

Pulse OF Emunah

ANI
MAAMIN
Foundation

ISSUE # 361 | PARSHAS TZAV

FRIDAY MARCH 29TH, 2024 | 19 ADAR II, 5784

life

LESSONS

LOOKING ELSEWHERE

What we know about Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's *gadlus* in Torah is just the tip of the iceberg. Rabbi Yerachmiel Fried, *rosh kollel* and the author of *sefarim* based on Rav Shlomo Zalman's *psakim*, witnessed a small window into his greatness.

Often, when Rabbi Fried would ask him a *shailah* or give him something to look over, Rav Shlomo Zalman would direct him to look at a certain Magen Avraham, one of the main *mefarshim* in Shulchan Aruch.

But when Rabbi Fried would go look at the Magen Avraham, it would seem to have nothing to do with the topic. Rabbi Fried did not understand. He looked at the words again and again. What was going on?

Finally, at the end of the Magen Avraham, he saw the words *ayin sham*, see another source. Rabbi Fried look at the other Magen Avraham or whatever source he was being directed to. There, he would find another "*ayin sham*." After a few *ayin shams*, a picture was painted that applied perfectly to what he had been discussing with Rav Shlomo Zalman.

Rabbi Fried was shocked. Rav Shlomo Zalman had at his fingertips not only the words of the Magen Avraham in the four *chelkei Shulchan Aruch*, but also all of the *ayin shams* of the Magen Avraham, and everywhere the *mefarshim* could send the reader.

He had all that on instant recall!

Courtesy of Agudas Yisroel of America



gem

OF THE WEEK

THE CLARITY OF DAY

By Rabbi Moshe Pogrow

The laws of *korbanos* conclude with the words "*Zos hatorah la'olah, lamincha ... asher tziva Hashem es Moshe b'Har Sinai, b'yom tzavoso es Bnei Yisrael lehakriv es korbaneihem laHashem b'midbar Sinai.*" These *pesukim* emphasize the place where Jews brought their first offerings, as well as the time when they received the mitzvah. It was *yom tzavoso*—it was day when they received this command.

Similarly, we find that the Torah distinguishes between the prophecy of Moshe, who received the Torah, and that of the other prophets: *peh el peh adaber bo, u'mareh v'lo b'chidos*. G-d did not speak to Moshe in the twilight of a dream. Rather, the Word that came to Moshe came to the lucid intellect of an aware man. And Moshe relayed that Word to the aware people. Similarly, *halacha* says, a person should bring a *korban* with a clear mind and full awareness; with thoughtfulness and free choice should he dedicate himself to fulfilling the Torah. *Asher tziva Hashem es Moshe b'Har Sinai b'yom tzavoso*: all *hakrava*, drawing closer to Hashem through an offering, is fit only by day.

continued on reverse side

powerful
PRAYER

BIRKAS HAMAZON:
JOYOUS GRATITUDE



The fourth *bracha* of Birkas Hamazon was introduced by Rabban Gamliel in Yavneh. The occasion was the permission granted by the Romans to bury the dead of Beitar. In the heroic but futile Bar Kochva revolt, thousands were massacred at the fortress of Beitar. Hadrian, the Roman emperor, prohibited their burial. Thus, their corpses were left lying in the fields around Beitar for years. When permission was granted at long last to bury them, the *chachamim* uttered the blessing "*Hatov vehameitiv*." The *bracha* was joined to Birkas Hamazon because it is a prayer that is spoken in joyous gratitude.

Adapted from World of Prayer by Rabbi Elie Munk

To sponsor a weekly newsletter for \$100,
please email amfmainoffice@gmail.com

CHUKIM: THE MITZVAH MYSTERIES

By Rabbi Dovid Sapirman, Dean, Ani Maamin Foundation

Some people experience discomfort about *chukim*, the *mitzvos* for which we know no reason. After all, they say, how can I be expected to keep something I don't understand? This question touches on our fundamental beliefs. The foundation of our faith is belief in our *mesorah*: that Am Yisrael stood at Har Sinai and experienced a revelation. Our lives as Jews revolve around this belief.

Most people who go to the doctor and get a prescription have no idea what is in the medicine. We gaze at hundreds of bottles on the pharmacy shelves, knowing that only one of them is right for us. Why? We don't know. We rely on the doctor's expertise. So too with the *mitzvos*. We don't know why something works, but we rely on the One Who created us and knows what is good for us.

The mitzvah of *parah adumah* is a classic *chok*, but it is more mysterious than even other *chukim*. Everyone involved in producing the *parah adumah* becomes *tamei*, while the one sprinkled with its ashes is *tahor*—a seeming contradiction, but we do it because of Hashem's command. Rashi tells us that "the Satan [our own inner cynicism] and the nations of the world taunt us, saying, 'What is this mitzvah, and what reason is there for it?' Therefore the Torah wrote '*zos chukas hatorah*.' It is a decree from [Hashem], and you have no permission to have second thoughts."

Shlomo Hamelech writes in Koheles, "I said 'I will be wise,' but it is far from me." The *chachamim* tell us that he was referring to the *parah adumah*. Shlomo, with his great wisdom, was unable to deduce the reason for it. About this and similar mysteries Hashem says, "You don't have to use your judgment to decide whether it makes sense. Rely on My judgment. This decree comes from Me."

There is a reason for every *chok*—but those reasons are known to Hashem. We are simply missing information. If there had been a *chok* to cook fresh milk before drinking it, every Jewish home for centuries would have had a special milk mitzvah pot. We would make a special *bracha* on cooking milk. We might question it—until after 3,000 years, a French chemist would discover that raw milk contains harmful bacteria that are destroyed by cooking. Suddenly every civilized country mandates pasteurization, and a *chok* is no longer a *chok*.

The Torah warns us to "guard" the *chukim*. Rambam explains that this means we should not allow ourselves to think any less of the *chukim* just because we don't understand them, just as we respect "do not steal" and "honor your parents." We must know that every single law of the Torah, even the most mysterious, has a reason, because it is "a decree from before Hashem, and you have no permission to have second thoughts."

Night, *laila*, is the time when things are commingled, when man gives himself up to physical forces. Hence, night brings a pagan man close to his gods. At night, he senses their power, as he is held in it like all the other creatures. During the day, however, man walks upright, aware of himself and subduing the world. To the pagan mind, day is the time of man's struggle with the gods.

The Jewish perception is the antithesis of this. Not in the resignation of night does the Jew sense G-d's power. Rather, in clarity of thought, in creative action that conquers worlds, in the upright posture of daytime—in these, he attains closeness to G-d. The light of his intellect, the force of his free will, the creativity of his endeavors—indeed, the entirety of his personality as it stands tall throughout the day—all these were given to him by the grace of the Creator.

G-d has granted man a share of His infinite intellect, of His free will, of His creative Power. G-d has raised man above the bonds of physicality, stood him upright, and made him master of the world—so that he may serve G-d in it. In the very carrying out of a day's work, a man fulfills the Will of G-d.

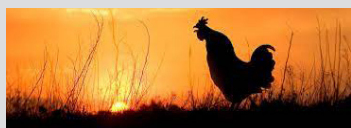
To pagans, the day is a struggle of mortals against the power of gods. To the Jew, day means serving G-d, and through His world he brings G-d satisfaction.

Based on the commentary of Rav Shmshon Raphael Hirsch zt"l on Chumash, with permission from the publisher.



wonder WORLD

BIRD BRAINS



Can chickens recognize people?

Chickens may not seem as majestic as eagles or as mysterious as owls. There are more than 20 billion chickens in the world—they outnumber humans! But although they are common, chickens are far from ordinary. Unusually for the animal kingdom, chickens have full color vision. They can also recognize over a hundred different faces of people or animals. Chickens can run up to nine miles per hour, and they bathe by rolling in dirt. Unlike humans, chickens do not sweat. To beat the heat, they pant or flap their wings to cool down. If you see a chicken with its beak open on a hot day, it's not gasping in awe—it's just trying to stay cool. So next time you spot a chicken, take a moment to appreciate these remarkable creatures and their unique place in our world.

Please feel free to take newsletter home to share with your family.

For more information please call (845) 418 2122 or email info@animaamin.org • To subscribe to this newsletter send an email to subscribe@animaamin.org