

PARSHAS TZAV

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

פרשת צו - פרשת פרה
March 28, 2024 / י"ח אדר ב' תשפ"ד



Shabbos Parshas Parah – שבת פרה

This Shabbos is called שבת פרשת פרה, since we read in פרשת חקת about the Parah Adumah (red heifer). The Parah Adumah was used in the times of the two Holy Temples to cleanse those who became impure from being near a dead person. They used to sprinkle the ashes from the Parah Adumah onto the person on the third and seventh day, with immersion in a Mikva completing the purification process. Once this procedure was over, the person was allowed to eat meat of the sacrifices and the Kohanim were allowed to partake in the fruits donated to them, known as Terumah or Bikurim.

זאת חוקת התורה אשר צוה ה' לאמר (חקת יטב)
This is the Biblical teaching that HaShem commanded.

Rashi explains that the mitzvah of פרה אדומה (Parah Adumah) is a חוק – i.e. a statute with no rational explanation. This is because Hashem wanted the Yidden to do the mitzvah without understanding the reason behind it. He could then prove their loyalty to Him, to those who claim that the Yidden are not better than the non-Jews. We find the same idea in Tehillim (Psalms), where Dovid HaMelech (King David) says: “לא עשה כן לכל גוי ומשפטים בל ידעום – non-Jews need to understand the reasoning behind every Biblical law, before committing to it. Not so the Jewish People, who are unique in that they perform the commandments even without understanding; they do it purely to fulfill the will of Hashem!”

Reb Yehoshua of Belz zt”l (a.k.a. the Mittele Rov) once remarked: “If I were a chassid, I would travel to my Rebbe for Shabbos Parah.” His grandson, the Rav of Bilgoray zt”l added an explanation to his holy grandfather’s words: There’s a deeper meaning: Rashi says in Parshas Parah: אין לך רשות – one is not allowed to delve into the reason why Hashem commanded this mitzvah, only do it with complete faith. The same is true with a Rebbe: אסור להרהר אחר רבו – whatever a Rebbe does, you do not doubt!”.

We can learn how important it is to hear the reading of Parshas Parah from the following anecdote: Maran Reb Aharon of Belz zt”l once descended from the Bimah (podium) before the reading of Parshas Parah and went to the Shul’s foyer where the simpletons were shmoozing, of the, to summon them to listen to the Torah reading of Parshas Parah.

Yahrzeit of the Rebbe Reb Elimelech M’Lizhensk zt”l – כ”א אדר –

The Rebbe Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk zt”l, author of the famous Sefer No’am Elimelech and the “צטל” (literally “the small note,” which describes how a person is supposed to lead his life as a Jew and as a Chassid). The Rebbe Reb Elimelech is known for his כח התשובה (the power to bring a fellow Jew to repent) and כח היראה (the power to infuse a fellow Jew to have an intense fear of HaShem). His spiritual influence has been a power of good for generations, which is surely going to last until the end of time.

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The Ropschitzer Rebbe zt"l said of Reb Elimelech that had he lived in any of the past generations, he would have been the greatest in stature of that generation. Had he been at the times of the Amora-im (Talmudic Rabbis), he would have been an 'Amora,' or during the generation of the Tanno-im (Mishnaic Rabbis), he would have been a Tanna and if in the era of the Nevi'im (Prophets), he would have been a Navi. He went on to say that had he lived during the times of the Avos HaKedoshim (the holy Patriarchs), we would have had to say in davening: "אלקי אלימלך" – just like we say "אלקי אברהם יצחק יעקב". This is how highly the Rebbe Reb Elimelech Zt"l was regarded by Tzaddikim."

During the first decade after the establishment of the young Israeli State, a group of Holocaust survivors who moved to the small hamlet of Gimzo came to Maran Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l. They bemoaned the terrible suffering they endured from their Arab neighbors, who would steal from their farms and oftentimes taunted the local residents. They asked Maran for a brachah, adding that many residents are contemplating moving to bigger cities.

Maran advised them to establish a Beis Hachayim (Jewish cemetery) and also to undertake to commemorate the yahrzeit of the Rebbe Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk with a seudah (meal) each year.

The Gimzo settlers did as advised, and to everyone's wonder, from then on – although the neighboring settlements were still scapegoats for the Arabs' barbaric actions – their Arab neighbors stopped bothering them. The Gimzo settlers commemorate the yahrzeit with a seudah on כ"א אדר for many years. Years later, one year they didn't hold a Yahrzeit meal, and two of Gimzo's residents died during one of the Arab wars in Eretz Yisroel.

It was verified with the current Gimzo Rav, Harav Lisner shlita, that the yahrzeit is still commemorated with a seudah each year.



Everyone loves a good story, especially a Chassidishe story...

לטהר טמאים, לטמא טהורים, באומר קדוש (פיוט לשבת פרה)
To purify the impure and tarnish the pure by saying "holy."

Reb Yisroel of Ruzhin zt"l related that when the holy Reb Yoel Sirkis zt"l (author of the classic Bayis Chodosh – or Bach in short) ascended to the higher spheres after his passing, the Heavenly Courts couldn't find one aveira (sin) that would warrant he should pass the 'cold' gehinnom (hell).

The neshamos (souls) in Gehinnom complained, saying that – if only the holy Bach would pass by the entrance to the Gehinnom – he would surely take them out of there and into Gan Eden (paradise).

A Katorgor (prosecuting angel) then came running and said in front of the Heavenly Court that he found a sin on the Bach. He went on to explain: the Bach once walked in the marketplace where an ox and a donkey were hitched to a wagon. As he passed the wagon, the Bach happened to sneeze, startling the animals, and as a result, they pulled it to a distance of four amos (ells – a measurement). This – concluded the persecuting angel – constitutes a transgression of the prohibition of "כלאים" (not to have different animals work together, like in this scenario). Though this was not intentional, it was still considered a sin for such a tzaddik as the Bach. It was then decreed by the Heavenly Court that the Bach would need to pass

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**EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY,
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the entrance of Gehinnom so that his 'sin' would be erased.

So that this holy neshama should not suffer, the Gehinnom was cooled off for forty days, and only then did he pass by its gates. The Bach then managed to remove all the tainted souls who were being punished in Gehinnom.

Maran the Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l added to this story: "When the holy Bach passed Gehinnom, he swept it out completely with a broom, not leaving anyone inside!".

The holy Ruzhiner Rebbe used the above story to explain the lyrics of Parshas Poroh: לטהר טמאים – when Hashem wants to cleanse the 'tainted' souls in Gehinnom, לטמא טהורים – He has to find a sin in someone that is טהור (pure) – a tzaddik. How can this be achieved? באומר קדוש – when the "קדוש" – the tzaddik emits noise from his mouth (e.g. a sneeze).

צו את אהרן את בניו לאמר זאת תורת העלה... (צו ויב)
Command Aaron and his sons, saying: This is the law of the elevation-offering.

Rashi says: "ביותר צריך לזרז במקום שיש חסרון כס" – there is a greater need for encouragement, where there is a cost involved. This is why it says by the Korban Olah, the word "צו"; where it costs money, it needs a separate warning.

The tzaddik R' Avraham of Sachatchov zt"l, the author of 'Avnei Nezer,' related the following story:

There was once a wine merchant from Kraków whose business was dwindling. The wine merchant borrowed a few hundred zlotys from his

friends and traveled to Hungary, where he used to purchase good wines for his business. He hoped that with this sum, his mazel (luck) would change for the better.

On the way to Hungary, he stopped off in Riminov, visited the holy Rebbe Reb Hersch zt"l, and asked for a bracha (blessing). He handed a 'pidyon' (a sum of money) to the Rebbe, along with his personal request for good luck in his business dealings. The Rebbe Reb Hersch said that he needs a larger 'pidyon.' The wine merchant, who believed in tzaddikim, didn't think twice and handed most of the money he had borrowed from his friends to the Rebbe. The Rebbe Reb Hersch blessed him and wished him hatzlacha (success).

When the wine merchant arrived in Hungary, he couldn't take advantage of the business opportunities he was offered since there wasn't enough money left to pay for the goods. Suddenly, a vendor approached him with an offer. He had many wine barrels that were part of an inheritance, which had been sitting for a long while, and he was instructed by the owners to find a buyer. The wine merchant went to inspect the wine barrels and realized that he could do well selling these wines. Alas, he didn't have enough money to buy them all.

The seller agreed to give the wine merchant some wines to test if they would sell, and if so, he would come back to purchase the rest, to which he readily agreed. To his luck, the aged wine sold at a high price, so he returned to buy the rest of the wine barrels. He became wealthy from this business deal – all because he was steadfast in his belief and with the brachah from a tzaddik (righteous Rebbe).

והבשר אשר יגע בכל טמא לא יאכל (צו וזיט)
And the flesh that touches any contaminated thing may not be eaten.

A talmid chacham acquainted with the Ba'al

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Hatanya zt"l was spotted befriending the Maskilim (the enlightened). The Ba'al Hatanya summoned the talmid chacham and explained to him the dangers to his Yiddishkeit by befriending these people, ending with a warning that they would eventually ensnare him into their web of deceit.

The talmid chacham haughtily responded: "I do not have to worry because I'm strong enough not to get influenced by anyone. And to prove myself, I've befriended many chassidim in my life and still haven't become a chassid!"

The Ba'al Hatanya countered: "There's no comparison between the connection with Chassidim and the connection to Maskilim. It says, "והבשר אשר יגע בכל טמא לא יאכל" – from this passuk, we learn that one can have a Kosher piece of meat that just touched something impure and it becomes contaminated. It also says in the parsha when talking about 'hekdeshe' "כל אשר יגע בבשרה יקדש" – whatever touches its flesh becomes holy. Chazal learns from the word "בבשרה" – by just touching the flesh, it does not yet become holy only if it has something previously absorbed. From these Pessukim, we learn that if something is impure (טמא), one becomes impure from touching it. Even more, when something is 'hekdeshe' – holy, one does not become holy only if you absorb holiness from the 'hekdeshe'".

Concluded the Ba'al Hatanya: "Especially with you, I see that you didn't absorb the kedusha from the chassidim, but the impurity is there, and the danger is great!"



The Rebbe's Torah

וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר, צו את אהרן ואת בניו לאמר זאת תורת העולה... (ו-א-ב)

Hashem spoke to Moshe saying, command Aaron and his sons saying: This is the law of the elevation-offering...

Rashi explains that the word 'צו' is a phrase of "צורו מיד ולדורות", meaning: Aaron HaKohen was commanded to be zealous regarding the Korban Olah, not only then, but for all future generations. Why is this phrase referenced by this Korban? Rabbi Shimon said: "צריך לזרז במקום שיש חסרון" – there is a greater need for encouragement, where there is a cost involved.

Rashi's words can be explained (by way of a hint):

People tend to teach their children different skills or trades, so as to ensure a secure future by building a career for when they become adults. Yidden however behave different: we teach our young children the holy Torah with the sole purpose of cementing a solid future of the next generation who will live life as Torah-abiding Jews. As it's quoted in the Gemara (סוכה מב:א): "From when a child can talk, his father teaches him Torah". We don't worry too much about our children's future need for a livelihood, since we rely on Hashem for parnassah (livelihood). When the children grow up they will find parnassah.

This is alluded to in Rashi's words: "אין צו אלא זרז מיד" – we have to strengthen ourselves and be zealous about teaching our future generations – teach them the holy Torah. Since the passuk talks about learning Torah – "זאת תורת העולה". With this, we can better understand the words of Rabbi

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THE REBBE'S TORAH

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Shimon: "ביותר צריך לזרז במקום שיש חסרון כיס" – since we don't teach our children a skill or trade, we might think that they won't have the means to sustain themselves when they need to become breadwinners. We need to steel ourselves to rely on Hashem that – when the time comes – He will provide them with plenty of parnassah!



THIS WEEK'S VORT

פרשת צו

צו את אהרן את בניו לאמר: זאת תורת העולה... (צו ו'ב)
Command Aaron and his sons, saying: This is the law of the elevation offering.

The word "צו" can also mean "צותא" – to be together. The Gemara states (ברכות סג) the following: "אין התורה נקנית אלא בחבורה" – the Torah can only be acquired by keeping together as a group. In this Possuk, Moshe Rabbenu taught the Yidden a valuable lesson: Suppose you want your Torah learning to reach higher and higher, so you must connect with the likes of Aaron and his sons, who were Kohanim and tzaddikim.

ובער עליה הכהן עצים בבקר בבקר... (צו ו'ה)
And the Kohen shall kindle wood upon it every morning, every morning.

It says in the holy Seforim that each morning one must seek new ideas on improving his Avodas Hashem (serving Hashem). This is alluded to in our Passuk: the word "עצים" is similar to the word עצה (idea), "בבקר" is similar to the word ביקור

(inspect); always seek new ideas so that you shall know exactly how your life's journey is proceeding – and adjust accordingly.

זאת תורת העולה היא העולה על מוקדה... (צו ו'ו)
This is the law of the elevation-offering: It is the elevation-offering on the burning fire...

The words זאת תורת העולה refers to Torah learning that makes an impact on the one who studies it and also ascends to the high heavens – only when: היא העולה על מוקדה – when one learns Torah with enthusiasm – a fire in one's soul!

ובשר זבח תודת שלמיו ביום קרבנו יאכל... (צו ז'טו)
And the flesh of his feast thanksgiving pesach-offering must be eaten on the day...

Why can the Korban Todah (thanksgiving sacrifice) only be eaten one day? A Korban Todah is offered to thank for a 'ness' (miracle). Since a person experiences fresh miracles each day, if the Korban Todah is eaten longer than a Korban Chattos (sacrifice for a sin) then one would eat from yesterday's miracle for the miracle that happened today.