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THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

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CLIFFHANGER

“Do not imitate the practices of the land of Egypt in which you dwelled...” (18:3)

A group of people live on a mountain-top which ends in a sheer cliff and a drop of several thousand feet. One civic-minded fellow, on his own initiative, builds a safety fence to prevent anyone from venturing too close to the edge of the cliff and inadvertently falling off. Would anyone complain that the fence limited his freedom of movement by making it less likely that he plummet off the mountain to his death?

Often we hear those who do not understand the true nature of rabbinic legislation complain that the Rabbis restricted our lives with unnecessary and complicated extra laws and prohibitions, but one who appreciates the seriousness of transgressing a Torah law - the devastating effects that such transgressions have on the *neshama*, one's eternal life, and the world in general - feels much more secure knowing that safety fences have been erected to prevent him from plummeting into a spiritual oblivion.

• Adapted from Rabbi Zev Leff's *Outlooks and Insights*

FROM THE INSIDE OUT

“And he (Aaron) will place the incense on the fire in front of Hashem.” (16:13)

In the first part of the service of Yom Kippur in the *Beis Hamikdash*, the *Kohen Gadol* would burn incense in the Holy-of-Holies. The *Tzedukim* (Sadducees), who denied the authority of the Oral Torah, claimed that the incense should first be placed on the fire in a fire-pan

INSIGHTS

outside the Holy-of-Holies, and only then the *Kohen Gadol* should carry it inside. The Talmud (Yoma 53) cites the above verse as a proof to the contrary: that the incense should only be placed on the fire “in front of Hashem”. In every generation, the Jewish People has its ‘*Tzedukim*’ -

“...every Jew is expected to be holy on his level because he is an individual spark of the holiness of G-d.”

those who wish to introduce novelty into Judaism from what they have seen ‘*outside*’. To ape the secular world and introduce ‘improvements’ ‘adjustments’ and ‘modernizations’ into the sanctity of Yisrael. The Torah sages of every generation fight a constant and bitter battle against these ‘improvements’. Which is **not** to say that the Torah is stuck in a bygone age. On the contrary, the Torah speaks to each generation on every aspect of life; sometimes involving itself in the finest minutiae of science, in order to express how the Halacha views all that pertains to the modern world. But that view is extrapolated **from the inward essence of the Torah outward**, not grafted on from the outside. The Torah addresses the modern world, not in terms of compromise or appeasement, not through pandering to the ideology of the hour, nor to the dictates of the fashions of the world at large. Rather it views the world through intrinsic principles enshrined in immutable criteria.

• Based on *Hadrash V’Ha’Iyun*

FACES OF HOLINESS

“Speak to all of the congregation of the Children of Israel and tell them - You must be Holy.” (19:2)

We often think of holiness as something that only a few exceptional individuals can aspire to. However, the fact that Hashem gave this mitzvah to *Moshe Rabeinu* in the form of ‘Speak to **all** the congregation...’ teaches us that not only the exceptional among us is capable of holiness, but every one of us is **commanded** to be Holy. When the Torah was given on *Har Sinai*, the *Midrash*, commenting on the verse “*And all the people saw the voices*” tells us “*The Voice came out and was divided into many many different voices, and everyone heard according to his strength.*” In other words, when one person heard “*You shall not kill,*” he understood it to mean - “Don’t pick up your ax and murder!” While another understood “*You shall not kill*” to mean that if a dead body is found close to the outskirts of your town, you will be held responsible for not giving him sufficient protection, food and escort, as though you’d killed him. To yet another it meant, don’t embarrass someone in public, because when the blood drains from his face and he turns white, it is as though you had killed him. Each person heard the Voice according to his own strength and unique talents, and similarly every Jew is expected to be holy on his level because he is an individual spark of the holiness of G-d.

• Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin

Hashem instructs the *Kohanim* to exercise extreme care when they enter the *Mishkan*. On Yom Kippur, the *Kohen Gadol* is to approach the holiest part of the *Mishkan* after special preparations and in special clothing. He brings offerings that are unique for Yom Kippur including the two identical goats that are designated by lottery. One is “for Hashem,” and is offered in the Temple, while the other is “for Azazel” in the desert. The Torah states the individual’s obligations on Yom Kippur: *On the 10th day of the seventh month, one must abstain from eating and drinking, anointing, wearing leather footwear, washing, and marital relations.*

Consumption of blood is prohibited. The blood of slaughtered birds and undomesticated beasts must be covered. The people are warned against engaging in the wicked practices that were common in Egypt. Incest is defined and prohibited. Marital relations are forbidden during a women’s monthly cycle. Homosexuality, bestiality and child sacrifice are prohibited. The nation is enjoined to be holy.

Many prohibitions and positive commandments are taught:

Prohibitions: Idolatry; eating offerings after their time-limit; theft and robbery; denial of theft; false oaths; retention of someone’s property; delaying payment to an employee; hating or cursing a fellow Jew (especially one’s parents); gossip; placing physical and spiritual stumbling blocks; perversion of justice; inaction when others are in danger; embarrassing; revenge; bearing a grudge; cross-breeding; wearing a garment of wool and linen; harvesting a tree during its first three years; gluttony and intoxication; witchcraft; shaving the beard and sideburns; and tattooing.

Positive: Awe for parents and respect for the elderly; leaving part of the harvest for the poor; loving others (especially a convert); eating fruits

from a tree’s 4th year in Jerusalem; awe for the Temple; respect for Rabbis, the blind and the deaf.

Family life must be holy. We are warned again not to imitate gentile behavior, lest we lose the Land of Israel. We must observe *kashrus* and thereby maintain our unique and separate status.

OVERVIEW



KAH RIBON... יְהוָה רַבּוֹן
"G-d, the Master..."

"We will sing to You songs and praises in Yerushalayim, the city of beauty."

When the sage Rabbi Yochanan, a man of extraordinary beauty who said of himself that he was the last remnant of the beautiful residents of Yerushalayim, visited his sick colleague Rabbi Elazar, the dark room he lay in was illuminated by the radiance emanating from the skin of the distinguished visitor and Rabbi Elazar burst into tears. Rabbi Yochanan masterfully proved to him that there was no reason to weep over any disappointments he may have experienced in regard to spiritual, material or family achievements but Rabbi Elazar surprised him by explaining that he was weeping at the thought that such extraordinary beauty is destined to wither in the dust. At this both sages wept in unison. (*Berachos* 5b) Maharsha explains that these sages reflected on the fact that Rabbi Yochanan's eventual passing would mean the climax of the beauty of Jerusalem as reflected in its residents and they wept in anticipation of this next stage of the decline of the Holy City. The restored Yerushalayim will regain all of its beauty in people and everything else, and it is there that we shall sing the songs of praise we now sing at our Shabbos meal.



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FAMILY WORKOUT

Yoel <yoel...@ix.netcom.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

My parents are frequently asking me to work out. They are very into this new fad of exercising all of the time but it doesn't appeal to me. I am not out of shape, per se, I just do not lift weights or use our treadmill: They do not interest me. I also think that working out the way they do does not show modesty (by the way, they aren't frum [Observant] but I am trying to be). I know that I should fulfill 'Kibud Av V'Eim' [honor father and mother], and take care of my body, but I think I am in fine condition and get enough exercise walking around school. My parents aren't 'commanding' me to do it, they just advise it to me all the time. What should I do?

Also, thank you very much for providing this service.

Dear Yoel,

One of the big enthusiasts of this 'new exercise fad' is Maimonides. Good health, writes Maimonides, is a prerequisite for mitzvah observance. He promises that anyone following his health program — which includes vigorous daily aerobics — will enjoy good health.

So your parents are right. You should exercise.

But even if they're wrong...You should exercise. You see, your parents gave you life. They fed you. They changed your diaper. And even now, look how concerned they are about you! Who else would 'nudge' you all the time to exercise!

Although you may be in good physical

shape, your attitude towards your parents seems a bit 'flabby.' Honoring parents is not only in the way you act and speak towards your parents. It's also in the way you **think** about them. Although your parents may be 'simple' and 'ordinary,' but in your eyes they should be like prestigious dignitaries.

When the Torah says to honor your parents, it's not talking about some Biblical parent who lived in ancient times: It's talking about someone who may be sitting in front of the TV with a beer and a bag of potato chips! That's the person you're supposed to honor! There's a very important point to realize here. When a child is trying to become observant, it's natural that parents will be

extra sensitive to any of his objections. They may perceive such objections as a revolt against them.

Therefore, it's especially important that you try to compromise as much as possible (within the guidelines of Halacha — e.g., modesty).

When you listen to your mom and dad, they will see in you a son whose Torah values teach him to respect his parents.

By the way, working out with treadmills and weights isn't supposed to be interesting! (Maybe that's why they're called 'dumbbells.')

Listening to music can make exercise easier. Or try something fun, like racquetball or Frisbee. I'd like to write more, but I've got to run...I have a court reserved for my daily squash game, and I can't keep my partner waiting! (He's also an Ohr Somayach Rabbi! Honest!)

So, if till now your favorite exercise has been jogging your memory and climbing the walls, maybe it's time to start bending over backwards and jumping on the bandwagon!

Sources:

- *Maimonides Hilchot Dayot 4*
- *Chayei Adam 63:3*

Yiddle Riddle

Which two Tractates in the Talmud begin with the same Mishnah?

Thanks to Avi Steinhart, Jerusalem

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ONCE HOLY, ALWAYS HOLY

The Torah prohibited offering sacrifices outside of the sanctuary that was designated for that purpose, and warned the offender that he would be liable for *kares* - extirpation. (*Vayikra* 17:1-4)

Before the *mishkan* (sanctuary) was established in the *midbar* (wilderness) a year after the exodus from Egypt it was permissible to offer certain sacrifices on *bamos* (private altars). During the 39 remaining years in the *midbar* it was forbidden to offer sacrifices outside the *mishkan*. Upon entering

Eretz Yisrael the *mishkan* was established in Gilgal where it stood for 14 years while the tribes of Israel conquered and divided the land. During this period the ban on *bamos* was suspended. From there the *mishkan* was transferred to Shiloh where stone replaced the boards that hitherto had been the walls of the sanctuary. During the 369 years in Shiloh the ban on *bamos* was once again in effect. With the destruction of Shiloh the *mishkan* was moved to Nov, and then to Givon, and the ban on *bamos* was once again suspended during the 57 years it was in these two locations.

With the construction of the *Beis Hamikdash* in Yerushalayim a rule was established that nowhere else would a sanctuary be built for offering sacrifices and, of course, *bamos* were banned.

What about today, when we have not yet merited to have a *Beis Hamikdash* - if one offers a sacrifice on a private altar is he considered in violation of the Torah's prohibition or is that ban applicable only when a sanctuary exists?

Rabbi Yochanan and Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish (Reish Lakish) dispute this issue. The view of

Rabbi Yochanan, which is the one that the halacha accepts, is that he is guilty of offering a sacrifice outside the sanctuary even though the sanctuary is not functioning. The reasoning is that the original sanctity invested in the site of the *Beis Hamikdash* (*kedusha rishonah*) is in effect forever, and as far as the site is concerned, sacrifices could be offered there even though there is no Temple. (Halachic authorities have pointed out the halachic - aside from the practical - problems involved in actually doing so. These include an inexact knowledge of who is a bona fide *kohen* and where the site of the altar is, the fact that all *kohanim* are impure from contact with the dead and numerous other problems.) Offering a sacrifice anywhere else is therefore considered a transgression of this prohibition.

• Zevachim 107b

prophetic passage is that the flood waters did descend upon Eretz Yisrael as well and buried human bones deep in the earth, creating a doubt concerning every spot that it may be affected by the *tumah* (ritual impurity) rising from the deeply buried dead.

The practical application of this dispute is how to understand what the *mishnah* means when it speaks of slaughtering the red heifer - whose ashes were used for purifying those who had become impure because of contact with the dead - in the wrong place. Reish Lakish interprets it as referring to any place, even in Eretz Yisrael, which has not been thoroughly checked to assure that there was no danger of it being atop a deeply buried grave from the days of the flood. Rabbi Yochanan rejects this because the flood waters never reached Eretz Yisrael and he explains the *mishnah* as a slaughtering which took place inside the walls of Jerusalem rather than outside them as prescribed by the Torah.

If the flood did not affect Eretz Yisrael according to Rabbi Yochanan why was there a need for Noah to spend so much time and effort building an ark when Hashem could simply have placed him along with the human and animal life He wished to spare in the protected confines of this land? It is eventually established that even Rabbi Yochanan concurs that the residents of Eretz Yisrael died, as is clearly indicated in the Torah (*Bereishis* 7:22), not because of the flood waters but from the deadly heat that radiated even as far as Eretz Yisrael. This conclusion is not reached, however, on the basis of the need for an ark, because, explains Maharsha, even if there would have been an alternative to find a haven in Eretz Yisrael it was Hashem's wish that Noah publicly spend 120 years building the ark in the hope that the sinful spectators would hear from him about the impending deluge and repent their ways (Rashi on *Bereishis* 6:14).

• Zevachim 113

Weekly Daf



Insights, explanations and comments for the seven pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle.

THE UNFLOODED LAND

Did the waters of the Great Flood in the days of Noach descend upon Eretz Yisrael as they did in the rest of the world?

Rabbi Yochanan and Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish (Reish Lakish) have opposing views on this issue based on their conflicting interpretations of a passage in the prophecy of Yechezkel (22:24) which speaks of the status of ritual purity in Eretz Yisrael following the flood. Rabbi Yochanan's interpretation is that there is no need to fear that the flood waters buried the bones of their victims deep in the bowels of the earth in Eretz Yisrael as they did elsewhere. Reish Lakish's understanding of the same

ACHAREI MOS

1. Why does the Torah emphasize that *Parshas Acharei Mos* was taught after the death of Aaron's sons?
2. How long did the first *Beis Hamikdash* exist?
3. What did the *Kohen Gadol* wear when he entered the *Kodesh Kodashim*?
4. How many times did the *Kohen Gadol* change his clothing and immerse in the *mikveh* on Yom Kippur?
5. One of the goats that was chosen by lot went to *Azazel*. What is *Azazel*?
6. After the Yom Kippur service, what is done with the four linen garments worn by the *Kohen Gadol*?
7. What is the penalty of *kares*?
8. Which categories of animals must have their blood covered when they are slaughtered?
9. What is the difference between "*mishpat*" and "*chok*"?
10. May a man marry his wife's sister?

KEDOSHIM

1. Why was *Parshas Kedoshim* said in front of all the Jewish People?
2. Why does the Torah mention the duty to honor one's father before it mentions the duty to honor one's mother?
3. Why is the command to fear one's parents followed by the command to keep Shabbos?
4. The Torah obligates one to leave the "*leket*" for the poor. What is "*leket*"?
5. In *Shemos* 20:13, the Torah commands, "Do not steal." What does the Torah add when it commands in *Vayikra* 19:11, "Do not steal?"
6. In verse 19:13, the Torah commands, "Do not do wrong to your neighbor." To what "wrong" is the Torah referring?
7. When rebuking someone, what sin must one be careful to avoid?
8. How does one give honor to the elderly?
9. What punishment will never come to the entire Jewish People?
10. When the Torah states a death penalty, but doesn't define it more precisely, to which penalty is it referring?



I Didn't Know That!

"You shall be holy... A man shall fear his mother and his father."
(19:2-3)

Whenever Jews preserve the sanctity of family life, the children honor and obey their parents. Whenever the sanctity of family life declines, the honor the children show their parents also declines.

• *Mayana shel Torah*

Bonus Question ?

The *mitzva* of "covering the blood" applies to *Chayos* (e.g., deer) and fowl, but not *beheimos* (e.g., cows). Why not?

Answers on back page

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

ACHAREI MOS

- 16:1 - To strengthen the warning not to enter the *Kodesh Kodashim* except on Yom Kippur.
- 16:3 - 410 years.
- 16:4 - Only the four linen garments worn by an ordinary Kohen.
- 16:4 - Five times.
- 16:8 - A jagged cliff.
- 16:23 - They must be put into *geniza* and not be used again.
- 17:9 - One's offspring die and one's own life is shortened.
- 17:13 - Non domesticated kosher animals and all species of kosher birds.
- 18:4 - A "*mishpat*" conforms to the human sense of justice. A "*chok*" is a law whose reason is not given to us and can only be understood as a

decree from Hashem.

- 18:18 - Yes, but not during the lifetime of his wife.



KEDOSHIM

- 19:2 - Because the fundamental teachings of the Torah are contained in this Parsha.
- 19:3 - Since it is more natural to honor one's mother, the Torah stresses the obligation to honor one's father.

- 19:3 - To teach that one must not violate Torah law even at the command of one's parents.
- 19:9 - "*Leket*" is one or two stalks of grain that are accidentally dropped while harvesting.
- 19:11 - The Torah in *Vayikra* prohibits monetary theft. In *Shemos* it prohibits kidnapping.
- 19:13 - Withholding wages from a worker.
- 19:17 - Causing embarrassment.
- 19:32 - By not sitting in their seat nor contradicting their statements.
- 20:3 - "*Kares*" - the entire Jewish People will never be "cut off."
- 20:10 - Death by "*chenek*" (strangulation).

Recommended Reading List

ACHAREI MOS	187 Covering the Blood	19:18 Love Your Neighbor
Ramban	Sforno	19:30 Shabbos
16:21 The Scapegoat	16:30 Repentance	19:32 Honoring the Elderly
17:2 Meat in the <i>Midbar</i>	17:7 Demons	Sefer Hachinuch
17:7 Demons		227 Swearing Falsely
17:11 Prohibition Against Eating Blood	KEDOSHIM	236 Tale Bearing
Sefer HaChinuch	Ramban	237 Standing Idly
184 The Sanctity of the <i>Mishkan</i>	19:2 Be Holy	238 Hatred
185 Yom Kippur	19:14 Who May Not Be Cursed	239 Rebuke
	19:17 Love and Rebuke	

Bonus Answer!

The blood of *korbanos* was sprinkled on the *mizbe'ach* and therefore could not be covered. Since the the majority of animals offered as *korbanos* were *beheimos*, therefore the Torah never required covering the blood of *beheimos* - even ones not offered as *korbanos*.

• *Sefer Hachinuch 187*

HAFTORAH: Amos 9: 7-15

DOWN ON THE FARM

A "townie", who had never been out of the city, once found himself in the country, watching a farmer plowing up the earth and sowing seed in the furrows. He thought to himself that here was certainly someone who needed urgent psychiatric help: Someone burying perfectly good grain in the earth so that it would rot! He left, and went back to town shortly afterward. Had the "townie" stayed in the country longer, he would have witnessed how each rotting seed had given bloom to many heavy sheaves of wheat which

had been harvested and its grain gathered in sufficiency for the whole year. Had he stayed, he would certainly have understood that the plowing and sowing were only to achieve this end,

"Behold - days are coming - the words of Hashem - when the plower will encounter the reaper..." (9:13)

and there would have been no question in his mind that the farmer was a lunatic. However, since he returned to the city, he had no idea as to the true purpose of the farmer.

In our days, we look around us at the world, and we see the wicked prosper and the righteous in dire adversity. However, we only see the beginning of the process, not its purpose and completion. In the time-to-come, when there will be a complete revelation of Hashem's providential guidance in the world, we will understand the purpose of every single event, however seemingly illogical or unfair: The "ploughing" will be seen through the perspective of the "harvesting" - "when the plower will encounter the reaper..."

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