

In memory of all those brutally murdered in the war on Israel and the fallen soldiers of the IDF. Praying for the safe return of all the hostages.

בס"ד

23 MARCH 2024 | 13 ADAR II 5784

VOLUME 37 | #29

DAF HASHMAYUA

ויקרא | VAYIKRA

SHABBAT ENDS:

London 7.06pm
Birmingham 7.13pm
Cardiff 7.22pm
Dublin 7.32pm
Edinburgh 7.26pm
Glasgow 7.30pm
Hull 7.14pm
Leeds 7.14pm
Liverpool 7.21pm
Manchester 7.18pm
Nottingham 7.16pm
Sheffield 7.18pm
Southend 7.02pm
Southport 7.25pm
Jerusalem 6.30pm

Parashat Zachor

Purim is tonight
and Sunday



**PURIM
SAMEACH!**

**ויקרא
VAYIKRA**

1st Sidra in:

**ויקרא
VAYIKRA**

By Numbers:

**111 VERSES
1,673 WORDS
6,222 LETTERS**

Headlines:
**DESCRIPTIONS OF
OFFERINGS AND
PUBLIC LAW**

VAYIKRA:

Artscroll p544
Hertz p410
Soncino p605

MAFTIR (ZACHOR):

Artscroll p1066
Hertz p856
Soncino p1114

**HAFTARAH
(ZACHOR):**

Artscroll p1214
Hertz p996
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Sidra Summary

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – VAYIKRA 1:1-13

The Book of Vayikra starts by detailing the *olah* (elevation) offering. One who brought an offering had to lay their hands upon it (*semicha*). The *shechita* (slaughter) of the animal could be done by a non-Kohen, but the processes thereafter (catching the blood and sprinkling it on the altar) were performed only by the *Kohanim*. The *olah* offering was cut up and all of the pieces were burned on the *mizbeach* (altar). The verses detail an *olah* offering brought from cattle, sheep or goats.

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 1:14-2:6

The Torah now details the laws of an *olah* offering brought from fowl. The process of killing the fowl differed from an animal offering; notably, the *Kohen* used his fingernail (*meilika*) instead of a knife. It was also possible to bring an offering from fine flour (*mincha*), a handful of which was mixed with oil and thrown onto the altar's fire. The rest was baked and eaten by the *Kohanim*.

Point to Consider: *From what stage could the service of the meal offering be performed only by Kohanim (see Rashi to 2:2)*

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 2:7-16

Several voluntary meal offerings are listed, some baked, some fried. These offerings had to be unleavened. Every offering – whether animal, fowl or flour – had salt added to it. The laws of the Torah of the parched *Omer* offering are stated, which was brought on 16 Nisan (Rashi).

4TH ALIYA (REVI') – 3:1-17

A voluntary peace offering (*shelamim*) could be brought from cattle, sheep or goats. Only parts of it were burned on the *mizbeach* – other parts were eaten by the *Kohanim* and by the person who brought the offering (see Rashi).

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 4:1-26

People were commanded to bring sin offerings (*chata'ot*) for various inadvertent transgressions. A *Kohen Gadol* who

accidentally contravened specific serious prohibitions had to bring a bull, parts of which were burned on the *mizbeach*; the rest were burned outside the camp. A similar process had to be done if the High Court's (*Sanhedrin*) ruling caused an accidental transgression by the people. If a king (referred to here as *Nasi*) accidentally transgressed certain mitzvot, he had to bring a male goat as an offering.

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 4:27-5:10

The variable offering (*korban oleh ve'yored*) was dependent on the financial means of the person who brought it – it could be an animal, birds or flour. This offering was brought by someone who intentionally refused to testify as a witness or who made a false oath. It was also brought by one who accidentally entered parts of the Temple (*Beit Hamikdash*) or touched sanctified objects when in a state of ritual impurity.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI') – 5:11-26

An individual who unintentionally derived benefit from sanctified objects had to bring a male ram as a guilt offering (*asham*), as well as paying for the 'damage' and adding an additional fifth to the cost. An *asham* was also brought by someone who was not sure whether they had inadvertently committed the type of sin for which one would normally bring a *chatat*.

MAFTIR (DEVARIM 25:17-19)

The special reading for Parashat Zachor is from the end of Parashat Ki Tetze, commanding us to remember how the Amalekite nation started a war against the Israelites after they left Egypt, as well as the imperative to eradicate Amalek.

HAFTARAH (I SHMUEL 15:2-34)

The prophet Shmuel (Samuel) relates how King Shaul (Saul) defeated Amalek, but took pity on their king, Agag. In defiance of a Divine command, Shaul refrained from killing Agag, as well as sparing his cattle. Shmuel rebuked Shaul and told him that he would lose the monarchy because of this misplaced mercy. Shmuel himself then killed Agag.



United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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Wake Up and Smell the Korban!



**RABBI
YOSSI
HAMBLING**

Birmingham Central
Synagogue

"Wake up and smell the coffee!"

Like many idioms in the English language, the true origins of this phrase are unclear. Yet its meaning is well known: sometimes we need to pause and face up to the harsh realities of life; rather than continuing as we have always done, we need to adapt. In other words, a keen sense of smell serves as a metaphor for an improved awareness of the world around us and our place in it.

Likewise, the concept of smell in Parashat Vayikra also contains much metaphorical significance, albeit in a slightly different way. In describing the various *korbanot* (offerings) to be brought in the newly-constructed *Mishkan* (Tabernacle), the Torah describes them as "a pleasant smell to God" (for example, see Vayikra 1:9). This cannot be taken in the literal, human sense; after all, why should it make a difference to God what

a *korban* smells like? However, even when the Torah describes God anthropomorphically, rarely does it refer to smell. What, then, is the meaning of such a metaphor?

HaKtav veHaKabbalah (Rabbi Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenburg, 1785-1865, Germany) cites a fascinating answer to this from a work called *Ma'aseh Hashem*, by Rabbi Eliezer Ashkenazi (Poland, 1513-1586).

Imagine you were walking down the high street, and the smell of freshly baked bread begins to waft into your nostrils. Slowly the smell gets stronger and stronger, before finally a bakery appears in sight. You go in, buy a loaf of bread, and begin to eat it, finally accessing the taste you have been waiting for since the moment you first smelled it.

Explains *HaKtav veHaKabbalah*: so too with our *korbanot*. When God sees us bringing *korbanot* to Him, it is like a tempting smell. He senses that there is something special that we are doing in trying to come close to Him – or to repair our damaged relationship with Him – through this ritual act.

Yet this is not enough. Rather than being a standalone act, God

expects us to follow up the *korban* with *Teshuva* (repentance) and a renewed focus on Torah and mitzvot in our lives. In other words, He anticipates the day He can fully experience the closeness we desire to have with Him.

This idea – that mitzvot can serve as a springboard for our relationship with God, and not simply as an end in themselves – is all the more relevant as we approach Purim. Purim may be a day of celebrating how God saved us from the evil plans of Haman, but if our Purim is confined to the various *halachot* (such as listening to the Megillah and having a *seuda*, a festive meal), there is something lacking. Rather, our observance of Purim should lead us to consider the bigger questions. Am I looking out for Divine Providence in my own life? What does it mean to live as a proud Jew even whilst living in the Diaspora? And what is my contribution to the future of the Jewish people? Finally, this Purim, after all that has happened to the Jewish world since 7 October, what does it all mean to me in my life?

This Purim, let us follow the scent of our mitzvot and allow them to lead us to a closer connection with God than ever before. Together, let us make the effort to "wake up and smell the *korban*!"

In loving memory of Harav Yitzchak Yoel ben Shlomo Halevi z"l

Esther's Timeless Tale



**SHIRA
JACKSON**

US Educator

In every generation, there are those who want to destroy the Jewish people. In every generation, there are also heroes who rise up in our defence... In a town called Shushan over 2300 years ago, the Jewish nation were living in exile. The Babylonian Empire had invaded Israel, murdering and pillaging as they went. They destroyed our holy Temple in Jerusalem and sent the remnants of our people into exile.

By the time the Purim story begins, the Jews no longer consider themselves refugees, as they have settled into their new surroundings and even established themselves within the upper echelons of society. The Jews are invited to attend the many feasts of King Achashveirosh and seem unaware of what their neighbours really think of them.

When Haman comes into power as prime minister, he issues a decree that there will be a national day of rage. He does not tell anyone

By the time the Purim story begins, the Jews no longer consider themselves refugees, as they have settled into their new surroundings and even established themselves within the upper echelons of society.

until the last minute which nation is to be exterminated through his new genocidal policy, but no prizes for guessing who! Imagine our shock and horror when we realise that apparently our neighbours do not like us as much as we thought, and they are only too happy to get involved. Sound familiar?

'Coincidentally,' King Achashveirosh, having murdered his first wife Vashti in a drunken stupor, chose Esther, a Jewish woman, to become his new queen. She did not choose to be taken as a wife, she did everything she could to avoid it; but now she 'happens' to be in prime position to get this decree overturned. The only problem is that her husband, the king, does not know she is Jewish and he happens to be a wife killer; she is somewhat reluctant to

turn up unannounced, explain her situation and beg for her life and her people's.

She is faced with an impossible decision, should she risk her life to save her people? Mordechai, her cousin who brought her up, says to her, "Who knows, perhaps you have attained this royal position for just such a crisis?" Sometimes we find ourselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. Mordechai shows her a way to view it as the wrong place at the right time.

We have heard incredible stories in recent months of the heroics of ordinary people. They did not choose to be heroes, but, in impossible situations, found an inner strength to put others before themselves. Youssef Ziadna, an Arab Bedouin, left the safety of his home to drive his 14-seater minibus to the Re'im music festival, managing to rescue 30 people. Inbal Lieberman rapidly coordinated the security response of the residents of her kibbutz, Nir Am, saving everyone inside. Avital Alajem took her murdered neighbour's two children with her when escaping on foot from Gaza, risking her life to save them.

At the end of the Purim story, disaster is averted, the Jews are saved and while we celebrate our victory, Esther, our heroine, sits down to write her story. It does not end happily for her as she does not manage to return to her people, but she still celebrates her heroic achievement. She teaches us to hold conflicting emotions simultaneously; we mourn every person we have lost and yet their legacy lives on as we remember with pride everything they gave to the world. We hope and pray that all our captives and soldiers come home, as we celebrate the festival of Purim which epitomises 'Am Yisrael Chai, Od Avinu Chai'.

PURIM

Takes place **14th** of the Jewish month of Adar on the



Jamie Macdonald ate

48

Hamantaschen in 5 minutes, setting the record during the 2nd Annual El Al Airlines National Hamantaschen Eating Championship in New York (Don't try this at home!)

God's name is mentioned

0

times in the Megillah!

4

mitzvot of Purim – Megillah, Matanot La'Evyonim (gifts to the poor), Mishloach Manot (sending food gifts) and Mishteh (a feast)



In a Jewish leap year (like this year), Purim is in the **2nd** month of Adar (Adar Sheini)

15th century

traces back to the

to dress up in costume on Purim

The popular tradition

Matanot Le'evyonim is given to at least

2

poor people



THE FESTIVALS IN NUMBERS



The
United
Synagogue

Clothing in Megillat Esther Part 2



**REBBETZEN
CHANNAH
HAMBLING**

Birmingham Central
Synagogue

There are significant textual parallels between the rise of Yosef (Joseph) in Egypt and the rise of Mordechai in Shushan, both made great by the kings of the day, Pharaoh and Achashveirosh, respectively.

When Yosef invites his brothers to dine with him, we see a strange moment where Yosef is giving his brothers gifts and gives Benjamin “three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of clothing” (Bereishit 45:22). The Talmud (Megillah 16b) teaches us that this clothing was a hint to the five pieces of clothing that Mordechai would one day wear when he left the king’s palace.

When Achashveirosh asks, “What should a king do for someone he wants to honour?”, all Haman can think about is the external – being dressed up in the king’s fine clothing, riding on the king’s horse etc. Looks are important to him; external status items are at the forefront

of his mind. This is what will give someone honour. Indeed, this turned out to be an effective way of informing the people of Shushan that Mordechai the Jew was favoured by the king.

On the other hand, Mordechai understood that these clothes did not reflect who he really was and was not attached to them at all. We see this as he immediately returned to his place outside the king’s gate, as before, wearing his usual clothes. On the other hand, when Mordechai himself had an urgent message to convey to his people – Haman’s evil decree – he dressed in sackcloth and ashes and “cried a great and bitter cry”, all in public.

In last week’s article, we mentioned how pretentious Achashveirosh was in donning the clothes of the *Kohen Gadol* (High Priest). Mordechai was unimpressed by these and other luxuries and did not attend the feast. His reward for not going to the feast and for wearing sackcloth and ashes was the special royal garments that he received at the end of the story (R. Elisha Gallico, d.1583, Tzfat).

On Purim we dress up, wear different clothing to normal and



some cover their faces with masks. Perhaps it is to remind ourselves that things are not always what they seem. The entire Purim story is one of a series of ‘random’ events, some of which occurred even before Haman’s evil decree. The Jews, led by Mordechai and Esther, came to realise that these events were not random at all, but were orchestrated by God. They removed the ‘mask’ covering these stories to reveal God’s role.

The Megillah also contains hidden or concealed elements. The grandeur of the feasts of Achashveirosh belied the evil lurking within. Esther hid her identity. Bigtan and Teresh had a secret plot to kill the king.

Our dressing up on Purim, ‘hiding’ behind a mask or costume, is a reminder that our real, spiritual selves lie within.

However we present ourselves to the world on Purim, our true spiritual essence remains, and we express this by doing mitzvot, specifically those of the day – including giving gifts to the poor and to friends.

Echoes of Shushan: The dual joy of Purim



**RABBI
SAM
MILLUNCHICK**

Belmont United
Synagogue

If you ever find yourself in Ecuador, go and stand with one foot on either side of the equator.

It must be one of the oddest experiences a human can have. On one side of the equator, in the northern hemisphere, you would notice that water and air spin to the right, whereas on the other side, in the southern hemisphere, you would see that they turn to the left. Weirder still, on the equator itself, you would notice that the water falls straight down without spinning at all!

On Purim, a similar phenomenon takes place - depending on where you are in Israel, it is either Purim or it is not!

The Megillah of Esther records that when the Jews were fighting to defend themselves from annihilation, in the city of Shushan, the fighting continued for one extra day:

"And the Jews who were in Shushan assembled on the thirteenth day and on the fourteenth day [of Adar], and they gained respite on the fifteenth day, making it a day of banqueting and rejoicing. Therefore, the village Jews, who dwell

in unwalled towns, make the fourteenth day of the month of Adar an occasion of rejoicing and banqueting and holiday-making and the sending of portions of food to each other" (Esther 9:18–19).

The *Halacha* (Jewish law) states that cities which were walled in ancient times, as Shushan was, should celebrate Purim on 15th Adar rather than the 14th.

In contemporary Israel, this means that, as many boisterous Yeshiva students will gleefully tell you, Purim can actually be celebrated on two separate occasions, both on the 14th and 15th Adar!

Fascinatingly, and entirely typically of our faith, this dual Purim has spawned an entire genre of halachic literature — which cities are considered walled in ancient times and therefore must

keep Purim on the 15th?

Two Jews, three opinions, and in some places in Israel (such as in Hebron / Kiryat Arba) — two days of Purim, because it is not clear which day they should actually be keeping! Some neighbourhoods of Jerusalem, for example, were, for some years, not clearly defined as part of Jerusalem (15th Adar), or not (14th). Thus, some people kept all Purim's mitzvot for two days in a row! Today, everyone in Jerusalem observes Purim on 15th Adar.

It is not just Israel, though, where two days are kept out of doubt. Some cities in the diaspora could potentially fall into the category of ancient walled cities, and therefore keep two days, including Izmir in Turkey and Damascus in Syria, where until recently there was a thriving Jewish population. In London (along with everywhere else), we, too, mark Shushan Purim (15th Adar) by altering our prayers slightly on that day.

It is incredible to witness the influx of people into Jerusalem on the night of the 15th, keen to hear the Megillah twice more and celebrate our liberation from persecution at the hands of the wicked Haman. Perhaps this reflects the dream of the Jewish people, as beautifully expressed by the psalmist: "Run from evil and do good. Demand peace, and chase after it."

*Purim
Sameach!*



In loving memory of Harav Yitzchak Yoel ben Shlomo Halevi z"l



A Caring Community



**MICHELLE
MINSKY**

Head of
US Chesed

When I am asked what the Chesed Department does, I tend to start with explaining (briefly) what *Chesed* means – acts of kindness or love between people. The late Chief Rabbi Sacks zt”l, said that *Chesed* can be viewed as the giving of ourselves, with our time and with our hearts. He spoke of love as compassion, a society with a human face, where everyone feels honoured, where everyone feels at home. He told us that acts of kindness never die. They linger in the memory, giving life to other acts in return¹. The best way of breaking down barriers between people or communities is through simple, unforced acts of kindness².

These are the values our Chesed team aspire to demonstrate through our range of programmes – whether that is working together with our wonderful Community Care teams in supporting our shul members, sending messages and small gifts to the UK families of soldiers currently serving in the IDF, making asylum-seekers and refugees feel more welcome through our monthly drop-in centres or delivering back-to-school items of stationery at the beginning

of the academic year. Our core services also include the provision of hospital and prison chaplaincy, providing a listening ear to patients, prisoners and their families.

Although *Chesed* is about the human values of kindness, helping people when they are struggling – whether that is financially, through ill-health, bereavement or maybe loneliness, and we all struggle sometimes - we also need resources to enable our projects to happen.



So, as an example, through our Purim programme we distribute *Mishloach Manot* (food gifts) to our more vulnerable members, people who receive our food parcels and families supported by key Jewish charities such as the Jewish Deaf Association and Norwood. Groups of volunteers bake hamantashen (a traditional triangular-shaped pastry for Purim) which, together with a selection of food items, are packed in a US Chesed gift box by classes

of schoolchildren. Others volunteer to deliver the boxes. This project not only creates a whole range of volunteering opportunities; it also makes the recipients feel included, that they are part of the community.

Pesach should be a time when families and friends get together and celebrate – whether that is at someone's home or maybe at the communal Seder run by many of our shuls. But, as we all know, it costs a considerable amount of money to purchase all the items needed for a kosher Pesach. This is where US Chesed comes in. Every year we run a food parcel scheme for people who would have difficulty buying what they need. Communities can choose whether they want to have food parcels, food vouchers or to purchase the food themselves and then be reimbursed. There are subsidies for individuals or families who find the costs of the communal *Sedarim* beyond their means. Recipients can be assured that confidentiality is integral to the whole project.

In the last few years particularly, caring for the welfare of our members has become an essential part of the care the United Synagogue shows its members. This is why we are having a fundraiser at the beginning of April, so we can continue to carry out this important work. Please give as generously as you can.

¹ From *Optimism to Hope*, p. 130

² The Home We Build Together, p. 132

Devastation and Inspiration



**RABBI
BARUCH
DAVIS**

Daf Hashavua
Editor-in-Chief

During this war, many shocking images have been etched into our minds, but we have also heard countless stories of inspiration, of soldiers and ordinary citizens who have risen to the call of the hour.

In January, my wife, Nechama, and I took part in a trip to the south of Israel, to places bordering the Gaza Strip, including Sderot, where we visited the yeshiva and saw the site of the destroyed police station.

Our guide for the trip shared a story related by Col. Golan Vach, a long-time soldier, who, in 2009, established the Search and Rescue Battalion. He had the most harrowing task of removing many bodies from the massacres of 7/10.

He told the story of how, late one Friday evening in Gaza, he learned a new tune from the beloved educator Rabbi Yossi Herskovitz, Principal of Pelech High School, Jerusalem. It was to well-known words in Psalm 23: *"Gam ki elech... even as I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil, for you are with me"*. Tragically, a few days later, Rabbi Herskovitz was killed in action.

Arriving in Sderot, the sight of a still-intact Succah in January was a stark reminder of what this city has been through. Rabbi Aryeh Katz, a



A new wall mural in Sderot, by artist Elyasaf Miara, capturing the destruction of the Sderot Police Station on 7/10 and the eternity of Am Yisrael

teacher in the yeshiva, described some of the shocking events that had taken place on 7/10, including how a couple and their children had tried to escape by car, only for the parents and a would-be Arab rescuer to be shot dead by Hamas. A policeman rescued the terrified children and took them to his home. The police at the police station put up a most heroic fight against Hamas, lasting many hours. *"This"*, said Rabbi Katz, *"was one of the miracles of the day, as Hamas had planned to quickly overrun the police station and then to proceed onwards to Ashkelon and Ashdod. The terrorists had not reckoned on the strength and fortitude of the police, who fought until their last breath, saving thousands of people"*.

Less than a third of Sderot's 33,000 residents had returned to the town at the time, but the mood was one of defiant optimism. *"We're building a museum of heroism and a new girls' Sem"*, said the Rosh Yeshiva. *"This*

is the time to invest in real estate here", said Rabbi Katz.

We then walked through the site of the Supernova music festival at Re'im, with placards and photos of those taken captive and flowers and stones in memory of the 364 murdered there. Led by our accompanying musicians, Yonatan and Tzvi, we sang together at this devastated but holy place.

The remainder of the day was one of stark contrasts: Tekuma, the site where many destroyed cars were being readied for burial due to the human remains that could not otherwise be buried, and a *Hamal*, a place for soldiers to relax and refresh. They can take a shower, have a haircut, enjoy some music and there is lots of food, prepared and served by an 'army' of volunteers. As we thanked the soldiers for everything they do for *Am Yisrael*, they thanked us for coming, saying that the love and support of the people gives them the motivation to keep going.



The Building of the Temple

Sefer Melachim (Kings) I: Chapter 6



**PNINA
SAVERY**

Ma'ayan and
US Educator

This chapter outlines the building of the *Beit Hamikdash* (Temple). We are told that Shlomo HaMelech (King Solomon) begins to build it in the 480th year after the Exodus from Egypt. The specific date given highlights what an important event this building project is. Rabbi Alex Israel (Alon Shvut, Israel) suggests that the date is linked to the Exodus because the Exodus was “the birth of the nation” and the building of the *Beit Hamikdash* represents the nation’s arrival at a “mature state of adulthood”¹. Additionally, 480 is a multiple of 40 – a period of time often used in the *Tanach* (Hebrew Bible) to symbolise wholeness or perfection, such as the 40 days Moshe (Moses) spent up Mount Sinai and the 40 years of both David and Shlomo’s reigns.

The text does not tell us the location of the *Beit Hamikdash*, but we are told elsewhere in *Tanach* that: “Shlomo began to build in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah... on the threshing floor” that David had bought for this purpose (*II Divrei HaYamim* 3:1).

Only complete, cut quarried stone was used in the building

project. No hammers, chisels or iron utensils were heard in the Temple while it was being built (*I Melachim* 6:7). The *Mechilta* (an early Midrashic commentary) explains that the *Beit Hamikdash* was a positive building, intended to prolong life, and thus iron utensils, which can be used to end life, had no place there.

The 38 verses of this chapter go into all the details of the building: dimensions, materials and sections. Overall, it took Shlomo seven years to complete the project. The text is very similar to the text used in *Sefer Shemot* to describe the building of the

Mishkan (Tabernacle), although there are some differences. The *Beit Hamikdash* is double the length, triple the height and has an additional entrance hall (*ulam*). Chapter 7 will outline how the number of utensils also increased tenfold! The *Meshech Chochma* (Biblical commentary written by Rabbi Meir Simcha HaCohen of Dvinsk, 1843–1926) explains that the abundance of utensils is a logistical need. For example, with the massive increase in the size of the building, many more menorahs are needed to provide the equivalent light.

Why does the *Beit Hamikdash* have to be so large? Additionally, why does the *Tanach* spend so long describing it in all its details? The *Beit Hamikdash* is built as a palace for God – it represents the glory of God to the whole world, Jews and non-Jews alike. As such, it is only fitting that it be a splendid and grand building, one to inspire awe in any visitor. This also explains why we need to spend so much time both discussing it and actually building it: in order to give God the honour He truly deserves.

Halfway through the chapter, God reminds Shlomo that the building alone is not enough. Only if the people truly serve God and keep the mitzvot will God dwell within it (*I Melachim* 6:11-13).

The 38 verses of this chapter go into all the details of the building: dimensions, materials and sections. Overall, it took Shlomo seven years to complete the project.

¹ Alex Israel, *I Kings, Torn in Two*, p.81.

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT VAYIKRA

22-23 MARCH | 13 ADAR II

From Evil to Holiness: A Call to Eliminate Negativity and Draw Closer to God



**REBBETZEN
LISA LEVENE**

Hampstead Garden
Suburb Synagogue

The focus of the entire parasha and much of the book of Vayikra centres on the complex service conducted in the *Beit Hamikdash* and the *Mishkan*. However, in our current reality, without these sacred structures, what message does this hold for us today?

The term '*korban*', often translated as 'sacrifice,' comes from the root '*karov*,' meaning to approach or come close. According to the teachings of Rabbi Shimshon Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888), presenting a *korban* reflects

one's deep desire for a closer relationship with God. Through this act, individuals seek forgiveness, blessings, and an intensified connection with Him.

In the absence of the *Beit Hamikdash*, *tefillah* (prayer) has replaced the role of sacrifices. As a result, our prayers mirror the essence of the service performed in the *Beit Hamikdash*, emphasising the importance of sincere intentions during our moments of prayer.

As we approach Purim and recite Parashat Zachor, which highlights the obligation to eliminate the evil represented by the nation of Amalek, it is crucial to recognise Amalek's goal of distancing us from God. Amalek is an antisemitic nation of pure evil; therefore, reciting these words serves as a

reminder for reflection. It prompts us to seize the opportunity to draw closer to God, especially in light of current events.

In the words of Rebbeetzen Esther Jungreis: "*Parashat Zachor teaches us to recognise and confront the spiritual adversaries in our lives. It's an opportunity for self-reflection, eliminating negativity, and drawing closer to Hashem. In doing so, we affirm our commitment to a holier path.*"

In these moments of reflection, as we recite both the parasha of Vayikra and the words of Parashat Zachor, let it be a call to action, an opportunity to evaluate practical ways to draw closer to God. By eliminating negativity and reflecting on our history, we can deepen our connection with the Divine.

Purim Puzzler!

Unscramble the following letters to form words connected to Parashat Zachor and Purim.

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. meebrRem | 9. rPuim |
| 2. iemT | 10. nEeeism |
| 3. leamAk | 11. luVaes |
| 4. tommnedmanC | 12. moetsuC |
| 5. rtietmonixEan | 13. Taorh |
| 6. toeuermDony | 14. mHneanatchsa |
| 7. nIErtae | 15. MhiealgI |
| 8. ndooGses | |

Answers 1. Remember 2. Time 3. Amalek 4. Commandment 5. Extermination 6. Deuteronomy 7. Eternal 8. Goodness 9. Purim 10. Enemies 11. Values 12. Costume 13. Torah 14. Hamantaschen 15. Megillah



THE TRIBE SCRIBE

VAYIKRA: PURIM!

WOAH! CHECK OUT THAT CAR! I WISH I COULD ENJOY A NEW CAR TOO.

VROOOOM!

AW, I WISH I COULD AFFORD A CAR.

IF ONLY I HAD A BIKE - I WOULDN'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE BUS.

BUS STOP

SHE CAN JUST GO WHEREVER SHE WANTS.

IF WE FOCUS ON WHAT WE DON'T HAVE, WE ALWAYS FEEL LIKE WE'RE MISSING OUT! NOT FUN.

WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE? THE **MISHNA IN PIRKEI AVOT** TELLS US THAT THE SECRET TO FEELING CONTENT IS BEING HAPPY WITH WHATEVER WE HAVE.

HAPPY PURIM!

THIS WEEK IS **PURIM** - A TIME TO BE HAPPY! IF WE NOTICE ALL THE THINGS WE ARE BLESSED WITH, WE WILL BE FULL OF JOY!

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