

PHILOTORAH

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵלֵהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁתְּשַׁלַּח מְהֵרָה רְפוּאָה שְׁלָמָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם,
רְפוּאָת הַנַּפְשׁ וְרְפוּאָת הַגּוּף לְפְצוּעֵי הַמְּלַחְמָה, וְלַנִּפְגְּעֵי מַעֲשֵׂי טְרוֹר וְאִנְטִישְׁמִיּוֹת
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְכָל מְקוֹם שֶׁהֵם - עִם שְׂאֵר חוֹלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. אָמֵן.

May HaShem protect our soldiers; may He send Refu'ah Sh'leima to the many injured; may He console the bereaved families and all of Israel; may He end this war with success and peace for Medinat Yisrael and Klal Yisrael wherever we are.



YERUSHALAYIM in/out times for **KI TISA - PARA**

י"ח אדר ה'תשפ"ו • March 6-7, '26

 **5:05PM** PLAG  **4:28PM** •  **6:18PM** R' Tam  **6:53PM**

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Parshat PARA

Parshat Para is read on Shabbat Parshat Ki Tisa 41.81% of years. Para is paired with Vayak-hel (3.31% - rarest), Vayak-hel - P'kudei (18.05%), Tzav (16.3%), Sh'mini (20.51%).

When Ki Tisa is not partnered with Para, it is read on its own (58.19%).

When Ki Tisa and Para are read on the same Shabbat, there is a significant connection between them. In Ki Tisa, we read about the sin of the golden calf, CHEIT HA-EIGEL. Parshat Para is about the mitzva of the Red Heifer - the PARA ADUMA.

When we look into a Chumash at this perek, we find a very unusual situation in Rashi. Usually, Rashi's commentary is presented as words or small phrases that he comments upon. And that is what we expect and do find in Bamidbar 22. Which we do find there. But then we find something quite unexpected, maybe even unique in Rashi's commentary. At the end of the perek, Rashi reviews the text with a different set of commentaries. This 'extra' commentary, says Rashi, is based on the Midrash, mostly on the drash of Rabi Moshe HaDarshan (early 11th

cent. of the common era). Rashi then proceeds to comment on different points in Parshat Para, some of which are these:

V'YIKCHU EILECHA - and have them take for you: From their own [possessions]; just as they removed their own golden earrings for the [golden] calf, so shall they bring this [cow] from their own [possessions] in atonement.

PARA ADUMA - a red cow: This can be compared to the son of a maidservant who soiled the king's palace. They said, "Let his mother come and clean up the mess." Similarly, let the cow come and atone for the calf.

ADUMA - red: Alluding to [the verse], "if they [your sins] prove to be as red as crimson dye" (Yishayahu 1:18), for sin is described as [being] 'red.'

T'MIMA - perfectly: An allusion to the Israelites, who were perfect, but became blemished. Let this come and atone for them so that they regain their perfection.

ASHER LO ALA ALEHA OL - and upon which no yoke was laid: Just as they cast off from themselves the yoke of Heaven.

EL ELAZAR HAKOHEN - to Elazar the kohen: just as they assembled against Aharon HaKohen to make the calf, but because Aharon made the calf,

this service was not performed through him (but rather his son) for the prosecution cannot serve as the defense.

V'SARAF ET HAPARA - The cow shall then be burned: just as the calf was burned.

EITZ EREZ V'EIZOV V'TOLAAT HA-SHANI - a piece of cedar wood, hyssop, and of crimson wool: These three objects correspond to the 3000 men who fell because of the [sin of the golden] calf. The cedar is the highest of all trees, and the hyssop is the lowest of them all. This symbolizes that the one of high standing who acts haughtily and sins should lower himself like a hyssop and a worm [for TOLAAT means 'worm' as well as 'crimson' - see Rashi on Yishayahu 1:18], and he will then gain atonement.

L'MISHMERET - a keepsake: Just as the transgression of the calf is preserved throughout the generations for retribution, for there is no reckoning [punishment] which does include a reckoning for the calf, as it says, "But on the day I make an accounting [of sins upon them], I will bring their sin to account..." (Sh'mot 32:34). Just as the calf defiled all those who were involved in it, so does the cow render unclean all those involved with it. And just as they were cleansed through its ashes, as it says, "[he] scattered [the ashes of the

burned calf] upon the surface of the water" (32:20), so [with the cow], "They shall take for that unclean person from the ashes of the burnt purification offering..." (pasuk 17).

Over all, it is a well-done analogy that keeps emphasizing the the **PARA**

ADUMA is an atonement and tikun for the **EIGEL HAZAHAV**. The mother is truly cleaning up the mess that her son made.

Except for one thing.

The Para Aduma Potion is used to purify one who became **TAMEI** from contact with a dead body. A person who is **TAMEI** may not go into the Mikdash, may not eat sacred foods... but being **T'MEI MEIT** is not a sin. In many cases it is even a mitzva to become Tamei. Think of the great mitzva performed time and again by members of the Chevra Kadisha. Think of a child (any age) becoming Tamei as he lovingly prepares to bury his dear parent.

Not a sin! So why are we speaking of Para Aduma as an atonement and repair (**TIKUN**) for sin, when its function is the purification of the ritually defiled?

Perfect detailed analogy, but we need to connect **TUM'A** to **CHEIT**, sin.

The answer might be linked to the question - why is a dead body **AVI AVOT HATUM'A**, the super-source of

defilement? The human body houses and is partnered with the soul during a person's lifetime. Perhaps it can be similar to an orange peel or eggshell to an orange or an egg. While the fruit or egg is intact, the peel has a purpose. On its own, after removal of the content, its function is over and it is discarded. But it isn't negative. It isn't spiritually poisonous. Why is the human body different?

The answer is SIN. As mentioned earlier, the body not only houses the NESHAMA - it also partners with it. And the function of the body & soul is to live a good, moral life. And for Jews, that means a life filled with Torah and Mitzvot, Torah values and compliance, to be faithful to G-d and to be good to each other. It is the body that unfortunately fails on occasion, in its tasks and challenges. It is the body of a person that betrays the relationship that was formed at birth (or even earlier) and continues throughout a lifetime. To teach us that sin causes us to mistreat our Neshama and to slacken off from our true purpose of life, the body, when the soul leaves it, is not merely neutral, but is halachically deemed the main source of defilement. The purification from that Tum'a by the sprinkling of the Para Aduma Potion on the third and seventh day (in addition to seven days and Mikve) is truly an atonement for the specific sin of the golden calf and from sin, in

general. May we be zocheh to the purification by the ashes of the Para Aduma, and by complete T'shuva that will merit us the purifying waters from HaShem, of which the haftara this week speaks.

All of the above can be said when Parshat Para is paired with any sedra. But with Para coming together with Parshat Ki Tisa and its account of the sin of the golden calf and its aftermath, the message is all the more poignant.