, he had some ink left on his quill. He passed the quill across his forehead and the drops of ink made beams of light shine. Everything in Heaven and Earth is precise. If Moshe was given ink to write the Torah, he was given enough ink to write the Torah and not one drop more. We're not dealing here with end of season discounts and remnants. We're talking about the ink of eternity. Nothing can be too little or too much. How can there have been a little bit of ink left over? If you look at a Sefer Torah, you will see that the first word in Vayikra (Leviticus) is written in an unusual fashion. The last letter of that word - the aleph of the word Vayikra - is written much smaller than the rest of the word. Why is the aleph small? When Hashem told Moshe to write the word Vayikra - "And He called" - Moshe didn't want to write that last aleph. It seemed to Moshe that it gave him too much importance. How could he write that Hashem called him? Moshe would have preferred to write "Vayikar" - "And He happened (upon him)" - as if Hashem just gave him the strength and resolve to change his ways. Just as he sinned with blood sprinkled on the altar, when he hears himself make his confession over the act, he is unmoved when he sees the fire lick the flesh of the animal, when he sees its entrails and kidneys, which are the source of thought and lust. And he shall pour the blood on the altar, realizing that he himself would be liable to having his own blood spilled and his body burned, were it not for the lovingkindness of God who has taken a substitute... its blood for his blood, its life force for his life force."

In dividing the elements of sacrifice into thought, word and deed, Nahmanides is alluding to the powerful link between the sinner and the sacrifice. The hand that leads on the doomed animal, the mouth that confesses, the fire that burns out those organs which correspond to thought, all make us realize that sacrifice is not for anyone's sake but our own. It is we who must be moved by the sacrifices, and not God; God will only be moved by our realization of wrongdoing and achievement of repentance. And lest we mistakenly believe that the "sweet savor" implies a Divine appreciation of the scent of burning flesh, Nahmanides reminds us that the Talmud declares: "Would anyone think that God requires food? He owns the world and all of its fullness." (B.T. Menahot 110a) Clearly then, sacrifices are for our sake, and for the sake of change - the self-awareness and self-understanding which result in an improved individual. Since true repentance is so difficult to achieve, it requires a traumatic jolt. Anyone who recognizes the fundamental truth that he was granted life only in return for his commitment to fulfill the Torah's commands, and that if he has fallen short of his responsibility he should be the one on the altar, cannot remain unmoved when he sees the fire lick the flesh of the animal, when he sees its blood sprinkled on the altar, when he hears himself make his confession over a living creature that is about to die. The horror and shock should give him the strength and resolve to change his ways. Just as he sinned with thought, word and deed, he must now realize that "thinking" of change, and "speaking" of change is not enough. He must act. He must transform himself. He must emerge from the sacrifice as a new individual, worthy of a renewed lease on life. The Ktav V'hakabala (Rav Yaakov Mecklenburg) also discusses sacrifices in terms of individual change, and his starting point is precisely the phrase "sweet savor." As expressed by Nahmanides, the words are intended to instruct the person bringing the sacrifice not to make the mistake of believing that his job is done automatically and his sin forgiven immediately upon the sprinkling of the blood. Sin will be forgiven only if the sacrifice works on the person offering it. The ritual must be accompanied by repentance, a profound change of heart. That's why it's called "sweet savor," says Rav Mecklenburg. When a person puts on perfume, we smell the fragrance before we see the person. In effect, the fragrance heralds the person's arrival. In this sense, sacrifice is a "sweet savor unto God," indicating that a new individual is in the process of being formed. Only if...
that happens will sacrifice bring Divine forgiveness. Shabbat Shalom
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Rabbi Moshe Shulman
THE GORY DETAILS

In one of our adult education classes on the laws of Shabbat, somebody remarked, "so many details, so much to remember".

There is a major dispute between the giants of Jewish philosophy, Maimonides and Nachmonides, over whether there is, in fact, an explanation and rational for every intricate detail of Halacha. The focus of this dispute is over the service in the Holy Temple, for nowhere is there more "detail" than in the sacrificial service described in these Torah portions; where to bring the animal... how to place one's hand over the animal's head... which animals to bring, for what purpose... what to do with the blood... where to sprinkle it... how many times... for each type of sacrifice... on and on...

Generally speaking, we view the sacrificial service of the Temple as a means to "come close" to G-d, taking the root of "korban" as derived from "Karov", "close". Standing at the foot of the altar one realised that, in some small way, just like Isaac, we ourselves should be sacrificed on the altar! But instead, we are spared in order to learn that we should LIVE in Sanctity, rather than die in Sanctity. That's very true. But why do we need all the DETAILS? Who cares if the blood is sprinkled once, twice, four or seven times, or what parts of the animal are burnt, what parts are eaten and by whom? If the goal is the "experience", why get bogged down in tedious Halachic minutia?

In fact, Maimonides argued that, indeed, there is no explanation for the minutia. It simply had to be somehow! "The law that sacrifices should be brought is evidently of great use, but we cannot say why one offering should be a lamb, whilst another is a ram; and why a fixed number of them should be brought... You ask why must a lamb be sacrificed and not a ram? But the same question would be asked, if a ram had been commanded instead of a lamb..." (Maimonides, translation from Studies in Shemot, Nehama Leibowitz, p. 499) The philosophical explanations of the Mitzvoth are to explain the general concepts, while the details are required because without details you cannot do the act!

Nachmonides, Abarbanel, Akedat Yitzchak, and many other commentators, on the other hand, take the approach that every detail is significant, whether for symbolic, philosophical or mystical reasons.

Take, for example, the construction of the Menorah. In Maimonides' view, the Menorah had seven branches because "the Torah had to chose a number". While to the other commentators, the number of branches is philosophically significant: 7 days of the week, the Sanctity of Shabbat as the seventh day, Shmittah as the seventh year, Yovel as the seventh Shmittah, 7 branches of wisdom...

Today, most people are used to the approach of Nachmonides. They feel there must be a rational to the why's and wherefore's of every Halachic detail. But I think there is a danger here, and I'd like to explain Maimonides' view as well.

When we look at the Torah reading of the Parshiyot of Vayikra, we see a great deal of technical information, a great deal of "gory detail". What was the purpose of all of this? There answer is expressed in one phrase: "Veyeira aleichem kevod Hashem", "And the Glory of the Almighty shall appear to you." (Lev. 9:6) The entire service in the Tabernacle, with all its detail, was for the purpose of experiencing the presence of G-d, to "feel spiritually elevated", to have a religious experience equal to what we felt at Mt. Sinai! Yet, through all these technical halachot, we ask "where's the experience?" The answer is that WITHOUT THE DETAIL THERE CAN BE NO EXPERIENCE. That's what Maimonides is saying. It's not that the details are meaningless. It's that without the effort, the care, the meticulousness, without the planning, learning, and caring about exactly how to perform each Mitzvah, each Mitzvah loses its meaning and its significance, and we lose the EXPERIENCE!

Look at the laws of Shabbat. Shabbat is defined as a day in which to recognise the Majesty of G-d, Creator of the universe. We have 39 categories of Melacha, from building and ploughing to how to cut up a salad. "Who needs all the details?" we ask. Shabbat is a day to declare our faith in Hashem. "I believe in Hashem. So I no longer need all the details! Right?" Wrong! Sure we can SAY we recognise G-d. But we cannot EXPERIENCE what recognising G-d's Mastery, we cannot FEEL what being subordinate to the true Master of Nature means unless we are willing to let go of our own mastery over nature and become truly subservient to G-d rather than beholden to the world around us! Shabbat cannot be just "observed", or even "understood". It has to be EXPERIENCED, it has to encompass every aspect of our lives that day, and re-focus everything we are, everything we think, and everything we do. Without the details, Shabbat is reduced from an EXPERIENCE to a PHILOSOPHY; it becomes mere words, lip-service, and is meaningless!

Imagine what Pesach would be like without the laws of Chametz, without the cleaning for Chametz, the going through the cupboards and shelves, the koshering of dishes, the questions over which products we can use, and which we cannot. Imagine if we could just forget all that, and just sit down to a seder, eat Matzah and go through the Pesach Seder. Big deal if there's a bit of Chametz under the kitchen sink! Pesach would be so much easier, but so much emptier! The Torah requires us not only to eat Matzah, but, in a sense, to BECOME Matzah, to be free of all chametz not only on the table, but in our homes, and in every corner of our lives. The Torah wants us to EXPERIENCE Pesach with the totality of our being. Sure its harder! It's always harder to EXPERIENCE than to merely expound a philosophy. It's harder - but it works! It's the details of Pesach that in reality help us EXPERIENCE the Exodus from Egypt!

There 613 Mitzvot, each one with hundreds of details. We call these details Halachot! Tefillin is one Mitzvah - with many Halachot, how to wear them, how to make them, what colour they should be, even the order of the scrolls inside them!! Kashrut is a handful of Mitzvoth with hundreds of Halachot defining every detail.

Maimonides didn't say that the details aren't important! On the contrary, without them we can never EXPERIENCE the Mitzvot!

There is a beautiful statement of the Sages conveying this idea. "Rav said: the Mitzvoth were given only to forge better human beings, for, after all, does G-d really care if we slaughter from the front of the neck of the back? Rather, the Mitzvoth were given only to forge better human beings." (Breishit Rabbah 44) The purpose of Torah is to forge better people, more spiritual, better in ourarelationship with ourselves, with others, with the world around us, and with G-d, "forged" in the furnace of self-discipline, as a servant of the Almighty. We cannot just "believe" in self-disciplined! We must become self-disciplined!

That's what went on in the Temple. To us it may sound like a lot of "gory detail". Because we only real about it. We don't see the great EXPERIENCE that it was to actually feel the presence of the Almighty. "And the Glory of Hashem appeared to them." We dare not belittle the minutia of Halacha, for it, and it alone, leads us to experience the spiritual heights of Judaism!

weekly-halacha@torah.org Parshas Vayikra-Birchas Ha'ilanos SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS VAYIKRA By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav. BIRCAS HAILANOS - THE BLESSING OVER TREES IN BLOOM Rosh Chodesh Nissan marks the beginning of the season for saying a blessing upon seeing fruit trees in bloom - Bircas Ha'ilanos. Since this brachah, which extols Hashem's ongoing renewal of creation(1), is recited once a year(2), its halachos are difficult to remember. Women, too, may recite this brachah, since it is not considered a "time related mitzvah" from which women are exempt.(3)
OF THE BRACHAH: In many siddurim(4) the following text is cited: "Borch Ata HaShem Alokayim Lecholah Shelo Cheser Baw’olawmo "Davar". ‘Uv’ara Yo Breeos Tovos, Vilanos Tovim,(5) L’hanos Bahem Bnei Adam A search through all the of the early sources(6) reveals that the original text had the word "klum", not the word "davar" which appears in our text. The reason for the change is unsubstantiated, and it is, therefore, proper to follow the early sources and recite the word "klum" and not the word "davar"(7). WHEN IS BIRCAS HA’ILANOS RECITED? The Ichatshilah, preferred time to recite this brachah is immediately upon seeing a tree in bloom during the month of Nissan. Most poskim agree that the halachah mentions ‘Nissan’ since, generally, that is the month in which trees begin to bloom(8). Accordingly, in an area where trees start blooming in Adar(9), or where they do not bloom until Iyar or Sivan(10), the brachah should be recited in those months(11). In the countries where trees blossom in Tishrei or Cheshvan, the brachah should be said at that time(12). If a tree bloomed in Nissan, but one did not see it until later, he may recite the brachah the first time he sees the tree in bloom as long as the fruit of the tree has not yet ripened. Once the fruit has ripened, the brachah may no longer be said(13). One who saw the trees in bloom during Nissan, but forgot or neglected to recite the brachah, may recite the brachah at a later date but only until the time that the fruit of the tree has begun to grow(14). The brachah is said upon seeing the actual blooming (flowering) of the tree. The growth of leaves alone is not sufficient to allow one say the brachah(15).

In order to recite this brachah, a person must see the Shabbos and Yom Tov, since we are concerned that it may lead to shaking or breaking a branch off the tree. All other poskim who do not mention this concern(16), apparently do not forbid reciting this brachah on Shabbos and Yom Tov(18). It is customary, though, to recite the brachah only during the week(19), unless the last day of Nissan falls on Shabbos(20). The brachah may be said at night(21).

WHICH TREES REQUIRE A BIRCAS HAILANOS? Bircas Hailanos is said only on fruit-bearing trees(22). If one mistakenly said the brachah on a barren tree, he need not repeat the brachah on a fruit bearing tree(23). The poskim debate whether one is allowed to say the brachah on a tree which has been grafted from two species, since the halachah does not permit such grafting(24). It is preferable not to make the brachah on such a tree(25).

Some achronim prohibit the recitation of the brachah on an orchal tree(26). A tree is considered orchal during the first three years of its life. Many other poskim, however, permit reciting the brachah on an orchal tree(27). During the year of shmitat in Eretz Yisroel, it is permitted to recite the brachah even on a tree which - in violation of the halachah - has been cultivated(28).

BIRCAS HA’ILANOS- HIDDUR MITZVAH There are several hiddurim mentioned in the poskim concerning this once-a-year brachah. According to the kabbalah, especially, this brachah has special significance. Among the hiddurim are: The brachah should be recited only on two or more trees. No brachah is said on a single tree(29). Although the two trees do not have to be from two different species(30), several poskim mention that the more trees the better(31). Indeed, l’chatshilah the brachah should be said on trees in a orchard that is planted outside the city limits(32). The brachah should be said in the presence of a minyan followed by kaddish. It should be preceded by V’yehi Noam and followed by with Hallelukah hallelu Keil min hashamayim(33).

The brachah should be recited at the earliest possible time, which is on Rosh Chodesh Nissan, unless it falls on Shabbos or it is raining(34).

FOOTNOTES: 1 Shita Mekubetzes Brachos 43b. 2 OC 226:1. 3 Har Tzi OC 118. 4 Siddur Hagrah; Minchas Yerushalyim; ArtScroll. Their source may be Sefer Ha’eshkol pg. 68. 5 The text in many of the early sources [including Rambam and Shulchan Aruch] is ‘tovos’. [According to proper dikduk, tovin is the proper form, since ian is lassion zachar, in the Masorah (Aves 3:7): ian zeh.] 6 See Brachos 43b, Rambam (Brachos 10:13); Roceikah pg. 235; Ohr Zarua 1:179; Avudrham (Brachos); Tur and Shulchan Aruch OC 226; Siddur Ray Yaakov Emedin; Chayei Adam 63:2; Siddur Bzd Hatanya; Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 60:1; Aruch Hashulchan 226:1. 7 Several poskim mention that the more trees the better(31). Indeed, l’chatshilah, however, one should be particular to recite the brachah the first time he sees the blossoming, since several poskim hold that the brachah may not be said if one failed to say it the first time - see Machatzis Hashekkel 226, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 60:1 Shaa Hatzion 226:3 and Kitzos Hashulchan (Badei Hashulchan 46:18). For this reason it is important to know the text of the brachah by heart so that the brachah can be said as soon as the blooming is seen. 15 Mishnah Berurah 226:2. 16 Kaf Hachayim 226:4 quoting Moed Kol Chai. Kaf Hachayim also holds that according to kabbalah this brachah may not be said on Shabbos and Yom Tov. 17 Indeed, it is clearly permissible to smell a hadas which is attached to a tree on Shabbos since we are not concerned that the branch will be broken off - OC 336:10. 18 Teshuvos LeViv Chaim 2:44. 19 Mibais Levi Nissan 5756. 20 YecAVE DuAS 1:21; Tzetz Eliezer 12:20-6. 22 Mibais Levi Berurah 226:2. 23 Shevet Halevi 6:53. 24 Both views are brought in Kaf Hachayim 225:26 and 226:11. 25 Ben Ish Chai (Re’eih 11); Sdei Chemed (Brachos 2:7); Minchas Yerushalyim 3:2-3; Ya’iva Omer 5:20. 26 R’ Akiva Eiger (Gilyon OC 226); Divrei Malkiel 3:2. 31 If one in doubt whether the tree in question is orchal, a brachah may be said according to all views. 27 Dover Menhorim 3:5; Chelek Yavok 2:27. 28 Baras V. Yoeker (Mibais Levi, Nissan 5756). 29 Chida (More B’atzba 198). Although there are poskim who hold that halachically two trees are required and no brachah is said when only one tree is seen, see Chazon Ovadia pg. 9-10, most poskim do not quote this requirement. See also Kitzos Hashulchan (Badei Hashulchan 46:18) that Ichatshilah the brachah should be said when the blooming is seen. 30 Kaf Hachayim 226:2. 31 Shu’i Shulchos Ketanos 2:28. 32 Shi’u LeViv Chaim 45 quoted in Kaf Hachayim 226:3 and in Chazon Ovadia pg. 8. 33 See entire procedure in Kaf Hachayim 226:7-8. 34 Mibais Levi (Nissan 5756).

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Perhaps the Torah is hinting at the most proper aspect of restitution. There are two reasons to return a stolen item. First, you are in possession of an item that is not yours. Simple. But there is another reason. Every one of our actions helps mold us. By returning an item that we once desired enough to have stolen, we train ourselves to break the covetous constitution of our nature. We learn that even though we want something, we may not take it. That redemption is much more effective when the attachment for the item is still active. A stolen item that one may have forgotten about or lost desire for may be much easier to return. After all, ten years after you stole a bicycle you probably would be driving a car. The desire for the bike is no longer there. Maimonides teaches us that the greatest act of teshuva (repentance) is when the passion for the crime still exists. Repentance is always accepted, but if the item is still categorized in your mind with the expression “the stolen item that you stole,” the fraudulent gains that you defrauded, the pledge that was secured with you,” then the repentance is more meaningful. When desires conflict with conscience - and conscience prevails - that is true teshuvah. 50 years after a crime, there are those who may issue statements of apologies and excuses. However a lingering question remains. Are the “stolen items ones that they stole” or are they just relegated to black and white memories of an almost forgotten crime? The words “I am sorry” should not be sorry excuses, but rather true regret with a commitment never to sin again. That can best happen while the iron (or steal) is still hot.

Parabolic Reflections [From last week: In last week’s FaxHomily (drasha) I wrote... “We go to Israel for many reasons;... Of course there is much to see that will inspire us;...The Wailing Wall,” Gail Morrison of Mitzpeh Yericho, Israel wrote: The term walling a wall is a derogatory one used by non-jews to describe the Kotel hama’arav or the western wall. They mocked the jews praying there With tears. The last place I would expect to see written would be from a Religious leader in a dvar torah. Please correct that term in the future. I apologize and thank her for the useful information.] The response to the Wailing Wall controversy has been quite interesting. eitdom@aol.com wrote about remembering his grandparents talking about the tears of the Yid at the wall and that they always called it the Vainerdiker Vant -- Yiddish for Wailing Wall!! Uri Portal wrote: Somehow, I see the term “Wailing Wall” in the exact opposite light. I think that the gentiles recognizing how Jews come with tears to pray is a tremendous Kiddush HaShem. Would it really be preferable if the world had the impression that the Kotel was just a good place for a bar mitzvah and a photo? I think that it is correct and proper when the world sees the Kotel as a place of Jewish tears and yearning and not simply as some sort of national historic monument. Why should anyone consider a term which refers to emotional prayer as a derogatory comment? If a non-Jew said that someone cried on Yom Kippur, would that be considered an insult or rather a wonderful complement?

In summary, I think the term Wailing Wall is a most appropriate term. Mordechai Kamenetsky is the Rosh Mesivta at Mesivta Ateres Yaakov, the High School Division of Yeshiva of South Shore, http://www.yoss.org/ Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway. learn@torah.org 6810 Park Heights Ave. http://www.torah.org/ Baltimore, MD 21215

Parasha-page@jer1.co.il Parashat Vayikra 5758 - “The Sacrificial Service” The Weekly Internet P * A * R * A * H * A - P * A * G * E by Mordecai Kornfeld of Har Nof, Jerusalem (kornfeld@virtual.co.il)

“TORAH FROM THE INTERNET,” by RABBI MORDECAI KORNFIELD, is available now at a HEBREW BOOKSTORE near you, or from the publisher JUDAICAPR@AOL.COM PARASHAT VAYIKRA 5758 THE SACRIFICAL SERVICE This week’s Parasha introduces us to the details and intricacies of the sacrificial service, as practiced in the Mishkan (Tabernacle) and later in the Holy Temple. A good deal of the ensuing Torah portions dwell on this theme, listing the circumstances under which each of the various sacrifices must or may be brought, and the exact manner in which each of them were offered. In general, after an animal was slaughtered its blood was sprinkled on the sides of the Mizbe’ach (altar), certain of its fats were removed and burned on the top of the Mizbe’ach, and the remainder of the animal was eaten either by the Kohanim that were serving in the Mikdash or by the one who offered the sacrifice (depending upon the nature of the sacrifice). Although this practice may seem bizarre to the uninitiated, the early commentators point out the profound and enduring effect that offering a sacrifice has on a sinner. Man, like animal, is a physical organism of flesh and blood. Both are driven by their lusts and emotions; all that separates man from animal is his intellect. When a person sins because he allows his desires to get the better of his intellect, he puts himself on equal footing with the animal. It is necessary to impress upon such a person the futility of physical existence which is not led by the mind’s rational judgment. This is accomplished by having him offer a sacrifice. The sinner brings a body of flesh and blood, like his own, to the Mikdash. There, he slaughters it and burns it on the altar -- much as he allowed his own body to be “burned” by the fire of desire (Rabienu Bachye 1:9). The blood is sprinkled on the altar and the intestines and fats (the vehicles of desire) are burned, to demonstrate “there, but for the grace of G-d, go I” (Ramban 1:8). It is thus vividly portrayed to him that a body without a mind is valueless (Chinuch, Mitzvah #95). The meat of the sacrifice provides sustenance for the Kohanim, educators of the people and purveyors of the Torah (Devarim 33:10), who then pray for the complete atonement of the sinner (Ramban). This is one approach to the sacrificial service. Other approaches, ranging from the philosophical to the mystical, have been proposed as well, each shedding light on yet another aspect of the Temple service. Particularly intriguing is that of the Rambam. II In his Guide to the Perplexed (3:46), the Rambam explains that the nations of the world that worshipped animals generally worshipped one of three domestic animals: either sheep (as did the Egyptians, Targum Onkelos Shemot 8:22), goats (as in Vayikra 17:7) or cows (as in India, until today). In order to remove any reverent thoughts for these animals from Jewish minds, Hashem commanded us to take specifically these three animals, and to slaughter them and burn them on the Mizbe’ach. (In ch. 3:32 of the Guide, the Rambam offers yet another approach to the matter of sacrifices.) Ramban (1:8), however, finds this approach absolutely unacceptable. It is unthinkable to assume that the purpose of sacrifices is no more than to demonstrate the absurdity of the foolish practices of idolaters! Besides, we find that before any idolaters began serving animals, animal sacrifices were offered by Adam (Shabbat 28b), his sons (Bereishit 4:4) and Noach (Bereishit 8:20). How can the Rambam state that sacrifices only became necessary after people began to defile animals? Perhaps the answer to these questions lies in a better understanding of what prompted people to defile animals in the first place. Rabienu Bachye (1:9) explains that the Egyptians realized the great benefit that one derives from the wool, offspring and milk of sheep. In the words of Chazal (Rashi Devarim 7:13), “Why are [sheep] called ‘Asherot’? (ibid.) Because the make their owners rich (Me’ashrot)!” The same applies to goats, and to cows -- which provide not only milk and offspring but plow the fields as well, thus producing a large proportion of the daily rations. The nations defied these animals in an attempt to appeal to the powers of sustenance that they perceived in them. (This is not dissimilar from the manner in which people today often put considerable amounts of time and effort into a particular non-Torah mode of behavior, convinced that it will bring them “true happiness and peace of mind.”) We, who know that Hashem provides us with our livelihood and no other, do not attribute any supernatural powers to such animals. They are simply the vehicles through which the Omnificent One provides us with our daily needs, and have no power unto themselves. Even in the absence of actual idol-worship, the sacrificial service is necessary as a declaration that we “know the hand that is feeding us.” By offering these animals on the altar in Hashem’s service, we are declaring that He is the G-d of G-ds and all that we have is from Him alone. As such, the sacrificial service relates to more than just the folly of misguided nations; it denotes that we realize Who has granted us all that we have. It was certainly appropriate even for Adam and Noach to offer animal sacrifices.

III The Rambam (ibid.) adds a reason for specifically offering goat-sacrifices on the first day of the lunar month and
on Mo'adim (Jewish holidays). Citing a Midrash (see Yalkut Shimoni, Shemini, 1:521), the Rambam tells us that goats were brought for these, and other, public sin offerings in order to atone for the sin our fathers sinned by selling Yosef and dipping his cloak into the blood of a *goat* (to fool his father, Bereishit 37:31). By constantly bringing up this sin, we demonstrate how long lasting the effects of sin can be, discouraging future sins.

Haga'on Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin used this theme to explain a Gemara in Yoma (42a). The Gemara tells us that a red ribbon of two Sela-weights was tied to the scapegoat on Yom Kippur, and when the Jews achieved a full atonement through the scapegoat it turned white. Perhaps, Rav Diskin explains, this was because the scapegoat, like the other goats offered on the holidays, was meant to atone for the sin of selling Yosef. According to the Gemara (Shabbos 10b), the cloak given Yosef by his father which aroused the brothers' jealousy for Yosef (Bereishit 37:3) weighed exactly two Sela-weights more than those of his brothers. The two Sela-weight red ribbon turned white to demonstrate that Hashem would forgive the nation for persecuting Yosef because of his two Sela-weight cloak!

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rossfrand@torah.org “RossFrand” List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Vayikra

This week’s “RossFrand” is dedicated in memory of Naftali Hertz Ben Avrohom, whose Yahzeit is 2 Nissan.

Moshe Waited for the Call A verse in this week’s parsha says, “And G-d called to Moshe and He spoke to him...” [Vayikra 1:1]. The Midrash comments that we learn from here that “any Torah scholar who does not have intelligence (da’as), an animal’s carcass (neveilah) is superior to him.” The Medrash elaborates: “Look at Moshe, the greatest of all Sages, the father of all the prophets and yet he did not enter the innermost Tent of Meeting until he was called, as it is written ‘And He called out to him.’” Rav Bergman, in his sefer Shaarei Orah explains this Medrash. Rav Bergman proves that the word intelligence (de’ah) as used by the Medrash refers to Derech Eretz (manners, courtesy). The Sages are saying that a Torah scholar who does not display courtesy is inferior to a dead animal. The Medrash describes Moses as the greatest of all Sages. IQ and brainpower do not make a person the greatest of all Sages, but rather the desire to learn. A person excels in any endeavor as a result of an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. Consequently, Moshe must have had an overpowering desire to acquire wisdom. And yet, when G-d was there in the Tent of Meeting and Moshe had the opportunity to learn Torah from Him, and he was yearning to begin learning, he nevertheless waited for The Call. He dared not enter until summoned, because it would not have been proper Derech Eretz, proper conduct, to do so. The laws of Derech Eretz require us to wait until we are called. As great a Sage as Moshe was, he was a greater master of Derech Eretz. This is what the Medrash means -- a scholar that does not have Derech Eretz is inferior to a carcass. The Gerer Rebbe explained this very sharply. A dead carcass stinks, and everyone knows to stay away. But people do not necessarily stay away from a Talmid Chochom who does not possess manners - they even come and learn from him - because he doesn't stink on the outside!

We Must Be Doing Something Wrong Someone recently showed me a report called “The Current State Regarding Derech Eretz in our Schools.” This was a report written about a specific Jewish community, but it is no Mitzvah to say which community it was. But it is a fine community -- a prominent city with a distinguished Jewish community, and many good Jewish schools. And the truth of the matter is that it applies to all communities. We are in a sad state... "Teachers are quitting in large numbers; parents seem unconcerned that teachers are victims of abominable disrespect by our children. There is a pervasive atmosphere of Moshav Leitzim (see glossary) in many of our schools. This is manifest in the classroom in the concerted effort to waste time, often combined with tremendous chutzpah and a derogatory attitude..." Many teachers have told their classes that they have never seen such disrespectful behavior in twenty years teaching experience, and that our children are disgracing the community. The current favorite pastime of students is constant and vicious mocking of teachers and principals. "Teachers will confirm that there is a serious lack of respect among the children themselves. A student who lives by Torah law and refuses to participate in class pranks is called the worst of all terms -- a ‘Neb’ [short for ‘Nevach’, an unfortunate] -- and is often ostracized..." Now we would be remiss if we did not remind ourselves that this is hardly unique in the larger community. We can count our blessings for all that has happened in the halls of a Jewish day school. But neither have we demonstrated ourselves immune to the general decline of the last several decades. Come and see -- Moshe was the greatest of all Sages, but he didn't breach the laws of etiquette, no matter how much he wanted to learn.

The Mystical Magic of “The Ox Gores the Cow” The Medrash Rabbah, Chapter 3 interprets a verse from the prophet Malachi “The Torah of Truth was in his mouth and many he returned from sin” [2:6]. The Medrash relates this to how Aharon the High Priest brought people near to Torah. We think that outreach to fellow Jews is a new phenomenon. This Medrash tells us that Aharon also worked in Jewish Outreach. But how did he do it? “He did not make forbidden that which was permitted and did not make permitted that which was forbidden.” Aharon did not compromise. He told things as they were. His secret was that he was consistent and straightforward. People like consistency. They are not necessarily interested in permissiveness (heterim); they are not necessarily interested in stringencies (chumras); they are interested in the straight truth (meisharim). The Medrash explains that the way Aharon attracted people was to attract them to learning Torah. He learned with them! We, on the other hand, don't appreciate the value of Torah itself. I will tell you over a story that I heard from a prominent individual who works in Jewish Outreach. When he was he was newly married, and studying at a Rabbinic seminary in Israel, he couldn't afford an apartment in the desirable sections of Jerusalem. Therefore he bought one in what was then an outlying section, in a building where he was the only observant, religious Jews. All of the other residents were Israelis who were not religious. He went over to them and started building relationships. He invited every one of them to come once a week to his apartment to learn. After trying, he finally got several to come to learn, but he had not picked a topic. What would he learn with non-religious Israelis? In a certain sense non-religious Israelis are even more removed from Judaism, and have more negative attitudes towards Jewish learning, than unaffiliated Jews in America. So he deliberated his options: something philosophical, like Maimonides' Guide to the Perplexed, or a work which discusses the Jewish faith in comparison to others, like the Kuzari... he didn't know what he was going to learn. He went to morning prayers and there, as Hashgocha (Divine Providence) would have it, he met the famous Uri Zohar. Uri Zohar was Israel's foremost entertainer: comedian, television game-show and radio talk-show host, social satirist, movie star, and film producer, and an icon of modern Israeli secular society. Then, in the midst of his career, he turned towards religion, eventually becoming fully observant. [For more information, read Waking Up Jewish by Uri Zohar, which is available through Genesis Judaica (http://books.torah.org/ or books@books.torah.org.).] He asked Uri Zohar what he should learn with these neighbors. Uri asked him, “What are you learning in Yeshiva?” The Rabbi responded that he was learning Bava Kamma. Uri Zohar told him "Learn with them tractate Bava Kamma". The Rabbi looked at him incredulously and said "Bava Kamma? The ox that goes a cow; The Pit; The Ox; Fire that damages?... This will turn people on to Judaism?" To which Uri Zohar responded "My dear friend, you don't believe in Torah! If you can question and doubt that learning with them tractate Bava Kamma is going to bring them back -- then you don't fully believe and appreciate the power of Torah." Learn pure, unadulterated, "the Four Major Types of Damages" (Arba avos nezikin). You do not need to learn philosophical works such as Kuzari and Moreh Nevuchim. Learn about the Ox that goes the cow. It does something to the soul. It is mystical. It is magical. It is the nourishment that...
the soul thirsts for, and a teacher needs nothing more. To this day, what does the Rabbi learn with beginning adult students? Tractate Bava Kamma. That is what this Medrash says about Aharon. He returned sinners to Torah study. The power of Torah will prevail.

Sources and Personalities Rav Bergman -- Contemporary Israeli Rosh Yeshiva; Bnei Brak. Israel. Kazazi -- R. Yehuda HaLevi (1080-1145); poet, philosopher; Spain. Rambam; Moreh Nevuchim -- Guide to the Perplexed, philosophical work by Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon (1194-1270); Spain; Egypt.

[Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twerskyd@aol.com]

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dhoffman@clark.net Rav Frand, Copyright (c) 1998 by Rabbi Y. Frand and Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 6810 Park Heights Ave.
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ha'matzot and succot that year. Other commentators explain that these laws reflect a new level of kedusha, which required the NASI to offer additional korbanot - see Radak, see also Avraham and Malbim.) As we explained above, the necessity for the NASI to offer these additional korbanot may reflect his need to recognize his proper status in relationship to God, in order that the problems of the first Bet Ha'Mikdash, caused by the haughty attitude of the king would not repeat themselves. Specifically when the nation gathers en-masse on pesach and succot at the Mikdash, it is necessary for the NASI to show his humility. A similar restriction of the NASI is discussed in chapter 46. When the NASI comes to bring his korbanot, he can only come up to the gate, present his korbanot to the KOHANIM (who will offer them), then he must bow down and leave (see 46:1-2), just as the rest of the people do (see 46:3). Afterward Yechezkel describes an additional korban which the NASI must bring every shabbat (six kvasvim/ see 45:4-5), and on Rosh Chodesh (one par, one ayil, and six kvasvim/ see 45:6-8). Yechezkel even tells us that when the NASI enters and leaves the Mikdash, he uses the same entrance and exit as the people (and should 'mingle' with them/ see 45:9-10). The Hafarra concludes with one final limitation upon the NASI. He can only control this land which is part of his 'nachala', but can no longer expropriate the land of others. Yechezkel assures the people that the next time around the king will never again take advantage of his power and 'cheat' them from the land which God has given them (see 46:16-18). Even though Yechezkel's prophecy of the final Bet Ha'Mikdash has not yet been fulfilled, his guide for the proper relationship between the people, their political leaders, and God remains our guide for all generations.

Daf insights@shemayisrael.com Insights to the Daf: Shabbos 116-119 brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Har Noof Rosh Kollel: Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld daf@shemayisrael.co.il SHABBOS 116 - has been dedicated by Family Posen of Jerusalem & London, to the memory of their father, Reb Moshe ben Yehoshua (Frank) Posen Z”L, who completed Shas learning Dafyomi, insisting on continuing with his Kvius till his very last day.

Shabbos 116) 1) THE PARAGRAPHS OF “VA’AYEH BINESO’A  
HA’ARON” QUESTION: Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says that the paragraph of “Va’ayeh benesoa’asera” serves as a separation between two incidents of calamity involving the Jewish people. If we look at the verses prior to the paragraph of “Va’ayeh benesoa’asera” we will notice that there were two separate events which follow the paragraph, we find two* incidents of calamity with no separation between them - the incident of the complainers (Min’umim), and the incident of the lust for meat (Kivros Ha’ta’avah). When calamities occur, then, is the description of Kivros Ha’ta’avah later, it does not mean that the incident took place then. Rather, the Torah is going back and explaining that which it merely alluded to earlier. (b) TOSPOS (DH Puranim) says that the calamity at Har Sinai (before the passage of “Va’ayeh benesoa’asera”) refers to what the Midrash describes: the Jewish people ran away from Har Sinai hastily, the way a child runs when he is let out of school. Although this was improper conduct on the part of the Jewish people, what exactly was the calamity (= punishment for their action) involved? The RAMBAN (ibid.) explains that perhaps the Jewish people would have arrived at the border of the land of Israel immediately after leaving Har Sinai. Instead, it took them three days to get there, which was considered a punishment for their hasty departure. Why is there no break between the next two calamities? Perhaps Tosfos understood that only the Erev Rav (or the “Am,” as the Torah calls them in the Parsha of Kivros ha’Ta’avah) were involved in the incident of Kivros ha’Ta’avah, while the first two sins involved all of the Jewish people (“Binso’a”). Therefore, there is only a need to separate between the first two calamities. (c) The RAMBAN (ibd.) explains that the explanation of the Gemara does not mean that it is separating between two* calamities. Rather, the passage of “Va’ayeh benesoa’asera” serves to interpret between three* calamities, so that there should not be three calamities in a row, which would make a “Chazakah” of calamities.

11b) 2) READING “KESUVIM” ON SHABBOS The Mishnah (115a) states that we do not read Kesuvim on Shabbos because of “B’rit Beis ha’Mazone.” The Gemara cites another reason from Rabbi Nathanael, who says that we do not read Kesuvim on Shabbos as a safeguard to prevent people from reading business contracts on Shabbos. The RAGOTCHAVER GA’ON uses this Gemara to explain an enigmatic change in the text of Birkas ha’Mazone on Shabbos. During the week, we say “Migdol Yeshu’os Malco,” a verse from Tehilah (18:51). On Shabbos, though, we say, “Migdol* Yeshu’os Malco,” from Shemuel II (22:51). Why is that? The reason for this change, explains the Rogatchover Ga’on, is the rule that our Gemara expresses that one may not learn Kesuvim on Shabbos. Since “Migdol* Yeshu’os Malco” is derived from a parallel verse in Nsvimim (since learning from Nsvimim is permissible on Shabbos (see Mishnah 115a and Rashi there))/ Even though there are many other verses from Kesuvim in our Shabbos prayers, we are allowed to recite them because there is no other choice, since they do not have a closely matching verse in Nsvimim. Since they are part of our daily prayers, it is permitted to recite such prayers on Nsvimim. However, in the case of Kesuvim, we change “Migdol” to “*Migdol” in order to remind us of the prohibition against learning Kesuvim, when *not praying, on Shabbos. (M. Kornfeld)” (TheTORAH TEMMIMAH proposes, somewhat tongue in cheek, an interesting hypothesis to explain the change in Birkas ha’Mazon. The change in the text may stem fr on a misunderstanding in the early printings of Birkas ha’Mazon. In the margin next to the word “Migdol,” the following appeared in parentheses: “Migdol, SB” (the Hebrew letters “Shin” and “Beis”), which meant that instead of Migdol, the word “Migdol” appears in Shmuel Beis (SB). Later, printers who copied from the original printings misinterpreted the abbreviation to mean that “Migdol” was recited on Shabbos (or that the abbreviation stands as SB). (117b-2) CREATING THE CHALAH ON SHABBOS OPINIONS: The Gemara says that when cutting the Chalah at the Shabbos meal, one should lift both loaves of Lechem Mishneh while reciting the blessing of “Ha’Matzoh.” Rav Kahana ruled that he should then cut one* of the loaves. The Gemara then relates that Rebbe Zeira would cut “his entire meal” from the Chalah. What does that mean? (a) RASHI explains that he would cut a very large slice of bread which would last for the entire meal. He did this in order to show how beloved the Shabbos meal -- and thus the Shabbos meal -- was to him. (b) THE RASHBA disagrees with Rashi. He argues that Rashi’s explanation of Rebbe Zeira’s custom of cutting a large slice has no thing to do with the Sugya, which is discussing preparations for the Shabbos meal. Rabbe Yosi’s custom (that one should cut only two loaves of Lechem Mishneh) is the true answer. One cannot be allowed to recite the Ha’Matzoh on two loaves of Shabbos, corresponding to the two loaves of the Lechem ha’Panim in the Bet ha’Mikdash that were eaten on Shabbos. If we eat Lechem Mi’sheh for three meals, we only have six loaves. However, we now have two* loaves. One cannot be allowed to recite the Ha’Matzoh on two loaves of Shabbos, so small (or small Chalah-rolls) at each meal. (2) Another custom is to have four loaves at each meal, so that the total number of loaves after the three Shabbos meals comes to twelve. (3) The Vilna Gaon says that it is sufficient to have only two loaves at each meal. However, since one is supposed to cut through “both” loaves, one obtains four halves of loaves at each meal, or twelve halves loaves over the course of Shabbos (See Berachos 4b, where a “half” is also called one whole entity.) Shabbos 118b 3) SAYING “HALLEH HAGADOL”: EVERY DAY QUESTION: Rebbe Yosi prayed that his lot should be among those who say the complete psalm of Hallel every day. The Gemara says that we have learned that a person who says Hallel every day is saved from calamity, while the first two sins involved all of the Jewish people (“Bnei Yisrael”). Therefore, perhaps Tosfos understood that only the Erev Rav (or the “Am,” as the Torah calls them in the Parsha of Kivros ha’Ta’avah) were involved in the incident of Kivros ha’Ta’avah, while the first two sins involved all of the Jewish people (“Binso’a”). Therefore, there is only a need to separate between the first two calamities. (c) The RAMBAN (ibd.) explains that the explanation of the Gemara does not mean that it is separating between two* calamities. Rather, the passage of “Va’ayeh benesoa’asera” serves to interpret between three* calamities, so that there should not be three calamities in a row, which would make a “Chazakah” of calamities.

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What calamities, then, is the passage of “Va’yehi bi’Neso’a” separating? ANSWERS: (a) RASHI explains that even though the Torah describes the incident of Kivros ha’Ta’avah later, it does not mean that the incident took place then. Rather, the Torah is going back and explaining that which it merely alluded to earlier. (b) TOSPOS (DH Puranim) says that the calamity at Har Sinai (before the passage of “Va’yehi benesoa’asera”) refers to what the Midrash describes: the Jewish people ran away from Har Sinai hastily, the way a child runs when he is let out of school. Although this was improper conduct on the part of the Jewish people, what exactly was the calamity (= punishment for their action) involved? The RAMBAN (ibid.) explains that perhaps the Jewish people would have arrived at the border of the land of Israel immediately after leaving Har Sinai. Instead, it took them three days to get there, which was considered a punishment for their hasty departure. Why is there no break between the next two calamities? Perhaps Tosfos understood that only the Erev Rav (or the “Am,” as the Torah calls them in the Parsha of Kivros ha’Ta’avah) were involved in the incident of Kivros ha’Ta’avah, while the first two sins involved all of the Jewish people (“Binso’a”). Therefore, there is only a need to separate between the first two calamities. (c) The RAMBAN (ibd.) explains that the explanation of the Gemara does not mean that it is separating between two* calamities. Rather, the passage of “Va’yehi benesoa’asera” serves to interpret between three* calamities, so that there should not be three calamities in a row, which would make a “Chazakah” of calamities.
of this special spice to Shabbos alone, so that it would be used in honor of both the holy day and the
august emperor. At this point Rabbi Yehoshua was compelled to explain that Shabbos was not a
natural spice but a supernatural ingredient which worked only for those who were commanded to
observe Shabbos. As the Zohar, quoted by Eitz Yosef, puts it, the very essence of intangible
Shabbos holiness takes on a tangible form in the special taste and fragrance of Shabbos food.
Shabbos 119a

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