



MENUCHAV'SIMCHA

Candle Lighting 7:00PM

Vol. 12 Issue 33

Parshas Shoftim 5776

LEADERSHIP AND SACRIFICE

BY RABBI YOSEF PRUPAS

The following op-ed by Jeffery MacDonald, was published in the New York Times on Aug. 7, 2010:

Several new studies show that the American clergy is suffering from burnout... But there's a more fundamental problem that no amount of rest and relaxation can help solve, congregational pressure to forsake one's highest calling.

The pastoral vocation is to help people grow spiritually, resist their lowest impulses and adopt higher, more compassionate ways. But congregation members increasingly want pastors to soothe and entertain them... As a result, pastors are constantly forced to choose, as they work through congregants' daily wish lists in their e-mail and voice mail, between paths of personal integrity and those that portend greater job security. As religion becomes a consumer experience, the clergy become more unhappy and unhealthy...

The implications of the above article are self-understood. However, let us contrast the Torah's view on leadership through the words of Chazal, our sages, and thus deepen our understanding of a leader's status in Judaism. The Mitzvah to appoint "Shoftim and Shotrim," Judges and Officers, is followed by a group of three seemingly unrelated commandments – Not to plant an *asheira* tree next to the Mizbeach, the Altar, not to erect a pillar (for purpose of sacrifice), and not to slaughter a sacrifice with a blemish. The **Seforno** explains that the juxtaposition of these commandments hint to the qualifications one should seek in a judge. The first is an *asheira* tree – externally beautiful, but because it was used for idol worship, it should

be viewed through a spiritual lens. It would not contribute to the beauty of the Temple Mount. A *Dayan*, judge, as well, has to be internally (spiritually) beautiful, for him to function as a *Dayan*. The second commandment, the prohibition to use a *matzeiva*, a pillar, teaches the need for the *Dayan* to

revisit and correct the mistakes of his youth. The prohibition to use a *matzeiva* started with the sin of the Golden Calf. The *matzeiva*, once a preferred option for sacrifice, became forbidden once it became associated with idol worship. Until the sin is corrected, it cannot be used for Holy purposes. The *Dayan*, as well, must rectify the past. The third commandment is the prohibition to use a blemished animal for

sacrifice. A small scratch on the eyelid does not impact the economic value of the animal, yet it is disqualified for sacrifice. Our leaders/judges have to recognize the value of seemingly minor personal imperfection. One might have the right persona to fill the role of *Dayan*, but a small "scratch" in one's personal attributes should disqualify one from that lofty position.

One can ask, why does the Torah demand such a microscopically fine standard? Further, why are these lessons derived from the laws relating to the Temple and sacrifices? A possible answer can be found in the words of the **Abarbanel**.

The Abarbanel explains that the *Sanhedrin*, the High Court, was divinely inspired. Their number was 71, representing the seventy *Zekeinim*, elders, and

THE TORAH CORRELATES THE CRITERIA FOR APPOINTING JUDGES AND THE INSTITUTION OF THE SANHEDRIN WITH THE LAWS OF THE TEMPLE AND SACRIFICE BECAUSE THEY SERVE THE SAME GOAL

[cont. on back]

DVAR HALACHA



Laws Pertaining the Month of Elul

BY RABBI YOCHANAN ESKENAZI

The forty day period beginning Rosh Chodesh Elul thru Yom Kippur is a period that is an *es ratzon* (an auspicious time), a time that our *teshuva* (repentance) is more easily accepted. There are allusions to this in Tanach: *Ani L'dodi V'dodi Le* (I am for my Beloved and my Beloved is mine) [Shir Hashirim 6:3]. Furthermore, the Torah [Devarim 30:6] states "U'mul Hashem Elokecha Es L'vavcha V'es Lev Zar'echa" (Hashem your God, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring). The first letters of the highlighted words are Alef, Lamed, Vuv, Lamed, which spells Elul. Additionally, the gematria (numerical value) of the end letters [of *Ani L'dodi V'dodi Le* - four letter yuds] equals to forty [10 x 4] which hints to that there are 40 days that Hashem is close (Mishneh Berurah 581: introduction).

Many people have their tefillin and mezuzos checked during the month of Elul (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 128:3). Additionally, some have the custom to recite ten chapters of Tehillim (Psalms) each day during Elul, in order to complete the entire Sefer Tehillim two times before Rosh Hashanah (Mishneh Berurah 581:1). If possible, it is better not to recite Tehillim at night [during Elul and the rest of the year] (Koveitz Halachos 1:10).

One who writes a letter to a friend during the month of Elul should include wishes for a *k'siva v'chasima tova* (you should be inscribed for a good year) (Mateh Ephraim 581:9 & Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 128:2). In our day and age, if one is writing an email to a friend who he does not intend to speak to

[cont. on back]



Menucha Vesimcha has been dedicated by **Kutest Kids Early Intervention Services.**

CONTACT MALKY ADLERSTEIN FOR MORE INFORMATION

P 610.227.0388 // E madlerstein@gmail.com // W www.kutestkids.com

Providing Services in: Philadelphia // Montgomery // Bucks // Delaware // Chester County // Berks County



Kollel News

MAZEL TOV:

Dr. Uri and Shira Schechter on the birth of a baby boy. The Shalom Zachor will take place at their home, 227 Stoneway beginning at 9:15 p.m.

Guy and Nurit Shitrit on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Daniel over the Summer!

Michael and Lisa Wachs upon the engagement of their daughter, Danielle, to Shelby Rosenberg, son of Moishe and Carolyn Rosenberg of Woodmere, NY!

Ken & Malka Miller on the upcoming marriage of their daughter, Ahuva to Dov Adelson from Highland Park, NJ!

Rabbi Uri and Sara Leah Greenspan on the Bar mitzvah of their son, Yechiel. A special mazel tov to the grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. Eliezer Greenspan and Mr. & Mrs. Laibel Krawiec!

Rephael and Sarah Zohn on birth of Meir. A special mazel tov to the proud grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Benedict, Mr. Hesh & Mrs. Debbie Granek and Rabbi & Mrs. Elchonon Zohn and families.

Hasheeveinu Continues-

New Sunday Morning Program for Men and Boys During Elul

Hasheeveinu is a brand new, 4-week Sunday morning program, for men and boy (grades 1-7). The first step to Teshuvah is to strengthen our commitment to the study of Torah, as we say in davening: Hasheeveinu Avinu Lesorasecha. Come to the Kollel for the next four Sunday mornings and study a different topic each week related to the upcoming Yomim Naroim/High-Holidays. Men will join a group led by Kollel Rabbis, and boys will enjoy a special presentation on the lower level each week. A special breakfast prepared by our chef Jonathan will be available.

Shacharis 8 am

DAVENING TIMES:

Friday, September 9:

7:00PM Candle Lighting
7:18PM Shkiya/sunset

Shabbos, September 10:

8:15AM Shacharis
9:11AM/9:47AM Latest Krias Shema
Kiddush this week is sponsored

by Rabbi Uri and Sara Leah Greenspan in honor of the Bar mitzvah of their son, Yechiel.

6:30PM Mincha
7:17PM Shkiya/Sunset
8:29 PM 72 Minutes

Pre-Rosh Hashanah Evening of Inspiration 5776

With
Rabbi Reuven Drucker, shlit" a

Join us for our eighth Pre-Rosh Hashanah Evening of Inspiration to hear Rabbi Reuven Drucker of Highland Park, NJ.

Wednesday, September 21 at 8:30 p.m.

at the Kollel Beis Medrash.

[cont. from front]

again before Rosh Hashanah should include wishes for a good year (Rabbi Biberfeld, shlit" a).

The shofar is blown during the entire month of Elul, since hearing the shofar arouses a person to repent (Rama 581:1). The prevalent custom is to blow the shofar in the morning after davening shachris (Aruch Hashulchan 581:1). If there is no adult available, a katan (boy younger than 13 years old) may blow the shofar (Koveitz Halachos 1:18). One does not need to stand while the shofar is being blown (Koveitz Halachos 1:17). If the congregation forgot to blow shofar in the morning, it is proper to blow by mincha (Igros Moshe OC 4:21:5). If an individual missed hearing shofar, it is proper for him to blow himself or hear from someone else, although it is not obligatory (Koveitz Halachos 1:21). If one is davening shemoneh esrei while the shofar is being blown, it is proper to pause and concentrate on the shofar (Koveitz Halachos 1:22).

The minhag is to recite the chapter "L'Dovid Hashem ore v'yeeshee" [Tehillim 27] from Elul until Shmeinei Atzeres (Mishneh Berurah 581:2). Anyone who says this paragraph from Rosh Chodesh Elul until Simchas Torah is able to nullify bad decrees against him and merit being innocent in judgment (Sefer Shloshim Yom Kodem Hachag pg. 3 fn. 6 quoting Sefer Sheim Katan). One should recite it at the end of davening, after the shir shel yom [and after barchi nafshe on Rosh Chodesh] (Mishneh Berurah 581:2). However, there are different customs regarding which tefillah to say L'Dovid. Some congregations say it after Shachris and Mincha (Mishneh Berurah 581:2) while others say it after Shachris and Maariv (Alef Ha'magen 581:10). One who is davening in a minyan that says it during a different tefillah than he is accustomed to saying it, is not required to say it together with them (Shloshim Yom Kodem Hachag pg. 3 fn.8 quoting Shu" T Divrei Moshe 1:35).

LEADERSHIP AND SACRIFICE [cont. from front]

BY RABBI YOSEF PRUPAS

Moshe *Rabbeinu*. This hinted that *Ruach Hakodesh*, divine inspiration, was upon them too. Another sign is the *Sanhedrin's* location in the Temple. Further, the *Sanhedrin* were referred to as "Elohim," the divine Name of Justice of G-d. This reflects Heavenly Aid that they receive to execute justice correctly.

This fundamental fact is needed to understand the jurisdiction of the *Sanhedrin* to enact *takanos*, edicts. It might seem, as a result, that the Torah itself is not complete, *chas v'shalom*. To avoid this notion, the Torah makes clear the divine nature of the *Sanhedrin* within Torah itself. The overall objective of the *Sanhedrin* should be understood as part of the goal to come closer to Hashem. Just as sacrifices

serve to bring a person closer to Hashem, Mishpatim, law, accomplishes the same.

From the Abarbanel the essential message from the Torah is clear. The Torah correlates the criteria for appointing judges and the institution of the Sanhedrin with the laws of the Temple and Sacrifice because they serve the same goal, to bring one closer to Hashem. By putting Jewish leadership and the Laws of Temple and Sacrifice on the same pedestal, we learn how sacred their position is. It is a position that we should be looking to learn from, not dictating what we want to hear. May we merit leaders of high standards and come closer to G-d through their guidance.

PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL

364 Montgomery Avenue, Merion Station, PA 19066

P 610.668.9557 — F 610.668.9558 — E office@phillykollel.org — W www.phillykollel.org

