

# Parshas Shmini, Parshas Parah. Shabbos Mevarchim.



## YadAvNow.com Weekly Audio Series: Shemini

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

**Fit to Measure**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**The Offerings and Acknowledgement One Is Fortunate to Be Alive**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**The Cantillation and Moshe Forfeits His Claim to the Mantle**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**Differentiating Aaron's Culpability & Atonement**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**The Objective of the Mishkan's Permanent Status**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**G-d is Ready to Enter Their Handiwork**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**Initiated & Installed as the Kohen Gadol**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**The Detoxification of the Body & Soul**

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. The Torah classifies the kosher & non-kosher species.
2. The Hebrew term for undomestic species is chaya.
3. The Torah presents the permitted species which include the domestic as chaya.
4. Midrash: "chaya" is an expression of life (chayim: the Jewish people are attached to G-d), it is essential they should be spiritually alive.
5. "G-d separated them from impurity and proscribed to them mitzvos."
6. Ohr Hachaim: Observing negative commandments is to wean the person from spiritual impurities.
7. The value of positive commandments is to introduce illumination into one's soul.

## Does G-d Prefer to Dwell on the Terrestrial with Man?

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. Aaron & sons were installed as Kohanim on the 8th day.
2. The Mishkan assumed permanent status on the 8th day, the first of Nisan.
3. Opinion in the Gemara: the world was created in the month of Nisan.
4. Gemara: G-d's joy on the 8th day was the equivalent to the day of creation.
5. The initial intent of creation was for G-d to dwell on the terrestrial with man – not in heaven with the angels.
6. After Adam ate of the tree of knowledge and putrefied himself and all existence, G-d ascended from the terrestrial.
7. After the sin of the golden calf, G-d said to Moshe "Make for me a sanctuary so that I shall dwell in your midst."
8. The intent of creation came to be on the 8th day.
9. G-d's joy was no less than his joy before the sin of Adam.
10. Shalah Hakadosh: Before the sin of Adam, Adam's vestment to serve G-d was his body.
11. After eating of the Fruit of The Tree, the body became putrefied thus invalidating it as a vestment.
12. Aaron and his sons were installed as Kohanim on the first day of Nisan in their priestly vestments to qualify their service.

## When One's Demise Has Greater Value Than Life

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. Nadav & Avihu were struck down by G-d on the eighth day of the Mishkan's inauguration.
2. Either they transgressed when they officiated after drinking wine, or had ruled without consulting Moshe.
3. Moshe said to Aaron: G-d told me that I will be sanctified with those who are closest to me.
4. I had thought it was going to be me or you, now that they were chosen indicates that they are greater than us.
5. This was the only sin of their lives; The sanctification of G-d, even when one is slightly flawed, doesn't escape His retribution.
6. Aaron remained silent.
7. Sforno: He was consoled knowing their death was a sanctification of G-d's Name.
8. At Sinai, Nadav, Avihu and the Elders gazed directly at the Divine Presence.
9. They deserved to die at that moment; G-d delayed their death so not to undermine the joy of the giving of the Torah with tragedy.
10. The Elders died at a later date when the Jews desired meat.
11. Nadav, Avihu and the Elders were liable for the same disrespect, yet the death of Aaron's sons was a sanctification of G-d, but the Elders' was not.

## Where Was The ROI On Moshe's Investment

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. Moshe tells Aaron he was chosen by G-d to be High Priest.
2. Midrash: Aaron asks: "Since you toiled for the Mishkan, you should be the High Priest."
3. Why ask if Moshe was established as the irrefutable spokesman of G-d at Sinai?
4. Those instructed to remove the remains of Nadav & Avihu from the sanctuary became contaminated.
5. Once contaminated, one cannot participate in the Pascal Lamb.
6. In the second year they were in the desert the Jews brought a Pascal Lamb; those contaminated did not.
7. They complained to Moshe: "Why should we be minimized?"
8. Sforno: Why were they penalized for doing a mitzvah removing human remains from sanctuary?
9. Their question was valid: G-d responded there is a makeup Pascal Lamb.
10. Aaron's question to Moshe: If Moshe toiled for the Mishkan, should not The High Priesthood be his?

# The Power of **PRAYER**

A New Series by  
**Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky**

**Catch Up Below On the Most Recent Classes**

**The Power of Prayer - Part 48**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**The Power of Prayer - Part 49**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**The Power of Prayer - Part 50**

CLICK TO VIEW!



**The Power of Prayer - Part 51**

CLICK TO VIEW!



## Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Shemini

### Parshas Shmini, Parshas Parah. Shabbos Mevarchim.



#### The Qualifying Factor

*Torah:* “It was on the eighth day, *Moshe* summoned *Aaron* and his sons...” It was on the eighth day that *Aaron* and his sons began to officiate in the *Mishkan*.

*Midrash:* “During the seven day period that *Moshe* was at the burning bush G-d had said to him, ‘I want you to go (to Egypt) and fulfill My agency (to redeem My children).’ *Moshe* responded, ‘You should send the one who is qualified. You should send *Aaron* my brother who is more qualified than I am.’

“This dialogue repeated itself on the first day, the second day, etc. G-d said to *Moshe*, ‘Every day I tell you to go and every day you answer Me that I should send your brother, who is more qualified. I swear on your life that tomorrow you will be repaid for your obstinacy. When the *Mishkan* will be completed, initially you will believe that you will be the High Priest. However, on the eighth day I will surprise you by informing you that *Aaron* is the one who will officiate

as the High Priest. You will then summon *Aaron* and his sons.’ Thus, the verse states, ‘...*Moshe* summoned *Aaron* and his sons...’”

*Midrash:* “There is a calling for greatness. *Moshe* said to *Aaron*, ‘G-d said to me that I should install you as the High Priest.’ *Aaron* responded, ‘You have toiled for the building of the *Mishkan*, and I should be made the High Priest?’” If *Moshe* had told *Aaron* in the Name of G-d that he was chosen to be the High Priest, how could *Aaron* question the appointment? *Aaron* understood that *Moshe* had toiled and sacrificed for the building of the *Mishkan*. *Moshe* had inculcated into the *Mishkan* everything that was needed to give it the capacity to accommodate all the spiritual needs of the Jewish people.

*Chazal* refer to the *Mishkan* as “the *Mishkan* of *Moshe*” because of his degree of involvement and sacrifice for its sake. Certainly, *Aaron* was not questioning *Moshe*’s word as being the word of G-d regarding his

appointment as High Priest, but rather, he needed to clarify for himself why did G-d choose him to be the qualified High Priest and not *Moshe*, who had given the *Mishkan* its spiritual potential and function.

*Midrash*: “*Moshe* said to *Aaron*, ‘I swear by your life! That although you have been appointed to be the High Priest I regard it as if it were me. Just as you rejoiced when I was chosen to be the Redeemer (despite the fact that *Moshe* was the younger brother), so too, do I rejoice in your advancement.

“*Torah*: ‘G-d said to *Moshe*, “When *Aaron* will be informed of your elevation, he will come out to greet you in the desert and he will see you and have joy in his heart.” Although *Aaron* was a prophet and G-d’s agent to communicate His Will to the Jewish people in Egypt, when *Moshe* was chosen to be the Redeemer, *Aaron* did not feel slighted to any degree. To the contrary, he felt joy in his heart that *Moshe*, his younger brother was chosen. It was only because *Aaron*’s heart was pure that he had the ability to rejoice. He understood and internalized to the core of his being that whatever G-d chooses to do is absolute in its essence and there is no other consideration.

If G-d chose *Moshe* to be the redeemer, it was certain to *Aaron* that the redemption could only come about through *Moshe*’s leadership. *Aaron* was only able to internalize the communication of *Moshe* being the Redeemer because of his exceptional level of humility. Therefore, when *Moshe* was informed that *Aaron* will be the High Priest and not himself, *Moshe* rejoiced in a similar manner. The purity of *Aaron*, his brother, was confirmed through his own rejoicing. *Moshe* therefore felt that *Aaron*’s position as High Priest was no less than he himself being the officiant.

One cannot have had a more qualified agent than *Aaron*, his brother. The humility and purity of *Aaron* was also demonstrated through the *mitzvah* of the lighting of the *Menorah*. When *Aaron* was told by G-d that the lighting of the *Menorah* was unique to him, the *Torah* tells us “*Aaron* did as he was told.”

*Rashi* citing the *Midrash*: *Aaron* did exactly as he was told without any change. Despite the fact that *Aaron*’s participation in the lighting of the *Menorah* established him as unique and special, he was not affected to any degree because of his level of humility. It was because he fully appreciated his responsibility to G-d to actualize his potential as High Priest.

*Torah*: After *Yehoshua Bin Nun* was chosen to be *Moshe*’s successor as leader of the Jewish people, they both addressed the people as joint leaders. Within this context of leadership, the *Torah* refers to *Yehoshua* as *Hoshea*, which was his original name prior to the incident of the spies.

*Rashi* citing *Sifri*: “Although he (*Yehoshua*) was given a position of esteem and greatness he humbled himself to the point of his original unknown status when he was referred to as ‘*Hoshea*.’”

## **Atonement, Transcending the Animal**

*Torah*: After *Aaron* was installed as the High Priest, he needed to bring a calf as a sin offering to atone for his participation in the Golden Calf. *Aaron* in addition, brought a goat as a sin offering on behalf of the Jewish people to atone for their participation in idolatry.

*Torah*: “*Aaron* came near to the Altar, and slaughtered the sin offering...”

*Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh*: “The Jerusalem *Talmud* states that they had consulted with Prophecy (*Nevuah*), ‘What should be the fate of the sinner? Prophecy responded, ‘The life of the sinner should be taken.’ However the *Torah* tells us, ‘If one were to sin, He should repent and bring a sacrifice to be atoned.’ This is based on the Attribute of Mercy. The process of atonement of the sacrifice is based upon the mindset of the one who brings the sacrifice.

“In truth, the individual who sins deserves to be slaughtered and burned upon the Altar as the animal. When one understands and appreciates the severity of transgression and that the only reason he is spared is due to the Mercy of G-d, then the sacrifice can atone on his behalf. When the *Torah* states, ‘*Aaron* came near to the Altar...’ it means that he fully internalized that he had relevance to the Altar within the context of himself deserving to be slaughtered and sacrificed. However, he slaughtered the calf in his place because of the Mercy of G-d.

“*Midrash*: ‘G-d had taken an oath that the world should function within the context of Justice.’”

*Gemara* in Tractate *Bava Kama*: If one were to say that G-d overlooks and does not evaluate and judge every aspect of one’s behavior, he deserves that his life should

be compromised. If this is so, then how is the bringing of a sacrifice in stead of the sinner in conformance with this principle? Based on the Attribute of Justice, the individual who had sinned should be put to death.

*Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh*: "In fact, if one's life were to be taken after he had repented, it would be considered a miscarriage of justice. When one sins, it is not within the context of rational behavior for a Jew. The sinner assumes the persona of an (intellectual) animal.

"*Zohar*: 'A person does not sin unless he is overtaken by a spirit of irrationality (*ruach shtus*). Therefore, when one sins, he is not sinning as a person whose classified as a human being (*Adam*) but rather as an animal who is not endowed with discretion. After one introspects and appreciates the wrong that he had done, and begins the process of repentance, he regains the status of a human being (*Adam*). Therefore, it would be unconscionable to take the life of a human being for an act that was perpetrated by an animal.

"Therefore, justice dictates that the animal must be sacrificed in the stead of the sinner in conjunction with the sinner recognizing the wrong that he had done. This is the understanding of the verse in Psalms, 'Man together with the animal, G-d will assist...' Meaning, if one employs his intellect to repent and appreciates the degree of travesty that in fact he deserves to be slaughtered and sacrificed together with the offering, he will achieve full atonement."

*Gemara* in Tractate *Zevachim*: A sacrifice that is brought for atonement must be predicated by repentance. As it states, "The sacrifice of the evil is an abomination (to G-d)." The reason for this is that if the person does not repent prior to bringing the sacrifice, the transition from animal to rational being has not yet taken place. Therefore, the animal is not qualified to atone. According to Jewish Law, the animal that qualifies for a sin offering is the animal that is consecrated for that specific purpose. If the animal should give birth after it was consecrated to a calf, the offspring does not qualify to be brought as a sin offering although its status is a derivative of the initial consecration. Why should the offspring not be qualified for the offering if in fact it has the sanctity of a sin offering?

The power of speech emanates from the spirit that is contained within the human being (*Ruach*). The power of speech quantifies the human being as being

above the classification of animal. It is only when that characteristic is employed for the sake of consecration, can the animal be the equivalent of the sin offering to be slaughtered and sacrificed. *Adam*, the first human being, was classified as the human species when he was endowed with the power of speech that emanated from his spirit "*Ruach*."

*Rambam* in the *Laws of Repentance*: "For one to be atoned one must verbalize his confession." Only through the articulation of the sin does one assume the classification of "*Adam*" which transcends the animal and thus can be atoned.

## Sensing the Pain of the Torah Sage

*Torah*: After *Nadav* and *Avihu*, the sons of *Aaron* were struck down by G-d, "*Moshe* said to *Aaron*... your brethren the entire House of Israel shall bewail the conflagration that *Hashem* ignited."

*Rashi* citing *Chazal*: "From here we learn that the pain of the *Torah Sage* is incumbent upon all to experience."

*Sifsei Chochomim* explaining *Rashi*: It is not that everyone must mourn the loss of the one who passed away, but rather, one must feel the pain of the *Torah Sage* who is grieving. Why is this something that the *Torah* demands?

*Gemara* in Tractate *Berachos*: When *Moshe* was told that G-d had decreed that the Jewish people should be destroyed because of the sin of the Golden Calf, He supplicated G-d to annul the decree to the point that he became ill from the intensity of his prayer. This is alluded to in the verse, "*Moshe* pleaded (*vayichal*) before *Hashem*..." The word "*vayichal*" alludes to the fact that *Moshe* became "*choleh* (ill)."

*Gemara*: If a *Torah Sage* is ill one has the obligation to pray for his recovery. Just as *Moshe* prayed to G-d for the annulment of the decree to the point of becoming ill, so too must one pray for the recovery of the *Torah Sage*. One is obligated to internalize the tragic state of the *Torah Sage* who is not well. It is only in the merit of the *Torah Sages* that the Jewish people continue to exist.

*Yirmiyahu* the Prophet: "If not for My Covenant being in affect day and night, the extent of heaven and earth would not exist." This is referring to the continuous

obligation of *Torah* study. If *Torah* were not to be studied, even for a moment, existence would cease to be. When the *Torah* Sage is compromised with an illness, his recovery is crucial to existence because the world stands in his merit. Therefore, one must internalize the pain and grief of the *Torah* Sage as his own to understand and appreciate the gravity of the moment. The Jewish people needed to grieve with *Aaron* and his sons to feel their pain in order to appreciate their value as it pertains to existence.

*Chofetz Chaim*: The infinite value of *Torah* Scholars can be explained with an allegory. There was a king who had a steamboat built for himself that was the equivalent of a palace. He prided himself in the beauty and elegance of the steamboat that moved so easily over the water. One day the king asked the captain if he could show him how it was powered. The captain brought the king to the lower part of the boat where he saw how coal was being shoveled into the furnaces that caused the steam that powered the turbines. The walls of the lower deck were completely covered in the black soot of the coal and the men who worked to fuel the furnaces were similarly encrusted in grime.

When the king saw the degree of filth that was in his palace, he became outraged. How could he allow such squalor to exist within his palace? He thus ordered the captain to break down the walls of the engine room to remove the filth from the walls. Although the captain understood that by doing so the ship would sink, he had no choice but to follow the command of his master. The ship immediately sank because the king did not understand the value of that aspect and function of the ship.

Similarly, if one walks into a study hall or synagogue and notices people engaged in *Torah* study who may appear to be undernourished or impoverished and are not attractive physical beings because of their needy state, one should not look upon them in a condescending manner. It is these people who are the most vital to existence because their *Torah* study maintains existence. One must appreciate their true value and look beyond superficial appearances. If the *Torah* Sage is pained or is in need, one must sense that pain to either alleviate or to indicate that this individual is of great value and importance.

## **Dietary Laws, a Confirmation of the Eternity of the Jewish People**

*Torah*: “*Hashem* spoke to *Moshe* and *Aaron*, saying to them: Speak to the Children of Israel saying: These are the creatures that you may eat from among the animals that are upon the earth.”

*Midrash* citing *Chavakuk*, “G-d had stood and measured/evaluated the Earth. He saw and released the nations.’ What is the meaning of ‘G-d measured the Earth?’ When G-d wanted to give the *Torah* to the Jewish people, He evaluated the Earth (existence) and decided to give it in the desert in a public setting. Initially, when the nations of the world rejected the *Torah*, G-d was going to cause the world to revert back to a state of water (preexistence). However, when the Jewish people accepted the *Torah* unequivocally with their declaration of ‘*Naaseh V’nishma* – we will do and we will listen’ existence continued. It was only when the Jewish people accepted the *Torah* that the world became tranquil. As it states in Psalms, ‘The Earth was fearful and tranquil.’

When the Jewish people accepted the *Torah*, the nations of the world received their release. They were permitted to eat the forbidden contaminated species such as rodents. To what is this analogous? To a doctor who evaluated two patients. One was deathly ill with no chance of recovery. The doctor told his relatives that he should not be denied anything that he wants to eat. Afterwards, the doctor evaluated the second patient and believed that he would recover. He then instructed the family that he was only permitted to eat certain foods; however, other foods must be withheld from him so that he should be able to recover.

After hearing the doctor’s prescription to each of the patients, the doctor was asked, ‘Why do you differentiate between the two patients regarding what they are permitted to eat?’ The doctor responded, ‘Regarding the patient who is deathly ill, since he will die in any case, there is no reason to deny him anything that he desires. However, the patient, who has relevance to life, must adhere to a strict dietary regiment if he is to live.’

Similarly, G-d permitted to the nations of the world to eat anything that they desired. However, since the Jewish people have relevance to eternity, they

need to maintain their spiritual purity and sanctity. Therefore, G-d forbade them from eating the species that would contaminate them. As it states, "You who cling to *Hashem*, your G-d, you are all alive today."

Initially G-d had offered the *Torah* to the nations of the world. Each nation rejected it for their own reason. However, when the Jewish people chose to accept the *Torah* they did so unequivocally with their declaration of "*Naaseh V'nishma*." Had the Jewish people not done so, the world would have reverted back to a state of preexistence. Because of their acceptance of the *Torah*, the world assumed a state of permanency. G-d chose to give the *Torah* to the Jewish people in a public setting which was Mt. Sinai. Why did G-d choose to give the *Torah* in the desert, which is a location that is the ultimate setting of desolation?

*Gemara* in Tractate *Nedarim*: The reason G-d chose to give the *Torah* to the Jewish people in the desert was because it is a location that is owner-less and barren. Just as the desert has no innate value, so too must the one who wants to acquire *Torah* render himself owner-less like the desert (humble). It is only through one's self-negation does one become a proper receptacle for the processing and retention of *Torah*. It seems from the *Midrash* that G-d chose to give the *Torah* in the desert because He wanted to give It in a public setting that had no distractions. Because if there were any distractions at the moment of the giving of the *Torah*, one would not be able to appreciate the profundity of the event.

G-d wanted the *Torah* to be given in the most public setting because He wanted the nations of the world to understand that the world only exists in the merit of the Jewish people. It was only because the Jewish people embraced the *Torah*, unequivocally, that existence has any value. The nations of the world needed to appreciate and understand that they owe their very existence to the Jewish people, who dedicated themselves to G-d.

*Chazal*: There was a negative aspect to receiving the *Torah* in a public setting.

*Midrash*: The reason the Jewish people were vulnerable to the Sin of the Golden Calf was because the nations of the world had given them an "evil eye," which was rooted in envy. Had they received the *Torah* in a more private setting, they would not been minimized by the envy of the nations. Although the Jewish people were put in a compromised position, as a result of the public

setting, G-d chose to give the *Torah* before the eyes of the world, so that they could understand that their existence is only due to the Jewish people receiving the *Torah* at Sinai.

## The Invaluable Gift of Mitzvos

*Torah*: "...These are the creatures that you may eat from among the animals that are upon the earth."

*Midrash* citing Psalms: "'To fulfill Your Will My G-d I do desire and Your *Torah* is in my innards...' What is the meaning of this? The *Torah* permeates every aspect of our existence. How fortunate are the Jewish people because each one of their limbs has relevance to a *mitzvah*. There are 248 limbs in the human body and G-d has given the Jewish people 248 Positive Commandments (to correspond to them). And therefore we say every day (*asher yatzar*) 'Blessed are You, *Hashem*, our G-d King of the Universe, Who fashioned man with wisdom and created within him many openings and cavities (*chalulim chalulim*) ...' The numerical equivalent of '*chalulim chalulim*' is 248, which corresponds to the number of limbs in the human body. This is the meaning of the words of King David in Psalms, 'Your *Torah* is in my innards...'"

*Reb Chaim Vital*: Just as the human body is comprised of 248 limbs, the Jewish soul is comprised of 248 parts. There is a correlation between the soul and the body. When one fulfills any of the 248 Positive Commandments it perfects the corresponding aspect of the soul. In addition, the physical limb that corresponds to that *mitzvah* is also spiritualized and elevated. Just as the *mitzvos* nurture the soul, so too is the body spiritualized.

*Gemara* in Tractate *Berachos*: "Just as G-d permeates all existence, so too does the soul permeate every aspect of the body." The soul was created to give life and meaning to every aspect of the human being.

*Chazal*: Contained within the three paragraphs of the *Shema*, which is the acceptance of the yoke of heaven/dominion of G-d, are 245 words. If one prays within the context of a quorum, the one leading the service concludes the *Shema* with three words which complete the number 248 (*Hashem Elokechem Emes*). If one prays privately, one introduces the *Shema* with three words (*Kail Melech Neeman*) in order to bring



the number of words in the *Shema* to 248. When one declares his belief in G-d, he is accepting the yoke of heaven upon every aspect of his physical being.

The human being, regarding his make up and inclination, is the equivalent of an animal, apart from his intellect. All of Man's tendencies and drives are rooted within the animal. Man was endowed with intellect in order for him to take control of his physicality and spiritualize it through the performance of the *mitzvos*. It is only through the study of *Torah* and performance of *mitzvos* that man can subordinate his physical inclinations and invest them in spiritual endeavors.

*Gemara* in Tractate *Shabbos*: "If the earlier ones are classified as angels, then we can be classified as human beings. However, if the earlier ones are classified as 'human beings' then our classification will be donkeys – and not even the equivalent of the donkey of *Reb Pinchas Ben Yair*."

*Gemara*: The donkey of *Reb Pinchas* had been stolen and the thieves who had stolen it had attempted to feed it untithed grain. The donkey refused to eat it because it was a forbidden entity. Although the donkey is an unintelligible creature, because it was the possession of *Reb Pinchas Ben Yair*, who was a uniquely devout and holy person, the donkey assumed a spiritualized state. Thus, instinctively it would not partake of anything that was contrary to the *Torah*. Man, in terms of his physical make up, is no different from the donkey.

*Maharal*: The Hebrew word "chamor – donkey" is derived from the word "chomer – material." Just as the essence of the donkey is material, and thus epitomizes the animal, man in his physical make up is no different. The only way one can dominate and dictate the physical is to assume a spiritual persona. In order to facilitate this, G-d endowed the Jewish people with *Torah* and *mitzvos* that correspond to every aspect of their physicality to bring about this spiritual metamorphosis. When one transgresses with a certain part of his body, it becomes compromised.

Conversely, when one performs a *mitzvah* with that part of the body, it becomes spiritualized and thus elevated. Therefore, if one were to steal with his hand, besides the need to correct the sin that had been perpetrated, one should perform acts of kindness in order to spiritualize the limb that had been diminished. If one were to gaze upon something that is inappropriate, he should gaze upon the words of the *Torah* in order to spiritualize his eyes. This concept is mentioned in *The Gates of Repentance*, authored by *Rebbeinu Yonah*.

*Gemara* in Tractate *Sukkah*: "I (G-d) created the evil inclination. I created *Torah* as its antidote." When one engages in *Torah* study and actualizes it through the performance of *mitzvos*, one incapacitates and subordinates the evil inclination and brings about a spiritualization of himself.



**Yad Avraham Institute**