

DAF HASHAVUA

אחרי מות-
קדשים

ACHAREI MOT-
KEDOSHIM

SHABBAT ENDS:

London: 9.06pm
 Birmingham: 9.16pm
 Bournemouth: 9.14pm
 Cardiff: 9.22pm
 Dublin: 9.37pm
 Edinburgh: 9.40pm
 Glasgow: 9.44pm
 Hull: 9.22pm
 Leeds: 9.21pm
 Liverpool: 9.30pm
 Manchester: 9.24pm
 Nottingham: 9.21pm
 Sheffield: 9.24pm
 Southend: 9.02pm
 Southport: 9.32pm
 Jerusalem: 7.54pm



SIDRA BREAKDOWN

אַחֲרֵי מוֹת
קִדְשִׁים

ACHAREI MOT-
KEDOSHIM

6th & 7th Sidrot in:

וַיִּקְרָא
VAYIKRA

By Numbers:

144 VERSES

2,038 WORDS

7,523 LETTERS

Headlines:

**LAWS OF YOM
KIPPUR AND
HOLINESS**

**ACHAREI MOT-
KEDOSHIM:**

Artscroll p.636

Hertz p.480

Koren Sacks p.759

Soncino p.705

HAFTARAH:

Artscroll p.1173

Hertz p.509

Koren Sacks p.1535

Soncino p.735

SIDRA SUMMARY

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – VAYIKRA 16:1-24

God speaks to Moshe (Moses) after the death of two of Aharon's sons (recorded in *parashat Shemin*). Moshe is told to warn Aharon, the *Kohen Gadol* (High Priest), not to enter the Holy of Holies (*Kodesh Hakodoshim*) area of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle), except on Yom Kippur.

The sidra now details the Yom Kippur service in the *Mishkan*: Aharon will have to bring a bull as a *chatat* (sin offering) and a ram as an *olah* (elevation offering). The people will provide two male goats. Aharon must place lots on the two goats, designating one to be a *chatat* and the other to be thrown off a cliff in the wilderness. Inside the *Kodesh Hakodoshim*, Aharon will bring an incense offering (*ketoret*). He will also sprinkle blood from the various offerings in specific areas of the *Mishkan*.

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 16:25-17:7

The Israelites are commanded to fast on Yom Kippur. When Yom Kippur arrives, Aharon does exactly as commanded by God. His special service is to be repeated every year by future incumbents of his office. It is forbidden to bring an animal offering anywhere other than the *Mishkan*.

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 17:8-18:21

It is forbidden to consume the blood of any animal (Rashi). After doing *shechita* (slaughter) on kosher fowl or non-domesticated animals, there is a mitzvah to cover the blood. The laws of forbidden relationships are listed, such as with close relatives, or with another's spouse.

4TH ALIYA (REVI'I) – 18:22-19:14

The nation's well-being in the Land is dependent upon adhering to the laws about forbidden relationships. [This week's second sidra, Kedoshim, contains many mitzvot, a selection of which has been included here].

We are commanded to revere our parents and to observe Shabbat. Offerings need to be eaten within their designated time. When harvesting one's field or vineyard, certain produce needs to be left over for poor people to take free of charge. One may not place a stumbling block in front of a blind person.

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 19:15-32

A judge is not allowed to favour any litigant. It is forbidden to harbour hatred or to seek revenge. You shall "love your fellow as yourself". Eating the fruit of a tree during the first three years of growth is forbidden. In its fourth year, the fruit has to be eaten in Jerusalem. It is forbidden to cut one's skin in mourning. There is a mitzvah to stand up in the presence of a Torah scholar and an elderly person.

Point to Consider: *what did Rabbi Akiva comment on the mitzvah to "love your fellow as yourself"? (see Rashi to 19:18)*

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 19:33-20:7

One must have accurate scales, weights and measures. There was a severe prohibition against giving one's children over to an ancient cult called 'Molech'.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI'I) – 20:8-27

Cursing one's parents is forbidden. The punishments for the forbidden relationships detailed in the 3rd aliya (*Shlishi*) are listed. Keeping the laws of *kashrut* will enable us to remain a distinct and distinguished nation.

HAFTARAH (AMOS 9:7-15)

The prophet Amos rebukes Israel for being no better than the Pelishtim (Philistine) nation. Those who were particularly sinful will suffer the harshest punishment. But once they have died by the sword, the Davidic kingdom will return and the Land will be rebuilt.



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A HEARTFELT REBUKE

BY: **RABBI MORDECHAI WOLLENBERG**

Woodford Forest United Synagogue and Vice-Chair, RCUS

This week's *sidra* discusses the mitzvah of "*tochacha*", rebuking another person.

Unfortunately, there may be some people who overembrace this mitzvah, who may justify themselves by saying, for example: "I was only doing it for his own good"; "someone had to tell her"; "it's a mitzvah in the Torah!" Rarely is rebuke well-received or productive and it is sometimes destructive.

Yet the Torah states: "you shall surely rebuke your fellow" (*Vayikra* 19:17). Surely we are not supposed to just ignore this mitzvah. Yet how are we supposed to do it properly – how do we approach another person when we feel the need to point out that some aspect of their behaviour seems unacceptable?

The *halachot*, laws, of when this mitzvah applies are complicated and need to be studied closely. Yet in terms of the general approach, we can perhaps offer some suggestions. The word used for 'your fellow' in the verse is "*amitecha*" – which has a connotation of "your colleague", someone you have an existing relationship with. The mitzvah to rebuke relates to someone you have a bond with, who will understand that your words are meant with love and care, not malice.

Additionally, the Talmud states that just as it is a mitzvah to say

tochacha when it will be heeded, it is also a mitzvah **not** to say *tochacha* if it will not be heeded (*Yevamot* 65b).

This resonates with the time-period that we are in, *Sefirat Haomer*, between Pesach and Shavuot. It could have been a happy time, leading up to Shavuot and the Giving of the Torah. Yet we observe a period of mourning, marking the loss of Rabbi Akiva's 24,000 disciples (2nd century CE). The Talmud says that their mistake was that each student was so sure of his opinion and worldview that he lost sight of his colleagues' needs and wishes, leading to a lack of mutual respect (*ibid.* 62b).

Rabeinu Yonah of Gerondi (13th century) writes that "Words that come from the heart enter the heart". A sincere, authentic, heartfelt message is able to pierce even the toughest of hearts. This means that if the person being rebuked is not receptive, it may well be that the rebuke did not come from 'the right place'.

If we need to point something out to somebody, it must be done in a manner of sincere, genuine kindness and concern for them, not for any other motive. We

“ If we need to point something out to somebody, it must be done in a manner of sincere, genuine kindness and concern for them, not for any other motive. We must strive to genuinely put their needs first and to carefully measure the message and delivery.

must strive to genuinely put their needs first and to carefully measure the message and delivery.

The Chassidic masters are quoted as saying that before rebuking someone, one should cut one's own nails. In other words, avoid getting your claws into someone else; rather make every effort possible not to hurt or pain them.





THE COMMENTATORS: RASHI

BY: **SHIRA JACKSON**
US Education



The most remarkable thing about Rashi is that he had to learn Torah and Talmud without the commentary of Rashi; an unimaginable feat!

There are innumerable legends about his early life. One tells of his pregnant mother, saved when a wall curved inward to shield her from a charging horseman. Another describes his father casting a precious gem into the sea rather than surrender it to a bishop for idolatry. These stories may not be historically accurate, but they reveal how deeply Jews feel that Rashi's life and work carried enduring significance. Though he lived only 65 years, he emerged as the commentator with the most authoritative voice in the study of Torah and Talmud.

Rashi's own approach to *parshanut*, exegesis, is famously concise. He states explicitly that his goal is to explain the *peshat*, the plain meaning of the text. He selects *midrashim* with methodological care, using them to clarify linguistic or narrative difficulties, adhering to what he believes the text to literally mean.

In his early years, Rashi studied in the great Ashkenazic *yeshivot* of Worms and Mainz, centres of rigorous, close reading and precise analysis that later gave rise to the Tosafist movement. Many of his teachers and their communities were later destroyed in the First Crusade of 1096, reshaping

Ashkenazic scholarship. Rashi's return to Troyes and the founding of his own school ensured that the intellectual traditions of pre-Crusade Ashkenaz survived.

A striking example of Rashi's sensitivity to the lived realities of Jewish life, appears in *Acharei Mot* concerning the prohibition of giving one's offspring to pass to Molech: "וּמִזְרֵעוֹ לְאִתְּתוֹ לְהַעֲבִיר לַמֶּלֶךְ" (*Vayikra* 18:21). Rashi first explains the historical practice: Molech was an idol whose worship involved a parent handing a child to its priests, who then lit two large fires and made the child pass between them. But after describing the ritual, Rashi circles back to the wording of the verse itself. On the phrase לְאִתְּתוֹ - "you shall not give" - he jarringly emphasises the act of handing over the child to the priests as a distinct and primary prohibition, separate to the subsequent ritual.

Rashi's reading collapses the distance between ancient idolatry and the lived fears of medieval Jews. In Christian Europe, Jewish parents faced real pressure to surrender children to the Church, and forced conversions - especially of minors - left deep communal scars. Against that backdrop, Rashi's language feels less like a technical clarification and more like a contemporary cry about the terrifying prospect of losing a Jewish child to a dominant religious authority. He offers a window into the vulnerability of

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Jewish family life in his time.

Rashi's concern for the spiritual future of Jewish children shaped the next generation of French Tosafists – including his grandsons, the Rashbam and Rabbeinu Tam – who built their analytical method on the foundations he preserved. Through them, and through the wider circle of French and German Tosafists, Rashi's influence became central to medieval halachic and exegetical thought, and a testament to Jewish resilience.

His enduring legacy is the blend of precision, clarity and historical awareness that defines his commentary. A millennium later, his voice is still the first one students meet when they open a *Chumash*. His work became foundational not because it simplifies the Torah, but because it models interpretation that is rigorous yet accessible, making the text intelligible without diminishing its complexity.



THE COMMENTATORS: RASHBAM

BY: **RABBI MICHAEL LAITNER**

US Director of Education, Interim rabbi at Belmont US



If I could have been a fly on the wall, I would have been fascinated to hover at a Shabbat dinner when the teenage Rashbam was staying at his maternal grandparents. I can imagine Rashi, the doyen of Biblical commentators, teaching the *parasha* with his explanation, whilst Rashbam might have interjected when, in his view, his grandfather's explanations focused more on our applied learning from a particular verse (through use of Midrashic i.e. rabbinic teachings), rather than on the *straightforward* meaning of the text.

For Rashbam, the *peshat*, the straightforward, logical meaning of a Biblical text within its context and the broader context of the *Tanach*, is the primary way to understand it.

When compared to Rashi, as well as other commentators, this can lead to some fascinating ramifications. Let us consider one of these, a famous example from the early part of *Parashat Kedoshim*, looking at how Rashi and Rashbam explain the words highlighted below:

"Do not take revenge nor bear a grudge against any one among your people, but **love your neighbour as your own self**; I am God" (*Vayikra* 19:18)

Rashi, in what has become a well-known Jewish song, simply gives a religious message

by quoting the Talmudic sage Rabbi Akiva, that this injunction is "a great principle of the Torah". He does not explain this phrase any further.

Contrastingly, Rashbam works to analyse the phrase as I will attempt to demonstrate with the following question and answer:

Q: Why is the Hebrew word (*le're'acha* (your neighbour) used?

A: To show that if he is your neighbour and good, love him. Yet if he is wicked, then this command does not apply.

Rashbam looks at the word *kamocho* (like you). If the other person is good, like you, then love him as yourself.

In doing so, he does not rely solely on his own intuition or judgment. He quotes, as support, a phrase from elsewhere in the *Tanach*, "fear of God is hatred of evil" (*Mishleil* Proverbs 8:13). The word used there for evil is *ra*, which, strangely, has the same verbal root as *re'acha*.

Perhaps the implication is that everybody has the capacity to be good or bad, and that the obvious meaning of *Vayikra* 19:18 is that only if the other person is good is there a command to love him, but not otherwise.

“ Rashbam teaches the significance of understanding the straightforward meaning of Biblical phrases through analysing parts of those specific texts and by comparison to other parts of the *Tanach*.

Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra (c.1089-1167) focuses on an additional detail - *lere'acha* - literally, "love **to** your neighbour as yourself". He concludes that it tells us to "wish good things to happen to the other person, as you would wish for yourself".

In methodological summary, Rashbam teaches the significance of understanding the straightforward meaning of Biblical phrases through analysing parts of those specific texts and by comparison to other parts of the *Tanach*.

You can find his commentary in Hebrew and English at www.mg.alhatorah.org.



SEFER YIRMIYAHU (JEREMIAH) – PART 1

AN INTRODUCTION

BY: **PNINA SAVERY**

Ma'ayan and US Educator

Yirmiyahu HaNavi (Jeremiah the Prophet) begins prophesying at a young age. He speaks to the people during the final years of the First Temple, coming after the prophet Yeshayahu, whom we looked at in our most recent articles. This is after the northern kingdom of Yisrael has been destroyed at the hands of the Assyrians, and its citizens exiled.

During Yirmiyahu's prophetic career, he encounters three different kings of the southern kingdom of Yehuda (Judah): Josiah, Yehoyakim and Tzidkiyahu. None deal with him positively: the first ignores him at a critical, pivotal moment, the second tries to kill him, and the third listens but is unable to act upon his advice. The Temple priests mostly treat him as a nuisance, restricting his access to the holy site.

Nevertheless, Yirmiyahu continues to encourage the people to do *teshiva* (repentance) in order to avert further destruction. He states that

“ Despite this sadness and despair, we will see that there are many uplifting and positive messages within Yirmiyahu's prophecies.

the Temple and Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) will be destroyed if they do not. For this reason, many view the book of Yirmiyahu as very negative, full of doom and gloom. This is even more understandable when we look at the full picture. Ultimately, Yirmiyahu fails in this task; the Temple is destroyed and the people are exiled in 586BCE. He writes *Megillat Eicha* (The Book of Lamentations) in tears, after witnessing first-hand the destruction of all that he tried to save. Despite this sadness and despair, we will see that there are many uplifting and positive messages within Yirmiyahu's prophecies.

Sefer Yirmiyahu is complicated by a lack of chronology. Many chapters contain no references to the time periods, let alone actual dates. This makes it a challenging book to study, especially as many parts may be out of chronological order.

Yirmiyahu can be described as a “reluctant prophet”. In fact, Yirmiyahu is told in the opening chapter that God designated him as a prophet already from when he was in the womb. In response, Yirmiyahu responds “I cannot speak for I am young” (*Yirmiyahu* 1:5-6). This humility reminds us of Moshe (Moses), who also initially refused to be God's spokesman

“ Yirmiyahu loved his people and had faith in its posterity – and his faith has proven true until this very day”¹

– David Ben Gurion

and national leader. Eventually, both these prophets became the great leaders that God required them to be.

In fact, according to David Ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister of the State of Israel and a great lover of *Tanach* (the Hebrew Bible), Yirmiyahu was undoubtedly “the greatest prophet” as well as the “most despised, downtrodden and daring”. He adds that “Yirmiyahu loved his people and had faith in its posterity – and his faith has proven true until this very day”.¹

Despite the importance Ben Gurion attributes to this prophet, Yirmiyahu is not often studied. He is seen as the prophet of Tisha b'Av, who describes the heartbreaking account of the destruction of Yerushalayim. Whilst this is certainly an important part of Yirmiyahu's prophetic role, there is much more to Yirmiyahu than just this. We will try to analyse all the aspects of Yirmiyahu's prophetic messages in our mini-series.

¹ David ben Gurion, Sde Boker 1970, quoted in Binyamin Lau, *Jeremiah: The Fate of a Prophet*, p.viii.

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

ACHAREI MOT-KEDOSHIM

24-25 APRIL | 8 IYAR

VE'AHAVTA LERE'ACHA KAMOCHA



BY: **YOSEF KANTOR**

Tribe gap year student

In *Acharei-Kedoshim* we are commanded with many *mitzvot*, 79 in total! One of them is *Ve'ahavta Lere'acha Kamocha*, to 'love your fellow like you love yourself' (*Vayikra* 19:18). We know that Rabbi Akiva emphasises this as a "great *mitzvah*" in the Torah. However, the Gemara in *Bava Metzia* 62a brings a case where two men were travelling and only one had a flask of water, sufficient for only one of them to survive the journey.

Rabbi Akiva rules that your life takes precedence over your friend's and the water shouldn't be shared. From this Gemara it seems that a person is to love himself **more** than his fellow! Therefore we must ask what it really means to love your fellow like you love yourself.

The Ramban's (1194-1270) approach, citing the ruling of Rabbi Akiva above, is that *Ve'ahavta Lere'acha Kamocha* is an exaggeration! He explains that a human is incapable of loving someone to the same degree that they love themselves and alternatively teaches us to love our fellow just as a person loves themselves **regarding all that is good**. This means that you should

want your friend to benefit in every aspect of life just as you want for yourself. As a result, the Ramban explains that the main challenge to fulfilling *Ve'ahavta Lere'acha Kamocha* is jealousy.

In order for us to fulfil this important commandment we need to work on combating this struggle with jealousy. Perhaps, if we can work on realising that God has given us everything we need and that He knows what is good for someone else may not be good for us, then we may be able to overcome this jealousy and will be able to truly be as happy when things go well for others as we would for ourselves.

Shabbat shalom!

Guess the *mitzvah* in the parasha

I don't let you watch when someone's in trouble,

Silence here makes the wrong become double.

Holiness means you step in, not hide.

Which *mitzvah* am I from *Kedoshim*'s side?





THE TRIBE SCRIBE

ACHAREI MOT - KEDOSHIM: HOLY, HERE, NOW!

PARSHAT ACHAREI MOT TALKS ABOUT THE KOHEN GADOL (HIGH PRIEST) IN THE HOLY OF HOLIES ON YOM KIPPUR - THE HOLIEST DAY OF THE JEWISH YEAR.



TALK ABOUT HOLY, HOLY, HOLY!!! CHECK OUT WHAT RABBI MENDEL FUTERFAS (1906-1995) HAD TO SAY ABOUT THAT...

MY FRIENDS, HERE IS A RIDDLE: WHO IS THE HOLIEST PERSON, AND WHAT IS THE HOLIEST PLACE AND THE HOLIEST TIME?



SIMPLE! THE KOHEN GADOL ON YOM KIPPUR, WHEN HE'S INSIDE THE HOLY OF HOLIES, PERFORMING THE SPECIAL SERVICE.

YOU'RE RIGHT. BUT I HAVE ANOTHER ANSWER THAT MIGHT SURPRISE YOU!



THE HOLIEST JEW IN THE WORLD IS YOU!



THE HOLIEST PLACE IN THE WORLD IS WHEREVER GOD HAS PLACED YOU!



AND THE HOLIEST TIME IN THE WORLD? RIGHT NOW! THIS MOMENT THAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU IS PACKED WITH HOLY POTENTIAL.



HOLINESS ISN'T ONLY LONG AGO IN THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM.



IT STARTS RIGHT HERE. RIGHT NOW - WITH EACH ONE OF US!

WHOEVER YOU ARE, WHEREVER YOU ARE, YOU ALWAYS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO THE BEST YOU CAN - IN THAT MOMENT. AND EVERY TIME YOU DO, YOU'RE A WINNER!



Page Editor: Rabbi Nicky Goldweiser Writer: Shira Chaik Cartoonist: Paul Solomon

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