



TIFERET HASHABBAT

This Week in Tiferet

Tiferet was privileged to host noted author and musician **Rabbi Shlomo Katz** for our final Shabbat before the Nisan break. Rabbi Katz's divrei Torah and music helped us end the zman with a real spiritual boost, ready for the upcoming chag. On Tuesday, our students traveled to **Sderot** to get a tour of the city and hear about the challenges and miracles that the residents of the city have faced over the years. It was an inspiring way to spend Election Day here in Israel.

We want to congratulate the many students who participated in the **Jerusalem Marathon** last Friday. Kol Hakavod to you for all the funds you have raised for many important institutions!

תורת תפארת

Thanks for Something Rav Elie Mayer Parshat Vayikra

The most common misconception that I encounter in my Mashiach class is the assumption that the prophesies of Geula happen concurrently. However, the Geula is a process that unfolds gradually over many years, possibly even decades. The Gemara likens this process to the rising of the sun. So too was the Geula in Mitzrayim.

In fact, we learn in the Gemara that the four cups at the Seder are associated with the four expressions of redemption: וְהוֹצֵאתִי, וְהִצַּלְתִּי, וְגֵאלְתִּי, וְלִקַּחְתִּי. Each cup celebrates another stage of Geula. The first cup corresponds to וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִתַּחַת סְבִלוֹת מִצְרַיִם. We were still slaves in Egypt but were spared from the avodat parech - harsh labor. This Geula was by no means complete; after all, we were still in Galut and still slaves, yet it warrants a celebration. The second cup corresponds to the end of our servitude. We remained in Mitzrayim and under the rule of Pharaoh and yet we celebrate with a second cup. The lesson of the four cups is that we must celebrate each stage of Geula even if it is incomplete.

In thirty-five days we will celebrate the return of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel after 2000 years of exile. We celebrate Yom Haatzmaut with Hallel. Nevertheless, there are those who do not mark this great day with religious celebration. One of the reasons given is that the Geula is not complete. Yes, the process of the ingathering of the exiles has brought the majority of the Jewish people back to Eretz Yisrael for the first time since the first Bet Hamikdash. Yes, Har Habayit is in our control and Yerushalayim has been rebuilt and its borders expanded exponentially. Yes, the Torah center of the world is once again Yerushalayim.

On the other hand, the Bet Hamikdash has not yet been rebuilt (as of this writing). As well, our leaders and many of our people are not of the highest levels of open Torah observance. Despite this, we acknowledge the need to thank Hashem for each stage of our Geula. We acknowledge what's missing but show thanks for what has been achieved just as we did in the times of Chanukah by reciting Hallel on the return of Jewish sovereignty to Eretz Yisrael despite the Hellenization of the leaders and the people.

Rosh Chodesh Nissan is the first opportunity to recite the Birkat Ha'Ilanot: the bracha on the flowers of the fruit tree. The flower is the opening act for the main event-- the fruit-- but it is upon the flower that we say the bracha. In fact, there are some authorities who are of the opinion that once

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Tiferet Students at the Jerusalem Marathon with Mrs. Stefansky

תורת תפארת (המשך)

the fruit appears the bracha may no longer be recited. Perhaps the reason for reciting the blessing over the flower as opposed to the fruit is that we are thanking Hashem for every phase of bracha. We have to show gratitude to our Creator not just for what we receive in its entirety but even in its incompleteness. We express our hakarat hatov for every level of bracha.

The process of Geula is compared to the sprouting of a plant. In the "את צמח" bracha of Shmoneh Esrai, we ask Hashem to quickly sprout the sprout of Mashiach. Medinat Yisrael is referred to as Reishit Tzmitchat Geulateinu. We believe that the State of Israel is not yet the complete Geula. We believe that it is the flower of the fruit tree and one day (hopefully, today!) it will sprout into the ultimate salvation.

Parshat Vayikra begins with a small alef. Many commentaries offer explanations for the small alef of Vayikra. The Zohar answers that it is because this "calling" was imperfect since it took place outside of Eretz Yisrael. Perfection can only be found in Eretz Yisrael. Perhaps the small alef is teaching us that even though Am Yisrael experienced Kriyat Yam Suf, defeated Amalek and received the Torah at Sinai, we were still a small alef as we had yet to enter Eretz Yisrael. Our Geula was incomplete. Nevertheless, we express our thanks to Hashem for every step of the process. It is this spirit which we sing Dayeinu. Every phase of our redemption needs to be celebrated even if our Geula hasn't fully born fruit.

In Nissan we were redeemed and be'ezrat Hashem, this Nissan we will be redeemed with the Geula Shelaima.

Chodesh Tov and Shabbat Shalom!

Mazal Tov!

Mazal Tov to Adina Moskowitz (5767) on her marriage to Scott Katz! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Stephanie Danoff (5770) on her marriage to Jonathan Furer! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover Jen Reich (5773)

In א' פרק ב' פסוק א' of *Parshat Vayikrah* it states "When a soul will bring a flour-offering to Hashem..." This wording stands out because it is the only location where a person is referred to as a "soul," here in the case of the *korban mincha*. According to Rashi, when speaking about the *korban mincha* we are referring to a poor person since they are usually the ones who can afford this type of voluntary offering. Though it is a modest offering of flour and oil, Hashem accepts it as if they are giving their whole selves in worship to Him. Hashem counts their *korban* as if they sacrificed their soul. It is a beautiful idea that can be learned from this instance, that Hashem does not look at the physical quality of a *korban* brought whether it be from animals or of grain, but it is the spirit by which that *korban* is brought by the individual is by which Hashem sees its value and the sincerity of the *mikariv*.

Rav Shimshon Rafael Hirsch comments that the *korban mincha* can only be brought by individuals. While other *korbanot* which are brought with animals a person can identify with the animal and see their sacrifice in place of themselves, a *korban mincha* is of grains. The *mincha*, hence, is a measure of personality and a person's satisfaction with life to offer as they bring a voluntary offering to Hashem. Rav Hirsch writes "with the conditions of life to be provided by God each person stands individually before God." Each person, by virtue of bringing a *korban mincha* shows their modest yet virtuous thanks to Hashem via this voluntary offering. While the poor man might not have much, scraping together what he does have to show his thanks to Hashem, Hashem accepts the offering as though the poor person was offering up his whole soul. The poor man's *kavanah* and purity of heart are what makes his *mincha* truly special and accepted by Hashem as his whole soul. It's important to remember the motives and emotions behind the actions we take in our *avodat* Hashem. With the right intentions, any modest gesture is as if we are worshiping Hashem with our full hearts, which we should try to infuse in our daily practices of *avodat* Hashem