



ב"ג - כ"ט ניסן תשפ"ב April 24 - 30, 2022



קָה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- ◆ Aharon, the **גָּדוֹל בְּהֵן** (kohen gadol, high priest), learns the steps for the Yom Kippur service.
- ◆ In the mishkan (and, later in history, in the Beit Ha-Mikdash), the Yom Kippur ritual involved two goats.
- ◆ One goat would become a **קֶרְבַּן חַטָּאת** (korban hattat, sin offering). The kohen gadol would sprinkle its blood in a few places, including inside the holiest part of the mishkan, where the **אָרוֹן** (aron, ark) was. He could enter this space only on this one day of the year.
- ◆ Aharon would confess the sins of his family, of the kohanim, and of Benei Yisrael.
- ◆ The second goat would be sent away to the wilderness.
- ◆ Through these rituals, Benei Yisrael would **גָּיַר** (kapparah, atonement), which means being completely forgiven.
- ◆ Benei Yisrael learn rules about where and how to slaughter animals. An animal's blood can never be eaten and must be covered with dirt.
- ◆ The Torah lists certain people you can't marry, like your brother or sister.





מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash

Midrashim are ideas or stories that explain the Torah. They often come from listening very carefully to what the Torah says and how it says it. Here, we will look for what clues this midrash sees in the Torah's words, and try to understand its messages.

After teaching all the details of what the **כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל** (kohen gadol, high priest) does on Yom Kippur, the Torah summarizes the purpose of the rituals:

Vayikra 16:30

For on this day, atonement shall be made for you to purify you;
from all your sins before God you shall be purified.



ויקרא טז:ל

כִּי-בְיוֹם הַזֶּה יִכַּפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לְטָהָר אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי ה' תְּטַהְרוּ:

This pasuk might seem familiar because we repeat it many times in our Yom Kippur prayers. In this midrash, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah wonders: what does it mean to be purified 'לִפְנֵי ה' (lifnei Hashem, before God)? He suggests that these words contain a message about the nature of Yom Kippur:

Sifra Aharei Mot Chapter 8

Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah explained:

"from all your sins before God you shall be purified"—



for things between yourself and God, you are forgiven on Yom Kippur,

but for things between yourself and your friend, you are not forgiven (by God) until you make peace with your friend.

ספרא

זו דְרַשׁ ר' אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה:

"מִכָּל חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי ה' תְּטַהְרוּ" -

דְּבָרִים שְׂפִינָה לְבִין הַמָּקוֹם מוֹחֲלִים לָהּ,

דְּבָרִים שְׂפִינָה לְבִין חֲבֵרָה אֵין מוֹחֲלִים לָהּ עַד שֶׁתַּפְּיִיס אֶת חֲבֵרָה.



In our translation of the pasuk, we attached “before God” to “you shall be purified” (this is what the trop notes suggest). But Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah suggests that instead we should attach “before God” to the words that come before it, “from all your sins.” See the way we moved the comma in the translation of the midrash! In this reading, the words “before God” limit the sins that get forgiven to include only those specifically “before God.”

- ◆ How many different kinds of sins (and mitzvot) are there? What kinds do you think are considered “before God,” and what kinds are not?
- ◆ Why does Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah believe that Yom Kippur can only work to repair relationships between people and God? What has to happen for relationships between people to be repaired?



פְּרָשְׁנוֹת • Commentary

Our parashah warns Benei Yisrael not to follow the ways of the evil nations around them. Then it states:

Vayikra 18:5

You shall keep My laws and My rules, that a person should do, **va-hai bahem**—I am God.

ויקרא יח:ה

וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת-חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת-מִשְׁפָּטַי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם הָאָדָם וְחֵי בָהֶם אֲנִי ה' :

“Va-hai bahem” literally means “and live in them.” But what does that actually mean?!



Bekhor Shor says va-hai bahem means that following the Torah is a safe lifestyle:



שְׁלֹא יְהוּ שְׁנֵי מִתְקַצְרוֹת שְׁאִינוּ מֵת אֶלָּא מֵיִתַּח עֲצָמוֹ, אֲבָל חֲקוֹת הַגּוֹיִם, שְׁגוֹזִלִים וְחוֹמְסִים וְגוֹנְבִים וְרוֹצְחִים... מְקַצְרוֹת יְמֵיהֶם, שְׂבָאִים בְּעַלֵּי הַמָּמוֹן וְהוֹרְגִים אוֹתָם...

If you follow the rules of the Torah, your life will be longer because you'll die of natural causes.

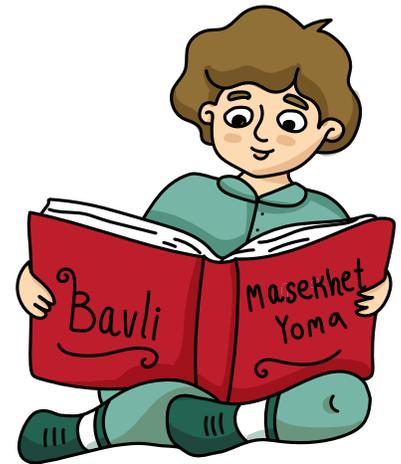
But the ways of evil nations, who steal, and take, and thief, and murder... shorten people's lives. For example, robbery leads to murder...

The Gemara (Yoma 85a-b), though, teaches a major principle from these two words!

מִנֵּיִן לְפָקוּחַ נִפְשׁ שְׂדוּחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת?
- אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר שְׂמוּאֵל: "וְחַי בְּהֵם" -
וְלֹא שְׂיָמוּת בְּהֵם.

How do we know that we can break Shabbat in order to save a life?

...Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: "va-hai bahem"—you should "live through" the mitzvot, and not die through the mitzvot.



- ◆ The Gemara uses these words to teach about the sanctity of life in Judaism. Why is preserving life more important than other mitzvot like Shabbat? Does the teaching in the Gemara surprise you? Why or why not?
- ◆ Could both of these explanations be true? Which one do you think is the primary meaning in the pasuk? Can you think of other ways to explain these words?
- ◆ **Grammar check!** Is our pasuk in second person (speaking TO you), or in third person (speaking ABOUT you)? Answer: both! Do you see where the shift from second person to third person happens? How do you understand this change? Does this grammar change relate to the way the pasuk is understood?



הלכה • Halakhah



Holy spaces get extra respect. We see this in our parashah, when Aharon learns how to enter the holiest part of the mishkan. He had to bathe, and be dressed a certain way, and follow all the steps to a T.

In the time of the **בַּיִת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ** (Beit Ha-Mikdash, Temple in Jerusalem), there were many rules for how to treat that space properly. These rules applied every day, and to everyone, not just the **כֹּהֲנִים** (kohanim, priests). For example, people couldn't use the Beit Ha-Mikdash as a shortcut, and they couldn't wear shoes, or spit (gross!), inside the Beit Ha-Mikdash (Berakhot 54a).

Today, some of these rules apply in our prayer spaces, and they are in a category of mitzvot called **כְּבוֹד בַּיִת כְּנֶסֶת** (kevod beit kneset, respect for a shul/synagogue). The Gemara gives details (Megillah 29a):





- ◆ A beit kneset shouldn't be used for personal benefit. So we shouldn't go there just to get out of the rain, or to avoid being in the sun on a hot day.

We shouldn't use a beit kneset as a shortcut to get somewhere else more quickly.

- ◆ If you have to step into a beit kneset to get a person from there, or because you forgot your book in there, or for something else that isn't praying or learning Torah, it's recommended that you stay a minute or two and recite a mishnah or a pasuk.

- ◆ We shouldn't do business or handle money in a beit kneset unless it's for a mitzvah, like giving צְדָקָה (tzedakah, charity).



- ◆ We shouldn't eat, drink, or sleep in a beit kneset.



רִגְעַן שֶׁל עִבְרִית • A Moment of Hebrew

Vayikra 16:7

Aharon shall take the two goats and **make them stand** before God at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

ויקרא טז:ז

וְלָקַח אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַשְּׁעִירִים וְהֶעֱמִיד אֹתָם לִפְנֵי ה' פְּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד:

לְהַעֲמִיד (שָׂרַשׁ ע.מ.ד.)

- ◆ To place or position
- ◆ To place upright, or put someone on their feet (le-ha'amid)

עָמַד בְּדַבְּרוֹ =
Kept their word
(amad bedibburo)

עָמַד עַל שְׁלוֹ =
Insisted on something
(amad al shelo)





דְּבָרָה שְׁל דַּי • One-Minute Debate

How to play:

Here is a topic for debate along with some suggested arguments, but feel free to come up with your own.

- ◆ Assign people to the "true" or "false" sides.
- ◆ Each side gets 30 seconds to make their case.
- ◆ At the end, the group votes on a winner.

Debate: Yom Kippur was way better in the time of the mishkan than it is today.



True!

- ◆ Benei Yisrael didn't have to spend all day in synagogue.
- ◆ The כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל (kohen gadol, high priest) did all the hard work, and the people would gain forgiveness!

False!

- ◆ It feels good to take responsibility and not let someone else do the work for you.
- ◆ Praying all day is way tidier than the blood of sacrifices in the mishkan!

= עַמּוּד
Pillar or page (amud)

= עֲמִידָה
Amidah (the silent prayer at the center of all services, always recited while standing)

= עָמַד מִלְכֶּת
Stood in their place or stopped (amad milekhet)

= מְעַמָּד
Candidate (muamad)

Find the Word!

This is a very common שָׂרֵשׁ (shoresh, root) that shows up all over the Torah! In Bereishit, someone dreams that they are standing by the river. Who is the person and what is the word the Torah uses there? (Hint: look at Bereishit 41.)





שאלות השבוע • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to the last three are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah.**

aliyot:

- 1) Vayikra 16:1 to 16:17
- 2) 16:18 to 16:24
- 3) 16:25 to 16:34
- 4) 17:1 to 17:7
- 5) 17:8 to 18:5
- 6) 18:6 to 18:21
- 7) 18:22 to 18:30

Good luck!

1 How does Aharon pick which of the two goats is for God and which is for Azazel?

2 What does Aharon do to the goat for Azazel before sending it off to the desert?

3 What date each year is set aside for forgiving all of the people's sins?



4 Benei Yisrael were told not to offer sacrifices to beings other than God. What were they called?

5 Which part of an animal's body does the Torah say contains its נֶפֶשׁ (nefesh, soul or life force)?

6 What idolatrous god is spelled with the same letters as the Hebrew word for king?

7 What two groups of people are expected to follow all the rules at the end of our parashah?

8 What does the Torah call the person who takes the goat out to the desert?

9 There is a word that appears only four times in our parashah, but all four times are in one verse. What is it?

10 What will the land do to the people, if they follow the ways of the nations around them?



*
Look for the answers on page 12!

קריאת התורה • Torah Reading

Question: How many columns are there in a סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה (Sefer Torah, Torah scroll)?

Answer: There is no fixed number!

There are a bunch of requirements, such as having at least 42 lines per column, and at least 30 letters in each line. But a Sefer Torah can end up with anywhere between 200 and 300 columns, depending on how you write it. And, for the most part, columns can end and begin wherever you want.

But there is a tradition that there are six words in the entire Torah that should always be at the top of a column. These words are described by the acronym בי"ה שמ"ו, which is a hint at writing the Torah with God's Name in mind. R. Menahem Hameiri (Southern France, 700 years ago) explained this to refer to the words at the beginning of these phrases:



Check out the fourth one, which is from a verse in our parashah! Not all Torah scrolls are the same, and some people think the letter ש (shin) refers to a shin in a different verse. But if you are lucky and you pay attention during the Torah reading, you may see the reader move to the next column during the first aliyah, when reading the word שְׁנֵי (shnei).

Can you imagine how much planning it takes when writing a Sefer Torah to make it come out just right? See if you can find anyone who writes Sifrei Torah and ask them how they do it!



בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

The parashah doesn't tell us a lot about how it felt to perform rituals in the mishkan, or to see them happen. But there's a poem some communities sing on Yom Kippur that imagines the Yom Kippur scene at the Temple. It describes the moment that the כהן גדול (kohen gadol, high priest) left the Holy of Holies and came out safely to the community.

אמת מה נהדר היה בהן גדול בצאתו מבית קדשי הקדשים בשלום בלי פגע
Truly how wonderful was the kohen gadol when he left the Holy of Holies in
peace, without being hurt!

כדמות הקשת בתוך הענן
Like a rainbow appearing
inside a cloud

בגן הקשתות בתוך גנת חמד
Like a rose in the heart of
a lovely garden

כוכב הנגה בגבול מזרח
Like a shining star on the
eastern horizon

The poem compares the look of the kohen gadol to some amazing images, which we've illustrated here. Together, these can give us an idea of the emotions people experienced when they saw the Yom Kippur service performed correctly, and they knew that God had forgiven them.

- ◆ How do you feel during the day of Yom Kippur? What about at the beginning or the end? Is "relief" an emotion you feel at some point during the day? If so, when and why?
- ◆ Maybe ask these questions to people you know who fast the whole day!



Send us your thoughts or questions from learning the parashah. We'll write back to you, and some will get published in future issues of Devash!
Write to us at devash@hadar.org



מי היו חכמינו • Who Were Our Sages?

This week's **מִדְרָשׁ**/Midrash section included a teaching of **Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah** (p. 2), one of the junior Sages of the Tannaim who lived at Yavneh (about 1,900 years ago). According to the Talmud (Berakhot 27b-28a), he was, for a short time, the **נָשִׂיא** (nasi, head of the Sanhedrin).

Rabban Gamliel, the previous nasi, had a leadership style that bothered the other Rabbis. He was too forceful, and humiliated Rabbi Yehoshua on more

than one occasion. Eventually, this was too much, and they replaced him with Rabbi Elazar. Although he was very young at the time, as soon as he was appointed nasi, Rabbi Elazar instantly grew a white beard!

In the end, the other rabbis were able to make friends again with Rabban Gamliel. He and Rabbi Elazar ended up splitting the job of nasi.

This story contains lessons for how to be a good leader: don't throw your weight around. Be kind and respectful.





מה זה • What's Going On Here?

The two goats in the Yom Kippur ritual met two different fates. One would be offered as a sacrifice, and the other would be sent to the wilderness (Vayikra 16:8-10). This wilderness is described with an unusual word: לְעִזָּאֵזֶל (la-Azazel, to/for Azazel). This word appears nowhere else in the Torah! **Where or what or who is Azazel?**

- ◆ Rashi, based on the Gemara, says it's a steep, rocky mountain. This might be connected to the word עֶז (az), which means "strong" or "fierce."
- ◆ Azazel could be a combination of the words עֵז (eiz, goat), and אָזַל (azal, to go away). In this case, Azazel describes the goat itself, and what happens to it.
- ◆ According to Ibn Ezra, the true meaning of Azazel is a deep secret that you cannot fully understand until you are 33 years old. (He was probably hinting at the idea that Azazel was a demon!)



Did you know? The English word "scapegoat" is used to describe someone who is blamed for someone else's actions. It's a translation of Azazel, if you follow the second explanation above!

Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. By a גּוֹרָל (goral, lottery) (16:8-9)
2. He puts his hands on its head and confesses the people's sins (16:21)
3. The 10th day of the 7th month (we know it as Yom Kippur!) (16:29-30)
4. שְׂעִירִים (se'irim), the same word that means "goats" (17:7)
5. The blood (17:11,14)
6. מִלְכָּה (Molekh) (18:21), spelled with the same letters as מֶלֶךְ (melekh, king)
7. הָעֶזְרָח וְהַגֵּר (the ezhrah/native-born member of Benei Yisrael, and the ger/non-Israelite who lives with them) (18:26)
8. אִישׁ עֵתִי (ish itti, an appointed person) (16:21)
9. בֵּד (bad, linen) (16:4)
10. Vomit them (18:25,28)



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