

Toronto Torah

Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshiyot Acharei Mot-Kedoshim

10 Iyar, 5777/May 6, 2017

Vol. 8 Num. 32

**This issue is sponsored by the families of Irwin, Jim and David Diamond
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לזכר נשמת אמינו מורתינו רצא בת ר' עזריאל ז"ל

It's Not Me, It's You

Adam Friedmann

Two weeks ago we read about the untimely deaths of Nadav and Avihu. The Torah describes their bringing "foreign fire" into the Mishkan "before G-d" in the midst of the inaugural days of sacrifices there. (Vayikra 10:1) Consequently, "a fire emerged from before G-d," consuming them.

Rabbi David Tzvi Hoffman, in his commentary to the story, illuminates the crux of Nadav and Avihu's sin. Their motivations were pure. In the midst of the joy and spiritual high of the inauguration of the Mishkan, they wished to offer something of their own to demonstrate their feelings of closeness with G-d. Taking fire pans filled with incense into the *kodesh hakodashim*, the Mishkan's inner sanctum, was an *avodah* of their own design, enabled by their special position as *kohanim*. G-d's response was complete impartiality. Rashbam explains that the fire which burned up Nadav and Avihu was the very same described just one sentence before their story begins. Namely, the fire which emerged from within the Mishkan to miraculously burn up the communal sacrifices of the day. Nadav and Avihu were in the wrong place at the wrong time. Their personalized *avodah* was ignored, and they were caught up in G-d's response to the greater community's service.

In this week's parshah, G-d prescribes an alternative method for Aharon to safely accomplish that which his sons had attempted. There is a way for a *kohen* to enter the *kodesh hakodashim*

and offer the *ketoret*. However, this closeness can only be achieved in the context of a complex series of other offerings. "With this shall Aharon come into the Sanctuary: with a young bull for a sin-offering and a ram for a burnt-offering. He shall don a sacred linen tunic..." (Vayikra 16:3-4 modified from Artscroll translation) Before entering the holiest of places, Aharon must first seek atonement for himself, for his family, and for all of Israel. This can be viewed as a kind of preparation. Aaron must be totally free of sin if he is to survive his encounter. Not only this, but all of *klal Yisrael* must be equally clean. A midrash reflects this perspective: "When the *kohen gadol* enters the *kodesh hakodashim* he holds bundles of mitzvot in his hands. In the merit of the Torah... in the merit of Shabbat...in the merit of circumcision...and in the merit of all of Israel." (Vayikra Rabbah 21:6)

Perhaps, however, there is another possible explanation for why G-d required this ritual for entering the *kodesh kodashim*. We know that this service is the basis for the *avodah* of Yom Kippur. Maybe the process described is not about preparing Aharon. Maybe the entire purpose is just atonement, in the course of which Aharon incidentally must enter the *kodesh hakodashim* and offer the *ketoret*. Read in this way, the description of Aharon's *avodah* contrasts starkly with the story of Nadav and Avihu. The latter acted with pure motivations, but ones which were ultimately personal. The former achieves the closeness to G-d sought by

his sons, but, paradoxically, only when he does not seek that closeness for himself. It is only in the course of serving the greater community, and on account of that service, that the *Kohen Gadol* is able to do what he does. As a private citizen, he does not merit this.

What is highlighted by our parshah is a fascinating aspect of Jewish spiritual leadership. Often, it is not the spiritual greatness of our leaders which makes them fit to serve the community. Rather, the opposite is the case. It is the deep desire to serve the community which sometimes elicits from G-d a more direct line of communication. It is precisely the Moshe who was humbler than any person on earth (Bamidbar 12:3), and who went out to see his brothers, deeply felt their suffering, and could not help but act, (Shemot 2: 11-15) who achieved the level of face-to-face interaction with G-d. (Bamidbar 12:8)

The message of the parshah is also a challenge. We ought not say, "I am not knowledgeable, wise, or holy enough to contribute to the community." If one sees a need, and truly cares, permission may just be granted to enter even the holiest of spaces.

afriedmann@torontotorah.com

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Eim HaBanim Semeichah
Rabbi Yissachar Shlomo Teichtal
First printed in Hungary 1943

Who is the author?

Rabbi Yisachar Shlomo Teichtal was born in Hungary, in 1885, to a Chasidic family. After his ordination, he became Av Beit Din and Rosh Yeshiva in Pishitian, Czechoslovakia – a position he held for twenty years. During this time he published two volumes of responsa, entitled *Sechar Sachir*. In 1942, after avoiding Nazi mass deportation by hiding with his family, he left Czechoslovakia and travelled to the still unoccupied Hungary, where he wrote the book *Eim HaBanim Semeichah* (“the childrens’ mother is happy”, from Psalms 113).

When Hungary was invaded by the Nazis in 1944, the Teichtal family tried to escape back to Slovakia, but they were captured and transferred to Auschwitz, and later to Mauthausen. On the train to Mauthausen, on the 10th of Shevat, 5705 (January 24, 1945), Rabbi Teichtal spoke up against a Ukrainian guard who withheld a portion of bread from one of the Jews.

The guard, together with his German officer, murdered the Rabbi in front of his children.

Rabbi Teichtal’s books were republished by his surviving children, and *Eim HaBanim Semeichah* became a well-known book in the Religious Zionist world.

Why was the book written?

Rabbi Teichtal wrote the book out of a strong and urgent conviction. Prior to the war, he was an adherent of the Munkaczzer Rebbe, Rabbi Chaim Elazar Spira. In accordance with the Rabbi’s views, he opposed Zionism. The horrible events he witnessed during the war caused him to rethink his position, a process which is reflected in the text of *Eim HaBanim Semeichah*. Therefore, the book is not written in an orderly and logical fashion but as a dialectic, reflecting the author’s swinging thoughts. As the book proceeds, it shifts to a strong polemical tone, explicitly declaring the goal of convincing Chareidi Hungarian Jews to support the Zionist cause.

Though the book was written more

than seventy years ago, many of its messages are still very relevant, and two English translations were produced in recent years.

What are the book’s main messages?
 Rabbi Teichtal’s book carries three main messages:

- The primary importance of settling Eretz Yisrael: Rabbi Teichtal urges his readers to move there. He develops a halachic basis for this requirement at length, and he quotes *aggadic* passages about the benefits of *aliyah*.
- The need to be active in the bringing about of the redemption: Rabbi Teichtal sees the responsibility for initiating the redemption as lying with the people, and he blames the passiveness of the Jews for their inability to escape the harm befalling them.
- The unity of Am Yisrael: Finally, Rabbi Teichtal demands of Torah-observant Jews to work together with the non-observant, seeing the ability to cooperate as a condition that must be met for the redemption to arrive.

bweintraub@torontotorah.com

Israel’s Chief Rabbis: *Rabbi Shaul Yisraeli*

Yaron Perez

Rabbi Shaul Yisraeli
5669 (1909) – 5755 (1995)
Chief Rabbi, Kfar haRoeh 1937-1964

Rabbi Shaul Yisraeli was born in Belarus; as a child, he studied in “underground” yeshivot because of the Communist ban on Torah study. In 1934, with the aid of Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook, Rabbi Yisrael ascended to Israel and began to learn in Yeshivat Mercaz haRav. He was one of the outstanding and close students of Rabbi Kook. In 1937, at the age of 26, Rabbi Yisraeli was ordained by Rabbi Yechiel Michel Charlop and Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer, and shortly thereafter he was appointed as the first Chief Rabbi of Kfar haRoeh - the first *moshav* to appoint a Chief Rabbi. As Rabbi of a nascent agricultural community, Rabbi Yisraeli addressed many questions regarding agricultural mitzvot, beginning a long involvement in this field of halachah. Rabbi Yisraeli taught in Yeshivat Kfar haRoeh from the time of its establishment, as well as Midrashit Noam, a high school offering Torah study and general studies.

In 1952, Rabbi Yisraeli replaced Rabbi Zvi Pesach Frank as a member of the Chief Rabbinate’s Rabbinical Council, and in 1958 he began to teach in Yeshivat Mercaz haRav. After Rabbi Zvi Yehudah Kook passed away, he was appointed to lead Yeshivat Mercaz haRav beside Rabbi Avraham Shapira. In 1986, Rabbi Yisraeli was among the founders of Eretz Hemdah’s Kollel for Dayanut [rabbinical court judges]. Rabbi Yisraeli was awarded the Israel Prize for Jewish Studies in 1991.

Rabbi Yisraeli published many books and articles on a broad array of topics. He specialized in mitzvot related to Israeli agriculture, as well as the blending of Torah and government expressed in his Zionist outlook.

In his article, *In Iyar the World’s Radiance is Renewed*, Rabbi Yisraeli wrote of our era:

The days of *sefirah*, established by the Torah between Pesach and Shavuot, were originally marked for days of joy and preparation, readying from the “time of our freedom” for “the time of the presentation of our Torah”, demonstrating the proximity of continuity of the two freedoms – national freedom with personal freedom – “for there is no free person like one who is involved in Torah”.

When the proximity was broken, when we were exiled and distanced from our land during the destruction, the days of joy were converted to grief. Our sages depicted this with the death of the students of Rabbi Akiva, who were punished for failure to act respectfully toward each other... G-d left a remnant, the day of the *hilula* of His great student, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai... who needed to flee and hide in a cave... For two thousand years, our life has been like his, in a cave, with neither light nor sun, surviving miraculously by carobs and a stream of water...

We have now merited the great era in which we live. In the month of Iyar, the world’s radiance is renewed, and the connection between the two holidays is renewed. Pesach receives its full meaning with Jewish independence. The fire which burned and illuminated the darkness continues to burn, creating the great light of redemption. We are no longer an exiled nation dependent upon the hard heart of every nation and murderer; “the nation rises like a lion, and is elevated like a lioness”. Not only rising, but elevation and exaltation.

yperez@torontotorah.com

Biography
Rabbi Asher Weiss
Rabbi Jonathan Ziring

Rabbi Asher Weiss is a leading *posek* (halachic authority) living in Jerusalem. He was born in the United States and grew up in Borough Park, Brooklyn. His family moved to Israel when he was a young teenager, specifically relocating to Kiryat Sanz in Netanya. His family were Sanzer Chassidim, and he studied with and was close to the Sanz-Klausenberg Rebbe, Rabbi Yekutiel Yehuda Halberstam.

He has founded and held the position of Rosh Yeshiva for several yeshivot, including Keter Yisrael of the Sadigura Chassidim and Machane Avraham in Bnei Brak. He is currently Rabbi of a synagogue in Ramot Gimel, Rosh Yeshiva of *Kollel Dayanut Darkei Hora'ah* (for training rabbinical judges), *posek* for Shaarei Tzedek Hospital, and the author of tens of books on Talmud, Halachah, holidays, and philosophy, all entitled *Minchat Asher*.

The brothers of Rabbi Weiss are also well respected rabbis, including Rabbi Yehonatan Binyamin Weiss who is an Av Beit Din in Montreal.

Although Rabbi Weiss is Chassidic, he studies Talmud using many of the methods of the non-Chassidic yeshiva world. He draws on his various backgrounds, both cultural and intellectual, in his writing, speaking, lectures, and halachic decisions. He is known for the clarity of his presentation, as well as his encyclopedic grasp of Torah sources. He is widely accepted by and teaches throughout many communities, both Charedi and Dati Leumi, both Israeli and American/English-speaking, and often travels to the United States to teach there.

Many of his shiurim can be found at <http://www.torahbase.org/>. His responsa were reviewed in Toronto Torah, here: <http://bit.ly/2qlXhDu>

jjziring@torontotorah.com

Torah and Translation
Laws of Pricing in a Modern Economy
Rabbi Asher Weiss, Minchat Asher III 107
Translated by Rabbi Jonathan Ziring

בהרבה דברים הנמכרים בזה"ק קשה מאד לקבוע מחיר ואף לקבוע את גבול העליון והתחתון אי אפשר הדקדוק, דהמסחר כ"כ דינמי ולעולם יש מי שימכור בזול כמעט במחירי הפסד ולעומתו מי שמוכר ביוקר וכיון שבקל יגיע אדם מקצה הארץ עד קצהו בזמן מועט, והתקשרות מפותחת כ"כ ובידו אף להזמין דרך הטלפון ובמאמצעים נוספים משלוח לביתו ומשו"כ קשה לקבוע מחיר מוגדר...

בכלכלה המודרנית מקובל שכל אחד מוכר במחיר המשתלם לו, והלוקח הוא זה ששוקר את השוק כדי לקבוע את המחיר המתאים לו. כיוון שבדיקה זו מוטלת על הקונה ולא על המוכר, יתכן שהרי זה כאילו התנו במפורש "על מנת שאין לך עלי אונאה." אמנם מבואר בשו"ע שלתנאי כזה יש תוקף רק בשידוע הפער בין מחיר המוצר למחיר השוק שלו. אף על פי כן, נראה לכאורה, שבזמננו אין צורך בזה, כיוון שזו הדרך המקובלת במסחר... נראה שאף הרמ"א יודה לבית יוסף שבזמן הזה למוצרים רבים אין בכלל "שער", כיון שערכם של מוצרים משתנה "חדשים לבקרים" לפי ההיצע והביקוש...

ובסגנון אחר נראה לפימש"כ במק"א דכל ענייני מו"מ סתמא דמילתא דהכל נעשה על דעת המנהג. וכיון שאין מקובל בזמנינו בשום מקום בעולם לדרוש מן המכור פיצוי וביטול מקח משום אונאת שתות ויתר משתות על מנת כן קנה. ומאידך גיסא במוצרים שבפיקוח ממשלתי נראה דיש אונאה אף בפחות משתות וכמו שכתב הערוך השלחן.

[Preface: Under the law of *onaah*, sales may be reversed if the price paid deviates from the standard price by a certain margin, without the parties' awareness.]

For many things sold nowadays it is very difficult to establish a set price; even an upper and lower limit cannot be established exactly. The economy is so dynamic, and there is always someone who will sell cheaper, almost at a loss, as well as one who will sell at an expensive price. Since one can go from one end of the earth to the other in little time, and communication is so advanced and one can order things to his house by phone or other means, establishing a set price is hard...

In a modern economy it is accepted that everyone sells at the price that it is profitable for him, and it is the buyer who scans the market to establish the price that works for him. Since this checking is incumbent on the buyer and not the seller, it is possible that it is as if they had stipulated explicitly [that this sale is] "on condition that there is no [prohibition] of overcharging for me." In truth, it is clear in Shulchan Aruch that such a condition is only valid when the gap between the actual price of the item and the market price is known. Nevertheless, it seems that in our times there is no need for this, as this is the accepted practice in business... It seems that even Rama would agree to Beit Yosef that nowadays, many products don't have a "price" at all, as the value of items changes "and is new every morning", based on supply and demand...

In another formulation, it seems, based on what we have written elsewhere, that all business is assumed to be carried out according to popular custom. Since nowadays it is just not accepted anywhere in the world to demand repayment and the voiding of a sale because of a one-sixth or more overcharge, it was on this condition that the item was bought. ... On the other hand, for items [whose prices are determined by] government oversight, it seems that there is *onaah* even for less than one-sixth, as Aruch HaShulchan writes.

In Devarim 24:15-16, Moshe instructs the Jews, “You shall not cheat an employee, poor and needy, from among your brethren or from you stranger in your land, at your gates. You shall pay him on time, before the sun sets, for he is a poor and he sets his soul on it – lest he cry out to G-d regarding you, and you shall be guilty of sin.”

This teaches that we are obligated to pay employees, as well as those who rent out their animals or tools, on time. Those who stop work before sunset must be paid by sunset; those who work until sunset must be paid by the end of that night. Those who work at night and stop before dawn must

be paid by dawn, and those who work all night must be paid by the end of the next day. (Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat 339:3-4)

Sefer haChinuch codifies this as the Torah’s 588th mitzvah, and the Torah’s protection applies to both Jewish and Noachide employees. (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Sechirut 11:1-2)

Separately, Vayikra 19:13 warns, “You shall not leave an employee’s wages with you until morning.” Sefer haChinuch lists this as a separate prohibition, violated when one delays payment.

torczyner@torontotorah.com

Weekly Highlights: May 6 – May 13 / 10 Iyar – 16 Iyar

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
May 5-6				
After hashkamah	Adam Friedmann	Parshah Analysis	Clanton Park	
Before Pirkei Avot	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Daf Yomi	BAYT	Rabbi’s Classroom
After minchah	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Gemara: Nimrod’s House	BAYT	Simcha Suite
Sun. May 7				
8:45 AM	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Responsa	BAYT	
8:45 AM	R’ Josh Gutenberg	Contemporary Halachah	BAYT	On hiatus until June
9:15 AM	R’ Shalom Krell	Book of Shemuel II	Associated North	Rm. 206; Hebrew
6:00 PM Dinner 7:00 PM Shiur	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Joy and Pleasure in the Torah of R’ Avraham Price	Shaarei Shomayim	Free of charge
Mon. May 8				
7:00 PM	Adam Friedmann	Jewish Philosophy	Terraces of Baycrest	
8:30 PM	Adam Friedmann	Gemara Arvei Pesachim	Clanton Park	Men
Tue. May 9				
1:30 PM	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Ezra: Ezra’s Prayer	Shaarei Shomayim	
Wed. May 10				
10:00 AM	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Jewish Love, Week 2: Marriage	Beth Emeth	There is a fee; info@torontotorah.com
12:30 PM	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Modern Markets 1: Price Controls	Zeifmans LLP 201 Bridgeland Ave	Lunch served; RSVP to rk@zeifmans.ca
2:30 PM	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Narratives of Vayikra	carolleser@rogers.com	
8:00 PM	Adam Friedmann	Why do we do that?	Shaarei Tefillah	
8:30 PM	Yaron Perez	Parshah: הפרשה ואני	Shaarei Shomayim	
Thu. May 11				
1:30 PM	R’ Mordechai Torczyner	Shoftim: After Yiftach	49 Michael Ct.	Women
Fri. May 12				
10:30 AM	R’ Jonathan Ziring	Ribbit	Yeshivat Or Chaim	Advanced

This week, our Men’s Beit Midrash for University Students at Yeshivat Or Chaim offers:
 Sundays 10:00 AM Gemara Chullin, Rabbi Aaron Greenberg, 11:00 AM Kuzari, Rabbi Elan Mazer
 Tuesday 8:30 AM, Nefesh haChaim, Rabbi Jonathan Ziring
 Friday 8:30 AM, Yeshayah, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

Our Women’s Beit Midrash for University Students at Ulpanat Orot offers:
 Monday 9:30 AM to Noon, Middot haNefesh through Chassidut, Mrs. Ellieza Perez
 Tuesday 9:30 AM to Noon, Gemara Chullin / Hilchot Kashrut, Mrs. Ora Ziring
 Wednesday 9:30 AM to Noon, Hilchot Bein Adam laChaveiro, Mrs. Ora Ziring
 Thursday 9:30 AM to Noon, Netivot Shalom on the Parshah, Mrs. Ellieza Perez