

---

# CELEBRATING OUR 25<sup>th</sup> YEAR!

---

THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE • WWW.OHR.EDU

---

# OHRNET

---

SHABBAT PARSHAT VAYIKRA (HACHODESH) • I NISSAN 5778 - MAR. 17, 2018 • VOL. 25 NO. 24

---

## PARSHA INSIGHT

---

BY RABBI YAAKOV ASHER SINCLAIR

### Netilat Yedayim Part 3

***“If a person will sin and commit a treachery against G-d by lying to his comrade regarding a pledge or loan or a robbery, or by defrauding his comrade.” (5:21)***

Those of you who follow this column regularly (Hello Mummy!) may remember back in *Parshat Lech Lecha* the following story:

As we get older, we fall into two groups: Those who exercise, and those who are waiting for their doctors to tell them to exercise. A few years ago I left the first group and joined the second. I try to swim a few times a week. Outside the changing room of the pool there is a washbasin. Once in a while someone puts there a grubby looking white plastic *natlan* — a cup for *netilat yadayim*. It vanishes after about two days. Six weeks or so go by. Someone puts another cup there, but this time it's secured to the faucet with a serious plastic-covered metal cable. It also vanishes after about two days. A few months ago, someone went out and bought this beautiful *eau-de-nil* colored metal washing cup with chrome handles. It must have set them back a hundred-odd shekels. I thought to myself, “This one isn't going to last two days; it's going to last two minutes!”

I was wrong. It was there the next time and the time after that. Two months later it's still there.

I thought to myself, “What's the mindset here? Why will someone take something cheap but leave something expensive?”

In *Parshat Eikev* Rashi explains the unusual use of

the word ‘*ekev*’ to mean ‘if’. *Ekev* can also mean a heel. Says Rashi, a person must be as careful with the *mitzvot* that are typically down-trodden with the heel as he is with more serious sins.

I can rationalize taking a *cheepo* plastic cup, worth a couple of shekels at most, when I need it more than them, but to take an expensive item? What me? I'm no thief!

That's how I understood the psychology.

My good friend and colleague Rabbi Yitzchak Dalah had a different and I think rather beautiful, explanation. He told me a story that a wall in a certain town square was constantly being defaced with graffiti. The local authority had large signs put up on the wall saying, “NO GRAFFITI!” The result was that the signs were defaced with graffiti. Someone had a bright idea: They got an artist to paint a beautiful mural on the wall. The result? No more graffiti.

When you show me how beautiful the world is, it elevates me into being a higher person, so why would I want to spoil it? When you put something very aesthetic in front of people, it brings out the *mensch* in them.

I told the above to my Rebbe and asked him how he understood the underlying psychology of why the beautiful *natlan* was still there.

*Continued on page nine*

ADVICE FOR LIFE

Based on the Talmudic Sages found in the seven pages of the Talmud studied each week in the Daf Yomi cycle

---

BY RABBI MOSHE NEWMAN

## Avodah Zara 51 - 57

*The Jewish Sages in Rome were asked: "If your G-d doesn't want idolatry to occur, then why doesn't he just destroy the idols?"*

This question, which begins a *mishna* on our *daf*, is answered in two ways: The Sages replied, "If they only worshipped things that are not necessary for the world, G-d would indeed destroy those idols. However, they worship the sun, the moon, the stars and the constellations. Should G-d destroy His world because of these fools?!"

The *mishna* continues: "If so, let Him destroy the worshipped objects that are *not* necessary to the world, but the things that are necessary to the world He should allow to remain." The Sages answered: "That would strengthen the worship of the things that are necessary since people will say: *See, these really are deities since they were not destroyed!*

A *beraita* in the *gemara* raises the same question: Pagan philosophers asked the Jewish elders in Rome, "If your G-d doesn't want idol worship, why doesn't He just nullify the idols?" The *beraita* offers a number of answers, which appear to be "variations on a theme," but are actually quite different. The first answer in the *beraita*: "If they were worshipping only things not essential to the world, He would eliminate them. However, they also worship things essential to the world, such as the sun, the moon, the stars and the constellations. Should G-d destroy His world because of these fools?! Rather, the world carries on as usual, and the fools who transgressed will face judgment in the future." A second answer is offered in the *beraita*: "If a person stole some wheat seeds, and planted them, Divine Judgment dictates that the seeds should not grow. However, the world carries on as usual (the wheat will grow), and the fools who transgressed will face judgment."

If one compares the *mishna* and the *beraita* it would appear that the *mishna* is providing two separate answers to address two separate cases: things that are necessary for the world (such as the sun and moon), and things that are not. The *beraita*, however, offers only one answer, although it gives two different examples of transgressions — idolatry and theft. It gives the exact same answer for why the *idols remain in existence* and for why *stolen wheat grows*: "The world carries on as usual."

Why are there two examples of transgressions in the *beraita* (idolatry and theft), as opposed to the *mishna* dealing only with the one transgression of idolatry?

The Maharsha explains: Based on the first case in the *beraita*, that G-d would not destroy the sun and the moon that are necessary to the world because He would not destroy His world due to fools, we *still need* the second reason that is taught in the *mishna* — "Not to embolden worshippers of the sun and the moon" — to explain why G-d does not eliminate idols that are *not* necessary to the world. This is based on understanding the phrase "*Olam k'minhago noheg*," "the world carries on as usual," as speaking only about things that are *needed for the world*.

However, when the *beraita* says that "the world carries on as usual" in the case of planting stolen wheat, the Maharsha points out that this teaches that G-d does not destroy things and outcomes based on a transgression, *even* in the case of something *not* essential to the world, such as the growth of wheat.

The commentaries ask why the *mishna* and the *beraita* deal only with the question of whether the *idols* should be eliminated, but not whether G-d should eliminate the *idol worshippers*? One answer is suggested by the Tosefot Yom Tov: Sinners are not punished until they reach a certain level of transgression (depending on the person). G-d created the world with man having the freedom to choose right from wrong. Therefore, "early elimination" would diminish this freedom and thus constitute a *destruction of the world*. The Maharal gives a different reason for not eliminating the transgressor: If idolaters see a person's elimination when worshipping an idol, no one would have true "free will." The great fear of being annihilated from the world would "force" everyone to choose *not* to commit idolatry. Since eliminating *transgressors* would result in a lack of free will, the *gemara* does not discuss this option. Rather, it considers only the option of Heavenly elimination of *things* that might lead to transgressions.

• Avoda Zara 54b

---

## PARSHA Q&A?

---

1. Who does the word “*eilav*” in verse 1:1 exclude?
  2. Name all the types of animals and birds mentioned in this week’s Parsha.
  3. What two types of sin does an *olah* atone for?
  4. Where was the *olah* slaughtered?
  5. What procedure of an animal-offering can a non-*kohen* perform?
  6. Besides the fire the *kohanim* bring on the altar, where else did the fire come from?
  7. At what stage of development are *torim* (turtledoves) and *bnei yona* (young pigeons) unfit as offerings?
  8. What is *melika*?
  9. Why are animal innards offered on the altar, while bird innards are not?
  10. Why does the Torah describe both the animal and bird offerings as a “satisfying aroma”?
  11. Why is the term “*nefesh*” used regarding the flour offering?
  12. Which part of the free-will *mincha* offering is burned on the altar?
  13. The Torah forbids bringing honey with the *mincha*. What is meant by “honey”?
  14. When does the Torah permit bringing a leavened bread offering?
  15. Concerning *shelamim*, why does the Torah teach about sheep and goats separately?
  16. For most offerings the *kohen* may use a service vessel to apply the blood on the *mizbe’ach*. For which *korban* may he apply the blood using only his finger?
  17. Who is obligated to bring a *chatat*?
  18. Where were the remains of the bull burned while in the wilderness? Where were they burned during the time of the *Beit Hamikdash*?
  19. What two things does a voluntary *mincha* have that a *minchat chatat* lacks?
  20. What is the minimum value of a *korban asham*?
- 

## PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this week’s questions! - All references are to the verses and Rashi’s commentary unless otherwise stated.

---

1. 1:1 - Aharon.
  2. 1:2,14, 3:12 - Cattle, sheep, goats, turtledoves (*torim*), and doves (*bnei yona*).
  3. 1:4 - Neglecting a positive command, and violating a negative command which is rectified by a positive command.
  4. 1:5 - In the *Mishkan* Courtyard (*azarah*).
  5. 1:5 - Ritual slaughter.
  6. 1:7 - It descended from Heaven.
  7. 1:14 - When their plumage turns golden. At that stage, *bnei yona* are too old and *torim* are too young.
  8. 1:15 - Slaughtering a bird from the back of the neck using one’s fingernail.
  9. 1:16 - An animal’s food is provided by its owner, so its innards are “kosher.” Birds, however, eat food that they scavenge, so their innards are tainted with “theft.”
  10. 1:17 - To indicate that the size of the offering is irrelevant, provided your heart is directed toward G-d.
  11. 2:1 - Usually, it is a poor person who brings a flour offering. Therefore, G-d regards it as if he had offered his *nefesh* (soul).
  12. 2:2 - The *kometz* (fistful).
  13. 2:11 - Any sweet fruit derivative.
  14. 2:12 - On Shavuot.
  15. 3:7 - Because they differ regarding the *alya* (fat tail). The lamb’s *alya* is burned on the altar but the goat’s is not.
  16. 3:8 - The *chatat*.
  17. 4:2 - One who accidentally transgresses a negative commandment whose willing violation carries the *karet* (excision) penalty.
  18. 4:12 - a) Outside the three camps. b) Outside Jerusalem.
  19. 5:11 - *Levona* and oil.
  20. 5:15 - Two *shekalim*.
- 

OHRNET magazine is published by OHR SOMAYACH Tanenbaum College  
POB 18103, Jerusalem 91180, Israel • Tel: +972-2-581-0315 • Email: info@ohr.edu • www.ohr.edu

Love of the Land, written by RAV MENDEL WEINBACH, zt”l • General Editor: RABBI MOSHE NEWMAN • Design: RABBI ELIEZER SHAPIRO

© 1992 - 2018 Ohr Somayach Institutions - All rights reserved • This publication contains words of Torah. Please treat it with due respect.  
Editor’s disclaimer: Ohrnet Magazine is not intended to be a source for halachic rulings. In any real and specific case one should consult a qualified halachic authority for a ruling.

---

---

## LOVE of the LAND

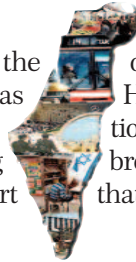
Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

---

### David's Citadel — A Misnomer

Every visitor to Jerusalem is familiar with the impressive structure popularly referred to as David's Citadel or the Tower of David.

This tower, which has no connection with King David, was built over two thousand years ago as part



of a fortress used to defend the city from invaders. Herod actually constructed three towers at this location, one of which he named Phasael Tower after his brother. It was only after Byzantine rule of the city that this tower became known as the Tower of David.

---

## PARSHA OVERVIEW

---

The Book of *Vayikra* (Leviticus), also known as *Torat Kohanim* – the Laws of the Priest –, deals largely with the *korbanot* (offerings) brought in the Mishkan (Tent of Meeting). The first group of offerings is called *korban olah*, a burnt offering. The animal is brought to the Mishkan's entrance. For cattle, the one bringing the offering sets his hands on the animal. Afterwards it is slaughtered and the *kohen* sprinkles its blood on the altar. The animal is skinned and cut into pieces. The pieces are arranged, washed and burned on the altar. A similar process is described involving burnt offerings of other animals and birds. The various meal offerings are described. Part of the meal offering is burned on the altar, and the remaining part is eaten by the *kohanim*. Mixing leaven or

honey into the offerings is prohibited. The peace offering, part of which is burnt on the altar and part eaten, can be either from cattle, sheep or goats. The Torah prohibits eating blood or *chelev* (certain fats in animals). The offerings that atone for inadvertent sins committed by the *Kohen Gadol*, by the entire community, by the prince and by the average citizen, are detailed. Laws of the guilt-offering, which atones for certain verbal transgressions and for transgressing laws of ritual purity, are listed. The meal offering for those who cannot afford the normal guilt offering, the offering to atone for misusing sanctified property, laws of the “questionable guilt” offering, and offerings for dishonesty are detailed.

audio.ohr.edu

Now available free of charge,  
anytime, anywhere.



OHR SOMAYACH  
AUDIO LIBRARY



BY RABBI YIRMIYAHU ULLMAN

## In or Out

**From: Pablo**

*Dear Rabbi,  
What is the Jewish approach to including non-observant Jewish people in the ritual or practice of the Jewish religion?*

Dear Pablo,

This is a very intriguing and somewhat intricate question, which I'll only be able to address in general terms within this venue.

In a nutshell, the basic spirit of Judaism is to include non-observant Jews in the community, and in ritual and practice. However, certain *mitzvot* require observance by the observant, while certain very severe transgressions exclude one from the community and communal observance.

Regarding the basic inclusive spirit of Judaism, several teachings illustrate this point:

One of the *mitzvot* of the holiday of *Succot* involves binding together and waving a branch of a date-palm, three myrtle branches, two willow branches and a citron fruit. The Talmudic Sages note (Lev. Rabbah 30:12) that regarding taste and scent, which correspond to Torah and *mitzvot* respectively, these items have either both, one or neither of the qualities.

Thus, the citron, which has both taste and scent, corresponds to Jews who are learned and observant; the date-palm, whose fruit has taste but no scent, corresponds to those who are learned but lack observance; the myrtle, which has scent but no taste, corresponds to those who are observant but lack Torah knowledge; the willow, which has neither taste nor scent, corresponds to those who have neither. However, just as the willow is nevertheless bound with and included in this *mitzvah*, so too Jews void of Torah and *mitzvot* are to be included with everyone else.

Similarly, at the onset of the holiest day of the year, the Day of Atonement, on which the final verdict for life or death, health or sickness, prosperity or poverty is decreed upon every individual, a special service, the moving *Kol Nidrei* prayer, publicly announces the community's willingness to include the transgressors in the communal prayer.

A third such source is regarding the special incense whose particular ingredients could only be prepared and offered in the Holy Temple on the Golden Altar before G-d. This incense was renowned for its beautiful scent, as befitting to honor G-d, and is described by the Torah as being "sweet-smelling before the L-rd." And, in fact of its eleven ingredients, ten were very aromatic, while one, *chelbana* (gelbanum) had a very unpleasant odor. The Talmudic Sages taught that this demonstrates that including the unobservant pleases G-d (Karitut 6a, see Rashi Ex. 30:34).

That being said, certain *mitzvot* require participation exclusively of observant individuals.

For example, even though prayer may be recited personally and individually, certain aspects or forms of prayer require ten adult males and the reciting of specific, fixed liturgy. While an unobservant, Jewishly unknowledgeable man could constitute one of the ten for parts of prayer that require only the presence a *minyan* (for example, *kaddish*), he could not do so for prayers which require communal recitation (for example, *amida* or *kedusha*) if he does not recite what's needed along with everyone else.

Another example involves creating an enclosed "private" space that permits carrying on Shabbat within an otherwise certain type of public domain in which it is normally forbidden to carry. What unites otherwise disparate homes, families and individuals into this carrying space is the manner in which they join as one "family" of Sabbath observers, where this space becomes their shared "home". However, Jews living in that area who do not recognize the observance of Shabbat prevent the unification of Sabbath observers, and thus hinder the formation of this area, defined by the *Eruv*.

Additionally, certain very severe prohibitions separate those who transgress them from the community and disqualify their participation in communal ritual and practice. For example, wanton, public Sabbath desecration or idol worship prevent one from being considered a part of the community, and would disqualify the person's ritual slaughter or writing of ritual texts, such as a Torah scroll, *tefillin* or *mezuzot*, until he properly repents from these sins.

---

## WHAT'S IN A WORD? Synonyms in the Hebrew Language

---

BY RABBI REUVEN CHAIM KLEIN

### Old Month Versus New Month

This Shabbat we read *Parshat HaChodesh*, the last of four special Torah readings before Pesach. *Parshat HaChodesh* establishes Nissan as the first of the months of the Biblical Year. This is especially germane because this year we read *Parshat HaChodesh* on the day of Rosh Chodesh Nissan. So we discuss the first month of the year on the first day of that month. In this essay we will discuss two Hebrew words that both mean “month” — *chodesh* and *yerach*. We will strive to find the difference in their etymology and how/why they are used in different contexts.

Although some say that *chodesh* is Aramaic, while *yerach* is Hebrew, others offer a more sophisticated approach. The Malbim and Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888) provide a penetrating insight as to the etymology of the word *chodesh*. They explain that the primary meaning of the word *chodesh* is not “month” but rather “beginning of the month.” In this way we find that the word *chodesh* appears in the Bible when one would otherwise expect the phrase *Rosh Chodesh* to appear (see Num. 28:14, I Sam 20:18, and Isa. 1:13). The word *chodesh*, therefore, primarily refers to the concept of *chadash* (“new”) or *chiddush* (“novel” or “renewal”), and specifically denotes the novelty of the month. That *chodesh* also refers to the idea of a “month” is only a secondary, borrowed meaning.

What, then, does the word *yerach* mean? Malbim explains that the word *yerach* simply denotes a period of thirty days — regardless of whether or not those thirty days represent an astronomical event related to the moon. However, in truth, the word *yerach* is actually related to *yareach* (“moon”), whose lunar movements help us define the duration of a month. Based on this we may posit that while *chodesh* denotes the *beginning* of the month, *yerach* denotes the entire month as a whole.

Rabbi Aharon Marcus (1843-1916) writes that the word *yerach* is related to the Hebrew word *oraiach* (“path”) and to the Aramaic word *itrachish* (“it happened”). He does not explain the thematic link between these words, but to me it seems fairly clear. The word *chodesh* is related to the idea of “new,” and alludes to G-d’s role in administering the world, in which He introduces *new* occurrences that are outside of the normal system of nature. We call these events

“miracles”. For this reason, the first of the months is Nissan, whose very meaning is “miracles” because the Exodus from Egypt, one of the greatest miracles of all time, happened then. In general, we use the word *chodesh* colloquially, because we wish to focus on G-d and His awesome miracles. On the other hand, the word *yerach* is less commonly used because it is related to the word for “path” and does not connote anything “happening” beyond the regular system of nature. When we refer to a month with the word *yerach*, we refer to time running its course in a natural way, as if to say that it just “happened,” seemingly without G-d’s miraculous intervention.

Rabbi Hirsch offers another way of differentiating between *chodesh* and *yerach* which fits with our model. He argues that the word *chodesh* denotes the idea of a month as simply a unit of time (measured by the amount of time it takes the moon’s light to disappear and reappear). In this way, the word *chodesh* is transcendental, or abstract. On the other hand, he explains, the word *yerach* connotes the month as a vehicle for maturation. That is, the word *yerach* implies a physical manifestation of the passage of time — more specifically, in the growth of produce. According to this understanding, the word *yerach* refers to a month in a very tangible or physical context, a month that is bound to the rules of nature.

Rabbi Mordechai Jaffe (1530-1612), the author of the *Levush*, writes that the custom is to refer to the month on a divorce document (a *get*) as a *yerach*, and on a marriage document (a *ketubah*) as a *chodesh*. He explains that this is because the word *yerach* is associated with being sent away, *geresh yerachim* (Deut. 33:14), while the word *chodesh* is associated with something new, and marrying a woman is called “taking a new wife” (Deut. 24:5). (It is also unfortunately true that many marriages end when the novelty wears off and a couple is left in a stale rut. The hope that this will not plague the newlyweds is reflected in the word *chodesh* that appears in the *ketubah*.)

*Liluy Nishmat* my mother Bracha bat R’ Dovid and my grandmother Shprintza bat R’ Meir

BY RABBI YITZCHAK BOTTON

## The Secret of the Small “Alef”

The Hebrew word “*Vayikra*” — “And He (G-d) called” — is the name of the third book of the Torah, as well as its first *parsha*. Rashi points out in his opening comment that the term “*vayikra*” indicates that G-d called to Moshe with *special affection*, and that it is the language which the Heavenly angels use to call to one another.

There is, however, something peculiar about the way the word *vayikra* is written in this *parsha*: its final letter, an “*alef*,” is *smaller* than the rest of the letters in the word. What is the lesson behind this small *alef*?

The letter *alef* is the first letter of the word *ani* (I), the self. By writing a small *alef* the Torah teaches us that when one makes himself “small,” attaining true humility, G-d draws that person close to Him and shows him great love and affection. The Torah testifies to the exalted level of humility which Moshe reached, causing him to merit receiving G-d’s Torah, and being the one chosen to teach it to the Jewish People.

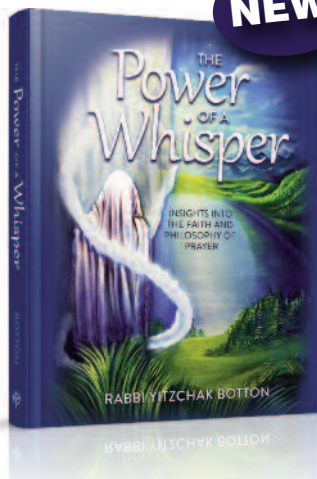
### The Mitzvah of Learning Torah

Torah is an expression of Divine wisdom. G-d, though infinite, affords each one of us the opportunity to connect with Him by engaging in Torah study.

Though it is one of the 613 commandments, one should not foolishly look at learning Torah as an obligation or burden, but rather as a privilege.

The first word of the Ten Commandments, “*Anochi*,” which refers to G-d and literally means “I,” is an acronym for the phrase, “*Ana Nafshi Ketavit Yehavit* — I, Myself, wrote and gave the Torah.” This shows us how important the Torah is, for G-d took great care to write and organize each detail of the Torah. This refers to the *essence* of the Torah as it is in Heaven, as it was later dictated to Moshe, who wrote it on a scroll for the Jewish People. Thus, Torah study is tantamount to learning wisdom directly from G-d.

A more literal reading of the above acronym reveals an even deeper message: “I wrote down My very soul and gave it (in the Torah).” This profound concept can be understood according to the words of Maimonides: “The Creator, blessed is He, and His knowledge and His life are one... He is the Knower, He is the known, and He is the knowledge itself; all is one...” (Mishneh Torah) Through the mitzvah of Torah study one connects to G-d, the Source of all life.



NEVER UNDERESTIMATE

# THE Power OF A Whisper

INSIGHTS INTO THE FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY OF PRAYER

BY RABBI YITZCHAK BOTTON

DISTRIBUTED BY MENUCHA PUBLISHERS

AVAILABLE AT YOUR JEWISH BOOKSTORE OR WWW.OHR.EDU

BY RABBI YOSEF HERSHMAN

## Korban: To Draw Close

In *Sefer Vayikra* we are introduced to the concept of *korban*, generally translated as “sacrificial offering.” It is unfortunate that there is no word in Western languages that can capture the essence of what *korban* is, and even more unfortunate that the words used distort the concept.

Both terms commonly used, “offering” and “sacrifice,” are at odds with the meaning of *korban*. Sacrifice denotes destruction, annihilation and loss — a connotation antithetical to the Hebrew concept of *korban*. Even “offering” does not do the term justice, as “offering” implies a prior request or need on the part of the one to whom the object is offered; the purpose of the offering is to meet his request or to satisfy his need.

*Korban*, a word used only in the context of man’s relationship to G-d, derives from the root *karev* — closeness. In the verb form it means “to draw close.” It follows, then, that a *korban* is the means to achieve a closer relationship; a *korban* draws close. It is far removed from any connotation of destruction, annihilation and loss. And its object is not to appease or satisfy the Recipient, but to bring the giver closer.

The *midrash* notes that the name *Elokim* is never used in the context of *korbanot* — only the Divine Name, the Tetragrammaton, beginning with the letters *yud* and *heh*. The name *Elokim*, representing strict justice and retribution, is never associated with *korban* because the purpose of *korban* is not to

appease a vengeful G-d. Rather, the Name of mercy, His essential Name, appears — a Name which hints to His past, present and future existence and involvement. *Korban* is associated with His liberating love, as Creator, Sustainer and Granter of future. It is brought as a means of connecting to that force, of commitment to a life more noble and worthy.

This can be sensed in the very first mention of *korban* in the Torah. Kayin brings his offering from the fruit of the ground, and Hevel brings his from the finest of his flock. Kayin’s is rejected and Hevel’s is accepted. But the text does not say: “G-d turned to Hevel’s offering, but to the offering of Kayin, He did not turn.” Rather, the text reads: “G-d turned to Hevel and his offering, but to Kayin and his offering He did not turn.” The difference lay in the personalities and intentions of the *offerers*, not the offerings themselves. The purpose of *korban* is to bring close, and *korban* is effective (in this case accepted) only when it serves that purpose by the offerer’s seeking nearness and creating connection.

Careful study of the details of the various *korbanot* and attendant procedures reveals vast symbolic significance furthering the main goal of the *korban*, to bring close. See *Commentary, Parshat Vayikra and Tzav, Siddur*, pp. 22-36.

• Sources: *Commentary, Vayikra 1:2, Bereishet 4:3-6*

## PLEASE JOIN US...

...in saying Tehillim/Psalms and a special prayer to G-d for the safety and security of all of Klal Yisrael in these times of conflict and conclude with the following special prayer:

אֲחֵינוּ בְּלִבְיַת יִשְׂרָאֵל

“Our brothers, the entire family of Israel, who are delivered into distress and captivity, whether they are on sea or dry land – may G-d have mercy on them and remove them from stress to relief, from darkness to light, from subjugation to redemption now, speedily and soon.”





BY RABBI ZE'EV KRAINES

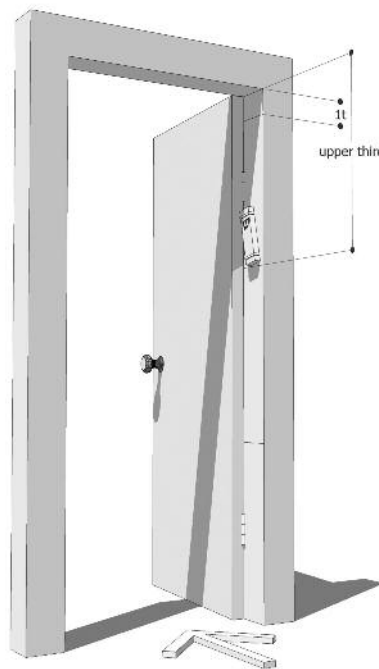
## Top Third of Doorpost

**Q:** *I saw that the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch writes that the mezuzah should be affixed at the beginning of the top third of the entrance. I've seen many homes where the mezuzah is within the top third, but not exactly at its "beginning." Does the Kitzur mean to say that ideally one should use a tape measure to determine the exact spot where the top third begins?*

**A:** The Kitzur's ruling reflects the consensus of contemporary authorities that one should ideally measure the doorway in order to affix the mezuzah precisely at the beginning of the top third. Be careful to place it slightly above the exact line, so that no part of the mezuzah is lower than the top third.

However, you have correctly observed that the general custom follows those authorities who deem

anywhere within the top third as equally acceptable, as long as it is not placed within the top *tefach* (about four inches) of the doorpost. Indeed, several authorities hold that its ideal position is higher up on the post, preferably at about shoulder height (4' 6").



- Sources: *Shulchan Aruch* 289:2; *Nekudos Hakesef and Mezuzos Beisecha*, *ibid. Agur B'ohalecha* 12:2; *Teshuvos V'Hanhagos* 2:538

Got a mezuzah question or story?  
Email [rabbi@ohrsandton.com](mailto:rabbi@ohrsandton.com)  
or submit on my website  
[mymezuzahstory.com](http://mymezuzahstory.com)

Free "Mezuzah Maven" book  
for every question  
or story submitted  
(when published  
in the near future!)

### Parsha Insights...continued from page one

He thought for a good few minutes, as is his way, and then answered: "Someone who steals money will take money whether it's a little or a lot, but what he won't take away is someone else's giving to the community. That is something he won't take away from the giver."

*"If a person will sin and commit a treachery against G-d by lying to his comrade regarding a pledge or loan or a robbery, or by defrauding his comrade."* (5:21)

The verse starts by speaking of treachery to G-d,

and continues to discuss man cheating his fellow. This seems like a non-sequitur.

In truth, the breakdown of all social behavior is predicated by treachery to G-d, i.e. atheism, because without the Ultimate Authority of the Creator, man's baser side will find ways to violate even the most widely accepted norms of human behavior. It will start with theft, pure-and-simple, but eventually it will degenerate into the callous theft of even the intangible and the noble.

- Source: based on Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik

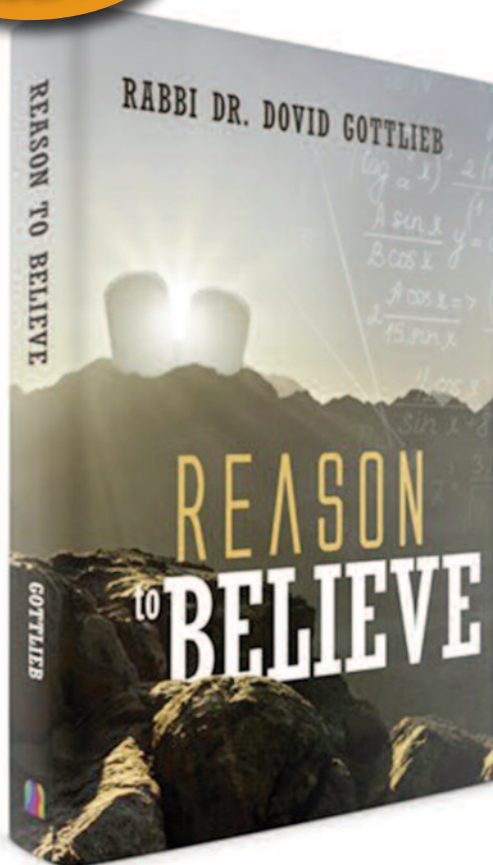
JEWISH LEARNING LIBRARY PRESENTS

RABBI DR. DOVID GOTTLIEB

# REASON to BELIEVE

KOHN FAMILY EDITION

**NEW!**



**WHY DO WE LIVE THE WAY WE LIVE?  
WHY DOES ANYONE?**

There are hundreds of religions and worldviews in existence, each claiming to be accurate. How do we know that Judaism is true?

In this masterful work, the magnum opus of one of the greatest contemporary teachers of Judaism, readers are guided along an extremely logical, consistent, and convincing path. With this once-in-a-lifetime book, readers discover truth: a powerful "reason to believe."

**Published by The Jewish Learning Library of Ohr Somayach**

Distributed by Feldheim Publishers

**Available online at [www.ohr.edu](http://www.ohr.edu)**