



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

ט אדר ב תשע"ט - ויקרא - 16th March 2019 - Volume 11 - Issue 36

## News This Week

### מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Yosef and Ruthie Keller on the birth of a boy. The Sholom Zochor takes place at 64A Upper Park Road  
 Mazel Tov to Jeff and Melissa Horwich on the birth of a granddaughter to Daniel and Avigail Pick.  
 Mazel Tov to Dov and Debbie Black on the engagement of Yanky to Ariella Morris from London. Mazel Tov also to grandparents Dovzi and Anne Lopian.  
 Mazel Tov to Rabbi and Mrs Braunold on the occasion of Aviva's wedding to Jonathan Levy in London on Sunday.

### Kiddush This Shabbos

There will be a special Kiddush after davening in honour of our 20th Anniversary! Mazel Tov!

### פרשת זכור

There will be 3 Leinings, at 10.30 approx, 11.30 approx after Davening and 2pm after first Mincha.

### מגילה

The times for the Leining of the מגילה at Shul will be 7.05 & 8.30 at night and 7.35am (after 1st Shacharis Minyan), 9.05am (after 2nd Shacharis Minyan), 10.05am (after 3rd Shacharis Minyan).

### מתנות לאביונים

Anybody who wishes to give מתנות לאביונים through the Shul can do so by delivering any donations to the Rov who will arrange for the money to be distributed on פורים either to needy families locally or to families in ארץ ישראל.

### ישיבת מרדכי הצדיק

We will be holding a ישיבת מרדכי הצדיק programme on פורים before Mincha, from 3.00pm until 4.00pm. Everyone is invited to attend.

### Men's Shiurim Series

R' Shaya will give the second of 2 Shiurim on 'Purim and Amalek' this Tuesday at 9.15

### Sacrifice Your Samsung For Something Sacred Dani Epstein

In ancient times - roughly 1997 - the 802.11 protocol was released by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. For muggles this elicited little if any excitement since they had probably never heard of the IEEE and couldn't care less about half-duplex over-the-air modulation techniques. Moving forward to 1999, the term "Wi-Fi" was coined to describe the moderately less snappy "IEEE 802.11b Direct Sequence" and now we have not only 802.11a, b, g and n; there are a further 11 extensions, each one offering up yet more delectable rates of data transfer. So, from a measly 11mbits/s speed in 1998, we are currently at just over a Gigabit per second.

Think of it this way: if cars in 1998 had a maximum speed of 11 mph, now they can break the sound barrier and a bit more as well. That is a rate of progression that is nothing short of breathtaking, and yet we are so saturated with new developments popping up every second minute that this is hardly news.

In this climate, anything from the previous decade is going to be outdated very rapidly. Any year from the previous century is old history even if it's 1999, and the Victorian era is, to our burgeoning youth, ancient history. With regards to the preceding millennium, well that's practically Palaeolithic.

Imagine, then, when our hopes and aspirations come true soon and the Beis Hamikdash is rebuilt, how will an ancient practice of ritual sacrifice sit comfortably with Retina screens and Virtual/Augmented Reality?

"Why ask the question?", you may well ask. That's because someone is actually going to ask that question, which means we need an answer.

Truth be told, this is hardly a new question, in fact it's almost a millennium old and



### Between Teachers and Student

Loshon hora initiated by children and accepted as fact by their believing parents is often a cause of major injustice. It happens all too often that one or two key students in a class arbitrarily take a disliking to their teacher and stories are exaggerated and circulated. Well-meaning parents accept their children's accounts of the goings-on at school and before long the teacher finds himself struggling to defend his position.

As every adult knows, student dissatisfaction is not necessarily an indication of a teacher's inadequacy as an educator. The students' version of a situation must be considered but not accepted as fact. A thorough and discreet investigation - one which does not cause the teacher embarrassment - must be conducted before a teacher is declared at fault. A teacher too, must avoid believing accusations directed by students against one another. Here, too, an investigation is called for, and unless the facts can be established, no action should be taken.

We thank the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation [powerofspeech.org](http://powerofspeech.org) for the use of this material

## זמני תפילה פורים תשע"ט

6.02pm	מנחה וקבלת שבת (מקרא - 5.57pm)	פיקודא פי זכור
8.45pm	שיעור	שבת
9.15am	שחרית	
10.30am	פרשת זכור א'	
11.30am approx.	פרשת זכור ב'	
1.30pm	מנחה מנין א'	
2.00pm	פרשת זכור ג'	
5.43pm	סעודה שלישית followed by מנחה מנין ב'	
7.03pm	מעריב מצאי שבת	
6.05pm	מנחה ומעריב	Sun, Mon & Tues
6.30am	מנחה מנין א' (מקרא תענית starts 9.27am)	Weds, תענית אסתר
7.00am	שחרית מנין ב'	
8.00am	שחרית מנין ג'	
5.55pm	מנחה ומנחת השקל	
6.25pm	שיעור על עניני פורים	
6.55pm	מעריב	
6.30pm	סוף תענית קריאת מגילה א' (7.05pm)	
8.30pm	קריאת מגילה ב'	
7.00am	שחרית מנין א'	Thurs, פורים
7.35am	קריאת מגילה א'	
8.30am	שחרית מנין ב'	
9.05am	קריאת מגילה ב'	
9.30am	שחרית מנין ג' (Hall)	
10.05am	קריאת מגילה ג'	
3.00pm	ישיבת מרדכי הצדיק	
4.00pm	מנחה	
8.30pm	מעריב	



פיקודא אור ירושלים

therefore Palaeolithic history for our dear yoof. The Rambam addresses it in Moreh Nevuchim, the Guide to the Perplexed, and postulates that when Bnei Yisroel left Mitzrayim the primary mode of worship throughout the world was through sacrificial services, hence the decision on-high to allow this as a mode of worship to Hashem.

The nature of man, argues the Abravanel, is to turn to the familiar. Imagine were a novi to appear and say: "Hashem no longer wants you to daven to Him, to fast or beg for salvation in a time of duress". All He wants is for you to serve him through your heart. People would get upset, to say the least. Even the Reform whose religion makes as much sense as Marmite and Chrein ice cream have their rituals and mitzvot, devoid as they are of any meaning or rationale within their philosophy. We like our rituals, we like doing "things"; a purely intellectual religion has yet to appear.

With this in mind, Hashem commanded us to build Him a temple with all its sacrifices, rituals and genuflections, which came with a non-competition clause, that is to say performing any of these actions to any other deity is verboten. This is essentially the position of the Rambam.

This theory, amongst others of the Rambam, landed him in a lot of hot water, culminating with the public burning of his books on more than one occasion. In fact that enthusiasm for destroying his works in such a public and despicable manner triggered off two terrible misfortunes for us, the burning of the Talmud and eventually the instigation of the Inquisition's horrific Auto da Fe. This ought to be a salutary lesson for all our fanatics, and yet sadly we seemed to have learned little from these incidents.

Needless to say, the Ramban comes out in a fury, all guns blazing, pulling no punches. He names the Rambam's position as "vacuous words". How could he possibly cast korbonos in a prophylactic role when the posuk says "כי הם לחם" – they are the bread fire-offerings of Hashem?

After all, Hevel brought a korbon when there was no concept of Avodoh Zoroh and so did Noach, who clearly believed only in Hashem. Even Bilom, bless his evil little heart, built seven altars on which to offer sacrifices to Hashem.

As a parting shot in his dismissal of the Rambam's position, the Ramban quotes a verse we are all familiar with: "את קרבני לחמי לאש ריח ניחוחי" – my sacrifice, my bread as a fire offering, my pleasing scent".

So, that has the Rambam told then, I suppose. Or does it? In defence of the Rambam, mestre Vidal Bellshom - otherwise known to us as Moshe of Narbonne or the Narboni - steps into the ring and presents a theory that the Rambam uses this concept as a motivation for the initiation of sacrifices a mode of worship due to its prevalence, that is to say that it was selected perhaps simply because it was already familiar to Bnei Yisroel.

The Abravanel is quite unhappy with this casuistry and offers his own take on the controversy. The Rambam, he says, understands that the prime mode of serving Hashem is through prayers, supplications, studying Torah, the things pertaining to fasts and their associated tearful tefilos, as well as practical mitzvos such as Tefillin, Tzitzis etc. The is evinced by the fact that all these things are applicable at all times, unlike the korbonos - the sacrificial order – which applies only when there is a functioning Beis Hamikdosh (or one is in the process of construction, see Eduyos 8:6).

Korbonos are furthermore restricted to one place with a building constructed to specifications that may not be modified and only a small minority of Klal Yisroel are authorised to engage in the service. This makes the avodah very restrictive both temporally and spatially, which is not the case with the rest of the mitzvos, the purpose being to reduce that mode of service to a secondary level.

The Rambam has a plethora of proofs to buttress his theory. Shmuel castigated the people with the following (I Shmuel 15:22): "ויאמר שמואל לה' בעלות" – But Shmuel said: "Does Hashem delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obedience to the Hashem's voice? Surely, obedience is better than sacrifice, compliance than the fat of rams."

I have to confess that I am conflicted by this proof. We need to examine the back story to this particular reproof in order to understand the ambiguity I feel is present. Shmuel had conveyed the instructions of Hashem to Shaul, which were quite simply to wipe out Amolek, no ifs or buts. When the novi turned up to inspect the outcome, Shaul greeted him: "אתה לה' הקימתי את-דבר ה' ברוך" – Your are blessed to Hashem; I have fulfilled Hashem's word".

This did not sit well with Shmuel, since he replies: "ומה קול-הצאן הזה באזני וקול" – then what is this bleating of sheep in my ears, and the lowing of oxen that I hear?" Shmuel was not one to mince his words.

Shaul proceeds to defend his decision by explaining that they were the choicest cattle and sheep that they had reserved as korbonos. This got him nowhere since Shmuel proceeds to chew him out for failing to follow the instructions he was given without adding knobs, whistles or bells on. Inter alia, he then says: "החפץ" – Does Hashem delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices".

Now, you could swing this argument both ways. Either you could say that in this particular case sacrifices are absolutely secondary to the word of Hashem, or one could argue that Shmuel is stating a general rule that is monumentally applicable in this instance.

This is why I feel that this proof is too ambiguous to stand on its own merits.

Yeshaiyohu, on the other hand, is absolutely unequivocal. He spoke at a time when the people had become corrupt, when the destitute and unfortunates were oppressed and the avodah was devoid of any emotional or intellectual content, it had ceased to be a conduit to Hashem and had decayed to mere ritual.

"למה לי רב-זבחים יאמר ה' – What need have I of all your sacrifices? Ask Hashem. שבעתי עלות אילים וחלב מריאים ודם פרים וכבשים ועתודים לא הפצתי – I am sated with burnt offerings of rams, And suet of fatlings, And blood of bulls; And I have no delight In lambs and he-goats."

Hashem is essentially castigating them for believing that He had some need for all those korbonos, that the mere ritual itself has some kind of value.

Yeshaiyohu continues in this vein for quite a while which why the Reform absolutely love him and quote him at every opportunity in order to support their position. Naturally, when belief in Hashem even for a Rabbi is not mandatory (I am not making this up, it's much more fun to read what they write themselves) and keeping kosher is something you can do if you want to but don't get worked up about it there are no brownie points to be earned, then of course you can slice and dice Yeshaiyohu as you wish and avoid the bits you don't like. OK, rant over.

There is no avoiding the message here. Korbonos are worthless in the absence of devotion to Hashem. Ritual requires the marrying of the intellect to the performance of the commands; the binding of the heart to the worship of Hashem. Yeshaiyohu is a monumental proof to the Rambam's position.

As if this is insufficient, the Abravanel brings yet a further incontrovertible proof from Yirmiyohu (7:22): "לא ידברתי את-אבותיכם ולא ציותים ביום הוציא אותם" – For when I freed your fathers from the land of Egypt, I did not speak with them or command them concerning burnt offerings or sacrifice. כי אם-את-הדבר הזה צויתי אותם לאמר שמעו בקולי והייתי לכם לאלהים. – But this is what I commanded them: Do My bidding, that I may be your G-d and you may be My people; walk only in the way that I enjoin upon you, that it may go well with you."

Now, one could wiggle through these pesukim somehow or another, so the Abravanel brings proof from Chazal, in Menochos: "כל העוסק בתורה אינו צריך" – one who engages in Torah require neither sin offering nor an elevation offering, nor doubtful sin offering nor pan offering". In fact the Abravanel brings yet further proofs which brevity does not allow me to quote, and in his vigorous defence of the Rambam wonders how the Rambam "who had the entire Talmud before him like a set table" failed to acknowledge these proofs himself.

So at this point we see how the position of the Rambam is eminently borne out by Tenach and Chazal. Put down those matches and that book now and breath deeply; thank you.

All this is well and good, but how does it address the central thesis of our question, i.e. is there a role for a sacrificial service in modernity? Well, it does partially address the issue by validating the question to a degree, in that the ideal, preferred mode of service is that of the heart and intellect, no doubt. Yet, we still have a mitzvoh ongoing today to build a Beis Hamikdosh and restore the avodah. How do we integrate that into the 21st century?

I have a theory; simplistic perhaps, but maybe worthy of brief consideration.

No-one could have ever imagined what we are experiencing today. Agriculture has become industrialised to such a degree that for the first time in humanity's history the overwhelming majority of the Western world's population have a vast disconnect between the production and consumption of their food. Britain probably discards more food in a month than Europe consumed in year, back in the day. Europe has the farming capacity and technology to feed the entire planet, albeit at a subsistence level. America could probably feed the planet at a pinch. With all this, consumers and producers at several degrees of separation. We have dispelled the notion of famine as a natural disaster; today's famines are the product of excessively evil politics (all politics is evil, just some more than others). The outcome of this is that we no longer pray for food the way people did a mere century ago, and our appreciation thereof is far less than a new foldable mobile phone screen or the next thing after sushi.

On the other hand, in ancient times most of the population had perhaps a thrice yearly pilgrimage; only those who lived in close proximity to the Beis Hamikdosh had a daily connection to this central service. They were close to the land, prayed most days for agricultural success of one kind or another, even if they were not directly involved in the occupation. They did not require a reminder of the control Hashem held over their daily sustenance.

Soon b'Ezras Hashem, the tables will be turned in a dramatic fashion. We, who have little if any association with agriculture and never worry about famine or starvation will be able to load up our live streaming video feeds and have a daily connection with the avodah in the Beis Hamikdosh. Our ancestors saw before their very eyes the results of their blessings and, chas vesholom, their curses and hardly required reminding. We who are far more blessed than any generation in mankind's history require a daily reminder of our blessings. Never before has a sacrificial service been required at such an intrinsic level in order to forge our relationship with our Creator.