

# Toronto Torah

Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Shemini

29 Nisan, 5778/April 14, 2018

Vol. 9 Num. 29

This issue of Toronto Torah is sponsored by Esther and Craig Guttman and Family  
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**By Invitation Only**

**Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**

Perhaps the most powerful sensory experience in Judaism is the korban; surrounded by the sights and scents of spiritual devotion and ritual sacrifice, we immerse ourselves in an environment which enforces dedication to G-d. However, on two occasions that experience is augmented by a particular sound: the formal recitation of a set of biblical instructions.

- The first occasion was the eighth day of the *miluim*, when the kohanim initiated their service in the Mishkan. As the Talmud (Yoma 5b) explains, these one-time rituals were accompanied by a public recitation of the relevant biblical passages.
- The second occasion is Yom Kippur; the annual rituals of the Kohen Gadol are accompanied by a public reading of their biblical instructions. [See Mishnah Yoma 7:1, Rashi Yoma 68b *ba lo*, and Meshech Chochmah Bamidbar 19:20.]

Why do we require these readings? What do they add?

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (Vayikra 11) suggested, "Reciting this portion established these rituals as fulfillment of Divine commands. No element was invented by a human heart and its subjective feelings; the totality of these actions was dedicated to fulfillment of a Divine command." However, this explanation introduces a glaring question: Would not every korban, and perhaps every mitzvah, benefit from such readings?

### The Golden Calf

We might answer based on Rabbi Yehudah HaLevi's explanation of the

sin of the Golden Calf. (Kuzari 1:97) Per Rabbi HaLevi, the Jews' central sin was not idolatry; we intended to serve G-d. Our sin was in creating ritual in service of Hashem, sans Divine order: "Their sin was in making a form, which had been prohibited to them, and ascribing the Divine element to that which they had made with their hands and desire, **without a Divine command.**" This follows the foundational thesis of Rabbi Yehudah HaLevi's *Kuzari*, that the legitimacy of all ritual stems exclusively from the underlying Divine commission.

According to many early authorities, the Mishkan's initiation atoned for the Golden Calf; Ramban (Vayikra 9:3) even suggested that the rituals of the eighth day were only added after the sin of the Golden Calf, for this purpose. Yom Kippur, too, is associated with forgiveness for the Golden Calf; the first Yom Kippur was the day when the Jews completed their atonement and Moshe brought the second set of Tablets. In this light, perhaps the rituals of the eighth day, and of Yom Kippur, specifically need the explicit Divine command in order to demonstrate that we have learned our lesson and placed the error of the Golden Calf behind us.

### Invitation and Orientation

Alternatively, perhaps we recite these verses to establish a sense of mission.

Since Creation, sacred space has been defined by restrictions; one may not barge across the boundaries of a holy area. Adam and Chavah did not enter Eden; they were placed there by G-d, and when they were removed it was

with the institution of an angelic border patrol. (Bereishit 2-3) Avraham and Sarah left Aram toward Canaan on their own, but they entered the Holy Land only upon the command of *Lech lecha*. (Ramban Bereishit 12:1) Moshe stood atop Mount Sinai outside of the Divine cloud, until he was summoned to enter. [Shemot 24:16-18, and see Shabbat 89a, Avot d'Rabbi Natan 1] The Jews did not enter Israel until G-d invited them in. (Yehoshua 1:2) Here, too, the kohanim could not enter the Mishkan for their initiation, and the Kohen Gadol may not enter the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur each year, without the invitation expressed in the biblical text describing their roles and service. One enters Divine space not out of a sense of ownership and entitlement, but with an awareness that our presence before G-d is by Divine commission alone.

The same message of mission pertains in our own lives. Entering even the most mundane space with an arrogant swagger is offensive to G-d. (Berachot 43b) Upon entering a synagogue we recite Tehillim 5:8, acknowledging that we enter G-d's House by Divine generosity. (Shu"t Maharshal 64) And as a rule, one may not ascend to the Torah for an aliyah unless called. (Orach Chaim 139:3) The invitation humbles and orients us.

May we, like the kohanim of the *miluim* and like the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, go about our lives with humble attention to the Divine summons which defines our mission, and so merit what Moshe promised, "The glory of G-d will be revealed upon you." (Vayikra 11:6)

## OUR BEIT MIDRASH

**ROSH BEIT MIDRASH**

RABBI MORDECHAI TORCZYNER

**SGAN ROSH BEIT MIDRASH**

RABBI JONATHAN ZIRING

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**WOMEN'S BEIT MIDRASH**

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**הורשתם את הארץ וישבתם בה (במדבר לו)**  
**Marking the State of Israel's 70<sup>th</sup> Year!**

**Israeli Landmarks: Ammunition Hill**

**Adam Friedmann**

Located in the northern part of East Jerusalem, *Givat HaTachmoshet* (Ammunition Hill) was a strategic site conquered by Israel during the Six Day War. The hill is located on what is today the northwest side of the Mount Scopus area of Jerusalem.

The site was originally developed by the British in the 1930's during the Mandate era. It consisted of a police academy with an adjoining artillery storage facility. The two were attached by a series of fortified trenches. The trenches connected a series of bunkers as well as one large underground bunker.

After the British left, during the War of Independence, the Jordanian army seized control of the site. This became a strategic issue for the nascent State of Israel after the war because it enabled the Jordanians to cut off Mount Scopus and the facilities there, including Hadassah Hospital and Hebrew University, from the rest of the Israeli settlement in Jerusalem. It was clear

that sooner or later the IDF would need to attempt a raid on the position. This battle ultimately occurred on June 6, 1967. An aerial bombing was ruled out because of civilians who lived in close proximity. Instead, the plan was to concentrate artillery fire on the site and send in ground troops. At the time, the Jordanian installation was manned by a company of 150 soldiers. Israeli intelligence erred in assuming that there was only a single platoon guarding the hill, and therefore, even though the goal was to overwhelm the Jordanians, the IDF sent in a reinforced company from the 55<sup>th</sup> Paratroopers brigade which was only roughly the same size as the defending force. The result was a difficult and bloody battle. Outgunned, the IDF soldiers were trapped in the network of trenches and had to fight slowly to make their way to the underground bunker where the Jordanian soldiers were waiting. After a gruelling, four hour battle, the IDF emerged victorious. In all, 36 IDF soldiers and 71 Jordanians lost their lives. The

battle is recognized to this day as critical to the overall outcome of the Six Day War.

After the battle ended, the surviving soldiers built a makeshift memorial for the fallen out of rocks and helmets. That small gesture later grew into a permanent memorial and museum at the site, built in 1975. 182 olive trees now grow on Ammunition Hill, one for each soldier who fell in Jerusalem during the Six Day War. Today, the site attracts over 200,000 visitors a year. It is used for the induction ceremonies for IDF paratroopers, as well as for the official commemoration ceremonies on Yom Yerushalayim.

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**The Zionist Idea: The Admor of Husiatyn**

**Yaron Perez**

Born in Romania in 1878, Rabbi Yaakov Friedman was a descendant of Chasidic leaders; his father, Rabbi Yitzchok Friedman was the Bohusher Rebbe, and his grandfather Rabbi Yisroel Friedman was the founder of Ruzhiner Chasidut. While he was still a child, it was arranged that Rabbi Yaakov would marry his second cousin, Chayah Sarah Rachel, daughter of Rabbi Yisrael Friedman, the Admor of Husiatyn.

World War I led to the migration of the families of Rabbi Yaakov and Yisrael Friedman to Vienna. There, along with other Chasidic leaders, they established a Chasidic and Zionist organization, the Association for the Settlement of the Land of Israel. Their goal was to encourage aliyah to Israel, and to build up the land itself. In 1918, the Association joined with Mizrachi. Responding to criticism for his alliance with non-observant Zionists, Rabbi Yaakov Friedman wrote, "Our view has always been that we must join in building... For one cannot influence the spiritual structure if one does not join in the material structure... And if they do not make concessions to us, it is a sign that we are also not entirely in order." (Oholei Yaakov, pp. 248-249)

In 1937, Rabbi Yaakov Friedman moved to Israel; he and his father-in-law established a Beit Midrash in Tel Aviv. When Rabbi Yisrael Friedman passed away in 1949, Rabbi Yaakov became the Admor of Husiatyn. Eventually he became known by the title "Oholei Yaakov", the name of the book which collected the Hebrew talks he delivered at *seudah shlishit*.

The Oholei Yaakov opposed the view that prohibited aliyah to Israel; he contended that the "three oaths" cited in the

Talmud against aliyah did not apply to the present situation. He spoke sharply against the leaders of Agudat Yisrael, who endorsed Jewish autonomy within an Arab state.

The Oholei Yaakov looked for the positive sparks in secular Zionists, and he saw their return to Israel as part of a return to Judaism. He wrote, "The work of purification is possible not only in the synagogue and Beit Midrash, but also in the store and the market, in building a road and in a harvest. 'Know G-d in all of your ways. (Mishlei 3:6)'" (ibid. pg. 245) In his view, "Religion and Statehood are joined; they unite and are not separated. And just as statehood without religion would not satisfy us, so our religion without statehood would not endure." (*HaMizrachi* 1918)

Rabbi Yaakov Friedman saw in the establishment of the State of Israel "the start of Redemption" on a physical level. He rejoiced greatly with the creation of the state, and he celebrated Yom ha'Atzmaut in his shtreimel, reciting the full Hallel and holding a special *tisch*. However, he wrote, "One must remember that establishment of the Jewish nation, even with its inestimable value, is still not the promised redemption we have anticipated. True redemption is tied to the arrival of Mashiach." (Oholei Yaakov pg. 273)

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**Biography**  
**Rabbi Shlomo Aviner**  
**Rabbi Jonathan Ziring**

Rabbi Shlomo Chaim HaCohen Aviner was born in German-occupied Lyon, France in 1943 as Claude Langenauer. (His change of name is the subject addressed in this piece). Using a false identity, he managed to escape the Nazis. He was active in Bnei Akiva in France, eventually becoming the National Director. He studied mathematics, physics, and electrical engineering at the Superior School of Electricity. Inspired by the ideals of Bnei Akiva, he made aliyah at 23, moving to Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu. He then went to learn at Yeshivat Merkaz HaRav. He became a student of Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Kook. During this time, he also served in the IDF, participating in the Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War, and earning the rank of Lieutenant.

He has held many rabbinic positions, including Rabbi of Kibbutz Lavi, Moshav Keshet, and then Beit El (his current position). He is also Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Ateret Kohanim.

Rabbi Aviner is a very significant persona in the Religious Zionist community in Israel. He has published many books, including the Sichot of Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Kook, and many of his own. He has written on the Parshah and holidays (in his Tal Hermon series), and he has produced many books on Halachah (She'eilat Shlomo, Piskei Shlomo). He has also taken full advantage of modern modes of communication, answering thousands of questions via mail, telephone, fax, email, text message, his radio shows, and his video blog. He also publishes in various Parshah sheets each week. Many of his writings are archived at <http://www.havabooks.co.il>. He also has an official English website: <http://www.ravaviner.com>.

Rabbi Aviner has also been involved in many controversies, as he is not afraid to take public positions, even when they are unpopular with various segments of Israeli society. Many of his positions, however, have elicited criticism both from within the rabbinic community and without.

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**Torah and Translation**  
**Hebraicizing a Family Name Upon Aliyah**  
**Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, <http://bit.ly/2FbQZ4t>**  
**Translated by Rabbi Jonathan Ziring**

**שאלה:** עברות שם משפחה - האם זה רק דבר שמוותר לעשות, או שזה ראוי וצריך וחשוב כחלק מהשיבה ארצה והניתוק מהגלות וכו'? האם לעשות זאת אף על פי שאר האחים לא ישנו את שם המשפחה, והאם מותר לעשות זאת אם ההורים מקפידים?

**תשובה:** יש מעלה לעברת את השם כדי שיהיו לנו שמות יהודיים, וידועים דברי המהר"ם שיק שהנושא שם גוי עובר על איסור מן התורה משום בחוקותיהם, שנאמר "ואבדיל אתכם מן העמים להיות לי", שאין רשאים להידמות להם בשום אופן (שו"ת מהר"ם שיק יו"ד קסט מובא בדרכי תשובה קעה יד), ... מספרים על המהר"ם שיק עצמו שכאשר הייתה גזרה לקחת שם משפחה, בחר בשם ש"ק שהוא ראשי תיבות: שם ישראל קודש, כדי להדגיש שאיננו לוקחים שם גוי.

העולה מדברים אלו, שוודאי יש ערך לשם יהודי ולא לשם גוי, אך אין בכך מצווה וחובה אלא מידת חסידות הנדחית מפני דבר אחר חשוב. אך מה שאין האחים האחרים משנים את שם המשפחה, אין נפקא מינא. אמנם לגבי הקפידא של ההורים הנה המהר"ק הכריע שאין חובת כיבוד אב ואם לגבי מה שאיננו הנאה מבושית להורים, וכן היא שיטת הרבה ראשונים ... והרי כאן מדובר על השם של הבן ולא של האב.

יוצא שאין הבן חייב לשמוע להורים בזה, אך כמובן אם ישמע מקיים בזה מצווה. אולם אם הדבר חשוב לו מאוד, יוכל לעשות כרצונו.

והדרך הטובה היא שיצרף את שני השמות, השם הלועזי הישן והשם העברי החדש, כך שבאופן זה הוריו לא יקפידו, וכן יכול להיות שבמשך הזמן יתרגלו לשם החדש ואפשר יהיה לוותר לגמרי על השם הישן.

על כל פנים, אם יהיו שני שמות לא ירגישו בכך ההורים בגידה וניתוק, ולדור הבא ודאי לא תהיינה בעיות והוא יירש רק את השם החדש.

**Q:** Regarding Hebraicizing a family name – is this something that is merely permitted, or is it proper, needed, and important as part of returning to Israel, separating from the Exile, etc.? Should this be done even if other brothers will not change their family name, and is it permitted if the parents oppose?

A. There is a benefit to Hebraicizing a name so that we will have Jewish names. The words of Maharam Schick, that one who uses a non-Jewish name violates a biblical prohibition of [following] their customs, as it says “and I shall separate you from the nations to be mine” – [meaning] it is not permitted to imitate them in any way (Responsa Maharam Schick Y.D. 169, cited in Darkei Teshuva 175:14)... It is told about Maharam Schick himself that when there was a decree to take a family name, he chose Schick (Shin, Yud, Kuf) which are the first letters of Shem Yisrael Kodesh – the name of Israel is holy – to emphasize that we don't take non-Jewish names.

What emerges from this is that there is certainly a value to a Jewish name, and not a non-Jewish name, but not a commandment or obligation. Rather, it is righteous trait which is pushed aside for something important. But that which the other brothers are not changing the name, that makes no difference. However, regarding the parents' opposition, the Maharik rules that the obligation of honoring fathers and mothers does not apply to that which does not relate to actual benefit to the parents, and this is the position of many early authorities... and here we are dealing with the son's name, not the father's.

What emerges is that the son is not obligated to listen to his parents regarding this, but if he would listen, he would fulfill a mitzvah with this. However, if it is very important to him, he can do as he wishes.

The best way would be to combine the two names, the old non-Jewish name and the new Hebrew one, so that his parents won't oppose. Also, in time, it could be that his parents will get used to the new name and he will be able to totally give up on the old name.

At any rate, if there are two names, the parents won't feel betrayal and separation, and the next generation certainly won't have problems and will inherit only the new name.

The fourth biblical mitzvah is the instruction to institute and follow a lunar calendar, as seen throughout Tanach. This is usually understood to include:

1. Sanctification of the start of each month by a *beit din* (Jewish court), based on the calculations made by a secretive group (Ketuvot 112a, and see Rashi ibid. 111a *hasod*);
2. Public declaration of the new month, based on eyewitness testimony regarding the new moon; and
3. Calculation of leap months to ensure that specific lunar months will not stray too far from key points in the annual solar calendar. In the best-known example, the lunar month of Nisan, in which Pesach occurs, must not wander too far from the vernal equinox.

Rabbi Saadia Gaon disagreed with the need for witnesses, though. As part of his 10<sup>th</sup> century stand against Aharon ben Meir regarding the calendar, Rav Saadia Gaon claimed

that the original method was to set the calendar based upon rabbinic calculations, and that witnesses were only instituted in the period of the second Beit haMikdash in order to counter Sadducee challenges to rabbinic authority.

Our calendar year includes 12 months, or 13 months in a leap year. In every 19-year cycle, years 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17 and 19 are leap years. Years may be “normal”, with 354 days (leap year: 384), “lacking”, with 353 days (leap year: 383), or “complete” with 355 days (leap year: 385). The months of a “normal” year alternate between 30 and 29 days, starting with the 30 days of Nisan; in a “lacking” year Kislev drops to 29 days, and in a “complete” year Cheshvan grows to 30 days. The extra Adar in a leap year is always a 30-day month.

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**Weekly Highlights: Apr. 14 – Apr. 20 / 29 Nisan – 5 Iyar**

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
<b>שבת Apr. 13-14</b>				
<b>After Hashkamah</b>	Adam Friedmann	Parshah Analysis	Clanton Park	
<b>Before Avot</b>	R' Jonathan Ziring	Daf Yomi	BAYT	<b>Rabbi's Classroom</b>
<b>After minchah</b>	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Gemara Avodah Zarah	BAYT	<b>Simcha Suite</b>
<b>Sun. Apr. 15 Rosh Chodesh Iyar</b>				
<b>8:45 AM</b>	R' Jonathan Ziring	Responsa	BAYT	<b>Hebrew</b>
<b>10:00 AM to 11:20 AM</b>	<b>Adam Friedmann R' Jonathan Ziring</b>	<b>Reframing the Exodus in Light of Sinai Counting the Omer: Re-living? Remembering?</b>	<b>Shomrai Shabbos</b>	<i>Midreshet Yom Rishon <b>For women</b></i>
<b>Tues. Apr. 17</b>				
<b>1:30 PM</b>	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Nechemiah: Succot!	Shaarei Shomayim	
<b>7:30 PM</b>	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Yehoshua	129 Theodore Pl.	
<b>Wed. Apr. 18 Yom haZikaron</b>				
<b>2:30 PM</b>	R' Jonathan Ziring	Exploring Bamidbar	32 Timberlane Ave.	<b>For Women</b>
<b>6:30 PM</b>	<b>Community Tekes for Yom haZikaron and Yom ha'Atzmaut at BAYT</b>			
<b>8:00 PM</b>	Adam Friedmann	Why do we do that?	Shaarei Tefillah	<b>Not this week</b>
<b>8:00 PM</b>	Yaron Perez	הפרשה ואני	Shaarei Shomayim	<b>Not this week</b>
<b>Thu. Apr. 19 Yom ha'Atzmaut</b>				
<b>1:30 PM</b>	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Shoftim: Saving Binyamin	49 Michael Ct.	<b>For women</b>
<b>Fri. Apr. 20</b>				
<b>10:30 AM</b>	R' Jonathan Ziring	Muktzeh: Introduction	Yeshivat Or Chaim	<b>Advanced</b>

***For University Men, at Yeshivat Or Chaim***

***10:00 AM Sunday, Rabbi Aaron Greenberg, Gemara Beitzah***

***11:00 AM Sunday, Beit Midrash, Contemporary Halachah***

***8:30 AM Monday, Rabbi Jonathan Ziring, Nefesh haChaim***

***8:30 AM Friday, Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, The Book of Yeshayah***

***For University Women, at Ulpanat Orot***

***9:30-11:30 AM Monday, Mrs. Elliezra Perez, From Rachel Imeinu to Racheli Frenkel***

***9:30-11:30 AM Tuesday, Mrs. Ora Ziring, Shabbat***

***9:30-11:30 AM Wednesday, Mrs. Ora Ziring, Contemporary Halachah***

***9:30-11:30 AM Thursday, Mrs. Elliezra Perez, Parshah in the Eyes of Chassidut***