



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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Thoughts on VAYIKRA

Year 24

by Dayan Abraham David

We read Parashat Zachor the week before Purim to remember what Amalek did to our forefathers in the desert after 'Yetziat Mitzrayim', connecting it to what his descendant Haman tried to do to our people in the kingdom of Achashverosh which spread over 127 states. The parallels between these two especially are a lesson to us. Amalek attacked Am Yisrael in the desert at Refidim when they quarrelled and complained about the lack of water, when they doubted, 'Hayesh Hashem beKirbenu im iyin', is Hashem in our midst or not? Our Rabbis also learn from the word 'Refidim she rafa yadehem min HaTorah', they weakened their hands from Torah. This second reason needs explanation. This was before Matan Torah, so what Torah are we talking about? Granted they were given some mitzvot, 'Torah at Marah', but they had not as yet accepted the Torah. So how could this be considered a weakness? Amalek, like the 'yetzer harah', the evil inclination, seeks out the weak spots in us and there he injects his poison. This can be compared to the fly, which has neither beak nor teeth to break an opening in the skin but where there is already a wound he contaminates it. When Am Yisrael questioned, 'Im Hashem beKirbenu', when they did not have water, they showed lack of faith, they also lost their resolve for Kabbalat HaTorah. They had been told by Moshe in Egypt that they would be taken to Har

Hashem to receive the Torah. They now weakened in their resolve to prepare for receiving the Torah, 'Rafuhyadehem min HaTorah'. Amalek was now able to attack them since there was an opening in the protective cloud. Haman who was the descendant of Amalek also awaited his opportunity. The Jews had been invited to the banquet the king had made for his citizens. Mordechai had warned them not to attend even though they would not be forced to eat and drink anything not kosher but there would be some who could be carried away, impressed by the surroundings and atmosphere, to compromise. They would also see the dishonouring of the vessels of the Holy Temple used by Achashverosh. But they did not listen, thinking it would help them to be considered as good citizens of the King thereby enhancing their status. They were so impressed by the wealth and greatness of the King, they began to feel secure in their exile, weakening in their resolve to end the exile and return to the Holy Land. Haman found their weakness and chose the best time according to his calculations for his decree to destroy them. He almost succeeded were it not for Mordechai. Haman, even though he plotted and instructed the Princes and leaders of the state of his intentions to destroy the Jews in his letter to them, had not revealed his intention to the public. He only told them to be prepared for that day, the 13th of Adar, 'galuy lechol Hayamim lehiyot atidim le yom hazog' so as not to alarm the Jews. This was his cunning. But Mordechai revealed Haman's plot to the people and told them the decree was because of

their attending the seudah of Ahasverosh years ago. They could have turned around and told Mordecai it was really because you refused to bow down to Haman that had angered him into making the decree. Surprisingly they believed the Rabbi words and they all began to do teshuvah, fasting and praying and turning back to G-d, realising our salvation comes from G-d and not from the kings. Mordechai also began to teach them laws concerning the Temple to strengthen their Emunah and study of the Torah, As our Rabbis tell us that Haman found them learning the laws of kimitzah. He then realised that they had rediscovered their weapons, against his bribe, Torah with the laws of the offerings and their preparation for the services of the Temple. When he sent Yehoshuah to fight against Amalek, Moshe stood on the Mountain with his arms raised in prayer. He was supported by Aaron who represented the service of the Temple and Hur who represented kingship, as explained in the Midrash while Moshe himself represented Torah. It was with these three merits that they vanquished Amalek strengthening their belief in the service of G-d and the Torah. Our salvation will not come from the rulers and princes of the nations but from G-d.

GEMS

The Torah forbids an offering on the *"mizbeach"* containing leaven or *devash* (sweet). The Ramban quotes the Rambam in Meor Hanebukim, Guide for the Perplexed where he explains that the custom of the "Avdeh Avoda Zara" the idolaters was to bring leavened bread and sweet in their offerings hence the Torah forbade it like it forbade offering on an alter of a single stone since they mainly offered on such a stone, we do not follow their customs in our service of Hashem. It would seem the idolaters used these means to enhance their service, with extras sweet and leaven to make the offering tasty and attractive and that is the way of idolatry, they have to resort to distractions and enhancement, to entice people to the service of idols for on its own people

would see through the uselessness of idolatry. They have to use ta-avot physical lust depicted by devash sweet food etc. Leaven depicts 'Gavah' pride and haughtiness they used in the service of idols to attract people. Their preference for a single stone as an altar also depicted a service as individuals with personal 'gavah', haughtiness. Our service of Hashem is on altars built of many stones, we come together not as individuals but unite to serve Hashem. Our daily offerings and musafim all come from contribution of the whole congregation, half shekalim taken from rich and poor alike equally. The offerings on the mizbeach were simple straightforward without frills of sweeteners and leaven to enhance the bread offering, for Hashem does not need hype only what are essentials in his service.

The exception we find when 'devash' sweet juice and 'seor' leaven were brought as offerings were the 'korban reshet'. The offering of bikurim on Shavuoth and 'Shte Halechem' the two loaves of bread which were chametz offered on Shavuoth. The kli yakar explains a person is born with an urge for tasty foods and other physical pleasure which are under the category of devash some of this is necessary for survival, a little is good but an excess is damaging. Leaven represents the 'yetzer harah' the evil inclination which encourages a person to 'gavah', pride, this if not controlled stops us from the spiritual growth, gaavah makes us complacent. Taavah distracts us from service to Hashem. We need the urges of the yetzer harah so that we should have children, marry, build homes and necessities to live a normal life. We need some gaavah to take pride in the services of Hashem. We need to eat drink and physically grow and become healthy and strong to serve Hashem with a healthy body and keep other physical mitzvot. Im ain kemach ain Torah' but of course our thoughts should be for Torah. 'Davash' and leaven are not an end in themselves only a means to keep Torah and mitzvot according to the dictates of the Torah. The pasuk says

they do not bring Re-ach Nichoach, pleasure to Hashem as offerings normally. Only when we received the Torah on Shavuoth, they were brought as offerings to tell us that only through the Torah could we use them correctly with direction and control, 'Barati yetzer harah vu barati Torah Tavlin'. I have created the evil inclination and I have created the Torah as a spice to direct its use and taste.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

There was once a great chassidic rabbi whose gabai would always find fault with the rabbi's students. He would constantly complain to the rabbi that some of the students would keep their shops open too late before the start of Shabbat on Friday afternoon, or that some were guilty of tale bearing, or not having strict enough kosher food. The rabbi was angry at the gabai and told him off for his constant criticism. One of the students who overheard the conversation between the rabbi and the gabai asked the rabbi "why do you object to him giving his criticisms? After all, do you not also criticize and find fault in with us in your sermons! What does it matter if the gabai also criticize us?"

The rabbi replied "the difference between me and the gabai is the same as the difference between a home owner and his cat. Both the home owner and the cat strongly desire to rid the house of mice. The difference however is that the owner is happy when there are no more mice, but the cat is happy when it catches the mice and looks forward to more. Similarly I am happy when there is no longer any sin amongst my students, my gabai however seems to be happy when he catches my students sinning."

Also Hashem judges the world for the sake of goodness, He is happy when there is no sin amongst His people. We have to remember that anything that happens to us is from Hashem and is for the good even when it appears otherwise.

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT

Lashon Hara Sefer Chafetz Chaim 2: 3-4-5-6

There is a general misunderstanding of the Heter of Api Tlata, a derogatory statement made in front of 3 people which permits a person to repeat derogatory information that has been in the presence of three or more people according to the Rambam. Since a group is considered a public forum and whatever is said is certain to become public knowledge therefore someone who repeats the information is not really causing any harm because whoever hears it from him would have heard it anyway. This license is subject to many limitations which the Chafetz Chaim delineates.

1) Repeating the information is permitted only if the topic happens to come up in conversation and the information is related in a matter of fact manner. However even if the Rambam agrees that is absolutely prohibited to repeat the derogatory information for the purpose of spreading it or disgracing the person involved.

2) The licence only applies to those who were among the three or more present when the information was originally disclosed. Someone who hears even from one of those is forbidden to spread it further.

3) The leniency of Api Talata has geographic limitations and even in a case of shocking information which is of interest even outside the immediate community concerned, the license would only extend as far as the information could be expected to circulate. (and of course it would be forbidden to add derogatory perushim, rumours and assumptions to the information, especially personal conclusions, not verified according to the Halacha and thorough investigation). In addition it is subject to dispute, many poskim disagree with the Rambam's interpretation. Therefore the Chafetz Chaim concludes that we should avoid making use of this license.

4) The Chafetz Chaim tells in a previous chapter Negative Commandments 5-6 that one who speaks Lashon Hara in a conceited

way violates the commandment Heshamer lecha pen tishkach Hashem Elokecha. Be careful lest you forget Hashem your Lord (Devarim 8:11) which prohibits us from acting arrogantly. Arrogance has particularly severe consequences which is singled out as a trait which Hashem especially dislikes. The Chofetz Chaim adds that if the speaker of lashon hara raises his own stature in peoples eyes by degrading his victim (mitchabed be kalon chavero) his offence is even more severe.

HALACHOT - PURIM

1) On the coming Shabbat before Purim, Parashat Vayikra 16th March 2019 we read Parashat Zachor from the Sefer Torah. Every male is obliged to hear this; it is a Mitzvah from the Torah so, do come in time to hear the reading.

2) Even though women are not obliged from the Torah if they do come to hear this they have a great reward. Ashkenu Paskim hold it is an obligation for women too to hear the reading of Parshat Zachor.

3) On Wednesday, 28th March 2019 we have 'Ta'anit Esther'. This has been accepted as a public fast like the other four 'Ta'anit Tzibbur'.

4) This 'Ta'anit' is in commemoration of the fast the Jews took upon themselves when they went to battle with their enemies on the 13th of Adar, after Achaverosh permitted them to defend themselves.

5) Everyone should fast on Ta'anit Esther except pregnant or feeding mothers, a chatan or kallah, during the seven days of Sheva Berachot. There are conflicting views if a mohel, sandak, avi haben should fast. Those who have a definite minhag to fast should and those who do not can be lenient.

**Mazal to
Sophia Raymond &
Solomon Edery
on their engagement and to the
delighted parents
Silas & Lisa Raymond and**

***If you wish to sponsor a
Kiddush***

***Please contact
Nathaniel Bendayan
07825 871749***

***For Seuda Shlishit
or to rent the
Nancy Reuben Hall
for a Simcha***

***Please contact
Yanki David 07725 408724***

**We have a regular Youth
Minyan organised by
David Douer followed by a
kiddush**

SHABBAT TIMES

Shabbat commences	5:49 pm
Shabbat terminates	6:56 pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat	5:35 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat	
Shacharit	8:30 am
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit & Arbit	5:20 pm
Shacharit Weekdays	6:50 am
Shacharit Sundays	7:00 am
Mincha	1:30 pm
Arbit	7:30 pm

TIMES FAST OF ESTHER WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH 2019

Ta'anit begins	4:45 am
Ta'anit ends	6:54pm
Shacharit	6:50 am
Mincha Birchat Cohanim	5:35pm
Purim followed by Arbit	7:00 pm