

Shabbat Spice

PARSHAT SHEMINI



The Answer is Torah

By Rachel Livian

This week is a particularly eventful Parsha. Here we read about Aaron's two sons dying for trying to give a Korban to Hashem and it even tells us Aaron's reaction. There are many psychological and emotional things going on here...

The book of Vayikra has been building up to the moment of the completion of the Mishkan. Now we are finally having the inauguration of the Mishkan, and as they're preparing for the opening, Nadav and Avihu decide they want to bring the very first Korban. So, they sneak into the Mishkan and they bring their own Korban. One would think that this would be a good thing, no? Hashem wanted us to bring Korbanot, so what was the problem? Why did they have to die for this?

Well, when we look at the text from the Torah, it says that the 2 sons brought with them, "A *strange fire*." (Vayikra 10:1) Usually when giving a Korban, one would place the sacrifice on the alter, And then Hashem would bring the fire to consume it.

Here, we see that Nadav and Avihu didn't even give Hashem the chance to light the fire.

Hashem is teaching us a very important message here. Hashem is telling us not to deviate from what He tells us to do. You have a question- the answer is in the Torah! Hashem doesn't want us to create our own path. Of course we need to put in our efforts and connect personally to the mitzvot, but we can't forget who is the One in charge. Our problems begin when we think we can take on the world by ourselves!

There is a beautiful idea that if you take a look at the Hebrew alphabet; the first letter is א, the middle is מ, and the last is ת... spelling the word אמת (truth). You want truth? You want clarity? You want answers to your problems? Everything is in the Torah!

BZH we should always feel closeness and connection to Hashem and his Torah, and we should always remember who is the One in control!

Wishing everyone a beautiful and meaningful Shabbat! ❤️

CANDLE LIGHTING 7:06PM | SHABBAT ENDS 8:16PM

SUBSCRIBE WEEKLY OR WRITE FOR US:

@SHABBATSPICE | MASHADISHABBATSPICE@GMAIL.COM

Shabbat Spice

PARSHAT SHEMINI



Why We Keep Kosher

By Shana Livi

This week's Parashah, Shemini, introduces the Torah's dietary laws. Animals must chew their cud and have split hooves to be kosher, fish need fins and scales, and a list of forbidden fowl is enumerated.

Many Jews in the world have posed the argument that the Mitzvah of Kashrut is outdated. They believe in the desert, our ancestors needed to protect themselves from trichinosis and all sorts of sinister diseases, so some kind of dietary system was required. But today, they argue, in an age of refrigeration, government inspection, and modern hygiene standards, the kosher laws are archaic and quite dispensable.

However, if someone truly can understand what Kashrut is, they will realize that Kashrut is not about health. If they are healthy or provide good hygiene, that is a benefit of keeping Kosher. It may well be one of the perks, but it has never been the reason.

Kashrut is imperative for our *spiritual* health. It is not primarily for our bodies, but for our souls. It is a Jewish diet to help Jews remain spiritually sensitive to their innate Jewishness. However, the Torah does not divulge the exact reasoning for keeping Kosher. We keep Kosher because Hashem said so.

However, the Rabbis and philosophers have speculated on the purpose of Kashrut. They assume that Kashrut acts as a boundary against assimilation. If we keep kosher, we will end up shopping with fellow Jews, socializing with fellow Jews, and remaining close to Jewish communal life.

On a deeper, more spiritual level, keeping kosher keeps our Jewish souls sensitive to Judaism. This mystical concept is invisible to our physical senses, but according to our sages, it is a fact. Just as too much red meat or fatty foods are rotten for your cholesterol, non-kosher foods are bad for your *nesbama*. They clog your spiritual arteries and prevent those warm, healthy Jewish feelings from circulating through your consciousness.

Having a mezuzah on your door is crucial, as it identifies your home as Jewish. Yet what defines your home as a "Jewish Home" is what your Bibi meant when she proudly said, "My children run a Jewish home." We all know she is talking about an essential part of the home - the kitchen! A kosher kitchen makes a Jewish home genuinely Jewish. It also extends a warm and eloquent invitation to all fellow Jews, saying: "Here, you are welcome. Here it is safe to come in and eat. Make yourself at home."

Your favorite diet may build healthy bodies, but a kosher diet builds healthy souls.

Shabbat Shalom!

THANK YOU TO THE SHABBAT SPICE TEAM
RACHIEDILAMANI, VERONICA KORDMANY, ASHLEY
NAMDAR, DANIELLA NAMDAR, & JUDY YADGAR