



LT TORAH TO GO



Volume 13 - Issue 28

Edited by Rabbi Mara Nathan on behalf of generations of Torah Learners at Larchmont Temple.

EXPERIENCE TORAH THIS WEEK: March 29 – April 4
KABBALAT SHABBAT 6:30PM ~ EREV SHABBAT 8:00PM
SHABBAT AM SERVICE SATURDAY 10:30AM

SHABBAT TZAV 5769

Leviticus 6:1-8:36

pp. 781-798 in [Torah, a Modern Commentary](#)

PSHAT...*The plain/simple story*

Parashat Tzav repeats and enlarges upon the descriptions of the sacrifices already discussed in *parashat Vayikra*. Included in this portion are details about how the ancient offerings of the *olah* (the burnt offering), *mincha* (meal offering), *chatat* (sin offering), *asham* (guilt offering), and *zevach shlamim* (sacrifice of well being) were performed. We are also given a description of the ordination of Aaron and his sons as priests in the sanctuary and of the dedication of the first sanctuary.

REMEZ...*Looking for clues*

The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it, it shall not be extinguished... Leviticus 6:5

KOSHI...what is the purpose of the altar fires, how are they a metaphor for our own spiritual connection to God?

TALMUD...This passage contains three references to fire on the Altar. Two are in verse 2: a) *al mok-dah*, on the flame; b) *v'eish hamizbeach*— and the fire of the Altar, and the third is in verse 5: *v'haeish al-haz-mibeach*, the fire on the Altar. This teaches that three fires were kept burning on the Altar constantly. These fires were the large pyre upon which the offerings were burned, the second pyre of the incense, from which burning coals were taken and brought into the Sanctuary for the morning and afternoon incense service and the pyre for the perpetuation of the fires, from which burning wood was added to the large flame whenever necessary.

RAMBAN...*should be kept aflame on it...*This is a positive commandment that the Kohanim must place enough wood on the fire to keep it burning at all times, including the entire night.

HERTZ...*it should not go out...*During the day also. Even on the Sabbath, fuel was to be placed on the Altar. The law, 'you shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day' [Exodus 35:3] did not apply to the Sanctuary.

DRASH...*Discovering Meaning...*

SCHNNEERSON...When the Torah says the fire on the altar shall be kept burning, not to go out... it is referring, not only to the duty of the priest to keep the altar of the sanctuary burning, but also to the way in which one practices Jewish tradition. "It is not a private possession to be cherished subconsciously, it must show in the face a person sets towards the world....A Jew must be "involved" bringing life and fire to the three aspects of Jewish existence: 1- to the learning of Torah, 2- to prayer, and 3- to the practice of charity. 'Words of Torah' should be spoken with fire....They should penetrate every facet of a person's being. In other words, learning must not be dull exercises but a way of filling each person with a desire to practice the wisdom, ethics and traditions of Torah. In practicing the mitzvah of Tzedakah, it is not enough to provide money and services for the poor and sick. One must do it with an inner warmth that manifests itself outwardly, providing an example for others. In all these ways the fire on the altar will be kept burning.

Yashar Koach to this week's Bar Mitzvah:

ZACHARY HURWITZ

Come hear him teach Torah this Saturday at 10:30AM

SOD...Finding Ourselves

...One of the most important parts in this Torah portion is when the priests were instructed to keep the fire of the altar or the eternal light burning at all times. The priests would lay wood out to burn every morning to rekindle the fire throughout the day. My question is why is it so important to keep the fire burning? Really, what was its purpose then and what does it teach us today?

In Leviticus Chapter 6 the text reads *v' ha-aish miz-bay-ach tu-kad-BO*, "and the fire of the altar shall be kept there." The Hebrew word *Bo* means, there. The word *Bo* also means "within" which could also stand for within a person. Rabbi Zusia Friedman explains, "hence, the command may be understood to mean that the zeal of sacrifice must burn always with the kohanim and his descendents to whom the command is addressed."

I agree with what Rabbi Friedman said. What this means to me is that G-d commanded us to keep the fire burning on the altar to show our dedication to him. This reminds us that we should keep the fire of our personal faith and connection to G-d burning inside ourselves. For me this means that we should always have hope inside ourselves and we should work together to make the world a better place by doing good deeds. We should also feel positive that tomorrow will be a better day.

Keeping the eternal light burning was a very practical way that the Jews were able to obey G-d. They did not realize that by doing what G-d commanded them to do they were also bringing hope to themselves and the people around them. Many times we may feel alone and that the fire inside ourselves will go out. But this text can help us as it states: Aaron was with his sons who helped him light the fire. This could also mean that we need help from others to keep hope burning inside ourselves. Also, we can help others to keep their fire burning....

-ZACH HURWITZ

MITZVAH of the WEEK...

ZACH packed supplies and food to be shipped over to our soldiers in Iraq. "My actions will certainly be appreciated by the soldiers who receive the packages. Knowing people like me and so many others are thinking of them will give them hope. Caring for others like this will provide strong feelings to keep their internal fires burning."