

NCYI Youth Groups Parshat Acharei-Mot

(http://www.headcoverings-by-devorah.com/HebEngTaNaKh_TorahSummary.htm)

Parsha Outline

- The Yom Kippur service
- Prohibition against eating blood
- Forbidden sexual relationships

Parsha Summaries

http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/381723/jewish/Acharei-Mot-Roundup.htm

Acharei Mot Roundup

After the two sons of Aaron died (in Parshah Shemini), G-d warns against anybody going into the special chamber of the Miskan called the Holy of Holies. Only Aaron himself may enter, once a year, on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year. Another thing done on Yom Kippur is that two goats are taken and a lottery is made. One goat is offered to G-d and the second one, to "azazel", is sent to the wilderness to atone for the sins of the Jews.

Other important warnings in the Parshah of Acharie: It is forbidden to bring a *korban* (sacrifice), anywhere but in the Holy Temple. It is forbidden to eat blood in any way (this is why all kosher meat is salted--to take out the blood, and why we check eggs for blood before using); and a discussion of those who we are forbidden to marry.

http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/502747/jewish/Aliya-Summary.htm

Acharei Aliya Summary

General Overview: This week's reading, *Acharei*, begins with a detailed description of the service of the High Priest on Yom Kippur. The Torah then discusses prohibitions against offering sacrifices outside the Temple, consuming blood, and incestuous, adulterous, or other forbidden relationships.

First Aliyah: The High Priest is instructed to only enter the Holy of Holies chamber of the sanctuary once a year, on Yom Kippur; and even on this holiest day of the year, the entry

into the Temple's inner sanctum must be accompanied by a special service and specific offerings which are detailed in this reading. The High Priest was only permitted to enter amidst a cloud of burning incense. Also, special white garments were worn by the High Priest on this day. While offering the day's sacrifices, the High Priest would "confess" on behalf of the entire nation, attaining atonement for the past year's sins.

Second Aliyah: This section continues the description of the special Yom Kippur service. The procedure of the "scapegoat" ceremony is described in this aliyah.

Third Aliyah: After concluding the order of the Yom Kippur service in the Temple, the Torah instructs us to observe Yom Kippur as a Day of Atonement when we must abstain from work and "afflict" ourselves.

Fourth Aliyah: The Jews are forbidden to offer sacrifices anywhere other than the Tabernacle or Temple.

Fifth Aliyah: We are enjoined not to consume blood. When slaughtering fowl or undomesticated animals, we are commanded to cover their blood with earth. The Jews are admonished not to follow the depraved ways of the Egyptians and Canaanites.

Sixth Aliyah: Continuing on the above theme, the Torah provides a list of prohibited sexual relationships. The list includes adultery, cohabiting with a menstruating woman, and forbidden close relatives.

Seventh Aliyah: The prohibitions against homosexuality and bestiality are mentioned. The Jews are then warned that engaging in these forbidden relationships will result in their expulsion from the Land of Israel -- a holy land which cannot tolerate immoral behavior.

<http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/3482>

G-d instructs the kohanim to exercise extreme care when they enter the Mishkan. On Yom Kippur, the kohen gadol is to approach the holiest part of the Mishkan after special preparations and wearing special clothing. He brings offerings unique to Yom Kippur, including two identical goats that are designated by lottery. One is "for G-d" and is offered in the Temple, while the other is "for Azazel" in the desert. The Torah states the individual's obligations on Yom Kippur: On the 10th day of the seventh month, one must afflict oneself. We abstain from eating and drinking, anointing, wearing leather footwear, washing, and marital relations.

Consumption of blood is prohibited. The blood of slaughtered birds and undomesticated beasts must be covered. The people are warned against engaging in the wicked practices that were common in Egypt. Incest is defined and prohibited. Marital relations are forbidden during a woman's monthly cycle. Homosexuality, bestiality and child sacrifice are prohibited.

Parsha Songs

[The lyrics are supplied here. For the tunes, please click on the link]

http://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/573748/jewish/Parshah-Song.htm

Lyrics:

After the two sons of Aharon
Nodov and Avihu died
Hashem spoke to Moshe Telling him to go inside

To where the aron kodesh was kept
Called the kodesh kodoshim
Only on yom kippur
Aharon did go in

Chorus:

Vchai bohem ani Hashem
These are my Mitzvos, follow them

Yom Kippur, our holiest day
We ask Hashem to forgive
To grant us a good year
For all of us to live

The lives of our avos teach us
An example they provide
How to live with the Mitzvos
As an eternal guide

Parsha Questions & Answers

Selected from the following websites:

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=1917

<http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/906>

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=1664

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=4148

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=4031

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=383

http://www.chinuch.org/item_details.php?mid=7076

The following are a selection of questions obtained from the above mentioned websites.

K-2

Questions

1. When is Yom kippur?
2. Who performed the entire Avodat Yom Hakipurim?
3. What did the Bnei Yisrael do while the kohen gadol did the avodah on Yom Kippur?
4. What is forbidden Yom Kippur?
5. Where did the kohen gadol go only on Yom Kippur?
6. Why may we not eat the dam (blood) of the animals that we eat?
7. What do we do to meat in order to remove the blood?
8. What types of sins are forgiven on Yom Kippur?
9. What do we have to do to be forgiven for aveirot that are bein adam lachaveiro (between one person and another)?
10. What is the difference between mishpat and chok?

Answers

1. The tenth of Tishrei
2. The kohen gadol
3. They davened and did teshuvah.
4. There is no eating, drinking, washing, wearing leather shoes or smearing of oils. Also, no work is permitted (like on Shabbat).
5. The kodesh kodashim (The Holy of Holies).
6. Because the nefesh (soul) is in it.
7. We soak and salt it.

8. Those between man and Hashem – bei adam lemakom.
9. We must ask for mechilah (forgiveness).
10. A mishpat conforms to the human sense of justice. A chok is a law whose reason is not given to us and can only be understood as a decree from Hashem.

3-4

Questions

1. When is Yom kippur?
2. Who performed the entire Avodat Yom Hakipurim?
3. What color was the clothing that the kohen gadol wore in the kodesh hakadoshim?
4. Why didn't the kohen gadol wear his bigdei zahav when he went into the kodesh kodashim?
5. What did the Bnei Yisrael do while the kohen gadol did the avodah on Yom Kippur?
6. What is forbidden Yom Kippur?
7. What two animals must the Jews bring on Yom Kippur, and what is special about them?
8. What was done with the se'irim?
9. Where did the kohen gadol go only on Yom Kippur?
10. Why may we not eat the dam (blood) of the animals that we eat?
11. What do we do to meat in order to remove the blood?
12. What types of sins are forgiven on Yom Kippur?
13. What do we have to do to be forgiven for aveirot that are bein adam lachaveiro (between one person and another)?
14. What is the difference between mishpat and chok?
15. What are women whom we are not allowed to marry called?

Answers

1. The tenth of Tishrei
2. The kohen gadol
3. White
4. So it shouldn't be a reminder of the chet ha'egel.
5. They davened and did teshuvah.
6. There is no eating, drinking, washing, wearing leather shoes or smearing of oils. Also, no work is permitted (like on Shabbat).
7. Two se'irim (goats). They were identical.
8. One was used for a sin offering and the other was sent to Azazel (a high cliff)
9. The kodesh kodashim (The Holy of Holies).
10. Because the nefesh (soul) is in it.
11. We soak and salt it.
12. Those between man and Hashem – bei adam lemakom.

13. We must ask for mechilah (forgiveness).
14. A mishpat conforms to the human sense of justice. A chok is a law whose reason is not given to us and can only be understood as a decree from Hashem.
15. Ervah.

5-6

Questions

1. When is Yom kippur?
2. Who performed the entire Avodat Yom Hakipurim?
3. What did the kohen gadol wear when he entered the kodesh kodashim?
4. What color was the clothing that the kohen gadol wore in the kodesh hakadoshim?
5. Why didn't the kohen gadol wear his bigdei zahav when he went into the kodesh kodashim?
6. What did the Bnei Yisrael do while the kohen gadol did the avodah on Yom Kippur?
7. What is forbidden Yom Kippur?
8. What two animals must the Jews bring on Yom Kippur, and what is special about them?
9. What was done with the se'irim?
10. Where did the kohen gadol go only on Yom Kippur?
11. What is the punishment for a kohen gadol who inappropriately enters the kodesh kodashim?
12. Why may we not eat the dam (blood) of the animals that we eat?
13. What do we do to meat in order to remove the blood?
14. What types of sins are forgiven on Yom Kippur?
15. What do we have to do to be forgiven for aveirot that are bein adam lachaveiro (between one person and another)?
16. What will the land do if the nation commits too many sins?
17. What is the penalty of kares?
18. Which categories of animals must have their blood covered when they are slaughtered?
19. What is the difference between mishpat and chok?
20. What are women whom we are not allowed to marry called?

Answers

1. The tenth of Tishrei
2. The kohen gadol
3. Only four linen garments worn by an ordinary kohen.
4. White
5. So it shouldn't be a reminder of the chet ha'egel.
6. They davened and did teshuvah.

7. There is no eating, drinking, washing, wearing leather shoes or smearing of oils. Also, no work is permitted (like on Shabbat).
8. Two se'irim (goats). They were identical.
9. One was used for a sin offering and the other was sent to Azazel (a high cliff)
10. The kodesh kodashim (The Holy of Holies).
11. Death.
12. Because the nefesh (soul) is in it.
13. We soak and salt it.
14. Those between man and Hashem – bei adam lemakom.
15. We must ask for mechilah (forgiveness).
16. It will split them out.
17. One's offspring die and one's own life is shortened.
18. Non domesticated kosher animals and all species of kosher birds.
19. A mishpat conforms to the human sense of justice. A chok is a law whose reason is not given to us and can only be understood as a decree from Hashem.
20. Ervah.

Parsha Riddle

If you take the ה out of me, I'll be a closet.
 Who am I?
 (Answer: אהרן)

Parsha Stories

<http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/Parshat-Acharei-Mot.pdf?docid=3490&ie=1&showobject=1>

LESSONS FROM THE PARSHA

THE ROAD

My laws - you shall carry out, and My statutes - you shall guard, to go with them . . .” (Vayikra 18:4). The verse states that we must go with Hashem's laws and statutes. Where are we going? Where did we begin? Where is our destination? The Keli Yakar has a beautiful explanation which defines our job in this world. In this world, a person is called a traveler. He goes from one spiritual level to another. This world is a dynamic situation, with opportunities for growth and spiritual development. Contrast this to the next world. The person's status is described as “sitting”, as the Gemora (Berachos 17a) states, “The righteous sit with crowns on their heads”. There is no room for growth over there. Only reward for the work done here.

Kinderlach . . .

Let's all hit the road. We have places to go and things to do. We're on the way up. Higher and higher in madrayga (spiritual level). Now is the time to work hard and accomplish. Get moving and keep moving in the right direction. Up and up.

THE SPICE OF LIFE

Imma, can you please pass the potatoes?"

"My pleasure, Avi." "They sure are delicious, Imma." "I spiced them especially for you, Avi. Potatoes are nutritious. They give your body the energy and vitamins it needs to keep going. I wanted you to eat them; therefore I made them very tasty." "Are they more nutritious when they are tasty, Imma?" "Not at all, Avi. The food gets broken down in the digestive system. The nutrients then reach the blood system. The taste is gone. By the time the heart receives energy from the food, it makes no difference whatsoever what the taste was." "Imma, that is amazing. It almost parallels the subject of our parashas ha'shavuah class." "I would really like to hear the connection, Avi." "Rav Yerucham Levovitz zt"l, the Mashgiach of the Mirrer Yeshiva has an illuminating explanation to the verse, 'Carry out My laws and safeguard My decrees to follow them' (Vayikra 18:4). The prohibitions against stealing and murder are the type of laws that the seichel (common sense) would dictate. These are called mishpatim. Eating kosher, not wearing shaatnez (a mixture of wool and linen), and other decrees of this sort are beyond human understanding. They are called chukim. When one begins to learn Torah in depth, he delves into the reasons behind the mishpatim. Eventually, he comes to a verse, or a tradition upon which the law is based. We must observe the law because Hashem commanded us to do so. Therefore, even the mishpatim are ultimately chukim. What is the difference between the two? Hashem gave a taam (reason) to the mishpatim, so that we will have a sweet taam (spice) when we learn them. He wanted us to enjoy our Torah learning; therefore he gave some of the mitzvos taamim."

That is fascinating, Avi. I see the parallel. Hashem's 613 mitzvos are 'spiritual nourishment' for our souls. Each one feeds a different section. They provide necessary nourishment, regardless of their taam. However, The Almighty, in His infinite kindness, gave some of them a taam. Therefore, when we learn about them, we get pleasure, in the same way that the tasty food gives pleasure to our palate." "That is exactly what Rav Yerucham says, Imma." "Avi please let me share with you another insight that Abba once heard from an Odom Godol (Torah Giant). The Gemora (Kiddushin 30b) states, 'I created the yetzer hora and I created the Torah as its tavlin.' The word tavlin normally means spice; however, it is translated in this context as antidote. The yetzer hora is like a disease and the Torah is like its antidote. This explanation begs a question. If the Gemora meant antidote, why did it not write the word trufah (medicine)? It used an inappropriate word – tavlin." "What an insightful question!" "Yes. The Odom Gadol gave an electrifying answer. The yetzer hora makes the lowly pleasures of olam haze (this world) look so tantalizing. He shows us riches, luxuries, and technologies that are beyond belief. He says, 'You can have it all. Just put your time and energy into acquiring possessions here, and forget about olam habo.' He has strong arguments. 'You have a lot of time until you get to olam habo. Who knows what it will really be like over there? Maybe it does

not exist at all. I am offering you pleasure here and now. Take it!’ How can the yetzer hatov answer these claims? They are so strong. The yetzer hora’s ‘reward’ is tangible, here and now. Therefore, the yetzer hatov needs a special weapon – Torah. The Torah is pure emmes. Only it can stand up to the lies of the yetzer hora. However, even the Torah alone is not enough. It must have a sweet taste to it. Learning Torah will fend off the yetzer hora, however, what if learning is not pleasurable? How can it match the yetzer hora’s delights? Therefore, Hashem made the Torah tavlin. He made it delicious. He made Torah learning the sweetest thing in the world. One who learns Torah properly has no appetite for the puny pleasures of the yetzer hora. They are worthless in comparison to the sweetness of understanding a Tosafos. Answering a difficult question on the Rambam is more exhilarating than skiing down the Swiss Alps. What does the yetzer hora have to offer? Nothing!!! That is the tavlin of the Torah. That is the spice of life.”

Kinderlach . . .

Do you want to taste something yummy? What is your favorite sweet? Cake? Cookies? Chocolate? Ice cream? Hashem has something that is far sweeter than all of these things. Torah. Although all of His mitzvos are ultimately true just because He commanded them, He gave some of them taam. We get pleasure using our seichel to figure out their laws and nuances. That pleasure – the sweetness that comes with learning Torah – is the antidote to the trickery of the yetzer hora. He tells us to eat cookies all day, wasting our time and energy on the delights of this world. We answer him, “Cookies?!? Yuck! They taste terrible compared to the sweetness of the Torah!” Enjoy the best treat, kinderlach – Torah – the spice of life.

Parasha Questions:

- Which day may Aharon HaKohen go into the Kodesh? (Rashi 16:3)
- Who takes the Seir La’Azazel out to the Midbar? (16:21)
- How many times must the Kohen Godol change his Bigdei Kehuna on Yom Kippur? (Rashi 16:23)

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<http://www.aish.com/torahPortion/pArchive.asp?eventType=29&eventName=Acharei+Mot>

There are other stories available as well at the above website.

http://www.aish.com/torahportion/family/Family_Parsha_Acharei_Mot_5763.asp

Acharei Mot (Leviticus 16-18)

Comforting Discomfort

From this week's Torah Portion

In everyone's life, things happen - sometimes big, sometimes small - that cause frustration, aggravation, and pain. This week's Torah portion teaches us about Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, when we make an effort to look at our lives and think of ways to become better people. One way we do this is by making ourselves less comfortable on that day through fasting. The discomfort a person experiences when fasting would help to put him in a more serious frame of mind, making it easier for him to focus on his most important values, and consider ways in which he might improve himself, which is one of the main goals of Yom Kippur. We can learn from here that, while we needn't seek discomfort in our lives, if it does come our way, we can try to view it as a growing experience, and thereby turn our pain into gain!

Story

In our story, a boy comes out of a difficult experience with a new view of life.

"LUCKY BREAK"

If you could say that the Hunter Valley School had a 'king,' it would certainly be Robert Gershon. The big, brawny kid, known as 'Bulldozer', wasn't only the captain of the football team, but a baseball and track star as well. Tall, and good-looking, the kid literally and figuratively stood 'head and shoulders' above everyone around him.

In school, people would naturally move out of the way when they saw him bounding down the hallway - and with good reason. You see, Robert also had a bit of a temper, to say the least, and he felt that any slowpoke that got in his way deserved the 'bulldozer' treatment. More than one hapless kid ended up sprawled on the floor, after a stiff push from the not-so-gentle giant.

And so things went, until the day came that was to change Robert's life, and the lives of everyone in the whole school.

It started at a typical football practice. The guys had worked up a good sweat and were about to call it quits, when they decided to practice one more play. Robert ran to the far end of the field and jumped to catch the football being thrown his way. He caught the ball, but as he landed, his leg twisted the wrong way and the loud pop of the breaking bone could be heard clear across the field. Medics rushed the boy to the emergency room, and even though he would be okay, Robert found himself confined to a wheelchair and then crutches for two long months.

The boy was crushed. Now, instead of being able to powerfully bulldoze around the way he was used to, he would have to hobble along like an old man. The poor kid couldn't even open a door by himself. One of the hardest times for Robert was when he tried to make his way through the busy school corridors. Kids would rush by him on their way to class, and sometimes even shove him out of the way in their haste.

"What's their rush?" he would think. "Couldn't they show a little courtesy for a guy who can't move as fast as they can?"

Robert was really starting to feel down about his tough situation, when he had a thought that almost made him laugh out loud. "Hey, look who's talking!" he thought. "They don't call me 'Bulldozer' around here for nothing. I've been pushing people around like this for years. I guess at least one good thing that's come from my injury is that I'm getting a chance to know what it feels like to be on the other end of the push!"

Time passed and Robert had his cast removed and was back on his feet. Soon enough he had built himself back up into the bruiser he always was. But now there was one big difference that everyone in school couldn't help but notice. When Robert would walk down the hall, he didn't push anymore. He would even actually wait patiently for the smaller, slower-moving kids to get by. Whenever someone would comment on this, Robert would just smile, and say, "My time in the cast was hard, but taught me a very important lesson: 'bulldozers' belong on the playing field, and not in the hallway."

The whole school benefited from Robert's new attitude, and everyone felt inspired by the boy who learned how to turn his own tough break into a lucky break for himself and the people around him.

Discussion Questions

Ages 3-5

Q. How did Robert feel about pushing people around, before he broke his leg?

A. He felt like it was okay since he was bigger and faster than the other kids.

Q. How did he feel afterwards?

A. His time in a cast let him feel what it was like to get pushed, and he saw that it wasn't right.

Ages 6-9

Q. Why do you think experiencing a broken leg caused Robert's attitude to change?

A. While he was healthy, Robert was only able to see things from one perspective; since he was the toughest, he had the right to push around anyone he wanted to. But once he broke his leg and found himself in a weak and vulnerable situation, he was able to look more deeply at his behavior and to realize that it really was not the proper way to behave. Robert grew into a more sensitive person as a direct result of the discomfort he suffered from his injury.

Q. Can a person really grow from every difficulty he experiences?

A. Our growth depends largely on the choices we make. Indeed a person could come out of a painful situation without growing at all. But this would be because he chose not to focus on what there was to be learned. Every difficult situation surely contains within it a lesson, and a chance for personal spiritual growth, but we have to make the choice to be open to seeing it.

Ages 10 and Up

Q. Is the insight that we gain from difficult experiences really worth the pain?

A. It might not feel that way at the time. Nobody enjoys difficulty or pain, but when we consider that our ultimate purpose in life is to perfect ourselves into better, kinder, and more spiritual people, anything that brings us closer to that goal, even if it hurts, is in the end worth the price.

Q. Isn't there any way to grow that isn't painful?

A. Growth, like anything else worthwhile, demands a price. However there are ways to grow that don't require us experiencing pain directly. One way is to become more sensitive to the pains and difficulties others are experiencing. By empathizing with others, we open ourselves up to the growth potential of their situation as well. Another thing we can do is to make a constant and conscious effort at self-improvement. When we do that, we will come to learn on our own many of the lessons that it would otherwise require painful experiences to teach us.

Parsha Games

<http://www.aje.org.uk/harayon/>

K-2

The main topic in this parashah is the importance of Yom Kippur. At this time we ask forgiveness for anything we have done wrong

Middah/ Jewish Value

- **Saying sorry to our friends when we have upset them**

Activity

It is not necessary to mention Yom Kippur, which obviously occurs at another time of year, but the leader could focus on the idea of friendships. Sing this song about making up with our friends and not fighting.

Tune: This Old Man

Please don't fight,
It's not right,
Take my hands and
Hold on tight.
Best of friends we now will be
Won't you come and play with me.

Have the children standing up in pairs and doing the actions whilst singing the song.

3-4

In this parashah we are told about Yom Kippur and its importance as a day when we ask for forgiveness for any wrong things we may have done

Middah/ Jewish Value

- **Knowledge of Yom Kippur**

Activity

Use this as an opportunity to see how much the children remember about Yom Kippur. Prepare small cards with simple questions and different cards with the answers, on the subject of Yom Kippur, e.g

- In which Hebrew month is Yom Kippur?
- When does the fast begin?
- Apart from fasting what else may we not do?
- What story do we read on Yom Kippur afternoon?
- What is the name of the special tefillah (prayer) we say at the beginning of the fast?
- What is the name of the last part of the service?
- What happens right at the end of the Yom Kippur service?

Each child is given a question and answer card and must collect the correct answer card for their question.

5-6

God listened to the cries of the Bnei Yisrael to free them from slavery. The children of Israel merited being freed from slavery because, even after so many years of living outside Eretz Cana'an, they never changed their Hebrew names, they kept their language and dressed modestly. Keeping our Jewish laws and customs even whilst living among other nations helps the continuation of the Jewish people

Middah/ Jewish Value

- **Being proud of your Jewish identity**

Activity

There are lots of ways that Jewish people differ from the communities that they live in. For example:

- What they eat

- **How they dress etc.**

Ask the children to think of other examples. Then broaden out the discussion to include what the children have observed of other religions in Britain today.

Is it a good or bad thing that Britain has so many people living here with different cultures?

Should we all try to be the same (the melting pot) or keep our identity in a host culture (the mosaic or patchwork quilt)?