

# GOOD SHABBOS

## CLAREMONT WYNBERG



**GOOD SHABBOS # 813 – PARSHAT VAYIKRAH / HACHODESH\***

**SHABBAT ROSH CHODESH**

**16/17 MARCH 2018 – 1 NISSAN 5778**

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### VAYIKRAH – A CLOSED BOOK?

This Shabbat is one of those rare occasions when three *sifrei torah* are removed from the Ark. From the first we read the opening parsha of the book of Vayikrah; from the second we read the section dealing with Rosh Chodesh and from the third, the passage describing the preparations for the original Pesach prior to the exodus from Egypt. At first glance these readings seem to have very little in common. Each is from a different book of the Torah: Vayikrah, Bamidbar and Shmot respectively. They appear to have come together merely as a quirk of the calendar. But there is a common theme in each of the passages, namely, *korbanot* (sacrifices).

Vayikrah introduces the various categories of sacrifices and the fauna and flora that may be used for *korbanot*. The Rosh Chodesh reading (Bamidbar 28:9-15) details the additional sacrifices (*mussafim*) that were brought on Shabbat and the New Moon. The reading for *parshat hachodesh* (Shmot 12) describes the Pesach offering that was brought to the Temple in Jerusalem every year on the eve of the Passover festival. Each of these *korbanot* had their own unique laws regarding what animal was to be offered; how the sacrifice was to be prepared and who (if anyone) would consume the flesh.

I have a particular affinity to the laws of sacrifices. In my first year of yeshiva, my *chavruta* (learning partner) suggested that we use some of the lunch break to study Mishna. Both of us were not educated at Torah schools and we had a lot to catch up. There are six orders of the Mishna and each order is in turn broken up into *masechtot* (tractates). It would have made a lot of sense to begin our extra learning session with the first order, the one that deals with the laws of agriculture and prayers (*Zeraim*). But for some reason that I do not quite recall, we began with the fifth order, *Seder Kodashim*, the section dealing with the sacrifices and the Temple service. There are 11 tractates in this order. Other than one, tractate *Chullin*, which discusses the laws of kashrut, all of the tractates of this order describe practices that the Jewish people have not observed since the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. For several months we struggled through the archaic language and the foreign logic of this section of the Mishna until we were able to successfully complete the entire order. We hosted a little *siyum* (celebration on completing a portion of learning) to which we invited the Rosh Yeshiva and the other members of the faculty and we felt rather pleased with ourselves! I recently studied one tractate from that same order, using the book I had used all those years ago, and I was transported back to those afternoon sessions.

Perhaps the greatest benefits we received from our learning was an appreciation of these 'outdated' laws and a love for the book of Vayikrah. Many Jews, including the more observant, have a strange relationship with Leviticus in general and the sections dealing with the Temple in particular. They find it dry, technical and completely irrelevant. They cannot make head or tail of the incredibly intricate procedures in the Temple. They do not understand why one sacrifice is consumed by the Kohanim while another is burned entirely on the altar. They throw up their hands in frustration when they get to the passages about *tumah* and *tahara*, the esoteric laws of ritual purity and impurity. They know full well that these laws are Divine but they simply cannot relate to them because they are not part of their daily lives. They secretly wish for the book of Bamidbar to start as soon as possible so that they can get back to the narrative of the Torah. I imagine I would have felt the same way had I not broken my head over those many chapters early in my yeshiva career. I do not pretend to know the reasons for all of the sacrifices or to understand the details of every offering, but I am able to navigate the book of Vayikrah with a fair degree of confidence. Moreover, I enjoy this part of the Torah because the learning is "for its own sake" (*lishma*) rather than for a practical outcome.

The Sages of the Talmud (Megilla 31b) predicted many centuries ago that Jews would feel a sense of disconnect with these laws. They recorded a dialogue between Hashem and Avraham: "And he (Avraham) said, "Hashem, God, whereby shall I know that I am to inherit it [the Land of Israel]?" (Bereishit 15:8) Avraham said before the Holy One, blessed is He: "Master of the universe! Perhaps, Heaven forbid, Israel will sin before You and You will do to them as You did to the generation of the flood and the generation of the Dispersion." He said, "No!" Avraham said before God, "Master of the universe, whereby shall I know?" God said to Avraham (ibid verse 16), "Bring Me three calves", etc. [i.e. Israel will find atonement through the sacrifices]. Avraham said before God, "Master of the universe! That is fine when the Holy Temple will be in existence but in the times when the Holy Temple will not be in existence, what will be with them?" God said to Avraham, "I have already established for them the scriptural section of the offerings. Whenever they read from them I will consider it as if they were bringing an offering before Me and I will forgive them all their sins."

Avraham foresaw a time when the Temple would lay in ruins and the sacrificial order would be abolished. He wondered how it would be possible for the Jewish people to achieve atonement for their sins without the requisite sacrifices. Hashem answered him by stating that in such times Jews must study the passages dealing with the *korbanot* and that such study will be considered by Him as action! The Sages picked up on this and inserted a great deal of information about the sacrifices into the daily, Shabbat and festival prayer services. Every *mussaf* service lists in detail the offerings that were brought on that day; the Shabbat service includes a recipe for the incense that was offered twice daily; the morning service ends with the psalm that was sung by the Levites on that day of the week and the Yom Kippur *mussaf* service includes a lengthy and detailed description of the Temple service on that holy day. There are numerous other references to the Temple service in the siddur and machzor. All of these are included so that this important aspect of Torah wisdom should not remain foreign to us.

If a particular area of Judaism appears irrelevant or difficult to grasp, the correct approach is not to avoid it but to embrace it. The more one learns about a certain topic, the more one uncovers and the more that subject comes to life. The Temple and the sacrifices might have come to an abrupt end almost two thousand years ago, but through studying them they come alive and reveal new facets of Judaism that one never thought existed.

Shabbat Shalom  
**Rabbi Liebenberg**

#### **\*PARSHAT HACHODESH**

This Shabbat we read the last of four special *parshiyot* (portions) that began with *Parshat Shekalim* on the Shabbat preceding Rosh Chodesh Adar. The *parshah* is called *Hachodesh*, literally "the month," and it describes the mitzvah to sanctify the new moon, in particular the month of Nissan, and the preparation for the Seder and the exodus from Egypt. It is certainly appropriate to read this section now as the month of Nissan begins so that we will begin our Pesach preparations in earnest.

THE HAFTORAH WILL BE READ BY SHIMPA MOCH

**SHABBAT TIMES**

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 17:46        | Earliest candle lighting time*                           |
| <b>18:15</b> | Mincha followed by Kabbalat Shabbat                      |
| <b>18:30</b> | Children's Service                                       |
| 19:03        | Sunset   |
| 09:00        | Shacharit followed by Kiddush Bracha                     |
| 09:50        | Latest time to fulfil the mitzvah of reading the Shemah^ |
| 10:00-11:30  | Children's Service                                       |
| 18:00        | Mincha followed by Seudah Shlishit                       |
| 19:25        | Maariv   |
| 19:36        | Shabbat ends   |

**CURRENT WEEKDAY TIMES**

**SHACHARIT**

Mondays and Thursdays - 06:30  
 Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays - 06:40  
 Sundays and public holidays - 08:00  
**Wednesday 21 March (public holiday) - 08:00**

**MINCHA AND MAARIV**

Sundays to Thursdays - **18:00**  
 Fridays - **18:15**

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE FOR LADIES:**

During the summer months we will indicate the earliest time one can light candles (one and a quarter *halachic* hours before sunset). The latest time corresponds to the time that the community recites Psalm 92 after L'cha Dodi (approx 30 minutes after the start of Mincha).

^Please recite all three paragraphs of the Shemah before this time.

**LEARNING @ CWHC**

For details of all shiurim contact the office at [info@clarewynshul.co.za](mailto:info@clarewynshul.co.za)

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|---|--|
| <b>DAILY:</b><br><b>Gemora Shiur (Tractate Shabbat)</b><br><b>Between Mincha and Maariv</b> | Following Shacharit Mondays to Fridays.<br>A short halachic shiur with an opportunity to "Ask The Rabbi."  |
| <b>MONDAY:</b><br><b>09:00-10:00</b><br><b>20:00</b>  | The Torah Challenge with Rebbetzin Lee.<br>There will not be a Parsha shiur for gentlemen until after Pesach.  |
| <b>TUESDAY:</b><br><b>13:00-14:00</b>   | Lunchtime shiur at the offices of Berk Enterprises.  |
| <b>WEDNESDAY:</b><br><b>09:00-10:00</b><br><br><b>20:00-22:00</b><br><br><b>20:00</b>       | There will not be a Pirkei Avot - Ethics of our Fathers shiur with Rebbetzin Lee this week due to the public holiday. The shiur will resume 16 May.<br>Yeshiva learning sessions. Contact Vanessa on 021 439-9867 / 083 2866 591 / <a href="mailto:office@yeshiva.org.za">office@yeshiva.org.za</a><br>There will not be a <i>Shaarei Teshuvah</i> shiur for ladies with Rabbi Liebenberg. The shiur will resume after Pesach. |
| <b>THURSDAY:</b><br><b>10:00-11:00</b><br><br><b>11:00-11:30</b>                            | There will not be a Ladies Parsha shiur with Rabbi Liebenberg. The shiur will resume after Pesach.<br>Ladies Tehillim group.   |
| <b>SHABBAT:</b>   | Shiur following the Kiddush Bracha. Esther Wein will speak on the topic, "What constitutes a great person?"  |

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE FROM SHUL PREMISES ON SHABBAT

## SOCIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### WELCOME

Heshy and Esther Wein. Esther is one of the international speakers at Sinai Indaba VII.

### TZAITCHEM L'SHALOM

Sydney Kaufmann who will be spending time in Johannesburg with family.

Leon and Eunice Movsowitz who are going to Israel for their granddaughter's wedding.

### MAZAL TOV

Abraham and Rhona Neimann on the birth of a grandson.

Rael and Lindy Salkinder on the birth of a daughter, granddaughter to Paul and Cheryl Salkinder and Alan and Angie Alperstein.

Brian and Gail Berman who will be celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on Monday 19 March.

Sydney Kaufmann on the bar mitzvah of his great nephew, Jaden Mailich, in Johannesburg.

### Birthdays

#### Friday 16 March

Ross Horwitz, Arlene Kassel

#### Sunday 18 March

Rachel Ginsberg, Adam Merris, Grace Spitzglass, Lucy Zeleznik

#### Monday 19 March

Lynette Jaffe

#### Tuesday 20 March

Gerald Kark, David Miller, Max Ospovat, Benjamin Weiner

#### Wednesday 21 March

Lorraine Price

#### Thursday 22 March

Mikhail Todes

### Anniversaries

#### Saturday 17 March

Hymie and Shirley Kaplan

#### Monday 19 March

Brian and Gail Berman

#### Tuesday 20 March

Richard and Cheryl Ospovat

### RABBI LIEBENBERG'S BOOK

Rabbi's book "Wisdom From the South" is available from the shul office – R395 per copy.

### YESHIVA OF CAPE TOWN BACHURIM

If you are interested in learning with the bachurim on Wednesday evenings, please contact the shul office.

### SPONSORSHIPS

The **Kiddush Bracha** is co-sponsored by

- Selwyn and Andrea Schiff in honour of the yahrzeit of Selwyn's late mother, Sarah bat Avraham Schiff.
- CWEST to welcome Esther and Heshy Wein.

The **Ice Cream Table** is sponsored by

Golda Sher and Paula Baskir in celebration of their 85<sup>th</sup> birthdays.

### UPCOMING SPONSORSHIPS

#### 24 March Kiddush Bracha:

Lance and Heather Talberg

#### 7 April

Rabbi, Lee and Naomi will be sponsoring the Kiddush Bracha on the last day of Pesach, Shabbat 7 April, in celebration of Chani Merryl's bat mitzvah. All welcome.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Contact the shul office for details of upcoming events and programmes.

### SECURITY

Thank you to our team who are on duty this week.

*Shabbat Shalom*