

OHRNET

SHABBAT PARSHIOT ACHREI-KEDOSHIM · 10 IYAR 5773 - APR. 20, 2013 · VOL. 20 NO. 29

PARSHA INSIGHTS

G-D'S WAITING ROOM

"When you shall come to the Land and you shall plant any food tree, you shall treat its fruit as forbidden; for three years it will be forbidden to you." (19:23)

With macabre humor, Miami Beach is called "G-d's waiting room" because it abounds with retirement homes and hotels for the elderly.

Retirement is a western concept, and one that has come under criticism from doctors in recent years. Studies have found that people who don't retire but stay involved in their work (albeit at a level that befits their age) have longer life expectancies than those who retire and relax into their "golden years".

My father, who passed away well into his ninety-third year, was a person who worked hard throughout his life and never retired. Every morning he would still go into the office and do his work. He went in later and came back earlier, but he still kept his life's routine.

Our Sages teach that G-d conceals our time of death from us so that we should remain active to the last.

The Roman Emperor Hadrian was once passing through the city of Tiberias in Eretz Yisrael. He noticed an elderly man exerting himself, tilling the soil around his fig trees.

"Saba! (Grandfather) Saba!" called out Hadrian, "Why are you working so hard? When you were young you had to toil to make a living, but now it's time to relax. Anyway, you will never live to enjoy the fruits of your labors."

The old man replied, "My task is to try and accomplish whatever my age allows. The Almighty will do as He sees fit."

"Tell me, please, Saba, how old are you?"

"I am a hundred years old."

"A hundred years old! And you actually expect to reap what you sow?"

"If I merit to eat the fruit of my labors, well and good. If not, my efforts will benefit my children just as I have benefited from the toil of my forbears."

Hadrian said, "Hear me, Saba! If you ever eat these figs that you are planting you must surely come and let me know."

In due course, the figs ripened and abounded with fruits. The old man thought to himself, "I must go and tell the emperor."

He filled a basket with figs and traveled to the palace.

"The Emperor wishes to see me," he announced to the guards and they led him before the Hadrian's throne.

"Who are you?" asked Hadrian.

"Does the emperor remember years ago in Tiberias passing by an old man tending his figs? G-d has granted me to eat of those figs that I planted. I have brought the emperor a basketful as a gift."

Hadrian turned to his servants. "Take the figs from this elderly man and refill his basket with gold coins."

His courtiers questioned the emperor's generosity, "Why such a lavish gift for an old Jew?" Hadrian replied to them, "His Creator honored him with longevity. Is it not proper that I too should accord him honor?"

The Creator does not want us to sit and read the newspapers in G-d's waiting room.

• Source: *Vayikra Rabba 25:5*

PARSHA OVERVIEW

ACHAREI MOT

G-d 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 wearing special clothing. He brings offerings unique to Yom Kippur, including two identical goats that are designated by lottery. One is “for G-d” 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 afflict oneself. We 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 woman’s monthly cycle. Homosexuality, bestiality and child sacrifice are prohibited.

KEDOSHIM

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; tattooing. *Positive:* Awe for parents and respect for the elderly; leaving part of the harvest for the poor; loving others (especially a convert); eating in Jerusalem the fruits from a tree’s fourth year; awe for the Temple; respect for Torah scholars, 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 *kashrut*, thus maintaining our unique and separate status.

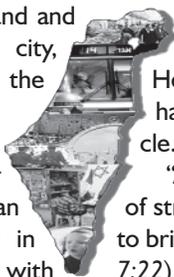
LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

OPHRAIM – THE ORIGINAL “COALS TO NEWCASTLE”

Way before there was a Newcastle in England and anyone bringing coal into this coal-rich city, there was a city in Eretz Yisrael where the famous expression originated.

Ophraim’s exact location is unknown although some historians place it in the eastern part of lower Galilee. But it is known that it was in the center of an area rich in grain, so that straw was plentiful in Ophraim. When the Egyptian sorcerers duplicated with



their black magic the plague of blood which G-d had brought upon the nation that had refused to free its Hebrew slaves, they assumed that Moshe and Aharon had also used sorcery rather than it being a Divine miracle.

“Are you trying to bring straw into Ophraim which is full of straw,” they mockingly said to them, “and are you trying to bring sorcery into Egypt which is full of it!” (*Rashi, Shemot 7:22*)

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PARSHA Q&A ?

ACHAREI MOT

1. Why does the Torah emphasize that *Parshat Acharei Mot* was taught after the death of Aharon's sons?
2. How long did the first *Beit Hamikdash* stand?
3. What did the *Kohen Gadol* wear when he entered the Holy of Holies?
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 *karet*?
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 *Parshat 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 Shabbat?
4. The Torah obligates one to leave the "*leket*" for the poor. What is "*leket*"?
5. In *Shemot* 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 wrong 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 fulfill the command "*v'hadarta p'nei zakein*"?
9. What punishment will never come to the entire Jewish People?
10. When the Torah states a death penalty but doesn't define it precisely, to which type of death penalty is it referring?

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week's Questions!

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

ACHAREI MOT

1. 16:1 - To strengthen the warning not to enter the Holy of Holies except on Yom Kippur.
2. 16:3 - 410 years.
3. 16:4 - Only the four linen garments worn by an ordinary *kohen*.
4. 16:4 - Five times.
5. 16:8 - A jagged cliff.
6. 16:23 - They must be put into *geniza* and not be used again.
7. 17:9 - The person's life is shortened and his offspring die.
8. 17:13 - Non-domestic kosher animals and all species of kosher birds.
9. 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 G-d's decree.
10. 18:18 - Not during his wife's lifetime.

KEDOSHIM

1. 19:2 - Because it contains the fundamental teachings of the Torah.
2. 19:3 - Since it is more natural to honor one's mother, the Torah stresses the obligation to honor one's father.
3. 19:3 - To teach that one must not violate Torah law even at the command of one's parents.
4. 19:9 - "*Leket*" is one or two stalks of grain that are accidentally dropped while harvesting.
5. 19:11 - The Torah in *Vayikra* prohibits monetary theft. In *Shemot* it prohibits kidnapping.
6. 19:13 - Withholding wages from a worker.
7. 19:17 - Causing embarrassment.
8. 19:32 - By not sitting in their seat nor contradicting them.
9. 20:3 - "*Karet*" — the entire Jewish People will never be "cut off."
10. 20:10 - "*Chenek*" (strangulation).

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Love of the Land, What's the Right Thing to Do?, The Human Side of the Story written by Rav Mendel Weinbach, zt"l

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ERUVIN 44 - 50

“A person might not merit to be able to learn Torah from every teacher.”

This is the reasoning given by Rabbi Yossi in a *beraita* on our *daf* for permitting a *kohen* to do something normally forbidden to him. In general, a *kohen* may not pass through a *beit hapras* – a cemetery-like field that has the status of *tumah* according to Rabbinical law. However, to learn Torah from a teacher in a foreign land the *kohen* may traverse this field even if there exists a Torah teacher in his own locale.

A person may learn Torah better from one rabbi teacher than from others, if his teacher’s Torah knowledge is more organized, clear and taught in a concise manner (Rashi). This “edge” is reason to permit the otherwise forbidden action of the *kohen* according to Rabbi Yossi. Although Rabbi Yehuda disagrees and does not permit the *kohen* to travel through a *beit hapras* if a Torah teacher is present in his own location, the halacha is according to Rabbi Yossi (*Shulchan Aruch Yorah De’ah 372:1*).

• *Eruvin 47 a-b*

“A rose by any other name would smell as sweet”, wrote Shakespeare. This shows the lack of meaning and significance of the object’s name. When *Chazal* coined a name for an item, however, it carries great meaning and significance – including halachic ramifications.

An “*Eruv*” for a courtyard is needed to allow all the people who dwell in the courtyard to carry from their homes into the courtyard and back. This is accomplished by the mitzvah of each household placing a loaf of bread in one of the homes, which indicates that they are in a sense all partners in that one dwelling and therefore the yard is the domain that belongs to that common dwelling.

What happens if one person agrees to place his loaf in that home, but will not allow anyone from another home to eat it? Rav Yehuda says in the name of Shmuel in our *gemara* that his “*Eruv*” loaf does not help fulfill the mitzvah and permit carrying into the yard.

This is due to an examination of the meaning of the word “*Eruv*”. The word “*Eruv*” means “mixture”, which signifies that the domains of the various tenants are considered mixed together and combined. The word “*Eruv*” also means “sweet and pleasant”. A person who is unwilling to share his food with his neighbors is not deemed as sharing the same home with them, and is not living with them as partners in a pleasant and sweet manner (Rashi).

• *Eruvin 49b*

@ OHR *Profiles of Ohr Somayach Alumni and Students*

written by Daniel Keebler

Rabbi Zelig Mandel
Passaic, New Jersey
Community Rabbi and Sofer
Ohr Lagolah Alumnus



More than 20 years after his Ohr Lagolah training, Rabbi Zelig Mandel proudly states “I still refer to my notes from Rabbi Zev Leff’s classes to this day!” Rabbi Mandel says his Ohr Lagolah training, only in its second year at the time, was critical to his success as a Jewish leader. For 18 years Rabbi

Mandel led a community of *ba’alei teshuva* in Morristown, NJ. Most of the families were “drop-outs” of various groups who were in search of authentic Judaism. Rabbi Mandel stood up as captain of their ship, sailing them through the Jewish life cycles and holidays, answering questions, and organizing Torah programs. His mottos? “There’s no one that can’t become a *ba’al teshuva*,” and “Every *ba’al teshuva* means generations.” Rabbi Mandel continues to teach Torah as do his sons – four teach in *yeshivot* and one is in *kollel*.

WORTH TO COME

From: Jack

*Dear Rabbi,
Maybe my wife is more spiritual than I am, but she's always encouraging me to be observant because of the World to Come, whereas I say that if I'm going to do something it's because it will benefit us in the here and now. Would you please help clarify this for us?*

Dear Jack,

In a way, you're both right; but also both wrong. You're both right because the Torah lifestyle is beneficial for a person both in this world and the next. But you both could improve on your concept as to why we do so. Ideally, it's not for the benefit or reward in either, but rather we observe the Torah because it's G-d's will that we do so.

There's nothing wrong with being aware of the benefits and beauty of the Torah's teachings and instructions in both the material and spiritual planes, and each of you should perhaps work on a more balanced appreciation of that, but the motivation behind it all should really be more about doing things for G-d.

Your question reminds me of a story:

A man of very little means once came to the Tzaddik Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heshil from Apta, explaining that he had no money to marry off his daughter. The rabbi asked how much he needs and how much he has. He answered that he needs 1000 rubles and has only one. The rabbi, gazing afar, thought for a minute and then told the man to return to his hometown and that all would be well, instructing him to take advantage of the first business opportunity that comes his way.

On the way home he stopped in a tavern where there were Jewish gem dealers examining their wares at one of the tables. Curious to see such wealth, the man stood by and gasped at the beauty and value of the stones. Seeing the poor man, one of the merchants mockingly asked if he'd like to do some business. Overcoming his obvious inclination to

decline, yet recalling the rabbi's words, he replied, "Yes".

With great delight, the scoffer jeered, "And just how much money do you have for the deal?" "One ruble", he replied. At which the dealers broke out in uncontrollable laughter. The leader of the group then asserted with feigned seriousness, "You know what, I have a deal for you. I'll sell you my portion in the World to Come for your ruble". To his astonishment, the poor man agreed, and with the cynical support of his friends, they wrote out a bill of sale which they signed with witnesses.

After a time, the gem dealer's wife came in the tavern, and eager to let her in on the joke, he told her the whole story, accompanied by the merriment of all - except for that of his wife. "Do you mean to say that you forwent the only good thing that you have, no matter how small that portion may be? I refuse to be married to such a wicked person with no place in the world to come!" And with that she stormed out of the tavern declaring her desire to divorce.

It suddenly dawned on him what a predicament he was in, and now the jeers of the tavern were directed toward him. Realizing he had no other option, he approached the poor man requesting to tear up the "worthless" document. But the man insisted that the bill of sale was binding. The dealer then offered to buy back his World to Come, first at a ridiculously low price, until he agreed to pay the pauper's demand of 1000 rubles, which he explained he needed to marry off his poor daughter. When the merchant's wife heard that her husband paid such a handsome sum for his World to Come while also enabling a poor Jewish maiden to wed, she withdrew her intention to divorce.

After hearing about the rabbi's role in this odd chain of events, she traveled to him in order to meet first-hand the person who orchestrated this great thing. Once there, she asked the rabbi, "Was my husband's World to Come really worth so much that it generated 1000 rubles dowry for a poor Jewish girl?" To which the rabbi replied, "When he sold it, it wasn't even worth the poor man's ruble; but when he bought it back, it became worth even more than the 1000 rubles he paid!"

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CALLS IN THE MIDDLE OF A MEETING

Question:

After a long wait for a meeting with a public official I finally got a chance to present my case face-to-face. No sooner did I begin my well prepared presentation than his phone rang and he completely turned away from our conversation to speak with the caller. This most disconcerting disturbance repeated itself several time during the course of our meeting. What was the right thing for me to do?

Answer:

The official you met with is apparently a very busy man

and you must appreciate that other people aside from yourself are anxious to speak with him during his office hours. If you find that such calls disrupt your meeting with him, you should make a polite request at the outset of your meeting that he instruct the secretary to hold all calls for a short span of time or that he remove his receiver. Such a request will not only eliminate the disruption but will also impress the official with the seriousness of your meeting.

Experience has shown that an official who turns down such a request is not particularly interested in what you have to say, so why waste your time anyway?

THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE STORY

THE SECRET OF SATISFACTION

“Are you satisfied with your life?” This challenging question was recently put to people in Israel by researchers from the Central Bureau of Statistics studying volunteering among citizens of the country.

Among the volunteers 41% stated that they were “very satisfied” with their lives as compared to only 26% expressing such satisfaction among the non-volunteers.

There were two other interesting facts emerging from the study. Jews were ahead of all other ethnic groups with

17% of the Jewish population from age 20 and upwards involved in volunteer activity, compared with 14% among the Druze and 9% of the Christian and Muslim populations.

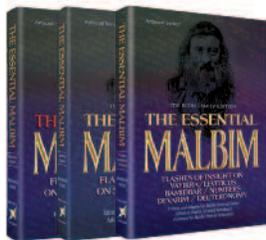
Concerning the breakdown within the Jewish population, 36% of the volunteers were very Orthodox, 27% were religiously observant, 14% traditional and 13% secular.

A powerful reminder that helping others goes hand-in-hand with a religious way of life.

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