

Window to the Soul – Mishpatim

[Shiurim Main Menu](#)

שלש פעמים בשנה יראה כל זכורך אל פנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים (שמות כג, יז)

In this week's parsha there are many mitzvot (53 to be exact) and one could easily write an entire year's worth of shiurim just on parshat Mishpatim alone.

Today I would like to focus on one specific mitzva, the mitzva of **עולה ראייה**, the special korban brought on the **שלשת הרגלים** when Am Yisrael went on pilgrimage to the Beit HaMikdash.

There are two psukim in the Torah that serve as the source for this mitzva. The first, our passuk above, which says that three times a year (Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot), all male members of Am Yisrael have an obligation to "be seen", **יראה**, in the Beit HaMikdash, to the "face" of the L-rd G-d.

Two psukim before this passuk (שם, טו) it says **וילא יראו פנֵי ריקם** (שם, טו), that you should not come "empty handed". The Gemara (Chagiga 7a) says that means bringing a special korban, **עולה**, a sacrifice that is entirely burned on the mizbeach.

Only males are obligated to bring this korban, as it says in the passuk **כל זכורך**. There is a machloket in the Gemara between the Yerushalmi and the Bavli, whether women are also obligated to do **עליה לרגל** to the Beit HaMikdash, or not. According to the Yerushalmi (**חגיגה א**) women are obligated to go up to Yerushalayim on the **שלשת הרגלים**, at least on Sukkot, (to be part of Hakhol). The Bavli (**חגיגה ד**, ע"א) on the other hand says women are exempt from doing **עליה לרגל**. This means it is not compulsory for women to accompany their husbands to the Beit HaMikdash, but they certainly may do so if they wish, as we see with Chana and Elkana (**שモאל א**) and so paskens the Rambam (**הל'**). Similarly, women are not obligated to bring the korban, but may do so if they wish (**עירובין צו**, ע"א, **מאיiri שם**). If a woman brings the korban, however, she does not do semicha (laying her hands on the animal), like the men.

There is a machloket in the Mishna (**חגיגה א, ב**) between Shamai and Hillel regarding the minimum age from which a male child is obligated to do **עליה לרגל**. According to Shamai, from the age the boy is able to ride on his father's shoulders. According to Hillel (according to whom we pasken), from the age he can hold his father's hand and walk himself. The Tosfot (**חגיגה ב**, ע"א) says that

this is also the age from which the child is obligated to bring the korban ראייה. Rashi disagrees with Tosfot and says the obligation to bring the korban only begins at age bar mitzvah.

What exactly is the korban עולת ראייה? According to some Rishonim (רש"י, רבינו חננאל) it must be a בבהמה, an ox, a sheep or a goat. According to the Rambam (who we pasken like), it may also be a bird. As we say in Shacharit every morning (משנה פאה א, א) תריאו ... אלו זבירים שאין להם שעור, it is dependent on the financial status of the owner, if they can afford a larger, more expensive animal ... or not. Chazal, however, did determine a minimum cost for this korban – מעה אמת (a מעה is a small coin from the time of the Gemara, about 0.8g of silver. 6 מעה are equivalent to 1 זעיר).

The mitzva (לכתחלה) is to offer the korban on the first day of chag, unless it is Shabbat, in which case it is נחתה to the following day. If for some reason the person could not offer it on the first day, he is still able to offer it on the subsequent days of chag (בדייעבד).

What is the purpose of this korban?

The Sefer HaChinuch (פרנקפורט, תפט) says - "The source of this mitzva is that all of Am Yisrael will appear and be present and focus on the action of the korban, which stirs the hearts. This is because *all* of them, from the youngest to the oldest, are part of Hashem and his inheritance, a holy and chosen nation, preservers of His covenant, the pinnacle of all nations under heaven, to observe His statutes and to uphold His laws. Therefore, they will come three times a year to the house of Hashem, saying using a parable 'We are slaves to the L-rd, entering under the shade of His protection and by His virtue, we are forever close to His love and awe, and a stranger shall not enter among us, because we alone are part of His household'. And with this action, our awareness will awaken and His awe will enter our hearts and we will fix His love in our minds and we will merit receiving His kindness and blessing."

Simply examining the lashon of the psukim it is clear that there are two dominant elements at work here – sight (יראה, פנוי) and face (פנוי, פנוי).

The question is – "Whose sight? and whose face?"

From the pshat of the psukim, it seems that it is HKB" H's "sight" (kiveyachol) and HKB" H's "face" (kiveyachol).

– יראה כל זכורך אל פנוי הארץ – All your males will be seen (in the passive) to the face of HKB" H.

– ולא יראו פנוי ריקם – they will not be seen to My face empty handed.

The pshat of the psukim seemingly implies that HKB" H's "face" "sees" us, kiveyachol. We do not see, we "are seen" **יְרֹאָה, יְרֹאוּ**.

That seems to be the pshat, but certain questions arise from the syntax of the psukim.

If the passuk **יְרֹאָה כָּל זְכֹרֶךְ** means "All your males will be seen", then the passuk should have said **יְרֹאוּ כָּל זְכֹרֶךְ** – in the plural. Why does it use the singular **יְרֹאָה**?

If the passuk **וְלَا יְרֹאוּ פְנֵי רַיקָם** means "They will not be seen to My face empty handed", the passuk should have said **וְלَا יְרֹאוּ אֶל פְנֵי רַיקָם** or **וְלَا יְרֹאוּ אֶל פְנֵי רַיקָם לְפָנֵי רַיקָם**

Then comes the Rambam with his halacha lema'aseh - **בְּתוֹרָה הִיא שְׁנָרָאָה פְנֵיו בְּעִזָּרָה בַּיּוֹם טוֹב הַרְאָשׁוֹן שֶׁל מֶגֶן וַיְבִיאָה עַפּוֹ קָרְבָּנוֹ וּכְוֹי (הַלִּיְלִיָּה אֶת חִגְגָה אֶת אַתָּה)**, and confuses us even further.

What does **שְׁנָרָאָה פְנֵיו בְּעִזָּרָה** mean? Does it mean "that the face of the will be seen in the Azara"? If so, it seems to be referring to the face of *Am Yisrael*, and not the "face" of HKB" H (kiveyachol) - which seemingly contradicts the psukim. If **שְׁנָרָאָה פְנֵיו** means HKB" H's "face" (kiveyachol), then the second part of the halacha is incongruous **וַיְבִיאָה עַפּוֹ** - and he (*Am Yisrael*) will bring with him (a korban). You can't have the first half "His face" referring to HKB" H and the second half "will bring with him" referring to *Am Yisrael*. If it means HKB" H's face in the first half, then the second half should say **וַיְבִיאָה אֶלְיוֹן פְנֵיו** to match the first half **שְׁנָרָאָה פְנֵיו**.

HaRav Moshe Odes in his sefer *Bilvavi Mishkan Evneh*, quoting the Rambam (ibid.) says that by bringing this korban we achieve such *proximity* to HKB" H, it is as if **שְׁנָרָאָה פְנֵיו**, "we see His face", kivachol (**בְּלֹבֶבִי מִשְׁכַּן אָבֵנָה**, **עַמִּי 99**)

Confused yet?

Again, I ask the question "Whose sight? and whose face?"

After that short introduction we can begin the shiur. I would like to bring a principle from sefer *Meir Panim* (פרק יד, עמי קמד). Not surprisingly, the sefer deals to a large extent with the subject of "faces" as it postulates that the reason for the name **לְחַנִּים הַפְנִים** (as Ben Zoma says), is that the korban Lechem HaPanim actually resembles a smiling human face.

To understand the principle, we need to use the mashal of the dashboard of a car. Very few of us are mechanically minded and if we popped the hood,

would not be able to identify more than perhaps one or two components that are recognizable to us, e.g. the spout into which we pour the windscreen wiper liquid, perhaps the car battery. Most of us, if we gazed at the internal "gizmos" of the car, would not be able to recognize if there was a problem with them or not.

For this reason, cars have dashboards. The purpose of a dashboard is to alert the driver if any of the myriad components require attention/servicing/repair etc. When a red warning light lights up on the dashboard, it draws our attention to the fact that the fuel is running low, the pressure in the tires is low, the engine is overheating, etc. etc. This allows us to address the problem and hopefully deal with it in a timely manner before it causes irreparable damage.

The human body works in a similar way. The exterior of the body is a kind of a "dashboard" for the interior. By observing certain "tell-tale" signs on the exterior of our body, we can identify many conditions relating to the inner workings of our bodies. This is the way physicians of old could diagnose various conditions, long before blood testing, X-rays, ECG's, etc. were invented. Physicians would observe things like skin color, the surface of the tongue, fingernails, the iris of the eye, etc. and be able to identify things like hepatitis, cardiovascular and pulmonary disorders, genetic conditions, etc.

The human face is a similar type of "dashboard", but it is unique in that it primarily reflects the inner workings of the *soul*, the neshama, and not the body. Facial expression reflects inner emotions and thought processes such as sadness, joy, worry, hope, disappointment, pride, shame etc. The face is a "window to the soul".

Two primary facial features are responsible for the majority of facial expressions – the mouth and the eyes. Meir Panim delves deeply into the connection between the shape of the Lechem HaPanim/the mouth and the bazichim of Levonah/the eyes. We have a hint to this from the smiling mouth shape of the Lechem HaPanim according to R' Yochanan - רזקְתָּה רַזְפִּינָה, which in gematriya is שְׁלַחְנָמָה.

Certain facial expressions can be manipulated by will and others are automatic responses by the body over which the will has no control. One such expression is a smile. Young children, when they smile, express an inner feeling of joy. As we get older, we learn to manipulate our smile for our own agendas and it is not always easy to identify an adult's true inner feelings based purely on their smile. Some smiles are a smirk, some are mocking, some are fake ... some are authentic.

One of the pioneering neurologists to study the science of facial expression was a Frenchman by the name of Guillaume Duchenne, in the early 1800's. He experimented by attaching electrodes to various facial muscles,

stimulating them with electric impulses and recording the facial expression that resulted.

Duchenne said that there are many different types of smiles, but only one of them is an "authentic" smile that is not manipulated by will. In his own words Duchenne describes this smile as "Reflecting the sweet emotions of the soul", poetic words recited by a scientist (if only the scientists of today would tone down the arrogance a notch and acknowledge more truth of HKB'H's creation). Subsequently, in the scientific lingo, an authentic smile has become known as a Duchenne smile, after its "discoverer" (something our sages knew millennia before him).

This principle that the face is a window to the soul has modern practical applications in the fields of psychology, criminology and even for employers conducting job interviews, specifically looking for telltale signs connected to facial expression, eye-contact, etc. Body language and specifically "facial language" has developed into an advanced science.

Centuries, even millennia ago, the great Gedolei Yisrael could tell who a person was *inside* by simply looking at their face. The Gemara (Brachot 28a) describes how Rabban Gamliel posted a guard, שומר הפתוח, at the door of the Beit Midrash and only students שתווכו בברור, whose "insides" were like their "outsides" were allowed entry. Anyone who pretended to be a big tzaddik on the outside but inside was a no-goodnik, was not allowed in. How could this guard see their "insides"? Take a guess ...

Facial expression has a special power that it directly affects those who see it and most often results in a *reciprocal* facial expression of the **same type**. This is what Shamai says (אבות א, טו) **ונחוי מקוביל את כל האדים בסבר פנים יפות**. The Rambam interprets this as **ונחוי מקוביל את כל האדים בסבר פנים יפות**. When you smile at someone, for example, they will most often parallel your facial expression and smile back (and vice versa). Try it ... when you are walking in the street, smile at a total stranger and see their reaction.

Now we get to the Beit HaMikdash. The Beit HaMikdash is a 3-tier structure. **מִקְדָּשׁ שֶׁל מִطְהָה**, the heavenly Mikdash up in heaven. **מִקְדָּשׁ שֶׁל מָעָלָה**, the earthly Mikdash on Har Habayit in Yerushalayim. **מִקְדָּשׁ שֶׁבָּתוּכֶנוּ**, the Mikdash inside each of us, as the passuk says (שמות כה ח) **וַעֲשֵׂה לְךָ מִקְדָּשׁ וְשִׁכְנָתִי בְּתוֹכֶם**.

The earthly Mikdash in Yerushalayim is a portal, a "gateway" between the heavenly Mikdash and the Mikdash within each and every one of us. In order for the 3-tier structure to function, there has to be *parity* between the **מִקְדָּשׁ שֶׁל מָעָלָה** and the **מִקְדָּשׁ שֶׁבָּתוּכֶנוּ**.

This is the purpose of **עליה לרגל**. All males, **כל זכר**, are obligated to go up to the **מִקְדָּשׁ** in Yerushalayim three times a year to "resync" their inner

Mikdash with the heavenly Mikdash. Women may join their husbands if they wish, but for them it is not compulsory. Why? Because a woman does *not need* to resync. Her inner Mikdash is *directly linked* to the heavenly Mikdash with no intermediary. How do we know this? From the tent of Sarah Imeinu. Her tent resembled a Mikdash – the cloud of the Shechina rested on her tent, there was blessing on the dough (Lechem HaPanim) and her candle remained lit from erev Shabbat to erev Shabbat (Menora). Whose tent? *Sarah's* tent! It doesn't say Avraham's tent. Avraham had to shlep with Yitzchak all the way to Har HaMoriah for the Akeida to achieve the same synchronization with the heavenly Mikdash, that Sarah enjoyed *every day* in her own tent.

From which age do the males in Am Yisrael need to resync? It is a machloket between Rashi and Tosfot, from the age of bar-mitzvah or from the age they can walk on their own such a long distance. Why this specific age? Because at this age (each according to their own shita) the child acquires **צַעַת** of their own. Prior to this age, the male child is like a woman (her entire life) – fully synced with the heavenly Mikdash. However, once a male child acquires **צַעַת**, the inner Mikdash may be manipulated by their **צַעַת**, just as an adult learns to manipulate their smile according to will and learns to fake a smile. From this age they have to visit the earthly Mikdash in Yerushalayim on the chagim to resync their Duchenne smile.

Whose "face" and whose "sight"? we asked earlier. The psukim (and the halacha of the Rambam that reflects them) are deliberately non-specific, because it is two "faces" and two "sights". We have to do **עַלְיהָ לְרַגֵּל** so that we can see HKB"H's face and ALSO so that that HKB"H can see our face! The purpose of **עַלְיהָ לְרַגֵּל** is to resync the "faces", realign our inner Mikdash with the heavenly Mikdash, as the Rambam says **וְהַנִּי מַקְבִּיל**, to achieve a relationship with HKB"H **בְּפָנָים**.

The **עֹלֶת רָאִיה** is not the only korban brought by the olei haregel. They also have to bring a **שְׁלֵמִי שְׁמַחָה** and **קָרְבָּנוֹת גִּנְגָה**. Unlike the latter two, where the person enjoys a large portion of the korban himself, the **עֹלֶת רָאִיה** is entirely for HKB"H and the person eats nothing from it. It is total sacrifice to HKB"H. For this reason, it has no preset **שְׁעָוָר**. Not everyone has the same resync requirements. Some require more, some less. However, there is a minimum requirement a **מַעַה**. Why specifically a **מַעַה**? Because **הַגְּנִי** in gematriya is **מַעַה**, the call of allegiance that is the precursor to resyncing with HKB"H – showing up!

The reason this korban is **נַקְרֵת** if the first day of chag is Shabbat, is because Shabbat *itself* is a resync – you don't need a double resync.

I would like to end by repeating that beautiful perush of the Sefer HaChinuch (in seven short lines the Chinuch managed to encapsulate what took me seven pages to write) –

מִשְׁרַשֵּׁי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לְמַעַן יִירְאָו כֵּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּתְנוּ אֶל לְבָם בַּפְּעֻולַּת הַקּוֹרֵבַן הַמְּעוֹרֶר הַלְּבָבּוֹת כִּי כָּלָם מִקְטַּנִּים וְעַד גְּדוֹלָם חָלֵק הַשֵּׁם וְנַחֲלָתוֹ, עַם קְדוּשָׁ וְגַבְּרָר, נַצְרִי עֲדוֹתוֹ, סִגּוּלַת כָּל הַעֲמִים אֲשֶׁר תָּמַת כָּל הַשָּׁמִים, לְשֻׁמֶּר חִזְקִיוּוֹ וְלִקְיִים ذָהָז. עַל גַּן יְבָאוּ שְׁלֹשָׁ פָּעָמִים בְּשִׁנְיָה בֵּית הַשֵּׁם, וְהוּא בָּאָמָרָם עַל דָּרָךְ מְשֻׁלָּ: "הַנְּנוּ לֹא-לְלַעֲבָדִים, נְכָנִסִּים וּבְאָמִים בְּכָל קֹרְתָּו, וּבְחִזְקָתָו סְמוּכִים לְעַד לְעוֹלָם בָּאָהָבָתוֹ וּבִירָאָתוֹ, וּזְרָ לֹא יָבֹא בְּתוּכָנוּ כִּי אֲנַחַנוּ לְבָדָנו בְּנֵי בֵּיתָו". וְעַם הַמְּעָשָׁה הַזֶּה וְתַּעֲוָרֶר דָּעַתָּנוּ וּנְכָנִיס בְּלַבָּנוּ מָוֹרָאָו וּנְקַבֵּעַ בְּרָעִיּוֹנוּ אָהָבָתוֹ וּזְכָה לְקַבֵּל מִסְדָּזָו וּבְרָכָתוֹ.

We should all be zochech this coming Chodesh Nisan to bring our first korban in the 3rd Beit HaMikdash.

Shabbat Shalom

Eliezer Meir Saidel

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