



# Menucha v'Simcha



A PARSHA WEEKLY BY THE PHILADELPHIA COMMUNITY KOLLEL

Candle Lighting: 5:35 p.m.

Parshas Ki Sisa 5773

Vol. 9 Issue 18

## DVAR TORAH

### By Command Only

By Rabbi Daniel Epstein

The first Shabbos after Purim is *Shabbos Parshas Parah*, in which we read a section of *Parshas Chukas* dealing with the mitzvah of *parah adumah* (the red heifer). This reading constitutes the *maftir* for *Parshas Ki Sisa*, which deals, among other things, with the incident of *Chet HaEgel* – the sin of the Golden Calf. At first glance, this juxtaposition is puzzling, yet Rashi states that the *parah adumah* served to atone for the sin of the *egel hazahav*.


In order to understand the relationship between the *parah adumah* and the *chet ha'egel*, we must explore the intentions that lay behind the making of the *egel*. According to many commentaries when *benei yisrael* made the *egel*, they never intended to engage in idolatry. Rather, they were attempting to fill the void left by the absence of Moshe Rabbeinu, who they feared had died when he did not return from Har Sinai at the time that they had mistakenly assumed he would. *Bnei Yisrael* had always looked to Moshe Rabbeinu as a source of holiness and spiritual leadership, and now that he was gone, they yearned for a substitute, a physical object, sanctified to Hashem, which would travel before them and from which they would derive spiritual energy and purpose.

The Meshech Chochma explains that *benei yisrael's* critical mistake lay in attributing too much centrality to Moshe Rabbeinu. We might think that Moshe Rabbeinu, the one person chosen to receive the Torah from Hashem and to communicate with Hashem *panim el panim*, might merit the most impressive possible title and attribution in the narrative of *matan Torah*. Yet the Gemara refers to him simply as "the *sarsur*," the agent. Rather than emphasizing Moshe's pivotal role in the receiving of the Torah, the Gemara seems to downplay it. Why is this so?

As Jews, we believe in the one Almighty G-d, supreme and immeasurable. However, it is precisely Hashem's limitlessness that makes it difficult for us, as mere mortals, to relate to Him. As human beings, we relate to our world through our physical senses, and it is, therefore, helpful for us to anchor our *avodas Hashem* in concrete ritual objects and venues. This is why the Synagogue and *bais hamedrash* (study hall) have such significance in Judaism. Our constant challenge is to maintain awareness that people and

physical objects may be conduits to *kedushah*, but they are not intrinsically holy. As Jews, we do not believe that people or things have intrinsic *kedushah*. People may achieve holiness only through constant, focused involvement with Hashem's *mitzvos*, and objects may be invested with *kedushah* only in accordance with Hashem's command. This was true even of the *Mishkan* (the Sanctuary), which served as a physical structure in which the *Shechina* was concentrated and in which *benei yisrael* could serve Hashem. This lesson is implied in the Torah's constant repetition that each component of the *mishkan* was constructed *ka'asher tziva Hashem es Moshe* (as Hashem commanded Moshe), emphasizing that the holiness derived from the precise fulfillment of Hashem's command.

This was the tragic error of the *egel hazahav*. Although the *egel* was constructed with the most spiritual of intentions, it lacked Divine sanction to justify its creation. Absent Hashem's command, the *egel* was merely an icon, devoid of true holiness. What's more, by designating the *egel* as a replacement for Moshe Rabbeinu, *benei yisrael* demonstrated that their perception of Moshe was also iconic and flawed.

The *parah adumah* is the antidote to this misconception about the nature of *kedushah*. The mystifying quality of the *parah adumah* – that it served to contaminate the pure and to purify the contaminated – demonstrates that neither purity nor impurity are intrinsic qualities. The *parah adumah* has no intrinsic spiritual power; it's purifying effect is exclusively a function of Hashem's commandment. This is the essential unifying theme of *Parshas Parah* and *Parshas Ki Sisa*: that Hashem, through the agency of His *mitzvos*, is the only true source of *kedusha*. 

## DVAR HALACHA

### Krias Hatorah part 1

By Rabbi Yochanan Eskenazi

*Moshe Rabbeinu* established that we read the *Torah b'tzibbur* on *Shabbos*, *Yom Tov*, *Chol Hamoad*, *Rosh Chodesh*, and on Mondays and Thursdays. *Ezra Hasofer* added that we also read at *Shabbos Mincha* (Rambam Hilchos Tefillah 12:1 based on *Gemara Bava Kamma 82a*).

The Mishnah [Megillah 31a] explains the reason why *Moshe* instituted that *Torah* be read each *Yom Tov* was to teach people the relevant portion pertaining to that *Yom Tov*. The rea-



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son why it was necessary to read the *Torah* on Mondays and Thursdays is to ensure that one would not go 3 full days without studying *Torah*.

The Gemara [Bava Kamma 82a] says the reason why *Ezra* added the *Shabbos Mincha Torah* reading was for the "yosh'vei kra'nos," which literally means the people who sit in the [street] corners. Rashi explains this is referring to the people who sit in their stores and are involved in their business all week and, as a result, miss hearing the *Torah* readings on Mondays and Thursdays. The Meiri argues, that it is referring to idlers, i.e. people who sit idly on *Shabbos* afternoon for they are not involved in *Torah* study nor are they doing any *mela-chah*. Therefore, *Ezra* established *Torah* reading in order that these people hear words of *Torah*.

The Toras Chaim [Bava Kamma *ibid*] explains the reason why *Moshe Rabbeinu* was careful to make sure that specifically 3 days do not go by without learning *Torah* [since one is obligated to learn every day]. The Gemara [Kiddushin 30b] teaches us that the evil inclination renews itself each day. However, *Hashem* created *Torah* as an antidote. If a person would go three days without *Torah* he would become spiritually weakened, and then even *Torah* will not work as an antidote.

The Gemara [Bava Kamma *ibid*] explains that *Moshe*

*Rabbeinu* established that there has to be 3 *aliyos*, and each *aliyah* had to have a minimum of 1 *posuk*. *Ezra* added that each *aliyah* has to have a minimum of 3 *posukim* and together all 3 *aliyos* need to total at least 10 *posukim*. The 3 *aliyos* correspond to the *Ko-hanim*, *Leviim*, and *Yisroelim*. Additionally the 10 *posukim* correspond to the "asarah batlanim." Rashi [*ibid*] explains the *asarah batlanim* were 10 men that were not involved in work, in order to be completely involved in the needs of the *tzibbur*. The Ritva [Megillah 31a] adds that one of the reasons *Ezra* chose 10 *posukim* is because it is a *davar chashuv* (significant) and with less than that there would be a concern that people would not come to *shul*.

When the *aron kodesh* is open before the *Torah* is removed, the *minhag* is to recite the prayer of *Kel Erech Apayim* (*Hashem* the Merciful). The *Mateh Moshe* explains that the reason why we say this prayer at this point, is that we are about to read the *Torah* and unfortunately we have not kept the *Torah* in its entirety. Therefore, immediately before reading the *Torah*, we ask *Hashem* not to punish us for not keeping all its laws. Additionally, this prayer has 24 words that correspond to the 24 books of *Tanach* and to the 24 hours in a day. We therefore ask forgiveness for not keeping all of *Tanach* and for not utilizing our days to the fullest. As an aside, there is a slightly different version of this prayer which has 26 words, which corresponds to the Name of *Hashem* which has a numerical value of 26.

## Kollel News

8:46/ 9:22 a.m.: Latest *Krias Shema*

### Friday, March 1:

8:20 am –8:40 Rabbi Prupas' Chaburas Chacham Lev  
5:14 p.m.: Mincha

5:35 p.m.: Candle Lighting 5:54 p.m.: Shkiya/ Sunset

5:53 p.m.: Shkiya/Sunset 6:49 p.m.: Maariv

**Shabbos, March 2:** 7:06 p.m.: 72 Minutes

8:15 a.m.: *Shacharis*, 8:30 p.m.: Rabbi Reisman's Shiur

**1. Masmid end-of-the year Banquet:** A phenomal culmination of months of learning. The sixth annual End-of-Year Masmid Banquet took place on Tuesday evening, February 26th at the KTA- Kosloff Torah Academy Social Hall.

Mazel Tov to **Hillel Friedman** on winning the grand prize, a set of Shas! Thank you to all of the sponsors of the Masmid Banquet: Erwin and Rochelle Nosenchuk, In memory of Mr. Ari Weiss, z"l. Jonathan and Karen Friedman. Joel and Margalit Lubell. Sherman and Susan Frager. Ted and Phyllis Kosloff. Alan Mazurek and Sam Gross

**2. A Stroll Through the Shuk Women's Tea:** The Philadelphia Community Kollel invites you on a Stroll through the Shuk Women's Tea Event Tuesday, March 12, 2013 7:00 pm Merion Tribute House 625

Hazelhurst Avenue, Merion Station Inspiring musical performance by Julia Blum Full dairy buffet, exotic decor, great raffle prizes. Couvert \$50 Mother/Daughter \$75. Additional Daughter \$25 each

**3. Live Broadcast Siyum:** Daf Yomi Mesechta Shabbos, The Da Plus Program of Agudath Israel of America is delighted to invite you to join thousands across the US and Canada for a Nationwide Shiur **SIYUM MASECHES SHABBOS**. A live broadcast will be held next Wednesday, March 6, 2013 at 8:00 pm Given by **RABBI ELI MANSOUR**, Rav, Congregation Bet Yaakov. A live broadcast will be held at Philadelphia Community Kollel Lower level conference room 364 Montgomery Ave

### Community News:

**Bnos of Bala Cynwyd** will not meet this Shabbos, Parshas Ki Sisa

**Torah Youth:** will meet from 3:30– 4:30 LMS Social Hall.

### Mazel Tov:

**Ms. Leta Bork** on the birth of a grandson, born to her children, the Stengels!

**Dan Selig and Tori Shapiro** on their engagement!

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