



Yesodos m' ha Sedra

LESSONS IN HASHKAFKA & HALACHA FROM THE PARSHA

In memory of R' Shmuel Shmelka ben HaRav Moshe Kizelnik z"l

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CLOSE INTENTIONS

Sefer Vayikra is also called Toras Kohanim as it introduces almost all of the korbanos, the sacrifices which were offered by the kohanim in the Beis HaMikdash. One of the korbanos offered was a korban mincha, a flour offering. The cost of a korban mincha was significantly less than an animal sacrifice, yet both of them could achieve the same level of atonement. It all depended on the financial ability of the person bringing the korban. Chazal tell us that from here we see "echad ha'marbeh v'echad ha'mam'it" - it doesn't make a difference how much you give, all are equal provided one's intention is l'sheim shomayim.

Although we no longer have a Beis HaMikdash, Chazal tell us that Hakadosh Boruch Hu accepts that which we recite and learn the parshiyos of the korbanos in its place. There are a myriad of korbanos printed in every sidur. Some people are able to say all of them, but usually they read the words fast, often without much kavana. Others, opt to omit most of the korbanos, reciting very little of them so that they can say them, as well as pesukei d'zimra slowly, with more kavana. Both approaches are valid and the Shulchan Aruch tells us, "echad ha'marbeh...". The same is true of skipping selichos and kinos; provided one's intention is help have kavana, one may skip some of them.

While this may certainly be true, one who can say everything with kavana is much greater! How then can Chazal compare this to a person who brings a flour offering, the korban of a poor man whose funds are limited? He cannot afford to bring a more expensive korban. Surely this is not the same as one who can have kavana but has difficulty focusing for a long time and therefore chooses to omit parts. Surely one who says everything with kavana is greater. How can we, then, make a blanket statement that both are equal. Perhaps the person who says everything also has great kavana throughout. How can we say that the two are equal provided their intentions are l'sheim Shomayim?

The S'fas Emes explains that we are mistaken in assuming that the person who recites everything with kavana has accomplished more than one who recited less with a lot of kavana. Were reciting selichos and korbanos the goal, then we would be correct in our assumption and our question would be valid. However, our goal as Jews is not to recite the liturgy with kavana. Our life long avodah is to come closer to the Ribono shel Olam and the tefilos are merely the vehicle that allows us to do so. As such, one who davened more tefilos and did so with greater kavana has not necessarily come closer to Hakadosh Boruch Hu than his friend who skipped, or said a lot quickly without much thought. The same is true of Torah and mitzvos. The main thing is not how much we do, but rather if our intention is l'sheim shomayim!

”וַיִּקְרָא אֶל מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר”, לָמָּה הַקָּדִים קָרְיָא לְדִיבּוּר? לִימָדָה תּוֹרָה דְרַךְ אֶרֶץ, שְׁלֵא יֵאמֵר אָדָם דְּבַר לְחַבְרֵי וְאֵלָא אִם כֵּן קוֹרְיָהוּ. (יומא ד:)

Just like a person shouldn't walk into a room unannounced or without knocking so as not to startle the people who are there, one also shouldn't start speaking to a person suddenly before he is aware that he is being spoken to. This way, he will turn their attention and focus on the communicated messages. Although Meseches Deretz Eretz derives this lesson from Hashem calling to Adam HaRishon from outside Gan Eden, the gemara learns from Moshe who was like a trusted member of Hashem's household, to teach us that this applies even to one's closest family members.

TORAH TEMIMAH



From the desk of
the Rosh Kollel...

Welcome to all our new subscribers!

Exciting things are happening in the kollel! - Now well into our 16th year since the kollel was first established, the kollel and its beis medrash continue to be a real asset to the community on so many levels. We have reached the final stages of organizing and cataloging our vast otzar ha'seforim (around 3,000 volumes). This new system will not only improve learning in the kollel, but with benefit the broader community as well.

THE SEFER IS OUT! - In honor of reaching our 16th year, I have published the Shabbos derashos on the haftarah and parsha which were said within the walls of our beis medrash. This is a second volume to the edition published upon our 10th anniversary five years ago. To find out how to get your own copy, email me at: rabbi@torahkollel.com

The current situation worldwide is still frightening. Please increase your commitment to Torah study, tzedaka and chesed, and of course daven for all the captives, soldiers and the general situation.

From the early hours of the morning, until late at night, the beis medrash is and active asset to the community at large. Mosdos Avahas Yehonoson - "Torah Kollel" continues to impact on the community at large in many ways and exists thanks to the benevolence and generosity of its supporters around the world. Consider having a part of this tremendous zechus by sponsoring a sefer, a day, week or month of the Torah Kollel. Contact us at info@torahkollel.com for further information. \

- Rabbi David Lewin

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Sugyas ha' Sedra

AFIKOMEN - WHY ALL THE RUSH?

In the times of the Beis HaMikdash, when each family would bring a korban Pesach, this would be the last thing served at the Pesach seder and one was not permitted to eat anything else afterwards. This prohibition however, extended only for the time that one could theoretically continue eating the korban Pesach, which, according to R' Elazar ben Azaria, was chatzos (halachic midnight). After chatzos, one could eat other foods. R' Akiva however disagrees and holds that one can eat korban Pesach until alos ha'shachar (daybreak), and therefore after eating the korban Pesach, one cannot consume any other foods for the rest of the night. Chazal however forbade consuming the korban Pesach after chatzos out of fear that one might come to eat it after daybreak as well. Needless to say however, that the prohibition of eating other foods remained in place.

In the absence of the korban Pesach, Chazal instructed us to eat another k'zayis of matza at the end of the seder, the piece of matza we refer to as 'afikomen', as a sort of commemoration of the korban Pesach. They also forbade the consumption of any other foods after eating this piece of matza. According to R' Elazar ben Azaria, this piece must be consumed before chatzos and after chatzos, one can eat other foods. According to R' Akiva, however, although perhaps one should eat this final k'zayis before chatzos (see further) one may not eat other foods for the rest of the night.

It is unclear which opinion the halacha follows. Therefore, ideally, one should eat his 'afikomen' before chatzos, and not eat anything else until the next morning. The Rema adds that one should also try to say halel before chatzos as well, and the Gra comments that this includes the fourth cup of wine as well. However, many people are not particular about this, and eat afikomen well after chatzos. What should a person do if he finds himself at someone else's seder table who is not particular to eat afikomen before chatzos? The poskim suggests a few different approaches:

One can rely on the opinions who rule in accordance with R' Akiva that the correct time for eating the korban Pesach is the entire night. Furthermore, although Chazal may have forbade eating korban Pesach after chatzos, this was out of fear that one may come to eat it in the

SPARKS OF SHABBOS

Only if something is experienced first hand, does one believe it without any doubt. Therefore, although we have a clear mesorah that Hashem created the world and took us out of Mitzrayim and intellectually believe in Him, there is still a room for doubt. To this end, He gave us the gift of Shabbos because at its onset every week, we feel its kedusha and sense its light. It is therefore only then that we can truly testify to Creation.

(Based on the writing of the Maharal's brother in Sefer Parnasa v'Kalkalah)

L'maaseh...

Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l would make himself available to answer people's questions at any time. His rebetzin urged him to set aside certain hours when he would be available to accept people, either in person or on the phone, and otherwise, be unavailable to the public except for questions of pikuach nefesh or other urgency. He refused. When she pressed him to reconsider, he remained adamant, and when she mentioned that other rabonim were accustomed to set specific hours, he explained to her that he couldn't bring himself to do this, but another person who was present heard him mumble to himself that 'that is gaavah (arrogance)'. Yet, when a Jewish publication wanted to print an article about him in a series celebrating Torah giants, R' Moshe asked 'what is there to write about me? I am just a simple Jew!'.

morning, a severe aveirah. There is however nothing wrong with eating matza after alos ha'shachar (except that he is eating before davening shacharis), and it would seem that Chazal never forbade it. Since eating a k'zayis of matza as afikomen is only a mitzvah d'Rabanan, one can invoke the rule of safeik d'rabanan l'kula - and rule leniently in cases of such doubt.

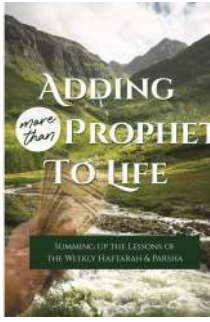
Alternatively, one can follow the suggestion of the Avnei Nezer to eat afikomen twice, conditionally. A few minutes before chatzos, he should take a k'zayis of matza and say, "if the halacha is like R' Elazar ben Azaria, then this is my afikomen, and if the halacha is like R' Akiva, this is just a piece of matza." He should then eat the piece, wait until after chatzos and resume eating his meal. Before bentching, he should eat another k'zayis of matza in case the halacha follows the opinion of R' Akiva.

The Brisker Rav is quoted as suggesting the same approach but without making a t'nai (condition). He argues that one does not need kavana for afikomen, only that the last thing he eats, should be matza. Therefore, eating a piece of matza before chatzos, waiting, and then eating another piece before bentching would be sufficient.

Others suggest simply making sure to eat a k'zayis of matza just before chatzos. Since the prohibition of eating after the final piece of matza is only rabbinic in nature, he can therefore choose to conduct himself like R' Elazar ben Azaria. Even if the halacha follows the opinion of R' Akiva, the fact that he eats other foods afterwards does not "ruin" his mitzvah of afikomen.

As with all such questions in halacha, one should seek the guidance of his or her own Rav as to how to kasher various utensils. If you don't have a rav or he is otherwise unavailable, you can e-mail your specific questions to: rabbi@torahkollel.com or WhatsApp to: +1-917-213-7932.

Invite a talmid chacham to ~~your~~ HIS seder !



DIVREI HA'NAVI - ADDING PROPHET TO LIFE

Our haftarah begins "am zu yatzarti li, tehilasi yesapeiru" - that Hashem made the Jewish nation so that we could sing His praises. Rav Yehonoson Eibeshitz explains that Hashem has many attributes, such as those of the 13 midos of rachamim, but just like a king without a nation is not a king, without k'lal Yisroel to relate to Hashem's midos, they simply wouldn't occupy a space in reality. He notes that the gematria of the word "zu" is 13, not just because there are 13 midos, but also because there are really thirteen shevatim, since Yosef was split into Efraim and Menashe, and while Levi is usually not counted because they don't own land in Eretz Yisroel, shevet Levi still is one of the shevatim.

When we speak of the thirteen midos ha'rachamim, we generally think of the posuk in Ki-Sisa, Hashem, Hashem, Keil Rachum.... in the way we are used to dividing them up, but there is actually a machlokes in the rishonim about how to divide them, at what they are, and the Arizal has yet a different way of dividing them.

Then there is the posuk of Mi Keil komacha in Micha. These are also thirteen midos, and most of the sefer Tomer Devorah is based on explaining them.

However, there are several other sets of thirteenth which we say daily which are interconnected to these midos and it behooves us to give it at least a little thought. B'ezras Hashem, it could at least help us focus a bit more on our davening.

The first set of thirteen we encounter is the beraisa of R' Yishmael in which he lists thirteen methods of exegesis. More than just ways of deducing the oral Torah from the written one, the Malbim and others, explains that there is a definite correlation between these thirteen ways and the thirteen midos ha'rachamim.

Depending on your nusach, it is only a matter of minutes before we reach Boruch sheh'amar where we say the word boruch, thirteen times. Each one of them addresses Hakadosh Boruch Hu and some have suggested that these also correspond to the 13 midos ha'rachamim.

At the conclusion of pesukei d'zimra, we list thirteen ways of praising Hashem: shir, u'shevacha, hallel, v'zimra... The mekubalim say it should be said in a single breath, but the poskim agree that one should not pause between them and these are also likely connected. While it is true that the Mishna Berura counts them as fifteen, he bases himself on the words of the Vilna Gaon, that one should not pause between them, but the Gra himself writes that there are thirteen praises, and the minhag in many yeshivos is that the shaliach tzibur pauses after "malchus" and then picks up "berachos v'hoda'os", in following with the opinion of the Gra.

This is something to think about as we make our way through shacharis every day. B'ezras Hashem, this will help increase our kavana which will in turn arouse the thirteen midos ha'rachamim.



While the Rambam holds that there is a Torah obligation to daven once a day, the Ramban understands that the mitzvah of the Torah is only when one feels an urgent need or finds himself in an eis tzara (difficult time or situation). We generally think of the Rambam as the more machmir approach while the Ramban is more lenient, however if one has already davened shacharis and then becomes aware of r"l an urgent situation, the tables are turned because now he has a Torah obligation to daven according to the Ramban. Rav Shimshon Pinkus suggests that this is not only true of a medical emergency or other urgent situation; anytime a person feels he needs help or siyata dishmaya in any important endeavor or undertaking, calling out to the Ribono shel Olam for assistance is the fulfillment of the mitzvah d'oraisa of tefilah according to the Ramban.