

J.L.C. Connections

The Jewish Learning Connection's Weekly Newsletter



Parshas Shemini

April 14, 2023 / 23 Nissan 5783

Volume 28, Issue 25

Candlelighting: 7:47 pm

Waxman Torah Center · 2195 S. Green Road · University Heights, OH 44121 · (216) 691-3837 · www.clevelandjlc.com

Friday, April 14

7:47pm Candlelighting
7:50pm Mincha / Maariv

Shabbos, April 15

8:45am Shacharis
*Kiddush is sponsored by
Yishai Anderson*

6:40pm Pirke Avos
7:40pm Mincha / Shalosh Seudos /
Maariv

Sunday, April 16

9:15am *Parsha Class*
(R. Nisenbaum)
10:00am "The 613 Mitzvos"
(R. Stoll)

Monday, April 17

8:00pm Qs & As

Tuesday, April 18

8:00pm Pirkei d'Rebbi Elazar
(R. Stoll)

Wednesday, April 19

8:00pm Nach Still Speaks –
Tehillim (R. Stoll)

Thursday, April 20

10:15pm Parsha Class
(R. Nisenbaum)

Torah Podcast

Listen to Rabbi Nisenbaum's
"Torah Podcast" at Spotify,
Apple Podcasts, iHeartRadio,
and more, or download at
www.maverickpodcasting.com

New episodes twice a week!

Weekday Minyanim

7:00am Shacharis (M-F)
8:00am Shacharis (Sun)
10:00pm Maariv (Sun-Th)

Class Connection

R. Nisenbaum:
425-436-6200 #352171

"The Torah Podcast" weekly
at all podcast locations

R. Stoll:
Zoom: 876-619-3551
Audio: 669-900-9128

Parsha: Shemini

The inauguration of the Tabernacle occurred on the first day of the month of Nissan. Ahron, the High Priest, and his sons, were commanded to bring sacrifices, after which G-d's presence would be revealed to the people.

The sacrifices were offered and a fire descended from above and consumed the sacrifices that were on the altar. This was a sign that the people had been forgiven for the sin of the golden calf, and they rejoiced.

Unfortunately, the joy did not last long. Ahron's two oldest sons, Nadav and Avihu, brought their own pans of fire and incense to the altar, without being commanded to do so. A fire suddenly descended from Heaven and struck Nadav and Avihu dead. Ahron accepted the tragedy in silence and did not complain about G-d's harsh decree.

The Torah doesn't really explain why the sin was considered a capital offense. Some commentaries explain that they did not confer first with Moshe before bringing their own fire. Although they may have had valid reasons for bringing it, since it was without instruction, it was considered a "strange fire." This was especially true considering that the inauguration was supposed to complete the

atonement for the golden calf, which had also been made without prior permission.

Immediately following Ahron's tragedy G-d instructed Ahron that the kohanim, or priests, were not allowed to do their service while under the influence of any intoxicating beverage. The Torah considers this to be a profanity of that which is holy. This is the only instance we find G-d speaking to Ahron alone. The Rabbis understand this as a reward for not complaining about his sons' death.

Many of the laws of *kashrus*, the dietary laws, are also discussed. Only land animals that chew their cud and have split hooves may be eaten. Marine animals must have both fins and scales. The Torah lists certain birds that may not be eaten. Although the Torah does not specify any physical characteristics, birds of prey are all prohibited. No reptiles or creeping animals may be eaten, except for certain types of grasshoppers.

The Torah does not really offer a reason for the dietary laws. Two points, however, are made: 1) that a Jew must sanctify his physical being by practicing discipline over what he eats; and 2) non-kosher species contaminate the Jewish soul and clog his "spiritual arteries", and thus must be avoided by Jews.

Insights: Shemini

Ahron remained silent. (Lev 10:3)

Rav Aviezer Piltz notes that Ahron did not need to eulogize his beloved sons. His silence was able to convey much more than any words could. Words are limited and can only say so much. Silence, on the other hand, has no boundaries. People sometimes think that they must say something to break the silence in order convey a thought. Ahron's silent eulogy conveyed a deeper clarity and understanding that could be heard by the discerning ear from one end of the world to the next.

Did You Know?

There is a popular custom the Shabbos after Pesach to bake "shlissel challah", challah that is either baked in the shape of a key or with the imprint of a key in the dough. Several explanations are offered for this custom. One reason is because the manna began to fall in the month of Iyar, which we bless this Shabbos. Also, when the Jewish people entered Israel under Joshua's leadership, the manna stopped falling shortly after Pesach, and they needed to plant grain for their sustenance. The key represents the key to the gate of sustenance, which remains under G-d's control, and we thus pray that the gate be opened for His assistance in sustaining us.

Thought for the Week: Superficiality and falsehood are blood brothers. (A Candle By Day)