

# Vayikra

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## Hilula

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4 - Rabbi Ya'akov Tzvi Mecklenberg, author of 'Haketav v'Hakabbalah'

5 - Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech of Blazhov

6 - Rabbi Aharon Roth, author of 'Taharat Hakodesh'

7 - Rabbi Chaim Abulafia, author of 'Etz Chaim'

8 - Rabbi Eliyahu Shapira, the 'Eliyahu Raba'

9 - Rabbi Aryeh Levin, "Rav of the Prisoners"

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# Pachad David

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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

Son of the tzaddik Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto, zt"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"á

MASKIL LEDAVID

Weekly talk on the Parshah given by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita



## Self-sacrifice in Place of Bringing Korbanot

**"Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them: When a man among you brings an offering to Hashem: from animals – from the cattle or from the flock shall you bring your offering"**

(Vayikra 1:2)

Hashem revealed Himself to Moshe Rabbeinu in the Ohel Mo'ed (Tent of Meeting) and told him to command Bnei Yisrael concerning the offerings, as it says, "When a man among you brings an offering". Seemingly, a person should really be offering his very self as a sacrifice to Hashem.

It seems that the idea behind the animal offerings is that just like an animal is slaughtered and offered up before Hashem, so too a person must prepare himself to be a korban for Hashem. Upon contemplation, we realize that this is not a simple matter since the animal is taken to be slaughtered and offered on the Mizbe'ach even without its compliance and contrary to its inclination. Yet since a human being possesses abilities and desires, it is therefore not possible to force him to sacrifice himself for Hashem.

This being the case, how can one achieve this deep desire to sacrifice oneself, or of oneself, for the sake of our Creator? The Ramban explains this idea, saying that the purpose of the korbanot was to bring a person to contemplate and observe what is being done to the animal, and realize that all this should really have been done to him. Yet since Hashem is merciful, He therefore commanded man to offer an animal in his place so that the animal that is being sacrificed should serve as an atonement for him. When a person sees how the animal is slaughtered and its blood sprinkled on the Mizbe'ach, this will immediately lead him to thoughts of repentance and remorse and he will seek with all his power to appease Hashem so that chalila what was done to the animal should not happen to him.

Since the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash and the cessation of the sacrifices, we have an even stronger obligation to surrender our will to the will of Hashem since we do not have animal offerings that can atone for our sinful ways. Unfortunately, sometimes out of habit, we fulfill a certain mitzvah automatically without inserting any feelings or love for the mitzvah and in this case, the mitzvah does not serve its purpose and does not have the power to bring pleasure to Hashem.

This brings out the lesson that 'A person is led on the path that he wishes to take' and 'One who tries to purify himself is assisted'. When Hashem observes a person's desire to surrender his own needs for His sake and He sees his extreme devotion to his Torah and mitzvah observance, then He bestows his efforts with a special blessing so that he can indeed cleave to the path that he wishes to follow.

We have a custom that when young children begin to learn the Chumash, we start by teaching them the Parsha of Vayikra that deals with the offerings. Why is this? Since the details of the korbanot are complex and intricate, we

would assume that it would more beneficial to begin by teaching them about the creation of the world and the deeds of the Avot and only later on introduce the korbanot. The explanation is that young children have an innocence and purity which slowly disappears over the years. It is due to this innocence that a young child is prepared to almost sacrifice his life for the sake of a small candy. Since young children possess this extreme devotion for things they consider important, the Sages wish to take advantage of that pure innocence to inculcate the youngsters with mesirut nefesh for the sake of Hashem. Just as they show self-sacrifice for a single candy, so too they will be prepared to sanctify Hashem's Name through their actions and show self-sacrifice for the will of Hashem.

There is nothing that arouses a person's understanding of mesirut nefesh more than the matter of the korbanot. The child is exposed to the procedure of slaughtering an animal and since he understands that all that happens to the animal should really have been done to the person who brings the korban, he will immediately accustom himself to fulfill Hashem's will with mesirut nefesh, so that chalila what is done to the animal should not happen to him.

It would seem that the small 'alef' found in the word 'ויקרא' teaches us that a person should learn a lesson from the young children, hinted to by this small 'alef'. Just as innocent young children show self-sacrifice for treats, so too a person should train himself to show self-sacrifice for Torah study and mitzvah performance.

Every single person was created and formed with a purpose and when he descends to the world of actions, he must complete his rectification and accomplish the goal for which he was created. The difficulty is, how can a person know his intended destiny? How can he know the goal for which he came down to this world? This world is chock full of challenges and difficulties; how can a person know which challenge offers him the opportunity of fulfilling his destiny?

It seems to be that specifically in the areas where a person feels substantial difficulty in serving Hashem, is where he must invest all his energy and strength. For example, if a person finds it extremely difficult to get up early in the morning and pray with a minyan, yet he overcomes this natural tendency to stay in bed, he is displaying self-sacrifice for praying with a minyan and through this, he accomplishes his life's mission.

Life is full of hardships and challenges and since no one has a life-guarantee or a promise that he and his family will sail through life peacefully, nobody knows when hardship will, rachmana litzlan, befall his family. Therefore, every person must toil to identify his weaknesses in avodat Hashem, and to invest effort, with true self-sacrifice, to strengthen those areas. When Hashem sees that a person is exerting himself to fulfill His will and complete his mission in life, then He rewards him with special protection.



## Walking in their Ways

Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagoan Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

### Crossing Paths

I was once invited to the home of a fantastically wealthy individual. As I toured his house, which was more like a mansion, I noticed that the walls were covered with expensive pictures, each worth a small fortune. Every corner announced his wealth, yet sad to say, I did not feel any measure of holiness in this home.

But then the master of the house brought me into an inner chamber. This room was truly magnificent. It contained an Aron Hakodesh which was completely coated in silver. When the man opened its door, I was stunned and moved to find myself in the presence of approximately ten beautiful Sifrei Torah! I stood there, speechless in awe. But suddenly, I was shaken at discovering a picture of a cross, resting beside the Aron Hakodesh.

"What is this?" I asked weakly. "Why do you possess a cross, the symbol of idolatry?"

"Oh, that," the rich man answered dismissively. "It's only a picture. I don't pay much attention to it, surely never considering it idolatry, chas v'shalom."

I was inflamed by his answer. I rebuked him severely for allowing an idol into his home, and for placing it beside the Aron Hakodesh, of all places!

As I left his house, I reflected upon what I had observed. I realized that this man could possess such a perverted outlook as to keep a cross next to an Aron Hakodesh, only because he never sought the truth. This man never invested effort in his avodat Hashem. He was satisfied with observing mitzvot, marrying off his children to Jews and keeping Shabbat and kashrut. Concerning matters of Judaism, he obeyed only his intellectual instructions. This brought him to such a level of self-contradiction that he could placidly place a symbol of idolatry beside a beautiful Aron Hakodesh filled with ten Sifrei Torah.

His life was missing its primary aspect- exertion in the service of Hashem, as in the aspect 'Believe one who toils and achieves'. Had this rich man endeavored to attain the pure truth, he would never have come to perpetuate such a sham. A Jew who seeks the untainted truth, with no ulterior motives, is helped by Hashem to find the light of the holy Torah. But without this exertion, one will never advance in one's avodat Hashem.

## The Haftarah

**"This people which I fashioned for Myself"** (Yeshaya 43)

The connection to the Parsha: In the Haftarah, Israel is accused of not bringing the offerings to Hashem, while the Parsha speaks about the laws concerning the service of the offerings.

## Guard Your Tongue

### Neither to One's Wife

There is no difference when speaking lashon hara, if one is speaking to other people, family members, friends, or to one's wife. Lashon hara to one's wife is only permitted if there is a purpose in telling her this information, for example, if she sells to dishonest people on credit, the husband may disclose this information since she will have a hard time getting them to pay their debts. He may warn her about their dishonest nature and advise her not to sell to them on credit.



## Words of our Sages

### Pure Jewish Children

It is a holy custom that when young children start learning Torah, one begins with Sefer Vayikra, as in the concept, 'Let the pure come and occupy themselves with purity'.

It is heartening to study the wonderful words of Hagoan Hatzaddik Rabbi Aryeh Shechter zt"l:

"Baruch Hashem, today's generation displays a great strengthening in the study of Torah. Children of six years old are familiar with the entire Sefer Bereishit and at nine years old they are well-versed in all the Five Books of the Torah. Our children possess enormous strength. More than once I have been invited to participate in the siyumim of my grandchildren and I am awed and impressed with the all-encompassing knowledge of today's children.

I heard about a method that Harav Yosef Halperin zt"l developed, where one teaches children all the laws of muktzah (the prohibition to touch or move certain objects on Shabbat) in just four lessons. After that, they are taught all the intricate laws of 'borer' (separation) and 'bishul' (cooking) and the children know how to apply the laws in a most amazing fashion! They know exactly what is permitted and what is forbidden. Children of three and four years old already know to control themselves from speaking lashon hara!

And what about the children of our estranged brothers?

They are Jews with feeling, who despite living in foreign countries are not prepared to allow their children to cut themselves off from our People and marry non-Jews. Many of those who are far from Torah observance have come to understand that if they want to raise well-mannered and educated children, they need to provide them with an orthodox education. The sight of a secular woman walking hand in hand with a child sporting peyot and a kippah is already not so rare...

In previous generations, those committed to a Torah

lifestyle were the minority. At the time when my sisters married, girls were embarrassed to marry a bachur who was sitting and learning. The first question in shidduchim was: What does the boy do? How does he support himself? Whoever thought about marrying a Ben Torah?!

When my oldest sister became of age, the shadchan came to my father and said, "I have three suggestions for your daughter, one of them is crazy". My father, a clever man, asked him what he meant and he replied: "This boy wants to learn his whole life. How will he support a family?" My father was a great G-d fearing Jew and lover of Torah. Therefore he replied, "this kind of crazy person is exactly what I want!" And he merited. My sister indeed merited marrying the Av Beit Din of the Edah Chareidit, Rabbi Moshe Sternbuch shlita.

What great sacrifice this aspiration required in those days! With her ingrained love of Torah, she devoted herself to publishing her husband's sefarim, which included deciphering his hand-written Torah insights, typing them and even selling the sefarim. She also shouldered the responsibility for the chinuch of her children and the running of the home, all so that her husband should be free to learn undisturbed.

Today the esteem in which we regard those who study Torah has risen immeasurably. Which parents do not wish for their daughter to marry a bachur who is a talmid chacham!

We are a generation that is searching for Torah! On Purim night, the Batei Knesset are full of fathers and sons studying Torah together. Thousands of fathers and sons participate in yeshivas 'Mordechai Hatzaddik', carving out time in the middle of all the festivities to learn Torah on Purim night and during the day.

More and more Torah Shiurim are being offered. Retired men who only with difficulty knew how to read Rashi, are transformed into genuine talmidei chachamim. People who never learned Torah in their lives can enjoy a chavruta on the phone with an avreich and become talmidei chachamim.

Did any other generation possess these characteristics? We are the generation of Mashiach!





## Pearls of the Parsha

## Treasures

Based on the teachings of  
Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon  
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### Humility at the Top of the Mountain

*"He called to Moshe" (Vayikra 1:1)*

The word 'vayikra' that is written in the Sefer Torah with a small 'alef', has an obvious connotation, as Rabbi Bunim of Parshischa zt"l explains: Even though Moshe Rabbeinu rose to the most elevated level, he did not become haughty because of this and fulfilled the directive, "Be exceedingly humble in spirit" (Avot 4:4). Just like when a person stands at the peak of a mountain, it does not cross his mind to feel proud because of his height since it is the mountain and not a personal attribute, that causes him to look tall, so too Moshe understood that his exalted level was a gift from Hashem.

He continues to explain that we are told, "He humbles the haughty to the ground and lifts the lowly to the heavens". So seemingly, there is no end to this: Since Hashem humbles the haughty, the proud one becomes humble. But since He lifts up the lowly, he once again becomes proud and so the cycle continues. But the true meaning is that the wicked one does not repent even when standing at the entrance to Gehinom and even when Hashem humbles him, he remains proud. On the other hand, since a righteous person considers himself lowly, even when Hashem raises him he retains this feeling of modesty. This is the meaning of "He called Moshe": Even though Hashem called him and he attained the highest level, he nevertheless retained his humble spirit, and this is what the small 'alef' represents.

### Sinful Thoughts are Worse than the Sin Itself

*"And the Kohen shall cause it to go up in smoke on the Altar – it is a burnt-offering, a fire-offering, a satisfying aroma to Hashem" (Vayikra 1:9)*

Why is the burnt-offering completely burnt while the sin-offering is not?

The sefer 'Imrei Shefer' explains that the reason is that the burnt-offering atones for sinful thoughts which are considered worse than actually committing the sin. The 'Akeidah' explains the reason for this: If one contemplates a certain sin and decides that it is in fact not considered a sin, he has entirely uprooted the command. Whereas if a person commits a sin without deliberations, simply because his evil inclination overcame him, there remains the chance that he will not commit this sin again.

This is why a burnt-offering that atones for sinful thoughts is completely burnt. It teaches us that his punishment is most severe, and just as the entire animal is burnt, so it would really be fitting to burn the sinner, since sinful thoughts are considered a grave sin. Since a sin-offering is brought to atone for improper deeds, its punishment is not so severe, therefore only part of the offering is burnt and the rest of it is eaten by the Kohanim, to hint that it would be in place to scour the sinner with suffering so as to remove the sin from his being.

### Honey Only at the Start

*"For you shall not cause to go up in smoke from any leavening or fruit-honey as a fire-offering to Hashem. You shall offer them as a first-fruit offering to Hashem" (Vayikra 2:11-12)*

The 'leavening' hints to the evil inclination while the 'fruit-honey' hints to lust.

These things, the Kli Yakar explains, one may only offer to Hashem as a 'first-fruit offering', meaning in the beginning, when a person wishes to accustom himself in the service of Hashem. He may then use a small amount of personal appeal and other subjective intentions, just as our Sages say, "A person should always occupy himself with Torah and mitzvot even not for its own sake, for this will lead to performance for its own sake".

### A Poor Man's Thoughts on his Offering

*"But if his means are insufficient for a sheep or goat" (Vayikra 5:7)*

We can ask why a rich person who sins is only obligated to bring a sin-offering, while the poor person who doesn't have the means, is required to bring a burnt-offering in addition to the sin-offering?

The Chida, in his sefer 'Pnei David' explains: When the poor person brings his offering, it could be that he entertains thoughts of resentment against Hashem for making him poor, for if he was rich he would be able to bring a sheep or goat for his sin-offering, and now he is embarrassed to bring his simple offering. The Torah is more severe with the poor person and requires him to also bring a burnt-offering to atone for these improper thoughts.

### When does Hashem 'Return Your Call'?!

*"He called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying:" (Vayikra 1:1)*

The Parsha begins with the word ויקרא, He called, which is written in the Sefer Torah with a small 'alef'.

We will try to understand why this is so; there is obviously a lesson here that the Torah wishes to impart. Rashi (Vayikra 1:1) clarifies the meaning of the word 'Vayikra' in the following way: It is an expression of love, an expression that angels use, as it says (Yeshayah 6:3) "And one would call to another". But to the prophets of the nations He appeared to them with a chance and impure expression, as it says (Bamidbar 23:4), "G-d happened upon Bilam".

Rashi's clarification shows that the word 'vayikra' is an expression that shows importance and greatness since this is the language of angels and only the prophets of Hashem merited being called with this expression, while due to the impurity of the nations of the world, they did not merit Hashem speaking to them with this holy term. Rather, He turned to them using a coincidental and impure expression, 'vayikar', "G-d happened upon", implying that it was a chance occurrence.

Due to Moshe Rabbeinu's great modesty, he could not accept the fact that Hashem was calling him with the language of the angels. Since he considered himself of lowly stature, he could not bear the great honor that Hashem bestowed on him and therefore asked that the Torah should write the letter 'alef' smaller than the other letters, so that it should not be evident to all future generations that he was fitting and deserving of this greatness. Due to the small 'alef' the word can be read as 'vayikar'. In this way, it would appear that Moshe too was called by Hashem using this chance expression, and not with the expression of 'vayikra' which denotes the importance and greatness of the one being summoned.

One can add to this idea by saying that the word 'vayikra' also has the same root letters as the word 'קריאה', calling. This implies that when a person connects to his Creator by cleaving to His Torah and mitzvot, then Hashem in return connects Himself to the person and even calls him to come and study Torah with Him.

As we know (Tana D'bei Eliyahu Rabba 13), after a person passes away, the souls of tzaddikim surround Hashem's holy Throne and study Torah with Him. In this reality, where a person connects to Hashem through Torah, he fulfills the saying (Zohar Section two, 90:2) "Am Yisrael, the Torah and the Holy One Blessed be He, are one."

## A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA



**T**he third of the Five Books of the Torah, Vayikra, is called so because of Hashem calling Moshe Rabbeinu a"h.

This 'calling' is explained beautifully by our Sages zt"l in several ways, and in this column we will concentrate on one of the interpretations, brought by the Midrash Rabba (Vayikra 1:6).

"Rabbi Tanchuma began, (Mishlei 20:15) 'There is gold and many pearls, but lips of wisdom are a precious tool'. In the normal way of the world, if a man has gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and all the precious vessels in the world, but goodness and wisdom he does not have, what acquisition does he possess? This is a parable that says, "if you have acquired wisdom what are you lacking, if you lack wisdom what have you acquired." 'There is gold', everyone brought their donations of gold for the Mishkan, as it says (Shemot 25) 'This is the portion etc.' 'And many pearls', this refers to the donation of the princes, as it says (ibid 35) 'The leaders brought etc.' 'But lips of wisdom are a precious tool' since Moshe was distressed and said, all brought their donations for the Mishkan but I did not bring, Hashem said to him, by your life, your words are more precious to me than everything else, for out of all them He only spoke to Moshe, as it says 'He called to Moshe'".

What is Hashem's speech? The words of His Torah which are more desirable to those who study them than gold and fine gold and more valuable than a thousand thousands of thousands of dinars and precious pearls. With their fierce love of Torah, they discard all of life's burdens and immerse themselves in matters of Torah and halacha. Time will end and we will still not finish describing this remarkable love. We can derive great encouragement from one of the inspiring personalities who lived in our generation, Maran Rabbeinu Ovadiah

Yosef zt"l. Studying his ways will grant us some perception of the extent to which he treasured Hashem's word.

In the sefer 'Shalhevet Yosef Chai', the author writes that in 5731 Rabbeinu went to Yeshivat Hanegev to give a shiur klali. After the shiur, Rabbeinu, together with the Rosh Yeshiva, Hagaon Rabbi Yissachar Meir zt"l, went to visit the Baba Sali zt"l, who accorded Rabbeinu great honor.

The Baba Sali told Rabbeinu: "I wished to meet his honor for many years now. Already in Morocco, I studied your sefer, 'Yabi'a Omer'. Now I ask his honor if he could please be so gracious as to stay a while and we will partake of a special meal through which we will bring Mashiach since a time of joy of the Chachamim brings the redemption."

Rabbeinu apologized to the Baba Sali and explained: "I regret that I cannot delay since a large congregation is waiting to hear my shiur in Bnei Brak, and Torah study is considered greater than building the Beit Hamikdash!"

The Gaon Rabbi Yitzchak Zilberstein shlita, told over that in 5735 he accompanied his father-in-law, Maran Hagaon Rabbi Elyashiv zt"l, on a visit to Rabbeinu, to fulfill the mitzvah of visiting the sick. Maran Hagaon Rabbi Elyashiv went to Rabbeinu's home where he remained and talked for longer than his customary time. When they left Rabbeinu's holy presence, the Gaon Rabbi Zilberstein expressed his surprise and asked his father in law, "Why did Harav divert from his usual custom in this visit?"

Hagaon Rabbi Elyashiv replied: "Take note of Rabbi Ovadiah's great love for Torah! He is now confined to bed only because he climbed up a ladder in his study to fetch one of his sefarim and after looking through the sefer he hurried to write down his chiddush, but he slipped and fell and injured himself because due to his great engrossment in Torah, he forgot that he was still standing on the ladder! In honor of the Torah of this great Gaon, whose love of Torah and rare diligence burns in his bones to the extent that when he is learning he does not know where he is, it is fitting that I extend myself beyond my regular measures!"

The following wonderful story is just

one out of numerous accounts that testify to Rabbeinu's diligence at all times and in all places. One year, on the hilula of Rabbeinu's mother, his father held an azkarah in his home as a merit for her neshama. Family and acquaintances all arrived at the appointed time, but the oldest son, Rabbeinu Hakadosh, was nowhere to be seen. Since it was getting late, they began the traditional order of learning, hoping that Rabbeinu would still show up sometime during the evening. But to their great astonishment, the evening came to an end and they realized that Rabbeinu had not attended the azkarah.

The following day, Rabbeinu's brother went to see if all was well with him and to uncover the reason for missing his mother's azkarah. Rabbeinu answered: "Yesterday I was presented with a case of an agunah (deserted wife) and asked if I could find a leniency for her to be able to marry again. I wrestled with this challenge the entire night, and only at four in the morning did I finish writing the answer! This was certainly a merit for Ima's neshama, much more than if I would have participated in the azkarah!"

When the brother related this to their father, he was filled with joy and said, "Fortunate is the mother who merited this kind of son!"

Another wonderful story in a similar vein:

At Rabbeinu's levaya, his son, Hagaon Rabbi David Yosef shlita, related this story in his hesped, amid copious tears: "Fourteen years ago, when Abba was hospitalized after his first heart attack, the doctors declared that he urgently needs to undergo catheterization but Abba forcefully countered that he first wished to go home for three hours, after which he would return for the procedure."

"We did not understand why," his son told over. "When we asked him about it he explained: 'I am in the middle of writing a ruling which would permit an agunah to remarry. What will be with this unfortunate agunah? I have no guarantee that I will survive this procedure, and then who will have mercy on this unfortunate woman?!'"