



Toras Avigdor

Junior

Adapted from the teachings
of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

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פְּרֻשֶׁת וִיקְרָא

Expensive Machines in the Beis Hamikdash

Sponsored as a zechus for our children:

מנוחה חיה, רבקה רחל, עמרם, עזריאל יוסף, שירה יוכבד,
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בת-שבע אסתר, אלעזר מנחם מן

Expensive Machines in the Beis Hamikdash

**Fifth Grade, Yeshivas Hodu LaHashem Ki Tov.
Rabbi Israelowitz is teaching his biology class.**

“Right inside here,” said Rabbi Israelowitz as he tapped his chest, “we all have two very expensive machines keeping us alive — they’re called lungs. And in case you don’t believe me how valuable these machines are, Hashem is teaching us a very big lesson with this Coronavirus that we all became too familiar with recently.

“Boys, I’m sure you all know that many people who caught the virus are having a lot of trouble with their lungs, and some people are even having trouble breathing altogether. When Hatzalah brings them to the hospital, they have to be connected to a machine called a ventilator that helps their lungs to start working again. It’s a very expensive machine — even the cheap ones cost around \$50,000 — but without working lungs nobody could live, so really it’s a bargain.

“But the truth is,” continued Rabbi Israelowitz as he drew a picture of a lung on the whiteboard, “lungs are a billion times better than a ventilator. They have so many more functions! They have bronchus and bronchi and bronchioles and alveoli and capillaries that all work together to keep us breathing.

“Our lungs keep our whole body alive every second of the day by bringing in oxygen that our blood needs and getting rid of carbon dioxide, which is dangerous for our bodies. Even if we would sit here in science class all year talking about our lungs, we wouldn’t be able to discuss even a tiny fraction of the miracles of these breathing machines that we all enjoy every second of our lives!

“Right now, you boys are taking about twenty breaths every minute. The Gemara says that each breath is so precious that we

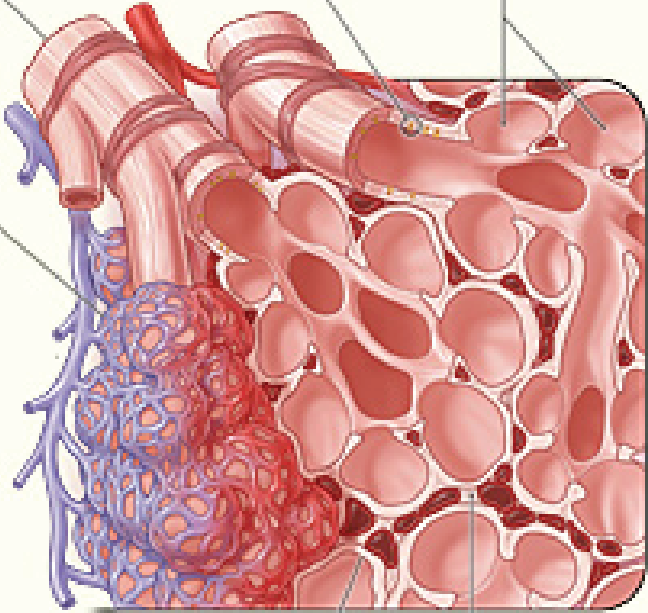
should really have to say the whole Hallel to Hashem for each breath. Can you imagine that?! For each breath, a whole Hallel!

“It’s so important for all of us to appreciate this gift that Hashem gives us. It’s sad that sometimes it takes a dangerous virus to remind us about our lungs, but at least we should make use of the reminder to thank Hashem as much as possible.”

Detailed View of Lung Cross-Section

Bronchioles (tiny airways) **Neuroendocrine cells (some of the cells lining the bronchioles)** **Alveoli (air sacs) in cross-section**

Capillary network surrounds alveoli



Surfactant (liquid) coats the inside of the alveoli

Interstitial space (the space between the alveoli, capillaries, and airways)

“It’s actually pretty interesting how Rabbi Israelowitz describes the parts of our body,” whispered Nesanel to his friend Avrumi. “I wish we really could spend all year talking about our lungs. It’s definitely more exciting than math, that’s for sure.”

“Well,” said Avrumi. “You remember what our principal, Rabbi Spira, told us at the beginning of the year? He said that Rabbi Israelowitz was a *talmid* of Rav Avigdor Miller, *zatzal*, and Rav Miller told him to use the opportunity of being a science teacher to teach his students to appreciate the wonderful body that Hashem has given us.”

But as Avrumi was speaking, Nesanel was already daydreaming. He was thinking about how he could really show appreciation to Hashem for his lungs. “If every single breath is really a miracle that Hashem is doing for me,” thought Nesanel, “how can I ever say thank you to Hashem for all the miracles He’s doing for me every day? Rabbi Israelowitz said that we breathe about twenty times a minute — that means we take more than a thousand breaths every hour! That’s almost 30,000 breaths a day! It would take me forever to say Hallel 30,000 times!”

“Nesanel, hurry up,” said Rabbi Israelowitz. “The whole class is already buckled into the time machine and you’re sitting here daydreaming! Let’s go; you don’t want to miss our trip! We’re going to visit the Beis Hamikdash where we’re going to finish up our lesson on the wonderful machine we call the human body.”

“The Beis Hamikdash for a science lesson?!” thought Nesanel to himself. “That doesn’t make any sense — the Beis Hamikdash is the place to go for a *shiur* in Parshas Vayikra, not for lessons in biology!”

But because it’s always more fun to travel in a time machine than sit in a classroom, Nesanel followed Rabbi Israelowitz out to the backyard where the whole class was waiting for liftoff. They both climbed into the Toras Avigdor Time Machine and closed the door behind them.

Har Habayis, Yerushalayim

“Rabbi Israelowitz?” whispered Nesanel as he crouched behind the Nikanor Gate that led into the Azarah. “What’s that big red thing the kohen is carrying up the ramp to the mizbei’ach?”

“I guess you didn’t look at the diagrams I gave out with the homework last night. Those are the lungs and the trachea of the Korban Tamid, and you can see the kohen studying them as he walks up the ramp. You know what he’s doing? He’s thinking about the great gift of lungs that Hashem has given him, and his wife and children, too.

“When we bring the different parts of the korban onto the mizbei’ach, we are supposed to use the opportunity to express our gratitude to Hashem for each part that Hashem gives us. Because really, the only way to show Hashem how thankful we are for the great gift of lungs that Hashem gives us is to give it back to Him — to offer up our lungs on the mizbei’ach to Hashem.”

“What?!” said Nesanel a little bit too loudly.

“Shhhh!” said Rabbi Israelowitz. “We can’t have the kohanim hearing us! If they notice us, we’re going to have to cut our class trip short and head back to New York and the year 2020.”

“Sorry. But give back our lungs?! We can’t live without them!”

“Exactly, Nesanel! That’s why giving Hashem our own lungs would be the best way to show Him that we understand how our lives are totally dependent on Him. Only, we’re very lucky that Hashem loves us too much to ask us to do that. He wants us to be healthy and to live for 120 years — at least! So instead He tells us to bring an animal to the Beis Hamikdash and sacrifice it.

“That’s the reason why there’s a mitzvah in Parshas Vayikra to cut up the korban into pieces — the legs and the head and the liver and the lungs and the heart and the windpipe and the spleen — they were all separated and put onto the fire individually. We have to be grateful for every single detail that Hashem gives us.

“And that is the tremendous lesson of korbanos. The kohen who was carrying the lungs, and the owner of the sheep who was

watching from the side, were thinking: “I’m so lucky that Hashem has given me healthy lungs that breathe in and out all day, keeping me alive every second. And I’m so happy that Hashem lets me off easy with just saying thank you to Him every day for the gift and letting me keep my lungs for myself.



“Alright, boys,” said Rabbi Israelowitz waving his hands at us. “We’re going to have to start heading back now to the time machine. I see a large group of nezirim coming in now to the Beis Hamikdash to bring their korbanos so it’s going to get pretty crowded in here very soon. Follow me out to the Har Habayis and we’ll board the time machine and travel forward in time. Meanwhile, everyone should take a long look around. This might be the last time you see the Beis Hamikdash until Moshiach comes.”

Back in New York, March 27, 2020.

Everyone is stuck in their homes and Nesanel and his father are trying to finish Mesichta Tamid together as a zechus for all of the cholei Yisroel.

“Ok, Nesanel,” said Mr. Auerbach. “Let’s continue from where we left off yesterday in Perek Daled, Mishna Gimmel. Why don’t you try to read the mishnah?”

נמצא כולן עומדין בשורה והאברים בידם — All the kohanim were standing in a line with all of the pieces of the korban in their hands, waiting their turn to walk up the ramp and put the part of the animal they were holding onto the mizbei’ach fire as a gift to Hashem.”

“Very good teitching, Nesanel. It’s only two weeks that we’re learning mishnayos together and you’re already reading much better. Now this part of the mishnah is telling us that each kohen carried a different part of the animal. We’ll see soon that there were twenty-two kohanim standing in line. One was carrying the head, one the feet, one the kidneys, one the lungs, one the stomach, and so on and so on.

“Nesanel, can you guess,” asked Mr. Auerbach, “what was the reason that the korban was cut into so many parts if they were going to be makriv the whole thing anyway?”

“I think I know,” said Nesanel. “It’s because Hashem expects us to study every detail of our body parts in order to appreciate them. We can’t just say, ‘Thank You, Hashem, for my body,’ and think we thanked Him enough. We have to study how much fun it is to have lungs. And we also have to appreciate how great it is to have working kidneys and a spleen and a liver and a stomach. Just for

the miracle of our stomachs we could thank Hashem forever and never be finished.

“A few weeks ago, we learned in science class that the stomach is a miracle. Because inside the stomach there’s a very strong acid, hydrochloric acid. And that acid is what breaks down the foods we eat into all the vitamins and nutrition our body needs. It’s such a strong acid that it breaks down whatever we eat — pizza, and apples, and cholent; it can digest anything! But our teacher asked us a good question. He said: Why doesn’t it break down our stomach, too? If the acid in our stomach can break down the meat that we eat, the stomach of an animal, so why doesn’t it break down our own stomachs? And the answer is that this is one of the millions of miracles in our body. Hashem made our stomach with a special lining — a very strong lining that protects it from the acid. The truth is if you would dip your finger in that acid, your finger would be burned. So the acid breaks down all the tough foods, but your stomach is not burned!

“So, as the kohen carried up the stomach to the *mizbei’ach*, he was thinking about that. And the owner of the *korban* was thinking the same thing while he watched. And that way, when a person brought a *korban*, he became a whole new person because he had learned how to appreciate the details of the body that Hashem was giving him every minute of life.”

“Nesanel,” said Mr. Auerbach, “that was a great explanation! Mamish, it sounds like you just came back from a trip to the Beis Hamikdash and experienced it with your own eyes! Where did you learn all that?!”

“Well, Totty,” said Nesanel. “It’s kind of a long story — and I’m not really sure you’d believe me ...”

Wishing Everyone a Happy and Healthy Shabbos!

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