



# The Community

Boruch Hashem

12550 Biscayne Boulevard · Suite 310 · North Miami, Florida 33181

(305) 892-1234 · Chabadniami@gmail.com

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Rabbi Avrohom Lipszyc

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## Rabbi's Article

"The King and (his) 'I'"

Being that the *Book of Exodus* concludes with the building of the *Tabernacle* (-[Link](#)), hence, the *Book of Leviticus* begins with the different offerings that take place in the *Tabernacle*, among them different types of *Sin Offerings*, and among them, for different personalities, such as the *High Priest*, the *Judges*, and the *King*. On the verse concerning the *Sin Offering* of the *King*, (-Leviticus 4:22), "If (*asher* - אֲשֶׁר) a leader (of Israel) sins and unintentionally commits one of all the commandments," Rashi comments on the unusual terminology of *asher*, versus the usual terminology *im* (אִם): "An expression of, אֲשֶׁר - fortunate is...": *Fortunate is the generation whose leader gives attention to bringing an atonement offering for his unintentional sins, how much more will he experience remorse for the sins he has committed willfully!*"

**Question:** Rashi defines his work as (-Genesis 3:10), "I have come only (to teach) the simple meaning of the Scripture, and such *Aggadah* (non-legalistic exegesis) that clarifies the words of the verses, each word in its proper way." Here, other commentaries take a 'simple meaning' of the word *asher* approach, such as the *Ibn Ezra* (-[Link](#)), "It is connected to that which is written above, that is, 'And if the whole congregation of Israel...'. Our verse, as it were, states, 'asher -and if the one who sins is' the ruler of a tribe or the ruler of a father's house." *Nachmanides* (-[Link](#)) comments, "In some cases it indicates time, such as (-Genesis 37:23): 'ka'asher (when) Joseph came unto his brethren...' Similarly, here too (*asher* is like *ka'asher* and indicates time): 'when' a prince sins, with the (letter) 'kaf' of cognizance (which would make it *ka'asher* - when) missing." Why does Rashi take the homiletic approach of our sages (-*Torat Kohanim* on the verse; *Horayot* 10b) of *asher* meaning *fortunate*, without even *first* giving the simple definition, and then if needed, to add, "And our sages expound...?"

**More Questions:** And even if we are to say that *ashrei* (*fortunate*) can be the simple meaning of *asher*, nevertheless: (i) What is Rashi's proof that the verse is saying, "Fortunate is the generation," and not the leader himself? (ii) How is the, "Fortunate is the generation," expressed in the "whose leader gives attention to bringing an atonement offering for his unintentional sins"? (iii) Of what importance is it to know, "Fortunate is the generation," in order to understand the *Sin Offering* of a leader, which is what these verses are speaking of? And, (iv) In the teaching of the sages (-*ibid*), the, "Fortunate is the generation," is followed with the explanation, "If his leader brings a (sin) sacrifice, it follows to then say that how much so, the layman does so." However, Rashi omits this! Hence, according to Rashi, what is the reason for the, "Fortunate is the generation"?

**Yet More Questions:** (i) The teaching of the sages (-*ibid*) reads, "Fortunate is the generation whose leader brings a *Sin Offering* for his unintentional sins," while Rashi changes it to, "...gives attention to bringing an atonement offering for his unintentional sins"? (ii) Being that Rashi defines the, "Fortunate is the generation," to be, "gives attention to bringing an atonement offering for his unintentional sins," why then doesn't Rashi include in his heading, "he shall bring his offering," or at least elude to it with an, "etc."?

**The Explanation:** Firstly, Rashi needn't point out that his commentary here is that of, "*Such Aggadah* (non-legalistic exegesis) that clarifies the words of the verses," since Rashi did so in his previous commentary on a similar verse (-4:3), reflecting on the bond between the entire Jewish people with the sinner (being a public figure, a 'shepherd'), "If the anointed kohain (*High Priest*) sins, bringing guilt to the people," that, "And its plain meaning according to the Aggadah: When the Holy Priest sins, it is the guilt of the people, for they are dependent on him to atone for them and pray for them, and (now) he has become impaired." Secondly, Rashi can't be speaking of the, 'Fortunate is the generation,' being because of, "the people of the generation will learn from their leader to bring *Sin Offerings* for their unintentional sins," for if so, why isn't this in the *first* verse concerning the, "If the anointed kohain (*High Priest*) sins," where, not only don't we say, "Fortunate of the generation," but rather, quite the contrary, "bringing guilt to the people"?! Now, one can say that the lesson from the king, who is *exalted*, -- and nevertheless, is humble to bring a *Sin Offering*,-- is more effective (hence, "fortunate is the generation"). However, on the other hand, the lesson of the *High Priest*, who (a) (-*Kli Yokor* on Exodus 4:2), "It is far and uncommon for the anointed priest... to sin...," being separated from the masses due to his holiness, and continuously serving in the *Holy Temple*, (b) and nevertheless, he humbly brings a *Sin Offering* for an unintentional sin, and (c) the *High Priest's Sin Offering* (unlike the leader's *Sin Offering*) has to taken *outside of all the camps*, and hence, is seen by all! Therefore, if the 'Fortunate is the generation,' would be because of,

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FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2023 \* ב' ניסן תשפ"ג

Yahrtzeit: [Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch](#) (1860-1920)

[Shabbat Candle Lighting](#): 7:21 PM · [Kabbalat Shabbat](#): 7:00 PM

SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2023 \* ג' ניסן תשפ"ג

TORAH READING: [Vayikra](#) (Leviticus 1:1-5:26) · HAFTORAH: [Isaiah](#) (43:21-44:23)

[Shacharit](#): 9:30 AM · [Mincha](#): 6:30 PM · [Shabbat Ends](#): 8:05 PM

**This Week...**

"The King and (his) 'I'" -Cont. from Page 1

"the people of the generation will learn from their leader..." then the Torah should have definitely used the term *asher first* in the earlier verses of the *High Priest's* bringing a *Sin Offering* for an unintentional sin! Therefore, Rashi (unlike the Midrash and the Talmud) is certain that (in the realm of the "simple meaning" of the verse) this is not the reason for the, "fortunate is the generation," and hence, Rashi omits this in his commentary. Rather, the reason must be something else, which the *High Priest's* bringing a *Sin Offering* does not have!

*And a Final Two Questions:* (i) In its *simple meaning*, the word *asher* denotes that we are *in middle* of a subject (for *ashrei* (when; which; who) is simply not how to start a *new* discussion). Hence, what is the connection between the *Leader's Sin Offering* (-4:22-26) and the portion of the *Sin Offering* of (-4:13-21), "And if the entire community of Israel errs (Rashi: "This refers to the Supreme Court of Israel (seated at the Holy Temple)... meaning that the community acted upon their instruction")?" (ii) If the, "Fortunate," is about the leader's bringing a *Sin Offering*, then why is the word *asher* written with the, "a leader sins," and not with the, "and he will bring his offering"?!)

These two questions lead Rashi to conclude that the, "Fortunate is the generation," is not about the leader *actual* bringing the *Sin Offering*, but about something connected to the *sin*! (Hence, Rashi changes the wording of the original teaching from, "whose leader *brings* a *Sin Offering*," to "*gives attention to bringing an atonement offering*...")

It is needless to say that when a Jew brings a *Sin Offering*, he feels (and is obligated to feel) remorse. However, concerning, "And if the entire community of Israel errs (Rashi: "This refers to the Supreme Court of Israel (seated at the Holy Temple)... meaning that the community acted upon their (the Supreme Court's) instruction)," how can it be that every Jew (albeit the verse's declaring it, "the entire community of Israel errs") feel remorse, when they did exactly what *G-d commanded them to do*, to follow the ruling of the Jewish Court?! Hence, Rashi sees the immediate next verses of, "asher (denoting that we are *in the middle of explaining a point*; and that *this* point is why the generation is *fortunate* to have) a *leader* (and not the *High Priest*) *sins* (and not when he brings his *Sin Offering*!)." Now we understand why Rashi saw no need to give us the *simple, simple meaning*," of the word *asher* --meaning *if*, but rather, the need to go straight to the, "its plain meaning according to the Aggadah," which is the *plain meaning* of 'starting' with *ashrei*, which denotes that we are *in middle* of explaining a point, namely, that of understanding how every Jew would feel remorse for the *sin* they performed, by doing the *mitzva* of listening to the ruling of the Jewish Court?!

We are speaking here of the leader --not only *bringing* the *Sin Offering* in observing *the Torah law* that he must bring a *Sin Offering* even for a *mistake*, an, "*unintentional sin*," but rather--, "*gives attention to* (lit. "gives *heart to*"), *bringing an atonement*," meaning, *feels deep remorse* for having done (even) an, "*unintentional sin*!" And, "how much more will he *experience remorse for the sins he has committed willfully!*" *This* --the leader's, (a) *feeling remorse*, and (b) for an *unintentional sin*-- is, (i) what the, "asher -in middle of explaining a point" is about, and (ii) what the, "asher -fortunate is the generation," is about, as they will learn from their leader to feel remorse for sins that are even practically not their fault.

The difference between the impact of the leader and the *High Priest* upon the people is: The job of the *High Priest* is, "to *atone* for them and pray for them," while the job of the leader is to 'lead' the people. In other words, the *High Priest* is about *after* the person sins, to teach him how to *atone* for his sin, while the leader's job is to teach the people --through his own sensitivity to the gravity of sin-- to *not sin* in the first place! This is why, it is by the leader the verse states, "asher -fortunate," that the generation is not sinning in the first place!

*Mystically Speaking:* Here, leader is speaking about (-Horayot 10a, Mishna), "This is a *king*, (as it is stated, 'When a leader sins, and performs any one of all the mitzvot of the L-rd his G-d (that shall not be performed),' referring to one who has only the L-rd his G-d over him and no other authority. That is only the king)." Hence, Rashi states, "fortunate is the (entire) *generation*." The difference between the *king* and the *High Priest* is, that the *High Priest's* job is to influence the people to have Love for G-d, while the *king's* job is to influence the people with a *self-negation* and *Fear* for G-d. Now (-Tanya, Chapter 4), Love is the root of the 248 *Positive Precepts* ("Thou *shall*"), and here this would be to *actually bring the Sin Offering*, while *Fear* is the root of the 365 *Prohibitions* ("Thou *Shall not*"), and here this would be feeling the *gravity of a sin*, which is, "fearing to rebel against the *Supreme King of kings*." Deeper Yet: We are taught (-Igeret Hakodesh, Epistle 28), "Unintentional sins... come about because of the strengthening of the animal soul which is of *nogah* (a somewhat transparent *husk* that yet allows for some *Light* to shine through; mundane (not *Impure*))." In other words, it is the intense sense of *I* that leads to an unintentional sin. Love allows for an *intense sense of I*, while *Fear* breeds *self-nullification*. Therefore, by the *High Priest* (Love) the verse states, "the guilt of the people," while by the *king* (Fear) it states, "Fortunate is the generation."

*The Lesson:* Zohar (-Vol III, 33b), teaches, "Man is like a small world." Hence, within man there is a *MeLeCH* (מלך) -king, which refers to the *Three Rulers* over the entire body: *Moach* -brain, *Lev* -heart, and *K(CH)oveid* -liver, of which the first letter -primary ruler, is *Moach*, the head, which has to rule over the *Lev*, the heart. And the lesson here is to be, "fortunate," by having our *King* (head), "gives (control the) *heart*," which then (-Tanya, Chapter 12), "each person may, with the will-power in his brain, restrain himself and control the drive of lust that is in his heart, preventing his heart's desires from expressing themselves in action, word or thought." And if he did sin, then with a deep understanding (head) of the gravity of sin, he, "gives heart," breaking the heart with remorse, causing (-Igeret Hateshuvah, Ch 7), "the removal of the spirit of impurity and the Other Side."