



Parshat HaShavuah

VAYIKRA

ויקרא

פרשת החודש

MAR 24, 2012

א' ניסן תשע"ב

A PUBLICATION OF



Ashreinu

חלקינו מה טוב

Candle Lighting

7:15

S"Z Kriat Shema

10:23

Sunset

7:34

Motzei

Shabbat

8:09



Enriching and Enhancing Your Study of the Weekly Torah Portion

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THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING  
RABBI BENJY HOROWITZ

Last week, a group of students stopped me in the hallway as I was encouraging people to get to mincha on time. They wanted to know the meaning of the word "mincha."

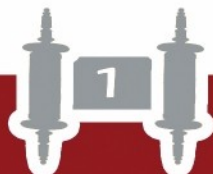
As I answered them that the word mincha means "gift," I began thinking: what exactly is the gift of mincha?

This week's parsha actually discusses mincha—the Korban Mincha—in great detail. Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch explains that in bringing a mincha sacrifice, we are offering a gift to Hashem, and that each of the components of the Korban Mincha represents an aspect of that gift.

The mincha offering is composed of flour, oil, and *levonah*, or frankincense. The flour represents the basic staple of food, the idea of nourishment and sustenance. By offering this flour to Hashem, we are demonstrating our recognition that everything we have comes from Hashem. The oil represents comfort, enrichment, a level of fulfillment above and beyond the basic necessity represented by the flour alone. Lastly, the frankincense, with its lovely aroma, signifies satisfaction and enjoyment. Food does not have to be enjoyable in order to sustain us, but when we offer the oil and *levonah* to Hashem, we show our appreciation that He fulfills and satisfies our needs beyond mere necessity.

So, in Rav Hirsch's opinion, our Korban Mincha, our gift to Hashem, is our recognition that everything comes from Him, from our basic existence—our daily bread—to our greatest, most satisfying experiences in life.

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## **TO HEAR OR NOT TO HEAR**

**GABE RAAB ('15)**

In the beginning of this week's parsha the Torah tells us that Hashem calls to Moshe from the Mishkan.

Rashi comments that the voice of Hashem reaches Moshe, but Bnei Yisrael do not hear it. However, if Hashem's voice is so powerful, how could only Moshe hear it and not the rest of Bnei Yisrael?

I would like to suggest that only Moshe is attuned to Hashem's "voice." Not everyone is able to hear His voice because not everyone is prepared to listen to and understand what Hashem says.

The same idea is seen in the parable of a farmer once walking with his friend who lived in Times Square. Suddenly the farmer says, "I hear a cricket." The friend replies, "Impossible. We are in Times Square and there is not a blade of grass. How can there be a cricket here!?" They walk a little farther and they come across a flower shop. They entered the store, and sure enough, among all the bouquets of flowers they spot a cricket.

When they leave, the friend asks the farmer, "How could you hear the cricket over all of the noise here in Times Square?" The farmer takes a quarter from his pocket and drops it onto the sidewalk. Half a dozen people immediately turn around to see what had fallen. The farmer asks his friend, "How could those people have heard the coin over all the noise here in Times Square? You see, my ear is attuned to the sound of nature, and their ears are attuned to the sound of money."

It is important that we too be attuned to the right things and are able to distinguish between good and bad, between right and wrong. It takes time and effort to train your self to be able to properly comprehend what we want to hear and what we do not want to be heard, but life in which you focus on the good will be a good one.

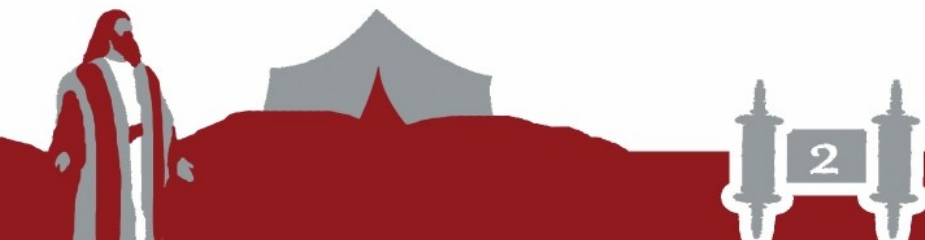
## **MODELING OURSELVES**


**KIRA DENNIS ('14)**

A close look at this week's parsha, which deals with sacrifices that are brought in the Mishkan, will show that sometimes the Torah will merely write "הכהן," "the Kohen," such as in the case of the burnt-offering of birds, whereas in other places it says "הכהנים בני אהרן"—"the sons of Aaron, the Kohanim." And yet, in other areas, regarding the placing of the fire, the Torah will write "בני אהרן הכהן"—"the sons of Aharon the Kohen."

What is the reason for the use of different terms in seemingly similar situations?

*Continued page 3*





*Dennis continued*

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, in his *Drash Moshe*, explains that it appears that the Torah defines the three levels of *Kehunah*, each one required for a different function. When he is simply called “the Kohen” the title is used to refer to when the wood and fire are already arranged on the *mizbeach*, seeing as though any qualified Kohen may bring the sacrifice.

The second level, “הכהנים בני אהרן,” is used when referring to how the offering must still be prepared for the sacrifice. The Kohen must be aware that he is one of “the sons of Aharon, the Kohanim,” so that by witnessing their behavior, the people will learn to fear Hashem.

This is substantiated by Chazal’s comment on a verse in Dvarim, “למען תלמד ליראה את ה’—” that one who sees the Kohanim at their service will learn to fear Hashem (14:23). This service then requires men chosen by Hashem from whom the people can learn.

The third level, “בני אהרן הכהן,” involves Kohanim who place the fire on the altar in order to bring down the fire from Heaven. Such Kohanim must know how to perform this act just like Aharon, the Kohen Gadol, has.

This lesson can be applied to our everyday life. When we are living in a generation and in an environment that is permeated by Torah, then Torah can be imparted very easily. It is a part of the daily life of every individual. However, in times when there are foreign influences that tend to weaken the religious environment, we must make sure, just like the Kohen who sets the proper example, that we have role models to which children, as well as adults, can look up and from which they can learn.

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## ADMITTING WEAKNESS IS A STRENGTH

YOSEF ITZKOWITZ (‘14)

In this week’s parsha the Torah states, “*Asher nasi ye’cheta*”— “If a leader sins” (4:22). The Gemara explains that the word “if” (*asher*) is derived from the word fortunate (*ashrei*).

According to this understanding, the pasuk should then be read, “Fortunate is the leader who sins.” How does this make sense? How could it be fortunate for someone to sin? And not just anyone, but the leader of a nation!

Rabbi Avraham Twerski answers this question beautifully. He explains that this pasuk is referring to a generation that is fortunate to have leaders who admit when they make mistakes. Moshe exemplifies the Torah value of truth above all else. Although easy to do otherwise, Moshe resists temptations and only speaks the truth, even to his own detriment.

Today, we must surround ourselves with leaders who not only have a strong sense of right and wrong, but who are also able to admit when they make a mistake. It is in these leaders that we find great role models.



## HUMILITY IS KEY

### SARAH BARROCAS ('14)

This week's parsha begins with the statement, "Vayikra el Moshe"— "Hashem calls Moshe [to enter the Mishkan]." The *alef* in the word "vayikra" is smaller than the rest of the letters. This comes to teach us that when Hashem is calling us we must all "lower" ourselves — we must become humble and approach the Torah with complete acceptance and dedication. We must want to follow the will of Hashem, just like Moshe does when Hashem calls for him.

In addition, Moshe considers himself less significant than others, smaller than others, and that is why the *alef* in the word "Vayikra" is so small. Rashi tells us that Hashem calling Moshe is a symbol of unique care because Hashem admires people with humility.

If Moshe, arguably the holiest man in our nation's history, the one who had the greatest relationship with Hashem, is able to stay humble, how much more so is it a lesson for us— we should learn from this small *alef* and humble ourselves. It is only through humility that we will be able to take advantage of the Torah and mitzvot we were given and use them in order to connect to Hashem.

*Rabbi Horowitz continued*

I think we can understand this on an even deeper level. Perhaps we can view the Korban Mincha as the "gift that keeps on giving." That is, the fact that we are given an opportunity each and every day to give Hashem a "gift" is actually a gift to us! And what is that gift? It is the ability, no matter what, to connect to Hashem. Whether we sin terribly or have an inspired day, we have the opportunity each and every afternoon to further develop our relationship with Hashem by bringing our korban.

So the next time you hear the mincha bell ring and you wonder what you are running to, recognize that mincha is a gift— a chance for you to appreciate the flour, oil, and incense in your life, and, even more importantly, an opportunity to strengthen your relationship with Hashem every single day.

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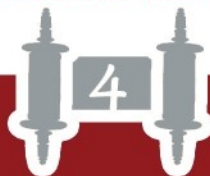
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