

Come close to the mizbeiach." (Vayikra 9:7)

On this pasuk Rashi offers the renowned comment, למה אתה בוש לכך נבהרת Why are you, Aharon, ashamed and reluctent to assume the role of Kohen Gadol? (Perhaps recalling the sin of the Egel in which he had in some subtle fashion been been implicated.) On the contrary, you have been chosen precisely because of this (לכר).

Many explanations have been offered as to the precise meaning of the term לכך because of this." Many of us are familiar with the renowned p'shat stating that you have been chosen because of your shame. Your very reluctance is the best reason for your selection to the esteemed position of Kohen Gadol.

Permit us to offer a somewhat different, perhaps even unique, approach to term לכך.

To fully appreciate our "vort" we need to recall why aharon didn't follow the example of his valiant nephew, chur, and resort to physical force to restrain the unruly mob that sought to erect the egel. Apparently, Aharon's מזה loving and pursuing peace, led him to the natural conclusion that the best method of preventing the travesty of the Egel was to conciliate the rabble rousers. According to aharon, physical force (or any



Parshas Shmini Questions

- 1. This parsha begins with the eighth day of the inauguration of the Tabernacle. What two Torah laws that refer to the "eighth day" are applicable nowadays?
- 2. Which pairs of brothers appear in this parsha? (4 pairs)
- 3. Who is referred to in this parsha as someone's "uncle"?
- 4. What person appears in this parsha, but appears only one other time in the entire Torah?
- 5. Which cousins are described in this parsha as "brothers"?

Answers

- 1. (1) In parshas Tazria, the Torah describes the mitzvah of circumcision, which is performed on the eighth day after the baby boy's birth (Leviticus 12:3). (2) In parshas Emor and parshas Pinchas, the holiday of Shmini Atzeres is described as the additional eighth day added on to the holiday of Sukkot (Leviticus 23:36, 39 and Numbers 29:35).
- The four pairs are (1) Moshe and Aharon,
 (2) Nadav and Avihu, (3) Itamar and Elazar, (4) and Mishael and Eltzafan, the sons of Uziel who are asked to carry the bodies of Nadav and Avihu out of the Tabernacle (Leviticus 10:4).
- 3. The Torah states that Úziel is the uncle of Aharon (Leviticus 10:4).
- 4. Mishael the son of Uziel appears in this parsha (Leviticus 10:4) and in parshas Va'erah (Exodus 6:22).
- 5. Eltzafan and Mishael are asked to carry the bodies of Nadav and Avihu out of the Tabernacle. Eltzafan and Mishael are the first cousins once-removed of Nadav and Avihu, but are referred to as their brothers (Leviticus 10:4).



1st aliyah- The parsha starts off with Moshe gathering all the Jews to the mishkan to witness the shechina of Hashem descending upon the mishkan on that day. Aharon offers various karbanos in preparation for this amazing event.

2nd aliyah- After concluding the offering of all the karbanos, Aharon blesses the jews with the kohen's bracha. Moshe and Aharon bless the Jewish people that Hashems presence dwell in their handiwork, and, indeed, the shechina rests upon the mishkan.

3rd aliyah- At this point a fire descends and consumes the karbanos on the mizbeach. Aharon's eldest two sons, Nadav and Avihu, bring an unauthorized karban and a heavenly fire consumes them. Moshe orders the removal of their bodies from the mishkan, and instructs Aharon and his remaining two sons not to observe the traditional laws of mourning (sitting shiva), considering that they had to continue serving in the mishkan on behalf of the Jewish people. The kohanim are instructed not to drink wine before performing the avodah.

4th aliyah- Moshe addresses Aharon and his sons, instructing them regarding the consumption of that day's karbanos- despite the deaths of their brothers and his son.

5th aliyah- Moshe becomes aware that one of the karban chatas's had been burnt, rather than eaten. When he expresses his displeasure, Aharon explains his reasoning for ordering the burning of that particular Karban, and Moshe humbly accepts Aharon's explanation.

6th aliyah- Hashem gives the commandments of Kosher, explaining how to distinguish between kosher and non-kosher animals, fish, and birds. Kosher animals must chew their cud and have split hooves. The Torah lists four animals that have only (Continued on page 5)



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Dvarim Hayotzim Min Halev



L'sheim Yichud and Other Tefilos Before and After Sefira

L'sheim Yichud

- This is not just a Sefira related idea, it is also men-• tioned by Tefillin, Tallis, and in the Haggadah.
- Nodah B'yehuda Yoreh Deah Siman 93: There is no • explanation (Peirush) on a Tefilla that has no source, the original generations did not include this and it is a faulty Tefilla.
 - The reason people started saying L'shem Yichuds is, since we are further away from Torah, we try hanging on to non-torah oriented things, and is therefore inappropriate.
 - Teshuva M'ahava (Talmud of the Nodah B'yehuda) : This prayer has been around for 150 years, it wasn't just invented in his days, but still it is not found in Chazal, so those 150 years are not enough to defend saying it.

Why would one say it?

- 1. Based off of Gemara in Zvahcim: When someone gets divorced, they need to verbalize that they are doing it. So too by Sefira, need to verbalize that you are doing the Mitzvah.
 - a. Nodah B'yehuda: This is a bad reason, and that Gemara in fact disproves saying it. By a women, where it isn't obvious or common, vou would have to sav it, but Kodshim, is for sure done for the right purposes.
- 2. There is a concept that in order to do an action fully, you must fuse speech, action, and thought together. So you should say it in order ro have speech.
 - involved, the Birachas Hamitzvah!
- Rav Yaakov Emden: The Chacham Tzvi (his father) 2. • never said the L'sheim Yichud, eventhough everything he did was based off of the Arizal.
 - Chida: Really you should say it.
- 3. Rabbi Aryeh Cohen It is placed there in order to distinguish the Tefilla and the Mitzvah. If it weren't there, it would look like Sefira is just another part of Tefilla, so the L'sheim Yichud breaks it up.
- 4. Rabbi Yehuda Balsam: Since so much of Sefira is Kabbalistic, so Kabbala plays a much bigger role.

II. Hinini Muchan Umizuman...

This Hinnini says "like it says in the Torah", howev-

er, we hold nowadays that Sefira is only M'drabanan, so to say this would be a lie.

- 1. This is problematic because the Rambam holds that if you tell someone that eating chicken and milk is an Issur M'dareissa, that would be a violation of Baal Tosif. So we see that calling something that is really a M'drabanan, a M'dareissa, you violate Baal Tosif and therefore should not be able to say this Tefilla.
- Piskei Teshuva quotes form Teshivos Divrei Moshe 2. Orach Chaim Siman 29: Also an issue that it directly contradicts the Harachman said after counting Sefira. The whole point of the Harachaman is to show that now I am now doing it M'drabanan, but will do it on a M'dareissa level when w e have the Beis Hamikdash!

III. Things we say after counting Sefira

- 1. Harachaman To show we want the Mitzvah back the way it was previously done.
- Tehillim It has 49 words, corresponding to the 49 2. days of Sefira.
- 3. Ana B'koach and the Kabbalastic Tefilla:
 - Shulcan Aruch Harav: Many people say this Tefilla.
 - Aruch Hashulchan: A lot of people felt this was inappropriate to say because we don't really know what it means. However, now that everyone says it, maybe it is okay.

Bottom Line:

- a. Nodah B'yehuda: We already have speech 1. Sefira is a Mitzva M'drabanan with a Birchas Hamitzvah with a Kiyum Hamitzvah.
 - Saying some the Tefilos makes more sense than others:
 - A. Harachaman reminds us what the Mtizvah is.
 - B. Tehilim nothing wrong with saying a Perek of Tehillim
 - C. But the other ones are more controversial. and you shpuld follow your own family minhag,

EZRA SICKLICK

THE MISSING ALEPH

10TH GRADE

In this week's parsha, Parshat Shmini, the Torah lists the laws of kashrus. It says in 11:43, "Al t'shaktzu es nafshosaychem... sitamu bahem v'nitmaisem bum." "Don't make yourselves repulsive... and do not make yourselves unclean through them and become defiled through them". Chazal point out that one of these words is seemingly spelled incorrectly. The word v'nitmaisem, "and you will become defiled" is missing an alef because it's shoresh is tamei, impure and it should be spelled v'nitamtem.

However, it could be that the pasuk never really meant, "and you will become tamei/impure", maybe it wanted to be read as v'nitmaisem, "and you will become closed up". Maybe the Torah is hinting to us somewhing deeper than just the idea that if you do this aveirah then you will become tamei. Maybe the Torah was actually trying to teach us that if someone eats other insects or forbidden meat from an animal they become a closed up".

But what does "you will be closed up" even mean? The Torah is teaching us that if a person does forbidden actions, his heart becomes used to doing these bad things and eventually the person does not even feel guilt for doing it anymore.

There is a mashal to this idea of getting used to reoccuring happenings. A person who owns a spice shop is used to nice smells. One day he walks into a tannery, a place where they sell animal skins, and is disgusted by the horrible smell. Later on, the man's spice shop closes and he goes into the tannery business. At first the man is still repulsed by the smell and can't stand it. However, as the man continues to work there, he becomes adapted to the odor and barely notices anymore. The same is true about us. At first we are like the spice owner because we are happy and clean and are repulsed by the idea of eating a bug. Once we are introduced to this idea and try it out, not only do we not mind the physical taste anymore, but our heart doesn't even feel bad for committing an aveirah.

We may be faced with situations in our life when we are either internally conflicted or peer pressured into trying something for the first time. We need to fight the urge to do the wrong thing by trying to remember this lesson. Once we try something for the first time, yes, we do become tamei which is a short-term issue, but more importantly we become "closed up" and eventually this action becomes a part of us which affects us in the long-run.

(Asher Schreier- Continued from page 1)

raim was based on the observance of these laws. The converse, as well true, if disregarded difficulty understanding difficult concepts as denial of techiyas hameisim. Vilna Gaon- what are the 365 gidim, doctors came to him with queston, you will be faced with a lack of clarity and comprehension of Torah principles. Phrase "you are what you eat" not only one's character, but your intellectual ability to understand Hashem's Torah. Additionally interesting to note the blessing of Borei Nefashos, recited when not benching or al hamichyah (important to thank Hashem for food, opening restaurant , having Kiddush), such as fruits, vegetables, and beverages other than wine. It thanks Hashem for creating Man, and all species, lacking. All living organisms need nourishment. We continue to thank Hashem for providing this life-sustaining nourishment. The blessing concludes, "blessed is He the life of the worlds". The word "worlds" is in the plural because His sustenance provides us with this world, and the realization thereof that He sustains us, and with our kosher diet, provides us with our worthiness of and entry into the next world. This is Rashi's theme at the end of Parshas Shmini (11:44) "just as I am holy, for I am the Lord your God, make yourselves holy, for I will sanctify you above and in the world to come." There is much more to kashrus than do's and don'ts!



Despite the fact that Aharon was a great tzaddik, he suffered the loss of his two sons, Nadav and Avihu, through unnatural means, as a fire came down from Heaven and burned their souls. A question can be asked: what did they do to deserve such an untimely demise? Several explanations have been offered to explain this strange happening. The Gemara in Eruvin explains that the sin of Nadav and Avihu was that they expounded the law in the presence of their teacher Moshe. This may seem harmless, but in reality, this was a severe transgression, as they showed a lack of respect for the authority of their teacher, thus presenting a challenge to the authority of Hashem as well. One who challenges the Torah Sages, they who are imbued with Hashem's wisdom, denies the whole basis of the Torah. Because the Rabbanim are the earthly representatives of the Almighty, both they and their laws must be accorded the highest respect. Therefore, when one has a question about a law or about 3 how he should conduct himself, he should take the matter to a Rabbi instead of deciding it on his own. Though 🖈 Rabbi Akiva was one of the greatest of our Sages, he refused to go against the words of the Rabbanim. Because of his adherence to the Torah, Rabbi Akiva had been imprisoned by the Romans. While he was in jail, Rabbi Ye-2 hoshua would bring him a jug of water every day. One day, Rabbi Yehoshua was stopped by a cruel prison guard, who cruelly spilled out half the water in the jug. Rabbi Yehoshua hurried to deliver the remaining water to Rabbi Yehoshua hurried to deliver to deliver the remaining water to Rabbi Yehoshua hurried to deliver to Akiva, and explained what had happened. "There is not enough water here for you to both drink and wash your hands," noted Rabbi Yehoshua. "Why not use all the water for drinking?" Rabbi Akiva shook his head. "My fellow rabbis decreed that one must wash his hands before every meal. How could I go against this dictum of theirs? No, I will use this water for washing, and if any water is left, then I will drink. I would rather die than transgress a Rabbinical ruling".

(Akiva Gluck- Continued from page 1)

form of confrontation) would only have emboldened them to commit greater aveiros.

While Aharon's approach may not have been an entirely appropriate tactic when dealing with the egelbuilders, it was precisely because of this attribute of conciliating his peers that he was chosen as the Kohen Gadol. While undoubtedly there are circumstances in which impassioned zealotry is appropriate-particularly when confronting idolators or any public desecration of Hashem's name- for the ongoing mission of mission of שלה שלים bringing Klal Yisroel's offerings and tefillos to Hashem, no attribute could do more conducive than shalom. As malachi states about Aharon and Pinchas, בריתי היתה אתו החייםם והשלום My covenant was with him, life and peace" (Malachi 2:5).

(Aliyot Summary- Continued from page 2)

one of these attributes, but not both, and are therefore non-kosher. Kosher fish must have fins and scales. The Torah then gives a list of species of non-kosher birds, and species of kosher locust. The Torah then discusses the tamei status caused by coming in contact with the carcass of a non-kosher animal, as well as certain species of rodents and amphibian creatures.

7th aliyah- We learn of the possibility of foods and utensils becoming tamei if they come in contact with any of the impurities mentioned before. The Torah then mentions the tamei status through coming in contact with the carcass of a kosher animal which was not shechted properly. We are commanded not to consume any insects or reptiles. The parsha closes with an encouragement that we remain kadosh and tahor by restraining from eating all forbidden foods.



In this week's Parsha, Parshat Shemini, there are two major storylines. First, in Rishon, the Torah describes the story of the death of Nadav and Avihu, while later, in Sheini, the Torah details the laws of kashrut. As we know, the Torah usually juxtaposes two topics that can teach us something by being next to each other (such as the Mishkan and Shabbat). These 2 topics seem to revolve around the same central holiness, yet they are positioned on opposite sides of the spectrum. On the one hand the story of the the death of Nadav and Avihu is one of two people trying to be holy but not being holy enough, while the laws of kashrut are set in place for people who want to go farther away from holiness and indulge in their carnivorous urges, God therefore gave them a set of laws to keep them on the right track. So how can we pull these opposing themes together to form a positive message?

When the Megillah wishes to express how widespread the kingdom of Achashverosh was, it says that he ruled over 127 provinces from Hodu to Kush. The Gemara presents a machloket about the proximity of Hodu and Kush. One amorah says that they were from one end of the world to the other. While another says they were right next to each other.

Rav Label Lamb reconciles these seemingly opposite opinions with a simple answer. He says that really they were very close to each other, but if you went the other way it would seem like they were at opposite ends of the world

We can also apply this answer to our case. Even though these cases seem to be on the opposite sides of the world, in reality they have very similar messages, and that is that from the loftiest levels of holiness to the most physical and animalistic appetite we are expected to navigate and proceed with precise rules. There is no room for extremism in either domain. Every move has to be carefully calibrated. Getting too holy too quickly is as dangerous as not trying to become closer to God in the first place. Just like if you are able to successfully build a birdhouse it is unwise and even dangerous to try and then go and build an actual house. We too must only try to serve Hashem at the level that we are capable, because if we do not, we may find ourselves further from the finish line than when we started.

(SOG- Continued from page 8)

would pretend to start to give it to him and then at the last moment he would snatch it back, making a fool of the naive Torah scholar.

But the tzaddik was not so naive after all. He held back, and simply gazed at Hershel thoughtfully.

"No, no," exclaimed Hershel, as his face took on a fully serious expression. "I really mean it. No joke. Please. Take the money." As he spoke the words, pressed the bulging purse he had drawn out of his pocket into Rabbi Chaim's hand.

The astonished rabbi felt himself overwhelmed with emotion—excitement and relief at being able to secure the release of the poor imprisoned Jew, amazement that such a supposedly lowly soul could ascend to the highest of peaks in the briefest of moments. His cheeks were flushed; warm tears pooled at the corners of his eyes.

Hershel himself was stunned. He couldn't understand what he had just done. It had been a spontaneous impulse that had overcome him, but why had it been so irresistible?

The tzaddik wished to bless his donor appropriately, but wasn't sure how. For Rabbi Chaim, life turned on one hinge: Shabbat. He had even written a unique book, Sidduro Shel Shabbat, explaining the exaltedness and holiness of the Seventh Day according to the mystical principles of the Kabbalah. But how was that relevant to the loutish man who stood before him? Nevertheless, he thought to himself, such a deed deserves the greatest blessing of all. Still brimming with enthusiasm, he exclaimed:

"I bless you that, in the merit of this great mitzvah that you have done, you will experience the true taste of Shabbat."

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Dvarim Hayotzim Min Halev

The Power to Bless Avi Ash 9th Grade

The Pasuk writes "And he blessed them"

 Rashi on the spot explains that he blessed the Kohanim with the Birchas Kohanim. The Iyei Hayam asks :

 The Gemara in Bava Basra says that if one is sick, you should ask a chacham to pray for him, not a kohein. If so,

 why do the kohanim have the power of blessing if the chachamim are the ones that help people?

The Iyei Hayam answers this by saying this power to bless can only be acquired by one who has a "good eye", or one who has a positive view of things that happen around him. The Kohanim had this trait of viewing events favorably, which they got from their forefather Aharon. This is why they are held in such high regard and can bless people.

If this is true, then why does the Gemara say we go to chachamim in a time of anger?

This can be answered by a parable of an angry king who could not be appeased by anything. Finally, one of [] his officers brought the king's son to the king. The king's anger was finally subsided when he say his beloved son. []

The Gra explains that Hashem's favorite son refers to the talmidei chachamim. This is why when Hashem is angry we go to them and not the Kohanim.

(SOG- Continued from page 6)

Hershel was still numb. He nodded his head as if he understood what the tzaddik was talking about, and answered, "Amen."

That very day Hershel returned to Mosayov. Since he had no money, there was no reason to remain in Czernowitz. Still, he remained his cheerful, joking self.

As the week progressed, however, he began to feel a strange feeling welling up inside him: a spirit of holiness, something he had never felt before in his life. When Friday dawned and the feeling was even more intense, he realized that it must be connected to the oncoming Shabbat, and that this Shabbat would definitely be like no other he had ever experienced.

He went shopping to purchase Shabbat's special foods, and he could barely control his trembling. As the hours went by, his inner upheaval grew stronger and stronger.

All those who encountered Hershel that Shabbat could hardly recognize him. Was that really him singing, dancing, studying, praying with ecstasy? Hershel could barely recognize himself! His entire being was bursting with the sacred pleasure of Shabbat.

It was the talk of the town. The idea that Hershel the clown could be caught up in a tzaddik-type intense love of Shabbat cracked up everyone who heard about it, even more than Hershel's intentional jests. They even entertained the possibility that he had gone insane.

But then the news spread of what had happened at the livestock fair in Czernowitz—the incongruous charitable deed that Hershel had done and the extraordinary blessing of the tzaddik of Czernowitz. People began to consider the issue more seriously.

After that Shabbat, Hershel returned to his customary lighthearted, joking manner. But by the following Shabbat he was again overwhelmed by the same spirit of holiness. It was as if there were two Hershels: the weekday persona and the Shabbat one.

Weeks went by, and months, without change in his situation. Hershel felt himself cracking under the strain of his dual personality. He decided to travel back to Czernowitz to discuss his situation with the tzaddik who had blessed him.

Rabbi Chaim told him that in order to absorb the taste of Shabbat without spiritual and psychological damage, he would have to refine his weekday behavior. Hershel decided to stay on in Czernowitz in order to learn more from his new mentor. Soon his daily lifestyle was slowly but steadily shifting to become harmonious with his weekly Shabbat elevation.

In the early 1800s Rabbi Chaim of Czernowitz moved to the Land of Israel, and his faithful disciple Hershel accompanied him. They lived in the holy city of Tzfat. Today, nearly two centuries later, their burial sites are well known.

דברים היוצאים מן הל״יב

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A Joker's Shabbat

As might be expected, Hershel soon became lom aleichem!" he called out, still grinning the most popular guy in Mosavov among the from the last joke he had successfully idle, the crude, the silly and the drinkers. cracked. Whenever there was a crowd of people on the "Aleichem shalom, my fellow Jews," restreet or in the village tavern laughing hilari- sponded the rabbi warmly. The die was cast. ously, one was sure to find Hershel at its epi- Now he could no longer turn away. "Perhaps center, perfecting his craft.

Hershel himself made a nice living as a seller the great mitzvah of charity?" of livestock. As his business took him to all "And what, exactly, is this charity for?" the neighboring towns and villages, his repu- asked Hershel, still smirking. tation as a joker spread throughout the Mar- "For pidyon shvuyim (redeeming captives), marosh region.

livestock fair in Czernowitz. Another person tunate Jew who has a large debt of fifteen who consistently attended the fair was the hundred zlotys to his local poritz (noble landrabbi of that city, the well known tzaddik and owner). Now he is languishing in the noblescholarly author, Rabbi Chaim of Czerno- man's dungeon until the debt is paid." witz. Rabbi Chaim would circulate among the Hershel's companions were all grinning in merchants, and accord them the opportunity anticipation. They waited eagerly for their to contribute to the many worthy causes in friend's witty riposte in the rabbi-jester diawhich he was involved, for helping needy logue. people and supporting educational institu- Hershel put his hand in his pocket and took tions.

ping their thighs and winking at each other. Jew." No doubt about it-Hershel Mosayover must All the onlookers were startled for a moment, be in the midst of them. And in top form, too. but then they realized this must be one of Rabbi Chaim thought to slip around them in- Hershel's clever jests. The rabbi would put conspicuously. He knew that from these out his hand for the money, and Hershel crude, empty-headed types he could not ex-

pect much "business" anyway. But Hershel was quicker than he. "Hey! Holy Rebbe! Sha-

you gentlemen would care to take a share in

called the greatest mitzvah of all," the rabbi Each year, he would travel to the great annual responded promptly. "There is a poor, unfor-

out 1,500 zlotys-all the money he had And so it came to pass that Rabbi Chaim was brought with him to replenish his stock. making his rounds of the stalls at the Czerno- "Here you are, Rabbi," he said quietly, with a witz fair when he suddenly came upon a large strange look on his face. "Here is the entire group of fairgoers laughing raucously, slap- sum you need to ransom the unfortunate

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