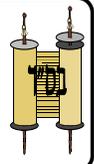




Kinder Torah[®]

Parashas Vayikra



It Runs After You

"Are your parents going to the shul's Annual Dinner, Avi?"

"I think so Chaim. Why do you ask?"

"Because they will be honoring my relative, Mr. Aaron, who is beginning his term as vice president of the shul."

"Mr. Aaron? I know him! He is such a nice person."

"Yes, tip-top. He never seeks honor or position. He is so humble. He runs away from all honor, recognition, and leadership. How ironic that he has been chosen to be vice-president."

"What do you mean? He fulfills the words of our sages perfectly!"

"Avi, please, share those holy words with me."

"The Medrash Tanchuma at the very beginning of this week's parasha makes the following statement. 'One who pursues a position of power, will find that the power eludes him. However, one who flees from public leadership will find that it runs after him.'"

"Does the Medrash give an example?"

"Yes it does: Moshe Rabbeinu. He fled from leadership. The Torah relates his humility in great detail, beginning with the episode of the *sneh* (burning bush). Hashem spoke to him from the *sneh* telling him, 'Now, go and I will send you to Paroh, and you will take My people, Bnei Yisrael out of Mitzrayim' (Shemos 3:10)."

"What an offer!"

"You're right. How would we have reacted to such an offer? 'Hashem chose me? I must be worthy of it. Of course I will go!"

"That was not Moshe's response."

"Not at all. The Torah tells us that he refused. 'Who am I to go to Paroh and to take Bnei Yisrael out of Mitzrayim?' (3:11) Hashem replied, 'I will be with you.' And so the conversation went. Moshe Rabbeinu came up with several reasons why he should not lead the Jewish people out of Mitzrayim. 'They will not believe me... I am not a man of words.' For each one Hashem had an answer. Finally Moshe said, 'Send with whoever You will send' (4:13). Hashem's anger flared (so to speak). And so, Moshe went. Rebbe Levi (in the Medrash) says that it took The Almighty seven days to convince Moshe to go."

"What humility!"

"That is not all. Moshe and Aharon told Paroh that Hashem the G-d of Yisrael says to send His nation out into the Midbar. The evil king replied, 'Who is Hashem that I should listen to His voice to send out Yisrael? I do not know Hashem nor will I send out Yisrael (5:2).'"

"Oy vey."

"Yes. Moshe Rabbeinu felt that he had done his part, and he wanted to finish right then and there. However, his work was not completed. Hashem said to him, 'Come speak to Paroh, king of Mitzrayim, that he should send the Bnei Yisrael from

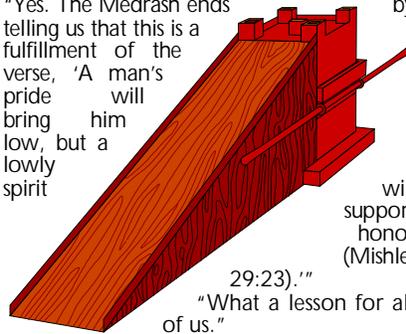
his land' (6:10-11). Moshe did not volunteer to go on his own. Each and every time Hashem had to tell Moshe to go to Paroh. All of these examples of Moshe's reluctance teach us that he fled from the position of leadership."

"And look at how it ran after him. In the end he did take the Jewish people out of Mitzrayim."

"Yes. Truthfully, that was not the end; rather it was only the beginning. He split the Yam Suf, he brought them to the Midbar, he brought down the *mun*, he brought forth water to the miraculous well, and he brought the quails, and built the Mishkan. He then asked Hashem, 'What more is there for me to do?' The Almighty answered him, 'I have a job for you that is bigger than all of the previous ones. Go and teach the Bnei Yisrael the laws of *tumah* and *tahara* (impurity and purity). Instruct them how to bring *korbonos* to Me.' As the verse states, 'He called to Moshe . . . Speak to Bnei Yisrael . . . When a man among you brings an offering (Vayikra 1:1-2).'"

"Amazing. Moshe Rabbeinu fled from leadership, and it ran after him."

"Yes. The Medrash ends by telling us that this is a fulfillment of the verse, 'A man's pride will bring him low, but a lowly spirit



"What a lesson for all of us."

Kinderlach . . .

The Medrash brings us a remarkable example of Moshe Rabbeinu's humility. A humble person does not seek honor, recognition, or power. He tries to be as unassuming as possible. He serves Hashem li'shaim Shomayim (for the sake of Heaven.) Kinderlach, try it yourselves. When no one is looking, wash some dishes, fold some laundry, or straighten up a bedroom. Don't tell anyone that you did it. If you are the first one in the Beit HaKnesses, put away a few books. Anonymous mitzvos show a person's true greatness. He is not looking for honor. He is serving Hashem without any ulterior motives. He is emulating Moshe Rabbeinu.

The Humble Sacrifice

"What a shame."

"What happened, Avi?"

"I was learning all about *korbonos* (sacrifices) in this week's parasha. I saw that *korbonos* were a way to get *kapora* (forgiveness) from Hashem for *aveyros* that we committed. What a shame. We no longer have a Beis HaMikdash, and we can no

longer bring *korbonos*. We can no longer receive the *kapora* that they provide."

"True, Avi. However, let me offer you some consolation. *Korbonos* are not the whole story. We learn a very important principle about *teshuva* and *kapora* from the Shelah HaKadosh."

"Please share it with me."

"The verse states, 'No meal-offering, which you shall bring to Hashem shall be made with leaven . . . nor any honey' (Vayikra 2:11). Why are leaven and honey prohibited? Because they will make the flour of the meal offering rise. That is compared to the work of the yetzer hora. Just as the leaven puffs up the dough, so too the yetzer hora raises a person's *gayva* and makes him proud. The person in such a state cannot possibly receive a *kapora* from his *korbon*. Why? Because *teshuva* and the subsequent *kapora* are dependent upon *hachna'ah* - humbling oneself before The Creator. That is the first step - realizing that you have made a mistake, regretting it, and humbly working to correct it. Although we do not have *korbonos* today, Avi, we still have *teshuva*. We can correct our *aveyros* and receive a *kapora* in other ways. However, it all begins with *hachna'ah*."

"Thank you, Chaim. May Hashem help us all humbly do *teshuva* and merit to see the Beis HaMikdash rebuilt so that we can again bring the *korbonos*."

Kinderlach . . .

Humility is the key. A korbon that is made with seor, the symbol of the proud yetzer hora, is not acceptable. Similarly, the teshuva that precedes the korbon begins with humility. We must humbly realize our mistakes, kinderlach. We must admit them and get to work on correcting them. When we succeed and confess, we have completed the teshuva process. We pray that Hashem will accept our teshuva, rebuild the Beis HaMikdash, and accept our korbonos speedily in our days, amen.

Parasha Questions:

- What are the reasons for bringing a *korbon oshom*? (5:1-4)
- Why is a *korbon shlamim* called *shlamim*? (Rashi 3:1)
- Which animal is brought for a *korbon chattos*? (4:28, 32)
- What does the Kohen do with the blood of the *korbon chattos*? (4:30)

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