



פרשת ויקרא
ניסן תש"פ

KOLLEL ONLINE SHIURIM

The Coronavirus has not stopped Limmud Hatorah in our community. Despite the closing of our Beis Midrash, Kollel is very much alive and well.

We have harnessed modern technology to offer our community the ability to enjoy the same quality shiurim and learning programs from the comfort of your own home!

Retirees Shiur: A 40 minute daily Gemara shiur with Rabbi M. Szmerning. Followed by a Kitzur Shulchan Aruch shiur with Rabbi M. Gurkov. Monday-Thursday 10:00am

Shalos Uteshuvos: Sunday 9:30am with Rabbi Johnson

Maamarim on Pesach: Textual Chassidus. 8:30pm with Rabbi Yossi Gopin

Halachos of Pesach: In depth study with Rabbi Stern. Tuesday 8:30pm

Nach Shiur: Wednesday 8:30pm with Rabbi Gordon

Likutei Sichos project: 8:30pm Thursday with Rabbi Aryeh Knapp

Dor Ledor Learning

Boys are encouraged to learn with their fathers at home over Shabbos or Motzai Shabbos. Submit your son's name after Shabbos to enter the Melbourne-wide raffle to win.

For access details, email kollel@yeshivahcentre.org



#Kollel Continues. Learning in the park. See page 3 for more photos

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The positive side of arrogance

Sefer Vayikra is referred to as Toras Kohanim as it discusses the laws of the sacrifices and the laws of purity. The opening Parshios begin with the Torah's discussion on the various Korbanos which would be brought on the Mizbeach.

When describing the Mincha flour-offerings, the Torah warns כי כל שאר וכל דבש לא תקטירו ממנו אשה לה' "any leaven and any honey, you shall not cause to go up in smoke as a fire-offering to Hashem".

According to most commentaries, honey here refers to the sweet juice which come from fruits.

It is for this reason, that the Mincha offerings in the Beis Hamkidash, including the Lechem Hapanim, were baked as Matzah.

In the very next Posuk, the Torah writes קרבן ראשית תקריבו אותם לה' "You shall bring the first offering for Hashem". This refers to the Bikkurim and to the two loaves that were brought on Shavuos.

The Bikkurim came from the 7 Species of Eretz Yisroel. These include dates which have honey. And in contrast to the other Menachos, the two loaves of Shavuos had to be made as Chometz.

Rashi points out the contradiction of these juxtaposed verses, explaining that the Bikkurim and the Shtei Halechem are exceptions to the normal rule specified in the earlier Posuk.

In these Pesukim, the Baal Shem Tov (Kesser Shem Tov 2:393) finds a deep insight into how we should approach our service of Hashem.

The Baal Shem Tov explains that honey and leaven represent the Middah of arrogance and haughtiness. Leaven rises and puffs itself up. Similarly, when honey boils it also bubbles up. On a deeper level, the Posuk is teaching us that on the altar of Avodas Hashem, arrogance has no place.

But, there is an exception. The Bikkurim and Shtei Halechem are referred to as the Korban Reishis (literally the first offering). The Baal Shem Tov explains that this refers to a person who is at the beginning stage of serving Hashem.

At the beginning of one's Avodah an element of pride (a subtle form of arrogance) is needed to stand up to our Yetzer Hora. The Yetzer Hora tries to sway us away

with thoughts of "who am I and what am I to be able to approach Hashem." This type of humility is wrong and misplaced. We need to have a healthy dose of haughtiness to overcome it.

But even then, the continuation of the Posuk warns; ואל המזבח לא יעלו לריח ניחח. The Middah of pride may be appropriate as a Korban Reishis, when first approaching the service of Hashem, but it cannot go up onto the altar of Avodas Hashem.

The subsequent Posuk teaches us that if one continues to serve Hashem as an expression of self-pride or arrogance, it will not be a pleasing fragrance before Him.

The Rebbe expands this theme. Sweet honey represents pleasure. At the beginning of one's Avodas Hashem it may be necessary to learn or keep Mitzvos because of the personal pleasure they derive. But this is *Shelo Lishma* and only appropriate as a start. Ultimately, our Avodas Hashem should be purely *Lishma*, for Hashem's sake alone.

The Baal Shem Tov's message is very relevant in our Chinuch approach. In their formative years we are initiating our children into the experience of serving Hashem, a Korban Reishis.

It is necessary for them to be given a strong sense of pride in being frum children to be able to overcome peer pressure, society's perspectives and a host of other challenges. A small dose of haughtiness is appropriate to achieve this.

We also have to give them a *Geshmak* in Torah and Mitzvos so that they feel its sweetness and enjoyment. There are a lot of competing pleasures the world has to offer and if we want our children to "buy-in" to Yiddishkeit, they need to feel personal enjoyment in it.

This is the Reishis. Long term, we need to inculcate the value of Kabolas Ol, serving Hashem for His sake. Our personal enjoyment is not the ultimate and certainly not the objective. And we need to ensure that their pride does not become elitism or arrogance, feeling better than others. Then they will climb the altar of Avodas Hashem and be a true pleasing fragrance to Him.

The weekly Halacha analysis

The Rebbe Rashab's Mikvah

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

Erev Shabbos was Beis Nissan, the Yartzheit of Rabbi Shalom Dovber Schneerson, the fifth Chabad Rebbe, known as the Rebbe Rashab. The Rebbe Rashab passed away exactly 100 years ago in the city of Rostov.

In the city of Rostov, the Rebbe Rashab built a unique Mikvah. Giving detailed and explicit instructions on how it should be built, the Rebbe Rashab was concerned that the Mikvah should meet the highest degree of Hiddur. He was careful to ensure that it satisfied the opinions of most of the Rishonim.

The Rebbe Rashab's Mikvah had a number of unique features. It has become the prototype for Chabad Mikvaos around the world.

In this article we will outline some of the key features of the Chabad Mikvah and why it was built in this particular manner.

Whilst at present, going to Mikvah for men is not possible, may our study of Mikvaos be considered as our purification.

Background

אך מעיין ובור מקוה מים יהיה טהור
"A spring or pit of collected water will be pure"

This Posuk describes two types of bodies of water which may be used for purification; a Maayan (natural spring) or a Mikvah. The word Mikvah means a gathering of collected water.

The water of a Mikvah must gather naturally from rainwater which collects into an excavation or structure built into or on the ground. There must be a minimum of 40 Se'ah (approx. 332L according to הגר"ח נאה) although common practise (and according to the Rebbe Rashab as well) is to collect significantly more than this to satisfy all opinions with absolute certainty.

In previous times, Mikvaos would have only a single Bor (pit), and people would Toivel in the actual rainwater. However, since the water could not be changed (without collecting new rainfall), the water in these Mikvaos would sit stagnant and become dirty.

Cleaner Mikvaos

For the last few hundred years, Mikvaos have been constructed using two Boros. This allows the water used for Toivelling to be changed regularly so that they remain clean,



while the rain water remains completely intact.

The rainwater is kept in one Bor known as the בור מי גשמים—the rainwater Bor. A separate Bor is used for Toivelling. This Bor is filled with regular tap water and can be filled and refilled to keep the Mikvah clean. This tank is referred to as the בור טבילה.

Tap water itself is not kosher for a Mikvah since it is 'drawn'. The בור טבילה (the Mikvah of tap water in which the person immerses) must be rendered kosher by connecting it to the rainwater tank.

The connection is achieved via an opening between the two Boros of at least two finger-breadths diameter (approx. 4cm) which remains open. This method of connecting the two Boros is called Hashakah, literally the kissing of the waters, describing how the waters touch one another.

Traditionally these two Boros were positioned side-by-side with the hole placed in the wall in between them. In halachic literature, this type of Mikvah is referred to as בור מן הצד, the Bor on the side.

The "Chabad" Mikvah

In earlier years, the Rebbe Rashab was adamantly opposed to the building of Mikvaos using rainwater. There are many halachic concerns that could compromise their Kashrus.

Instead, the Rebbe Rashab said that communities and towns should continue to follow their practise of using Maayanos, natural springs and rivers.

However, when the Rebbe Rashab moved to Rostov, a large city, it was no longer practical to use the river. The Rebbe Rashab therefore determined to build a Mikvah that would address all of his halachic concerns.

One of the primary features of this Mikvah was that instead of placing the Boros side by side, the rainwater Bor would be placed underneath the immersion Bor, with the connection hole in the floor of the upper Mikvah. Due to its configuration, this type of Mikvah is referred to as בור על גבי בור, a Bor on top of a Bor.

The Rebbe Rashab also specified that the Mikvaos should be connected with two holes rather than one, to avoid a situation where the hole gets blocked. He also required that these holes be one Tefach diameter (approx. 8cm), which is larger than the minimum 2 fingerbreadths measure specified in Shulchan Aruch.

Why Bor Al Gabei Bor?

According to the Raavad and others, once the original 40 Se'ah of rainwater becomes diluted with tap/drawn water and reduced to less than 50%, the Mikvah is invalidated.

Whilst the halacha does not accord with the Raavad, we try to build Mikvaos to a level of hiddur which would satisfy most opinions. The Rebbe Rashab was concerned that the Mikvah satisfy this opinion as well.

When the two Boros are positioned side by side, there is greater mixing of the waters between the two chambers. Each time the בור טבילה is drained, rainwater will also be lost as it spills from the rainwater tank into the immersion tank. This creates a situation where the refilling will cause a dilution of the original rainwater and the concern of it falling below the 50% threshold.

By placing the rainwater Bor below the בור טבילה, with only the small holes connecting them, the dilution rate is greatly reduced, since the draining of the upper Mikvah does not affect the water level in the lower one.

(Additionally, the water in the upper Mikvah is usually heated, whereas the rainwater is not. Since heat rises and cool falls, the waters are kept distinct and minimises mixing).

Another concern is that when the Mikvaos are side by side, constant care must be taken to ensure that the water level of the immersion Mikva remains above the connecting hole. One need not worry about this in a בור בור Mikvah. על גבי בור Mikvah.

Rainwater reservoir

Even with the Boros built one on top of the other, the Rebbe was still concerned about the dilution of rainwater over time as the immersion Mikvah is emptied and refilled (albeit at a much slower rate). This is because the waters of the two Boros still mix at their point of contact.

(In the 18 months between the construction of the Mikvah and his passing, the Rebbe Rashab instructed at least once that the rainwater be replaced.)

To address this concern, the Rebbe Rashab requested that an Otzar - an additional rainwater tank should be constructed, adjacent to the Mikvah. This tank would continue to collect rainwater from the roof. This would provide an ever-ready supply of fresh rainwater to be able to replenish or refill the rainwater tank, without needing to wait for new rainfall once the Mikva would be emptied.

Key Features of a Mikvah

Adjacent, is a diagram showing a "Chabad Mikvah" and its key features which are described below.

A. The rainwater Bor is situated under the floor of the upper Toivelling Mikvah. This is

where the rainwater collects when being filled.

The opening is fitted with a ledge. Once filled with rainwater, a stone cover is fitted into the opening sitting on top of the ledge. The Bor is sealed with a water-proofing to ensure that it does not leak.

B. Two openings of one Tefach width are left uncovered. These holes create the Hashkaha connection between the upper and lower Boros. In many Mikvaos these holes are placed under the stairs to prevent someone standing on them.

C. Rainwater enters the Mikvah falling into the אוצר מי גשמים. Customarily the rainwater first flows through a Hamshacha channel (not depicted) before entering the Mikvah.

D. Once the lower Mikvah has been filled with rainwater and covered, regular tap water is used to fill (and refill) the upper Mikvah.

E. As an extra hiddur, all water coming into the Mikvah flows through a Hamshacha channel of at least 3 Tefachim. This channel is constructed of a concrete mix or earth which is able to absorb water. This hiddur has many halachic benefits to ensure the kashrus of the Mikvah.

F. A pump is used to drain the tap water from the upper Mikvah when required.

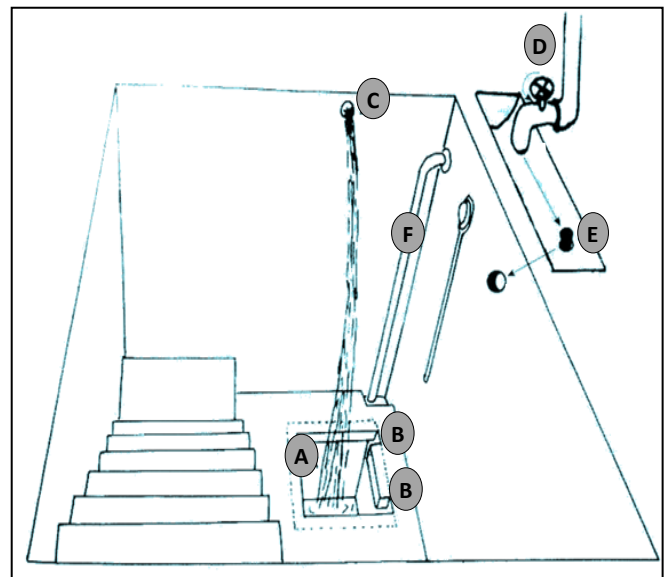
Conclusion

For Chassidim going to Mikvah is an integral part of our Avodah. immersing in a Mikvah daily is one of the preparations for davening which facilitates enhanced Kavana. It is also customary for men to go to the Mikvah on Erev Shabbos and one is required to purify themselves before Yomtov.

In the Zechus of studying the halachos of Mikvah may we merit the revelation of the teaching in the Mishna;

” אמר רבי עקיבא אשריכם ישראל לפני מי אתם מטהרין ומי מטהר אתכם, אביכם שבשמים שנאמר וזרקתי עליכם מים טהורים וטהרתם”

And may we experience the ultimate Tahrarah with the hisgalus of Moshiach now.



#Kollel Continues

Despite the closure of the physical building, Kollel and Limmud Hatorah must continue. Our Kollel Rabbis have been hard at work maintaining their learning schedules, community Chavrusas and shiurim at offsite locations, on the phone and via digital technology. We have also moved many of our shiurim online to live teleconferencing. Email kollel@yeshivahcentre.org to get details of this week's schedule.

Beis Nissan Recount: This week saw many fantastic online shiurim and events. On Beis Nissan, in honour of the Rebbe Rashab's 100th Yartzheit, 3 online shiurim focused on the significance of the day. Rabbi Johnson led a shiur studying part of the first Maamar recited by the Friedrike Rebbe, based on the final Maamar of the Rebbe Rashab. This was followed by a shiur in a Sichah of the Rebbe, explaining the message within the Rebbe Rashab's final words "I am going to Heaven, and the writing of Chassidus I leave for you." The third shiur explored the heartfelt and emotional letter written to the Chassidim by the Friedrike Rebbe after the passing of his father.

