



Parshas Ki Seitzei

August 28, 2020

A Taste of Torah

Echoes of Praise

by Rabbi Aharon Wilen

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 11a) says that in the time of the second *Beis Hamikdash* (Temple), following the deaths of the final prophets Chaggai, Zecharia and Malachi, the power of prophecy was removed from the world, but the *bas kol*, the echo of a voice from Heaven, still exists. While this voice emanating from Heaven is not full-fledged prophecy, it is a minor form of prophecy, a communication from Above.

The Talmud continues relates two instances where a *bas kol* was heard. The first occurred when the Sages were seated in the attic of a man named Gurya in Yericho (Jericho). The voice from Heaven announced, "There is one person seated here who is worthy of having the Divine Presence rest upon him as it rested on Moshe, except that the generation is not deserving." The Sages looked around the room and their eyes came to rest upon Hillel the Elder, whom they realized was the one referred to by the *bas kol*.

The Talmud relates a second, similar incident that took place years later involving a *bas kol* that announced that the great sage Shmuel Hakatan was also worthy of prophecy.

This is quite a remarkable thing. A *bas kol* is by no means an everyday occurrence; they are reserved for those rare instances that Hashem decides to share information with this world. We would imagine that when the spiritual leaders of the nation were granted a message via a *bas kol*, it would be for matters of the utmost importance, such as to

warn of an impending calamity or for instructions on spiritual progress. What is the purpose of a *bas kol* to merely inform that these men were worthy of prophecy had they lived during the right era?

Furthermore, the *bas kol* seems superfluous. Hillel was already the appointed *nasi* (prince) of the Jewish People, a scion of the House of David, and one of the two greatest Torah leaders of his time. The *bas kol* did not identify the person it spoke of, yet the Sages all identified him as the subject. Why was this message necessary at all?

Rabbi Avigdor Miller (1908-2001) provides an approach based on an idea found in this week's parsha. The Torah commands judges that they should "vindicate the righteous one and find the wicked one guilty." (Ki Seitzei 25:1) The basic understanding of this verse is the issuance of a command to judges to thoroughly investigate every case that comes before their court to ensure that they will reach a truly just and proper ruling.

"Vindicating the righteous," however, can be understood to include more than simply protecting the innocent from his accusers in court. It can be seen as an injunction for all of us to declare the virtue of a righteous person. If one is aware of a righteous individual or of superior deeds someone has performed, it's important to praise that person and elevate the righteous in the eyes of the world.

Rabbeinu Yonah (Shaarei Teshuva

continued on back

Stories for the Soul

No Horsing Around

One Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Dovid Biderman of Lelov (1746-1814) was at the court of the Chozeh (Seer) of Lublin (Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak HaLevi Horowitz; c.1745-1815). It was time to blow the shofar, but Rabbi Dovid was missing, and the Chozeh did not want the shofar sounded until Rabbi Dovid was present. After some searching, he was found in a barn with a sack of oats. The horses' owner had gone to shul for the services and neglected their responsibilities to care for their animals, and so he was feeding the horses!

Another time, Rabbi Dovid saw a driver whipping his horse. Feeling that the fellow was being excessive, he said to him, "If you only knew how to communicate with your horse, you would have no need to hit him. Is it fair and just to whip the horse because of your ignorance?"

"One day, the horse will take you before the Heavenly Tribunal for having caused him needless pain. Will you not be embarrassed to have to go to trial with a horse?"

In this week's parsha, the Torah gives the mitzvah of sending away the mother bird before taking the children or the eggs. Our Sages teach that we may not say that Hashem's mercy reaches even a bird's nest, but the commentators point out that the mitzvah is intended to teach us humans to be sensitive to all of Hashem's creatures.

Kollel Happenings

TORAH FOR TYCOONS VIA ZOOM ON SEPT. 9

Torah for Tycoons begins its 17th season on Wed., September 9 via Zoom. Join Scott Levin, Regional Director for the Anti-Defamation League and Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher, Senior Educator for the Denver Community Kollel, for *Demonstrative Success: The Right & Wrong Way to Protest*. Visit denverkollel.org or email info@denverkollel.org for more info.

KOLLEL CLASSES CONTINUE VIA ZOOM MEETING

The Kollel is continuing many of its classes and offering new classes via Zoom Meeting. You can tune in to live classes online or call in on a phone. For a full schedule and the links and phone numbers to access this treasure trove of Torah, visit www.denverkollel.org or email info@denverkollel.org.

HELP BUILD THE FUTURE OF TORAH IN DENVER

Claim your part in building the future of Torah in Denver! The Kollel is in the midst of a capital campaign to build a three-story, state-of-the-art Torah Center that will serve the entire Denver Jewish community. To contribute, or for dedication opportunities and details on the building, visit denverkollel.org or email info@denverkollel.org.

Parsha Quizzers

The six items below can be found in Rashi's commentary to this week's parsha. Can you figure out where they are? (Answers on bottom)

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| 1) Inevitable enmity | 4) Worse than murder |
| 2) Twin hanging | 5) Second time doesn't count |
| 3) Shatnez permitted | 6) Inheritance included |

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Menashe ben Yisrael - Part XIX

Nonetheless, many in England were not in favor of admitting Jews to the country. Even among those who were in favor, some demanded a number of preconditions, largely focused on religious issues which they hoped would lead the Jews to convert to Christianity. These conditions included things such as attending a weekly Sunday sermon from a priest,

and no backlash or impediments from the Jewish community if a Jew wished to convert to Christianity. Some proposed a "trial period" for the Jews in England.

Rabbi Menashe arrived in England in November 1655, and he published a work titled *Humble Addresses to the Lord Protector*, intended to convince Cromwell to readmit the Jews.

A Taste of Torah

continued from front

3:148) writes that when a person understands that Hashem created the Universe for His glory, he becomes obligated to honor Hashem with his every utterance, inflection, and motion. A responsibility emerges, incumbent upon every person, to publicize and demonstrate that the purpose of Creation is for humanity to serve Hashem. Included in this, says Rabbeinu Yonah, is that when sitting among others, a person should calculate how to honor Hashem with his words, to speak of the greatness of serving Hashem, and to sing the praises of those who fear Him.

With this, says Rabbi Miller, the stories of the *bas kol* can be understood. It seems that Heaven was sending a message to the Sages: This Hillel, whom you honor and whom you

made your leader, is greater than you ever imagined. A similar message was relayed to a later generation of Torah leaders regarding Shmuel Hakatan. The true stature of these spiritual giants was thus discovered. The Talmud thus teaches us how important it is to raise the stature of the righteous among the Jewish Nation. Revealing the full prominence of these *tzaddikim* was something that required nothing less than a *bas kol*, a minor prophecy.

We should speak about the righteous, praise pious Jews, and hone in on great deeds that people perform in their service of Hashem. When we speak highly of people who serve Hashem and how they do so, it promotes the importance of these things, especially in our own eyes.

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| 1) Inevitable enmity 23:9 s.v. <i>vilakachta</i> | 3) Shatnez permitted 22:12 s.v. <i>gedilum</i> |
| 2) Twin hanging 21:23 s.v. <i>ki</i> | 4) Worse than murder 23:9 s.v. <i>banim</i> |
| 5) Second time doesn't count 24:5 s.v. <i>isha</i> | 6) Inheritance included 25:6 s.v. <i>yakum</i> |

Parsha Quizzers - Answers