



# YOUNG ISRAEL DIVREI TORAH BULLETIN

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תורה

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A project of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF YOUNG ISRAEL

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PARASHAT TZAV

10 NISSAN 5769 / APRIL 3-4, 2009

DAF YOMI: BAVA KAMA 97

## 1013 Days of Captivity for Israeli MIA Gilad Shalit

### Righteous Indignation and Other Destructive Acts of Saintliness

Upon arrival, the facts are self-evident. “Someone” was not careful when setting the table and the decanter filled with wine slipped off the table, shattered, and spread deep purple all over the new off-white carpet. That “someone” is easily identifiable since that “someone” was home alone setting the table for *Shabbos*. That “someone” is watching and listening, waiting for our reaction. In that moment, whether that “someone” is our spouse or child, we will send a clear message of priorities. How we react to this “tragedy” will be compared to other reactions we had in the past. How did we respond last week when we dropped grandmother’s antique vase; how did we respond to the accidental violation of *Shabbos* when we woke up at 3 AM to use the restroom and accidentally turned on/off the light; how do we react when our friend speaks

to us during Torah reading; how do we describe the *chasuna* we just attended – are we obsessed with the menu, flowers, etc, or do we focus on the quality and

intensity of the dancing? These scenarios seem somewhat obvious when we step back and assess them honestly. The correct response is one of calm reliance on HaShem. However, this is easier said than done. It is difficult to discern the proper response in the heat of the moment, when we are convinced that we are morally and ethically right; when we believe that the future of our family, community, or *shul*, is at stake. This is why we should think carefully before every action.

That is exactly the message that can be found at the beginning of Parshas Tzav. The Torah, in Vayikra 6:1-6, introduces the *korban olah*, (elevation offering) but then immediately describes the process of *terumas hadeshen*, removal of ashes, before discussing the *olah* itself. The implication for such a deviation from the expected flow of text is that the ash removal itself is an integral part of the *olah* offering. In fact, Tehillim (20:4) stresses this relationship clearly. Since the essence of the *olah* offering brings atonement for improper thoughts (Vayikra Rabbah 7:3), we can deduce, by extension, that this must also be

true of the ash removal as well. In particular, the ashes represented atonement for questioning HaShem’s constant presence and concern for our well-being (see Idrey Tzon, Parshas Tzav).

In this light, the Mishnah’s description of how the Cohen was chosen to remove the ashes is somewhat troubling. The Mishnah (Yoma 22a) describes the fact that many privileges in the Temple services were determined by a lottery. The *terumas hadeshen*, however, was not. Instead, every morning, those *kohanim* who wished to participate in this opening service would simply race to the top of the ramp of the *mizbeach*. The one to arrive at the top four cubits of the 32-cubit-long ramp would be awarded this honor. One morning, however, two *kohanim* were neck and neck in their race to the top. To win, one bumped the other off the ramp, causing his fellow to break his leg. As a result, the rabbis determined that, from that moment on, the *terumas hadeshen* would also be determined by lottery. How is it possible that a person could perpetrate such wicked behavior while trying to serve

HaShem and bring atonement for inappropriate thought? How could one so fervently believe that HaShem is imminently present at all times, yet nearly murders his colleague in an attempt to prove his religious fervor?

The answer can be found in one word... Think. When discussing individuals of immense spiritual prowess and their desire to express their love to HaShem, the Torah teaches us that such a person should go beyond the letter of the law in all matters of life. They should be meticulous in their observance of

interpersonal *mitzvos* and ritual commandments equally, making sure that they serve HaShem with all their ability. However, the primary drive must be to sanctify HaShem's name. Before acting, one must stop and think, think through every possible outcome of his actions. The immediate result is not enough; the eventual repercussions must all be taken into account. In other words, what does HaShem really want? Without this pause and calculation, even the most intensely religious, spiritual, or kind acts may be twisted and corrupted. We may, inadvertently, become the

person we have dreamt of correcting. In our fervor to sanctify His name, we may find that, G-d forbid, we have done the opposite.

Rav Yaakov Weinberg, zt"l, Rosh HaYeshiva of Ner Israel Rabbinical College, used to implore that we respond to every scenario in our lives, but never react! Let us internalize this message, think through every action, and respond appropriately to every situation we encounter.

Good *Shabbos*.

#### **BLOOD DRIVES IN ISRAEL DURING THE PESACH HOLIDAY**

**The Worldwide Young Israel Movement is proud to once again co-sponsor  
with American Friends of Magen David Adom**

#### **Sharing for Life Blood Drives**

**Sunday, April 12 - 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM, Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem**  
**Sunday, April 12 - 4:00 PM - 9:00 PM, Kinar Classic Hotel, Galilee**  
**Monday, April 13 - 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM, Crown Plaza Hotel, Dead Sea**

**Please take an hour to donate blood to Magen David Adom. There's no more meaningful way to do  
something hands-on to help all Israelis.**

**Please bring a drivers license, passport or teudat zehut for identification.**

**For information on who is eligible to donate, or more information regarding American Friends of Magen  
David Adom, please contact Jonathan Feldstein at 057-761-4220 or [IsraelOffice@afmda.org](mailto:IsraelOffice@afmda.org)**

**Give the gift of life – give blood!!!**