

DIVREI TORAH FROM

YESHIVOT AND SEMINARIES



Over the coming year Torah Tidbits is proud to highlight the many outstanding Rabbis and teachers that lead the various Yeshivot and Seminaries here in Israel.

YESHIVAT LEV HATORAH, RAMAT BEIT SHEMESH

Yeshivat Lev HaTorah is a full-time Torah learning program. Our mission is to nurture inspired, confident, well-rounded bnei Torah with the skills to learn independently, while simultaneously developing a deep devotion to Eretz Yisrael, Medinat Yisrael, and the entire Jewish community.



Rabbi Shimshon Jacob
Morning
Seder Rebbe,
Director of PR and
Social Media



A Place Before God

Early in the litany of laws, we find ourselves confronted with an idea counter to the sensibilities of sportsmanship and inclusivity, that have been drilled into us since hearing the name “Rudy” chanted by a stadium of onlookers recognizing the efforts of an underprivileged, ungifted, loner, fighting for his dream.

In the place of college football, our parsha focuses on the life of “Ruvi”, a young lamb, born to a family line known to be designated for Korbanoat in the Beit Hamikdash! Only, a genetic variation caused Ruvi to be born with just 3 legs. His grandfather was a Korban, his father

was a Korban, his mother, brothers, sisters... all Korbanot... but because of his genetic defect he is told he can't do it! Ruvi's strong will cries out in rejection of the naysayers... he won't accept it! He fights against all odds, he overcomes the impossible challenges, he makes it to the Beit Hamikdash. Carried in on the shoulders of of a Kohen, we hear the crowd chanting “Ruvi, Ruvi, Ruvi...”, as tears of joy stream down his face... he is about to fulfil his lifelong dream, his destiny, his desire to be fully dedicated to Hashem as part of the Avodah! And BLAM we get hit with the following pasouk:

“לאִתְזַבְּחָהּ לַה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ שׂוֹר וְשֶׂה וְאִשֹּׁר יִהְיֶה בוֹ מוֹם כֹּל דְּבַר רַע כִּי תוֹעֵבֶת ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ הוּא:”

“Do not sacrifice to Hashem your G-d an ox or sheep that has any type of blemish, because it is an abomination to Hashem your G-d.” (Devarim 17:1)

How could the inclusion of a deficient being, especially when done for the sake of a Korban, be an abomination?!

So, the age old question, who do I teach to? Not nearly as simple as “high, middle, low”

The question strikes close to home! Deafness runs in my family, so does ADHD, OCD, Endometriosis,... I often teach students that display a wide variety of different learning challenges, some more visually apparent, others not... honestly, we're all unique, we're all different... So how am I supposed to understand this?! How do I relate to a mandate that inclusion of the “different” is unacceptable?!

A couple weeks ago the staff at Yeshivat Lev HaTorah waited with nervous anticipation as the government debated whether to let foreign students into Israel for their year of study or not. 17 brave young men held tickets, unsure if they would receive the permits allowing them to board the plane. Literally an hour before they were to leave for the airport, a telephone halfway around the world rang and everything sprang into action... we had planned for their arrival, had the education and programming scheduled and prepared... but now it was real, now it was happening. This may seem ridiculous, but the closest thing I can equate it to is the stories I hear from our hesder guys about preparing for an army mission and the anticipation that builds

There's a chess player in Chicago who's looking for a mate.

(submitted by Hadas Feld, Jerusalem)

There's a genealogist in Givatayim who wants to connect with family.

(submitted by Pinny Ringel)

There's a gardener in Shoresh who wants to discover his roots.

(submitted by Tova Meltzer, Netanya)

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up until you get that final green light telling you it's a "Go".

Throughout the year morning seder options at Yeshivat Lev HaTorah include: a hands-on experiential track, a basic "skills for beginners" track, an intensive text skills development boot camp, a halacha focused option that remains practically driven, the opportunity to traverse the complex byways of talmudic pilpull, and finally an in depth comprehensive learning experience guided by a world class posek for those guys looking for truly erudite learning!

And it is with this backdrop, that I took on teaching the first wave of students who arrived for their quarantine period before the program kicked off. 17 students (the staff has come to refer to lovingly as the "Chalutzim" for their dedication and bravery in being trail blazers in this year's Israel experience) from varied backgrounds, communities, educational histories, genetic predispositions, and over all drastically divergent walks of life. 17 guys that on a normal year would have been scattered

amongst the 6 morning seder options, but due to the global situation found themselves all together in one classroom experience.

So, the age old question, who do I teach to? Not nearly as simple as "high, middle, low". Where should the focus be? Talmud? Halacha? The introductory period is only a couple weeks, but that is more than enough time to alienate a kid from the Yeshiva experience if pushed in the wrong direction.

Maybe there is another way to read this pasuk; traditionally in order to express the preposition "to" in Hebrew the prefix "ל" is used. Upon inspection we find it conspicuously absent for the common translation of "abomination 'to' G-d". Instead one might read the end of our verse as "an abomination of G-d". Meaning our verse now read would be a statement to the effect of, "anyone who would use a blemished animal is in fact degrading the concept of G-d itself"!

Perhaps what parshat Shoftim is teaching us is that variation exists in the world,



resources abound... but every resource, every being, has a purpose. If we misuse those resources, if we take money that is not ours, we are not only held accountable for the theft itself, but we are also responsible for what didn't happen because those resources wasn't available where it should have been.

Maybe the message is that "Ruvi" has a mission, has a purpose, has something so incredible to offer to the world... but if we were to force him like a classical sheep to be offered, then we are missing his unique and special mission in the world.

Jewish education is not a one-size fits all concept. 17 students, means a lot of different approaches. I'm proud to be a part of an institution that understands that!

Shabbat Shalom ■

SHIUR SPONSORS

Wednesday, August 19 - Rabbi Manning's shiur is sponsored in memory of **Moshe ben Michael Shaul z"l** who left this world on the 6th of Sivan, Shavuot

Sunday, August 23 - Rabbi Breitowitz's shiur is sponsored by **Shoshana Ehrenfeld** in loving memory of her mother **Chana Shayna bat Shmuel Mordechai and Hulda Katz Hoch a"h** on the 10th yearzeit

Monday, August 24 - Rabbi Goldin's shiur is sponsored by **Jan Fidler and Linda Levine** in loving memory of their father **Michael Filder Michoel ben Chaim Dovid Aryeh z"l** on his 31st yearzeit, 5 Elul

There's a quantum physicist in quarantine who wants to know the limits.

(submitted by Sharona Nordlicht, Bet Shemesh)

There's a diamond dealer in Dimona who's looking for clarity.

(submitted by Mendel Yoelitz)

There's an ophthalmologist in Ofakim who wants to see things from a new lens.

(submitted by Melanie Merrick, Bet Shemesh)

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