

Parashah Newsletter

HADAR



PARASHAT VAYIKRA

פְּרַשַׁת וַיִּקְרָא

March 14th - 20th 2021

א - ז ניסן תשפ"א

מה בַּפָּרָשָׁה ◊ Review the Parashah

The *parashah* contains the instructions for bringing the various types of קִרְבָּנוֹת/sacrifices.

- › The **קִרְבַּן עֹלָה/burnt offering** was brought whenever a person chose to bring it voluntarily. It could be brought from cattle, sheep or goats, or birds. The entire sacrifice was burnt on the מִזְבֵּחַ/altar.
- › The **קִרְבַּן מִנְחָה/grain offering** is also brought voluntarily. It is made up of semolina wheat and olive oil with לְבוֹנָה/frankincense added. There are several ways to prepare a מִנְחָה/meal offering including raw, oven-baked in either a thick or thin preparation, fried on a griddle or deep-fried in a pan. A fistful is burnt on the altar and the rest is eaten by the כֹּהֲנִים/priests.
- › The **קִרְבַּן שְׂלָמִים/well-being offering** was brought voluntarily and could be brought from cattle, sheep or goats. The parts of this offering went to God, the כֹּהֲנִים/priests, and the donor (and their family), who ate most of the offering.
- › The **קִרְבַּן חֲטָאת/purification offering** was brought when a person committed a sin גַּבְעָה/inadvertently. It was brought by:
 - › The כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל/high priest
 - › עַדְת יִשְׂרָאֵל/The Jewish community
 - › אֶתְנֵי אֶתְנֵי/Head of Tribe
 - › An individual who sinned
- › In most cases, the person bringing the sin offering doesn't eat the sacrifice, but the כֹּהֲנִים/priests may eat it. In the case of the Purification Offerings of the כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל/high priest and the entire community, the offering is burnt outside of the camp.
- › **קִרְבַּן עוֹלָה יוֹרֵד/Graduated purification offering** is a sacrifice that depends on how wealthy the person is. קִרְבַּן עוֹלָה יוֹרֵד is brought:
 - › when a person chooses not to testify even though they are a witness;
 - › when a person goes into בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ/the Temple or ate food that required ritual purity while (not knowing that they were) ritually impure;
 - › when a person takes an oath and violates their oath unintentionally.
- › There are three types of קִרְבַּן אָשָׁם/Guilt offering:
 - › **אָשָׁם מְעִילָה**—accidentally eating or using things that belong to בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ/the Temple;
 - › **אָשָׁם תְּלוּי**—situations where a person is worried they might have sinned, but they can't figure out whether they actually did or not;
 - › **אָשָׁם גְּזוּלוֹת**—when a person lies or acts dishonestly in matters of another person's property or money.



שאלות לדין ומחשבה ♦ Discussion Questions

- › In Hebrew, the root for קָרַבַּן/sacrifice and קָרְבָּה/closeness is identical (ק.ר.ב). How might sacrifices and closeness be connected?
- › Why do you think the Torah requires a person to bring a sacrifice after harming another person? Take the case of אֲשַׁם גְּזֵלוֹת, the guilt offering brought by a person who lies or acts dishonestly in matters of another person's property or money. Clearly, in order to fix the situation, the person needs to apologize and/or return the money or object. Why do they also need to bring a sacrifice to God, if the one they wronged was another person? What's God got to do with it?

מה זה? ♦ Tell me more about this!



לְבָנָה /FRANKINCENSE

לְבָנָה/frankincense is a scented resin that Boswellia trees produce. These gnarled and knotty looking trees grow in the areas of Somalia, Ethiopia, and the Arabian Peninsula. When the bark of the tree is cut, the resin drips out and can be collected. Over time, the liquid לְבָנָה/frankincense hardens and crystalizes into solid pieces that are used for their scent, natural medicines, and essential oils.



The לְבָנָה/frankincense was used in בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ/the Temple with the מִנְחָה קָרְבָּן מִגֵּזֵלוֹת/grain offering, and it was also one of the components of קְטֹרֶת הַסַּמִּים/the incense offered in the tabernacle and in בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ.

רָגַע נֶשֶׁל עֵבְרִית ♦ A Moment of Hebrew

ויקרא ב:ב

וְהִבִּיֵּאֵה אֶל-בְּנֵי אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֲנִים וְקִמַּץ מִשֶּׁם מְלֵא קִמְצוֹ מִסֻּלְתָּהּ וּמִשְׁמָנָה
עַל כָּל-לִבְנֹתָהּ וְהִקְטִיר הַכֹּהֵן אֶת-אֲזָבָתָהּ הַמְזֻבָּחָה אִשָּׁה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה:

תלמוד בבלי ברכות ג:
אין הקמץ משביע את הארי

Berakhot 3b

"A handful doesn't satisfy a lion" =
The available resources are
insufficient to reach the goal, the
demand is greater
than the supply.

לקמוץ (שׂרַשׁ ק.מ.צ.)

To hold a handful of something
To clench, or close tightly

קמציץ

A pinch, a smidgen, an amount you take
with just the tips of your fingers

קמצינות

Stinginess

הֶלְכָה ♦ Halakhah

DOES YOUR FAMILY HAVE SALT ON THE TABLE ON SHABBAT?
DO YOU KNOW WHY AND WHERE THAT COMES FROM?

Summary of Talmud Bavli Berakhot 40a

Rabbah b. Shmuel says in the name of **R. Hiyya** that one shouldn't break bread until one has *something* to eat it with (in this case: salt or a dip like hummus). We don't normally eat bread by itself, we eat it with something (olive oil, cheese, cold cuts etc.), so it isn't proper to say a blessing and start eating it without the whole dish in front of you. But **Rabbah b. Shmuel** himself once broke bread right away, without waiting for anything else to be brought to him! He explains that this was because he was planning on eating the bread by itself.

תלמוד בבלי ברכות מ.

אמר רבא בר שמואל משום רבי חייא:
אין הבוצע רשאי לבצוע עד שיביאו
מלח או לפתו לפני כל אחד ואחד.
רבא בר שמואל אקלע לבי ריש גלותא,
אפיקו ליה ריפתא, ובצע להדיא. אמרו
ליה: הדר מר משמעתייה? אמר להו:
לית דין צריך בשש.
(רש"י: כלומר פת נקזה היא זו ואין
צריכה לפתו).

However, **Tosafot** in medieval France report that **ואין אָנוּ רָגִילִין לְהַבִּיאַ עַל הַשֻּׁלְחָן לֹא מֶלַח וְלֹא לִפְתּוֹן**—they never had salt on their table, and just ate their bread plain! On the other hand, they report a tradition of **R. Menahem** who used to put salt out on the table.

Summary of Tosafot Berakhot 40a

R. Menahem was worried about the minutes of quiet at the table while everyone was waiting for others to wash their hands and sit down. This was a moment without *mitzvot* and potentially fraught with danger! The salt—because it is part of a covenant with God (the *בְּרִית מֶלַח*/covenant of salt)—would protect people during this time until they began reciting blessings over food.

תוספות ברכות מ. ד"ה הבא

רבינו מנחם היה מדקדק מאד להביא מלח על השלחן כדאיתא במדרש כשישראל יושבים על השלחן וממתניין זה את זה עד שיטלו ידיהם והם בלא מצות השטן מקטרג עליהם וברית מלח מגן עליהם.

That very salt covenant comes from this week's *parashah*! The torah states that all sacrifices should be seasoned with salt:

Vayikra 2:13

You should season every grain offering with salt; you shouldn't leave out the salt of your covenant with God from your grain offering; you must include salt in all of your offerings.

ויקרא ב, יג

וְכָל קֶרְבֵּן מִנְחֹתָי בַמֶּלַח תִּמְלַח וְלֹא תִשָּׁבֵית מֶלַח בְּרִית אֱ-לֹהֶיךָ מֵעַל מִנְחֹתָי עַל כָּל קֶרְבְּנֶיךָ תִּקְרִיב מֶלַח.

The connection between the table at which one eats a meal and the altar on which sacrifices were brought is mentioned later on. The Rema (Rabbi Moshe Isserles) states in the *Shulhan Arukh* "מְצוּהָ לְהַבִּיאַ עַל כָּל שֻׁלְחָן מֶלַח קִדְּם שְׂיִבְצוּעַ בִּי הַשֻּׁלְחָן דּוֹמֶה לְמִזְבֵּחַ" "It is a *mitzvah* to place salt on any table on which one is having a meal *before* cutting the bread, because the table is like an altar" (שולחן ערוך קטז, ה), referring to this same verse from Vayikra.

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR OUR TABLES TO BE LIKE ALTARS?

BESIDES KEEPING A SALT SHAKER, HOW ELSE ARE WE SUPPOSED TO VIEW AND TREAT OUR TABLES AND MEALS?

שאלות השבוע Quiz

ANSWERS ON PAGE 12

1. There is a letter written smaller than all the others. What is it?
2. What spice is part of a מִנְחַת סֵלֶת/the grain offering made of pure flour?
3. We are told that two things that come from an animal are forbidden to eat. What are they?
4. When the High Priest brings a bull to atone for his own sin, how many times does he sprinkle the blood on the פְּרֹכֶת/the curtain in front of the Ark?
5. When you admit you stole something from someone, what fraction do you need to add on to your repayment?
6. Usually, the meat of a קֹרְבָן/sacrifice is either (a) burned on the מִזְבֵּחַ/altar, (b) eaten by the כֹּהֲנִים/priests, and/or (c) eaten by the person bringing the sacrifice. There are two sacrifices where the meat is burned לְמִחוּץ לַמִּקְדָּשׁ/outside of the Temple. What are they?
7. What words in our *parashah* hint at the holidays of Pesah and Shavuot?
8. There is a word that feels out of place in Vayikra 4:8. What is it? (Hint: Compare this verse to verses 3:3, 3:9 and 3:14).
9. What three categories of animal can be brought as an עֹלָה?
10. Which sacrifices require a male animal, which a female animal, and for which does it not matter? Check all of them!
11. There are three times when three words in a row begin with the letter *aleph*. What are they?
12. The root מ.ש.נ. is used in 12 different forms! What are they all?



פְּרָשְׁנוֹת ♦ Commentary

Our *parashah* begins with the words, וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהֵי-מֹשֶׁה / "God called to Moshe" followed by וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֵלָיו / "God spoke to him." Doesn't this seem repetitive?

Rashi on Vayikra 1:1

God called to Moshe—Each utterance, speech and command was preceded with a call, in the language of affection, the same language the angels use: "And they called one to the other..."

רש"י ויקרא א:א

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהֵי-מֹשֶׁה - לְכָל דְּבָרוֹת וּלְכָל אֲמִירוֹת
וּלְכָל צְוִיִּים קֹדְמָה קְרִיאָה, לְשׁוֹן חֶבְהָ, לְשׁוֹן
שְׂמֵלֵאכִי הַשָּׂרָת מִשְׁתַּמְשִׁין בּוֹ, שְׁנֵאמַר (ישעיה
ו ג) וַיִּקְרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה...

Rashi (France, 11th century) thinks the word וַיִּקְרָא at the beginning of our *parashah* is like someone saying, "Hi there, could I tell you something?" Each time God spoke to Moshe, according to Rashi, God would gently call out to Moshe to make it a more comfortable and loving conversation. Just like we describe the angels in the Kedushah calling to each other as they prepare to sing together to God with the phrase וַיִּקְרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה וַאֲמַר "And they called to one another."

Rashbam on Vayikra 1:1

God called Moshe from the tent of meeting because it is written at the end of Sefer Shemot that "Moshe was unable to enter the Tent of Meeting [because the cloud of God's glory was dwelling on it]." Therefore, the Holy Blessed One called him from within the Tent of Meeting.

רשב"ם ויקרא (א:א)

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהֵי-מֹשֶׁה - לְפִי שְׂכַתּוֹב לְמַעַל בְּסוּף
הַסִּפֵּר וְלֹא יָכוֹל מֹשֶׁה לָּבֵא אֶל אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְגו',
לְכַד קְרָאָהוּ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מִתּוֹךְ אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד.

Rashbam (Rashi's grandson) suggests something else: If you pay attention to the end of the book of Shemot, you see that God moves into the מוֹעֵד, אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד, the tent at the center of the מִשְׁכָּן (God's special home in the desert). When God did that, the tent was filled with a cloud so intense that Moshe was unable to go in. So, when God wants to talk to Moshe, there has to be an invitation to come back in. For Rashbam, וַיִּקְרָא is almost like the doctor calling you in when she is ready to see you.



Which makes more sense to you and why?

מִדְרָשׁ ♦ Midrash

There are often gaps in the Torah's telling of the story and there are also phrases that are curious and draw our attention. *Midrash* tries to fill in gaps in the story while also answering questions or resolving difficulties. You can think of *Midrash* as where the text and an idea meet.

Vayikra 2:1

When a person (the word *נֶפֶשׁ/nefesh* literally means life) brings an offering of meal to God, their offering should be of the best flour; they should pour oil over it, and put frankincense on it.

ויקרא ב:א

וְנֶפֶשׁ בִּי־תִקְרִיב קֶרְבַּן מִנְחָה לַה' סֹלֶת
יְהִי קֶרְבָּנוּ וַיִּצַק עָלֶיהָ שֶׁמֶן וְנָתַן עָלֶיהָ
לִבְנָה:

Rashi on Vayikra 2:1

When a person (or "life") brings an offering—The only place that uses the word *נֶפֶשׁ* in the context of voluntary offerings is here, in connection with the meal-offering. Who usually brings a meal-offering? The poor person! The Holy One says, I will regard it for them as though they offered their own life (Menahot 104b).

רש"י שם

וְנֶפֶשׁ בִּי־תִקְרִיב. לֹא נֶאֱמַר נֶפֶשׁ בְּכָל
קֶרְבָּנוֹת נִדְבָה אֲלֵא בַּמִּנְחָה, מִי דָרְבָּו
לְהִתְנַדֵּב מִנְחָה? עֲנִי. אָמַר הַקֹּב"ה,
מַעֲלָה אֲנִי עָלָיו כְּאִלוֹ הַקֶּרֶבֶת נִכְשׁוּ
(מנחות ק"ד):



In the description of the *קֶרְבַּן עֹלָה*/burnt offering, the Torah says *אָדָם בִּי־תִקְרִיב*/when a person brings an offering. But here, Rashi picks up on the unusual use of the word *נֶפֶשׁ*/life here when describing the situation of a person who brings a *קֶרְבַּן מִנְחָה*/meal offering, the cheapest option available to those who want to bring an offering but cannot afford to bring a live animal. According to Rashi, why does the Torah use the word *נֶפֶשׁ*/life rather than *אָדָם*/a person?



Vayikra Rabbah 3:5

There was once a woman who brought an offering of a handful of fine flour to a כֹּהֵן/priest, and the כֹּהֵן/priest embarrassed her, saying "Look at what these women offer up! This offering is so small that there is nothing that can be eaten by the כֹּהֵן! What is there in this small offering that can be offered up on the altar?!" Later on, the כֹּהֵן received a message in a dream, saying, "Do not embarrass her, because it is as if she offered up her very life!"

Based on this, there is a lesson here to be derived by **kal va-homer**. If the expression נִפְשׁוֹ/life, which hints that it is considered as if she offered up her very own life, is written with regard to one who does not actually offer up their life, then surely one who actually offers up a life is considered as if they offered up their very own life!

ויקרא רבה ג, ה

מַעֲשֵׂה בְּאִשָּׁה אַחַת
שֶׁהֵבִיָּאָה קִמְצָ שֵׁל
סֵלֶת, וְהָיָה כְּהוֹ מִבְּזָה
עָלֶיהָ, וְאָמַר, רְאוּ מָה
הוּ מִקְרִיבוֹת, מָה
בְּזָה לְאָכֹל, מָה בְּזָה
לְהַקְרִיב, נִרְאָה לְכַהֵן
בְּחֵלוֹם אֵל תְּבַזֶּה
עָלֶיהָ, כְּאִלּוּ נִפְשָׁה
הִקְרִיבָהּ. וְהָרִי דְבָרִים
קָל וְחֹמֶר, וּמָה אִם מִי
שָׂאִינוּ מִקְרִיב נִפְשׁוֹ
כְּתִיב בּוֹ נִפְשׁוֹ, מִי
שֶׁהוּא מִקְרִיב נִפְשׁוֹ, עַל
אַחַת כְּמָה וְכְמָה כְּאִלּוּ
נִפְשׁוֹ הִקְרִיב.



WHAT'S A KAL VA-HOMER?

A *kal va-homer* is a special kind of argument that compares a "light" (קל) case with a "heavy" (חומר) case. It normally runs like this: "If a thing is true in the light case, then it stands to reason that it should also be true in the heavy case." For example, if you need to wear a jacket when it's 40° fahrenheit, *kal va-homer*/surely you would need to wear one if it's 30° and snowing! Here, the "light" case is the place in the Torah that says נִפְשׁוֹ/life but the person only offers up a grain sacrifice—no נִפְשׁוֹ is lost—while the "heavy" case is the other scenario where someone brings an animal sacrifice—the נִפְשׁוֹ of the animal is lost.





The message the כֹּהֵן/priest receives in his dream is that bringing a מִנְחָה/meal offering should be considered equal to bringing an animal sacrifice. Do you agree that the offering of flour brought by a poor person and the animal sacrifice brought by a wealthy person should be considered equal? Why or why not?



At the end of the *midrash*, there is a lesson that is derived through *kal va-homer*—if a person bringing a meal offering (not a living animal) is regarded very highly, then all the more so a person who is bringing a live animal to be offered up to God. Does this support or undermine the previous statement, that said that both offerings are equal?



Vayikra 4:22

In case a Head of Tribe is guilty of doing any of the things which God commanded not to do, without their knowledge, and they realize their guilt... (Vayikra 4: 22)

ויקרא ד:כב

אֲשֶׁר נָשִׂיא יִחָטָא וְעָשָׂה אַחַת מִכָּל-מִצְוֹת ה' אֲ-לֹהֵיו אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תַעֲשִׂינָהּ בְּשִׁגְגָה וְאִשָּׁם:

Sifra Dibbura de-Hovah Section 5

If a Head of Tribe sins [אֲשֶׁר/when is similar to אֲשֶׁרִי/happy]: R. Yohanan b. Zakkai said: אֲשֶׁרִי/How fortunate is the generation whose Head of Tribe brings a קָרְבַּן חַטָּאת/purification offering for the sins they did unintentionally. If they bring a קָרְבַּן חַטָּאת for sin they did unintentionally, how much more so they must regret and feel bad for sins they did with intention. And if a Head of Tribe brings a קָרְבַּן חַטָּאת, how much more so is the common person moved to bring a קָרְבַּן חַטָּאת for their own unintentional sins!

ספרא דיבורא דחובה פרשה ה

אֲשֶׁר נָשִׂיא יִחָטָא אָמַר ר' יוֹחָנָן בֶּן זַבְדַּי, אֲשֶׁרִי הַדּוֹר שֶׁהַנָּשִׂיא נָשָׂא מִבֵּית חַטָּאת עַל שִׁגְגָתוֹ. אִם עַל שִׁגְגָתוֹ מִבֵּית חַטָּאת, צָרִיף לומר מֵהוּ עַל זְדוֹנוֹ. אִם נָשִׂיא נָשָׂא מִבֵּית חַטָּאת, צָרִיף לומר מֵהוּ הַדְּיוֹט. (ספרא, ויקרא דבורא דחובה, פרשה ה, א)



The three other examples of קָרְבַּן חַטָּאת/purification offering begin with the word אם/if, but the case of the נָשִׂיא/Head of Tribe is the only one that begins with the word אֲשֶׁר, which can mean “when.” Why is the language different here? This *midrash* connects the word אֲשֶׁר to the word אֲשֶׁרִי/happy, indicating how great it is for the generation whose נָשִׂיא/Head of Tribe brings a קָרְבַּן חַטָּאת/purification offering. The *midrash* seems to assume that if someone regrets the things they did wrong accidentally, then it is taken for granted that they feel bad about things they did on purpose. Do you agree with this assumption? Could you imagine a person feeling guilty about the things they did accidentally but not feeling regret for the intentional harm they caused?



According to the *midrash*, Why is it especially important for a leader to take responsibility for what they did wrong?

קריאת התורה Torah Reading

טַעֲמֵי הַמְקָרָא CANTILLATION

נְסוּג אָחוּד—A retreating note

Musical notes are located on the accented syllable of the word that is emphasized. Usually, a word's accent is constant. We always pronounce it CHILD-ren, and never child-REN. But in Torah reading, sometimes accents and notes shift to make things easier to pronounce. Look at this example from our *parashah*:

Vayikra 5:21 describes a case when someone denies that their friend gave them something to watch:

וְכִי־שָׁחַד בְּעֵמִיתוֹ בְּכִזְבוֹ

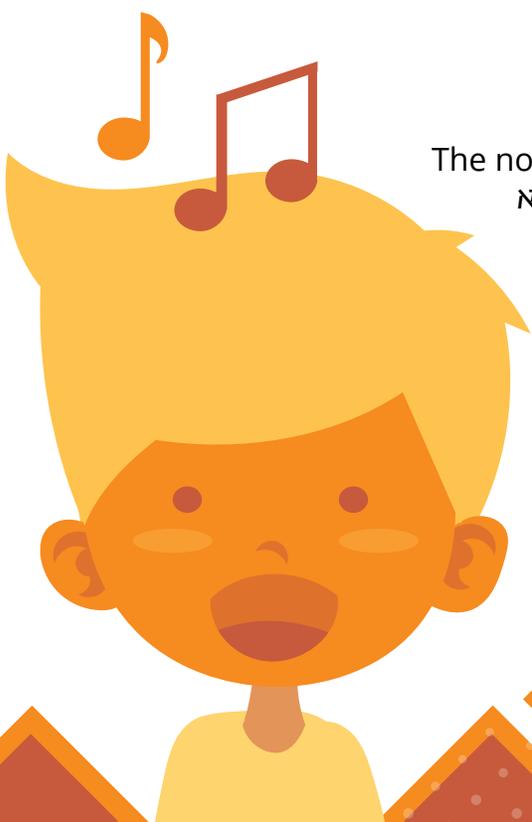
See where the note is? (It's called a *קדמא/kadma*.) On the letter ח, where it belongs. The word is pronounced "ve-khi-HEISH."

But when the very next verse uses the same word, look what it says:

וְכִי־שָׁחַד בְּהַ

The note is on the letter ב, one syllable back! (This note is called a *מֶרְכָּח/merkha*.) Now it is pronounced "ve-KHI-hesh."

Why? Well, the answer is that the following word *בְּהַ* is one syllable. If you pronounced *שָׁחַד* normally, you would end up with two accented syllables in a row, which is harder to say. So the accent backs up one syllable, to the ב, to make it easier to say the whole phrase, and so does the note. This is known as *נְסוּג אָחוּד*/a syllable and a note that "retreat" from their normal place. Very considerate, no?



מִן הַשָּׂפָה וּפְנִימָה BIBLICAL HEBREW GRAMMAR

Hebrew has seven different *בְּנִינִים/binyanim*, ways to structure verbs to make meaning and express ideas. Two of them are known as *הִפְעִיל/hif'il* and *הִפְעַל/hof'al*. *הִפְעִיל* is used to talk about doing something to someone else. So the word *הִקְרִיב* means to bring something else close (like a *קֹרְבָן/sacrifice!*) and the word *הִקְטִיר* means to turn something else into smoke (like the fat burned on the *מִזְבֵּחַ/altar*). *הִפְעַל* is the opposite, it means *having something done* to someone or something. So *הִדְלִק* means that something *was lit* by someone else. In our *parashah*, we have a great example of a *הִפְעַל* word:

אֶת־הַפְּקֻדוֹן אֲשֶׁר הִפְקִיד אֹתוֹ

ויקרא ה:כג

This verse is talking about an object that *was left to be guarded* by someone. When you ask someone to watch something, the verb you use is *הִפְקִיד*, which is in the *הִפְעִיל* form. So talking about something that *was guarded* is described as *הִפְקִיד*, which is in the *הִפְעַל* form.



Can you find any other *הִפְעַל* forms in this week's *parashah*?

מְנֵהָג CUSTOM

One of the cool parts of Torah reading is that there are a lot of customs and practices that surround the actual reading of the words. For instance, how do we decide how to break up the *parashah* into seven parts? Where do those *aliyah* breaks go and why? Here's one rule we generally try to follow: Don't end on something bad! Each *aliyah* should end on something that is generally positive.

Parashat Vayikra presents a problem, because the final words are *לְאִשְׁמָה בָּהּ*, which means "to be guilty for!" Now, technically, the larger sentence is about being *forgiven* for something you are guilty for by bringing a sacrifice. Still, some people didn't like ending the *parashah* on these unpleasant words. In a number of European communities, as soon as the final *aliyah* of Vayikra was read, they would all call out, "לְאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁבַת מִכָּל הַמַּעֲשִׂים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי/To the God who stopped all activity on the seventh day!" Why would they say this? Check it out:

לְאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁבַת מִכָּל הַמַּעֲשִׂים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי

This phrase comprises an acrostic for the words *לְאִשְׁמָה בָּהּ*! So, this practice turned a tough ending about guilt into gratitude to God for giving us the gift of Shabbat, a time when we don't work and have more time to read to the Torah!

