



# Shabbat Parah, Shemini March 26, 2011 20 Adar II, 5771

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## NEWS

### PURIM IN JERUSALEM

I hope that everyone had a wonderful celebration of Purim. It is good to rejoice for what the L-rd has done for his people in the past and in the same token to celebrate what the L-rd does for his people today. On Friday 19th evening, Shalom David led us in a wonderful service of worship in Jerusalem and reminded us the feast of Purim, the children of the Kehilah were disguised in Esther, Mordechai or Achashverus (it is not strange that no one wants to be Amman). The congregation was fully packed. When it was the time of the kiddush I asked the congregation to stay in the sanctuary and because it was impossible to do it in the fellowship room with all the people present.

### PURIM IN NAZARETH

On Shabbat morning I had the privilege to celebrate Purim with our small congregation of Nazareth, we had among us three Queen Esther, one Mordechai and one king. during my drasha I explained how the book of Esther is actual and helps us understand G-d's purpose even though the name of G-d is not present in the book.

### PURIM AMONG JEWS

Of course the people of Israel has celebrated Purim with a lot of joy, noise, food and drink. I was in the streets of Jerusalem to see one more

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time their celebration, it was wonderful to see all these Jews celebrating the deliverance of His people in a joyful carnival. Many people and countries have their own carnival at exactly the same time of Purim, then I asked myself if that is not a Jewish influence in the world. Of course what we see in Rio de Janero is not really for the glory of G-d, but maybe it is the duty of our people everywhere in the world to witness a correct way to celebrate G-d and not false deities.



### PURIM IN BUENOS AIRES

We received this message from David Barzola who is working in Argentina: Purim was a success this year. More people attended than last year. You know that this event does not call many people in gola. New people attended with common questions of all new attendees. As often happens, the non-Adventists help much in the preparation of activities.





# OVERVIEW

## SHMINI — שְׁמִינִי

### LEVITICUS 9:1-11:47

**O**n the eighth day of the dedication of the Mishkan, Aharon, his sons, and the entire nation bring various korbanot (offerings) as commanded by Moshe.

Aharon and Moshe bless the nation.

G-d allows the Jewish People to sense His Presence after they complete the Mishkan.

Aharon's sons, Nadav and Avihu, innovate an offering not commanded by G-d. A fire comes from before G-d and consumes them, stressing the need to perform the commandments only as Moshe directs. Moshe consoles Aharon, who grieves in silence.

Moshe directs the kohanim as to their behavior during the mourning period, and warns them that they must not drink intoxicating beverages before serving in the Mishkan.

The Torah lists the two characteristics of a kosher animal: It has split hooves, and it chews, regurgitates, and re-chews its food.

The Torah specifies by name those non-kosher animals which have only one of these two signs. A kosher fish has fins and easily removable scales. All birds not included in the list of forbidden families are permitted. The Torah forbids all types of insects except for four species of locusts.

Details are given of the purification process after coming in contact with ritually-impure species. Bnei Yisrael are commanded to be separate and holy — like G-d.

### MOSHE LOVED WISDOM AND TRUTH

**M**oshe (Moses) thought that his brother, Aharon (Aaron) — the Cohen Gadol (High Priest) had made a mistake regarding an offering and censured him. Aharon explained why his action was proper. The Torah then reports, **“And Moshe heard and it was good in his eyes” (Leviticus 10:20)**. Many people, when they find out that they are wrong, become defensive. They are embarrassed by their mistake—and then try to defend themselves or at-

tack the other person on a character basis, rather than dealing with the facts. If we are aware of this tendency, we can check the urge in ourselves and respond more appropriately. The goal of discussions should be clarity and truth, not defending egos.

The commentator, Rabbi Obadia Sforno says that Moshe felt joy upon hearing the reasoning of Aharon. He had pleasure that Aharon was correct in his decision.

Rabbi Pakouz concludes that this is a wonderful and high-level response. Moshe so loved wisdom and truth — and his brother Aharon — that he took great pleasure even though he himself was wrong and embarrassed. Our goal is to strive for truth and clarity and to keep our egos in check.

### ACCEPTING THE WILL OF G-D

**R**abbi Mordechai Kamenetzky give us some thoughts about the death of Nadav and Avihu. “It was the last day of the Mishkan’s inauguration. The joy was immeasurable, somewhat akin to the ribbon-cutting ceremony of a cherished king’s new palace -- in this case, a shrine to the glory of the King of kings and to the splendor of His reign. But in a tragic anticlimactic sequence, the celebration went terribly wrong. The children of Aharon,

Nadav and Avihu, entered into the realm of the outer limits, the Holy of Holies, the Kodesh HaKedoshim. They offered incense, something they assumed would surely bring joy to their Creator. But it was their own recipe.

Uncommanded, and uncalled for, something went terribly wrong. **“A fire came forth from before Hashem and consumed them, and they died before Hashem” (Leviticus 10:1-2)**. It’s hard for us, here, to fathom the pain. Remember that picture of a smiling schoolteacher and her fellow astronauts, waving in anticipation of another successful mission on America’s galactic pride and joy, only to be vaporized into a mist of memories plunging toward the ocean in a disastrous fate? The beloved children of a beloved leader on a beloved day in a beloved service were gone in an instant, from glory to death. Yet their own father did not react in open agony, rather only through silence and acceptance. **“And Aaron was silent” (Lev. 10:3)**. That silence was not only commended, but extolled. As a reward for that stoic reaction of acceptance, the next command in

the Torah is offered directly to Aharon without Moshe, who normally was the principal in receiving Heavenly directives.”

again about this silent attitude of Aharon, Rabbi Moshe HaCohen Rice writes in Ohr HaMussar: Aharon was greatly praised for remaining silent — for not complaining against the Almighty and for accepting the will of the Almighty.

Rabbi Pakouz says based on the teaching of Rabbi Zelig Pliskin that the Sages constantly worked on accepting the will of the Almighty. Rabbi Akiva always used to say when something apparently negative happened, “All that the Almighty does is for the good. This, too, is for the good . . . the man who has integrated into his being the idea regarding whatever happens to that ‘this, too, is for the good.’”

Rabbi Shaul says two thousand years ago **“And we know that in all things G-d works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Rom 8:28).** Rabbi Pakouz add in his comment that Aaron remained silent because he knew clearly that everything the Almighty does is purposeful. When things consistently go well for a person, he feels an inner-joy. Acceptance of the Almighty’s will is the most crucial attitude to make part of oneself for living a happy life. The more you learn to accept the will of the Almighty, the greater joy you will experience in your life!

## THE DESIRE OF YOUR LIFE

**T**he Torah commands the Cohanim that: **“Wine and other intoxicating beverages you shall not drink” (Leviticus 10:9)** before coming to do the service. The Midrash Vayikra Rabbah warns against alcoholism: “If a person drinks too much wine, he will end up selling all that he owns to keep up his addiction to drinking.”

The Midrash continues: The children of a drunk were worried that they would soon be penniless. They tied up their father when he was drunk and placed him in a cemetery; they hoped that when he became sober he would be shocked by the experience and become aware of the dangers of drinking to excess.

That day a caravan carrying vats of wine was attacked and sped past the cemetery to outrun the attackers. A barrel rolled off the wagon and when the man woke up from his drunken sleep, he was surprised to find the spigot of the barrel next to his face. And he continued to drink.

Rabbi Packouz says “The Almighty leads us in the direction we desire to go. The greater your desire to do something, the more successful you will be. Therefore, choose well what you desire in life. When you wish to accomplish in spiritual matters, build up a strong desire to accomplish and the Almighty will lead you in that path!.”

## RESPECT FOR G-D

**T**he Sages present us with various explanations as to what transgression Nadav and Avihu committed, for which they incurred the punishment of being consumed by the heavenly fire. These include: 1. They entered the Tabernacle either drunk, or without properly cutting their hair, or without the proper priestly garments. 2. They did not defer the honor of bringing this fire to their father, Aaron. 3. They did not consult with Moses, or with one another, prior to bringing the fire. 4. They did not marry. 5. They remarked, “When will these two old men [Moses and Aaron] die, so that we can lead the generation?” Then Rabbi Zev Leff asks the question: Since the Torah explicitly tells us the nature of their sin - that they brought “a strange fire” - why did the Sages find it necessary to add their own explanations? Furthermore, Rabbi Zev Leff reminds us that the Sages tell us that already at Mount Sinai, Nadav and Avihu were liable to a death penalty for their casual demeanor when they experienced their prophetic vision of the Divine Presence. Only the fact that G-d did not want to disturb the joy of the giving of the Torah, saved them from Divine execution at that time. **“Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up and saw the G-d of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire, clear as the sky itself. But G-d did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw G-d, and they ate and drank.” (Exodus 24:9-11).** Their behavior was so inappropriate that G-d could kill them on the spot, but that day was so special that he did not execute them. But on the very day of the dedication they still had not learned the lesson G-d had given them on the Sinai. If G-d let such behavior without sanction, it could become more and more problematic in Israel and no one would have respect for the sanctuary, and the high significance of the services. The lesson for each one of us is that we have to be full of respect for G-d and his sanctuary when we offer our adoration and when we worship him in his kehilah.

## PRIORITIES IN PERSPECTIVE

A fox once passed by a beautiful garden, filled with row after row of delicious fruits and vegetables. The food looked so tempting, the fox wanted to eat it all. But there was a problem. A tall fence surrounded the garden. The fox went around the entire fence many times determined to get in. Finally, he found a hole in the fence, but it was too small for him to fit through. The fox was not about to give up so easily. "Where there is a will there is a way!" he thought. So he decided to fast until he would be skinny enough to fit through the small opening.

For three straight days, the wily fox fasted. Finally, he was able to fit through the hole. Once inside the garden, he ate to his heart's content.

After enjoying the good life in the garden for some time, it was now time to leave and return to his family. But try as he might, he was now too fat and couldn't squeeze through the hole! He had no choice but to fast another three days until he could squeeze out again.

When he finally made it outside the fence, he turned and looked back.

"Garden, garden, how sweet was your fruit!" he said with a shout. "But what good is it to me; when the way I went in, is the way I came out!"

As we go through life, we too, like the fox, may be tempted to sacrifice real and lasting values for temporary and imaginary gains. Our sages in Pirkei Avot remind us to keep our priorities in proper perspective."

## FAITHFUL LIFE

"Cut off from the world", in an isolated camp in the Sudetenland, Jewish slave laborers kept the Yom Kippur fast and even celebrated Pesach as much as possible. We were three hundred and fifty young women in the camp. Hadassah Pesserman was the one we looked to for leadership. Even the Germans recognized her position and granted her special privileges. Unlike the other prisoners they did not call her by her first name, "Hadassah"; instead they

called her, "die Fraulein Pesserman" a token of respect for her personality, her excellent leadership, and her devotion to religion.

Hadassah had been a member of Agudas Yisrael girls, organization back in the Zbirce, Poland. She kept all the Mitzvos carefully even in the camp, including praying every day and observing Shabbat. She was extremely particular about Kashrut, which meant that she never ate any cooked food in the camp. Eventually a close friend of hers got permission to cook potatoes for her in a special pot set aside for that purpose. All the same, Hadassah agreed only to a potato that had been cooked whole in its skin. She was concerned that some well-meaning person might add some oil to the pot, wishing to give her some added nutrition (The cooking oil was usually not Kosher).

The prisoners worked in a cotton thread factory. It was true "die Fraulein Pesserman" no longer produced her daily quota of thread, since was slowly withering away from starvation. But the factory manager, a Nazi by the name of Theodore Rommler, respected her as a person even though she was not worth much anymore to his factory.

By the time the infamous Dr. Mengele arrived at the camp to conduct a selection among the prisoners, Hadassah was nothing but skin and bones so and ended up among those marked for Auschwitz and the crematoria. But Herr Rommler saved her, claiming, "I need this woman for the factory."

Die Fraulein Pesslerman, whose whole life was a sanctification of G-d,s name, died of exhaustion in 5704, without ever having defiled herself with non-Kosher food." (Testimony of Mrs. Miriam Schneider from Czanow in Shema Yisrael)

## EDITOR

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# HAFTARA

## 2 Samuel 6:1 - 7:17

**PARASHA:** In the text of the parasha the L-rd wants to impress Israel about the services in the sanctuary, G-d's people is holy that is why we have to be careful on how to offer our service to our G-d, **Aaron's sons, Nadav and Avihu, each took his censer, put fire in it, and laid incense on it; and they offered unholy fire before the L-rd, such as he had not commanded them. And fire came out from the presence of the L-RD and consumed them, and they died before the L-RD. (Leviticus 10:1, 2).** The text tells us that they were under the influence of alcohol when they performed their holy service. because of this unholy act, the L-rd asked his people not to drink alcohol before performing their service in the temple.

**HAFTARA:** In the text of the Haftara the people of Israel forgot the lesson given by G-d to Nadav and Avihu and David went to Baale-Judah to bring the Ark of the Covenant to his house in Jerusalem, The consequences of this move were dramatic, **'David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the L-rd with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of G-d and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it. The anger of the L-rd was kindled against Uzzah; and G-d struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of G-d. (2 Samuel 6:5-7).**

This text asks us a question about our own relationship to G-d, his temple and the manner we lead the holy service on Shabbat. Do we perform the service and worship our L-rd remembering that we are all standing before the King and the creator of the universe? Serving the L-rd in a proper way is a great blessing **The ark of the L-rd remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and the L-rd blessed Obed-edom and all his household. (2 Samuel 6:11)** Then David understood that he must perform the service of the L-rd following the Bible's instructions and with respect, **So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the L-rd with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet... (2 Samuel 6:15)**

# BRIT HACHADASHA

## Revelation 1:1-6

In the parasha we read all the instructions G-d gave to Moshe about the sanctuary and the service Aharon and his children after him would offer to G-d in order to serve G-d in the proper way. Today there is no temple and the biblical priest have stopped their service in the Temple. So, a legitimate question is to ask: Who are the modern priests who perform their service before G-d?. We have already seen that Yeshua inaugurated a new priestly service in the heavenly sanctuary. Indeed there is a sanctuary in heaven that was shown to Moshe in the Sinai **"Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you."** (Ex 25:9). Before the Levite priesthood G-d had an universal priest on the earth who was called Melchizedek (Gen 14:18). Even though Melchizedek was a real man, he was the type of the universal priesthood of the Mashiach (Hebrews 7). The Mashiach was declared priest **"The L-rd has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."** (Psa. 110:4). So, the Mashiach is today our high priest.

The next question is who are the priests of G-d today? The people of the Mashiach, the believers in Yeshua. Yochanan said that he received his revelation from **"Yeshua Hamashiach, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his G-d and Father — to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. (Rev 1:5-6)** and Shim'on says **"you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to G-d, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."** (1 Pet 1:9). We are the new people of priests who serve G-d.

If we take seriously the advice given by G-d to Moshe and Aharon for the priests, we should never drink any drop of alcohol, because as priest we are serving G-d days and nights for all our life. **"Wine and other intoxicating beverages you shall not drink"** (Leviticus 10:9).

