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- **Adventist Mission Website:** <http://wjafc.adventistmission.org/> This website is the new resource provided by the Office of Adventist Mission of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists.
- **Russian Website:** <http://www.boruh.info/> This website is in Russian, many articles and the parasha are posted on it every week.



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Weekly
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We pray every week for leaders of the Jewish Ministry, According to our list of prayer for 2016, I suggest that our partners pray from April 3 to 9, 2016, for Anna Vasina, and Victor Sokurov the leaders of our Jewish Adventist congregation in San Jose (CA). Let's pray for their ministries.



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NEWS

HEBREW SABBATH SCHOOL

✿ We try to provide on time every quarter the Sabbath School booklet in Hebrew to help those who are reading or learning Hebrew to have it on time. But it is not easy. Since this Sabbath School is produced in Israel, we have to wait to receive it. In this quarter which encompass the three months April to June we will study the Besorat of Matthew, and Jewish book, written by a Jew for the Jews. This Sabbath School will be available for download for a few days from our drop-box, and also from the resource page of our website: jewishadventist.org



JEWISH ADVENTIST FRIENDSHIP IN NEW ZEALAND

✿ It was interesting to be in New Zealand to meet key people there for the future of the Jewish Adventist Friendship group there, Beth Tikken. Upon arriving in Auckland, On March 23, Richard Elofer had a meeting with Brad Kemp, the Union president and his team. Then this meeting was on the perfect timing, since the Union had their advisory in the Union Office and there were present all the Field's president of New Zealand and the Pacific Islands and departmental directors. Good contacts were made, and appointments were taken to promote our Jewish Adventist Friendship ministry in some of these islands where Jews are living and where the Seventh-day Adventist leaders try to get good relationships with the Jewish community.



Parasha Overview: SHEMINI

On the eighth day of the dedication of the Mishkan, Aharon, his sons, and the entire nation bring various korbanot (offerings) as commanded by Moshe.

Aharon and Moshe bless the nation.

G-d allows the Jewish People to sense His Presence after they complete the Mishkan.

Aharon's sons, Nadav and Avihu, innovate an offering not commanded by G-d. A fire comes from before G-d and consumes them, stressing the need to perform the commandments only as Moshe directs.

Moshe consoles Aharon, who grieves in silence.

Moshe directs the kohanim as to their behavior during the mourning period, and warns them that they must not drink intoxicating beverages before serving in the Mishkan.



SHEMINI
The name of the parasha, *Shmini* is the third Hebrew word of Leviticus 9 and means “eighth”, “On the eighth day Moses summoned Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel.” (Lev 9:1). The fact that it is said “on the eighth day” implies that it was a natural continuation of the previous days.

The dedication of Aaron, his sons and the sanctuary lasted seven days: “And you shall not go out from the door of the tent of meeting for seven days, until the days of your consecration be fulfilled; for He shall consecrate you seven days.” (Leviticus 8:33) During that time the altar was dedicated. And the following day was quite separate: It was set aside for the ordination of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood (Leviticus 8).

Thus, the events described in this parasha occurred on the eighth day of the dedication of the sanctuary at the end of Aaron ordination.

It is interesting to know that in the Jewish tradition the eighth day has a special

importance. It can be stated that the eighth day can be a time of challenge.

- The eighth day of life is the day of circumcision of male Jewish children.

- The eighth day, the day after the week of rejoicing of a young newly married couple — was and is the day when real married life with all of its joys and challenges begins.

- The eighth day of Succoth, the day after the feast is a day called *Shemini Atseret*, the special day that God wants to enjoy one more day the presence of his people.

- The eighth day after the beginning of the holiday of Pesach in Israel is the day when we return to our ordinary lives and tasks and many times that is a moment of at least temporary depression. And here in the parasha the eighth day is transformed from the day of joy and supreme attainment to one of tragedy and silence.

- The eighth day is a difficult day. But the main lesson here is that life is in reality a series of “eighth days”.

- The eighth day is unpredictable, it can bring pain and sadness but it can also be inspiring and joyful, productive and worthy. So the eighth

PARASHA FOR THIS WEEK

Shemini

שְׁמִינִי

Leviticus 9: 1 - 11:47

day syndrome has become a metaphor for life in general and certainly for Jewish life particularly.

Because of the potential problems and difficulties that the eighth day may bring, the Torah begins the parasha with the word “*vayebi*” which is not necessarily an expression of happiness. Here it will refer to the untimely deaths of the two sons of Aharon. But in general it serves as a warning to humans to view life cautiously and realistically. The Torah always teaches us to drive defensively in all areas of living.

However there are more on the eighth day, Rabbi Hirsch argues that the completion of a count of seven days symbolizes the conclusion and completion of the condition that has prevailed until now, the eighth day marks a new beginning on a higher level — the beginning of a higher “octave,” as it were.

He continues saying “the same is true here. Seven days the *Cohanim* abided at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. This brought to a close the condition in which the *Cohanim* lived only the personal lives of individuals. On the eighth day they entered a new, loftier phase of life, consecrat-



“Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them.” (Leviticus 10:1 ESV)

ATONEMENT FOR ISRAEL

The torah order to Aaron: “Take for yourself a bull calf for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, both without blemish, and offer them before the LORD” (Leviticus 9:2). There is a great difference between heathen offerings and Biblical offerings. The essence of this difference is this: That which the heathen idolizes, and to which he offer himself and all that he owns, the Biblical believer masters and offers to the one and only G-d. The same applies here. Aaron had made the calf as a symbol of one of the powers subservient to the one, sole G-d. But heathen belief, which idolizes the forces of nature, turned the calf into a divine power, ruling co-ordinately with G-d. In our verse, Aaron offers to G-d an calf representing himself full of sins, let’s remember that the High Priest symbolized the eternal High Priest who is the Messiah. Sacrificing a calf, who represented Aaron himself, he announced already the ultimate sacrifice of the Messiah. However, the difference is that the Messiah is without any sin,

ed to G-d and to His people.

And finally in the Jewish tradition the number eighth is also the number of “holiness” one step more than seven. Seven is the number of the days of the week, the measure of earthly time, a symbol of the human dimension. Eight signifies the more-than-human, that is why it is the symbol of holiness. Then this special day is called the eighth day to emphasize its extraordinary character. For it is written shortly afterwards, “Today the L-rd will appear to you.” (Leviticus 9:4). The Lord wants to appear to Israel at Aaron’s dedication, but he waited for the eighth day.

A parallel can be made with the appearance of Yeshua on the day of his resurrection. He died on the sixth day (Friday), just before the beginning of the Shabbat. As he rested on the seventh day of the creation, he rested in the tomb on the seventh day (Shabbat) and the Glory of the Lord was revealed on the eighth day—the day of his resurrection. “Today the L-rd appears to you.” On that very special day, the L-rd Mashiach appeared to many of his talmidim or disciples.

that is why Messiah’ sacrifice was not for himself but to serve as atonement of G-d’s people.

Rabbi Hirsch affirms “there is a deep connection between the calf sacrifice and the erecting of the Dwelling place (Sanctuary) This sin occurred between the issuing of the command to erect the Dwelling place and the implementation of this command. It constitutes historical proof, for all time, of the very need for the atonement of the nation and the *Cohanim* (Priests); and lo, this is the whole purpose of the Sanctuary: to serve as a place of atonement for Israel.”

NADAB AND AVIHU

The Torah states “Now Nadab and Avihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them.” (Leviticus 10:1). Following the seven day inauguration ceremony for the *Mishkan* on the first day of the normal functioning of the *Mishkan*, a terrible tragedy occurred. Nadav and Avihu, Aharon’s two eldest sons, brought “a foreign fire”. Subsequently, a fire came down from

The Torah lists the two characteristics of a kosher animal: It has split hooves, and it chews, regurgitates, and re-chews its food.

The Torah specifies by name those non-kosher animals which have only one of these two signs.

A kosher fish has fins and easily removable scales.

All birds not included in the list of forbidden families are permitted.

The Torah forbids all types of insects except for four species of locusts.

Details are given of the purification process after coming in contact with ritually-impure species.

Bnei Yisrael are commanded to be separate and holy — like G-d.

Haftara Overview

2 Samuel 6:1-7:17

In the text of the parasha the L-rd wants to impress Israel about the services in the sanctuary, they are holy; we must be careful on how to offer them to our G-d, "Aaron's sons, Nadab and Avihu, each took his censer, put fire in it, and laid incense on it; and they offered unholy fire before the L-RD, such as he had not commanded them. And fire came out from the presence of the L-RD and consumed them, and they died before the L-RD." (Leviticus 10:1, 2). The text tells us that they under the influence of alcohol when they performed their holy service. Because of this unholy act, the L-rd asked his people not drink alcohol before performing the temple service.

In the text of the Haftara the people of Israel forgot the lesson given by G-d to Nadab and Avihu and David went to Baale-Judah to bring the Ark of the Covenant to his house in Jerusalem, The consequences of this move were dramatic, "David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the LORD with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the

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"And by these you shall become unclean. Whoever touches their carcass shall be unclean until the evening, and whoever carries any part of their carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening. . . . Whoever touches their carcass shall be unclean until the evening, and he who carries their carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening; they are unclean to you." (Leviticus 11:24-28)

Heaven and consumed them. It was a real tragedy because according to Chazal, Nadav and Avihu were only 20 years old when they were taken. They were in their prime. They were supposed to eventually replace Aharon and Moshe.

What terrible thing had Nadav and Avihu done that they were worthy of dying? They brought an offering to G-d! They wanted to draw close to G-d. Certainly there is nothing wrong with that! King David himself had declared "But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds" (Ps 73:28). Rav Kook had written, "Closeness to G-d is the strongest natural desire in man. This desire drives man to seek to know and be." (Orot 135). What then had they done so wrong? According to the Jewish tradition, Nadav and Avihu were spiritual giants of the world, and their intentions were based on their deepest will to please G-d and perform the service of the L-rd. However, because of their drunkenness, they were not able to make difference between good and evil and they were punished for doing what they were not commanded to do.

From the very wording of Scripture we learn that Aaron's sons behaved arrogantly.

First the text stresses their relationship with Aaron the High Priest. And it is clear that taking the "censer" they did not consult with their father before acting. Because they were sons of Aaron they felt they were under no obligation to seek advice from anyone else. Actually, they were Nadab and Avihu — merely individual members of the nation, and yet they did not seek advice from the nation's leaders. Perhaps they had an exaggerated sense of self-worth, and so relied exclusively on their own reasoning. Moreover, taking the censer, each one of them acted solely on his own initiative. They did not consult even with one another!

When the entire nation was privileged to witness a revelation of G-d's closeness, Nadab and Avihu felt they need to make a separate offering of their own. This shows that they were not moved by the *Ruach Hakodesh* (Spirit of G-d) or even the spirit of priesthood. In the Bible, the priests are completely identified with the nation. They have no standing in their own right. The whole essence of the *Cohanim* is that they stand in the midst of the people and this accounts for their standing before G-d.

The disobedience of Nadab and Avihu was extremely serious, because G-d gave very strict instructions and in the service of the offerings, there is not place

for subjective arbitrariness. Even the free-will offerings, must comply with prescribed forms. One who brings an offering seeks closeness to G-d, but this can be attained only through obedience to G-d and to his commandments. This is precisely the point that separates the biblical religion from paganism. The pagan through his offering, seeks to make his deity subservient to his will, which the biblical believer through his offering, places himself in the service of G-d and accept G-d's word and his commandments. All offerings in the Bible are formulas of divine imperative, they represent very important truth that G-d wants to teach to his people. And accepting the divine imperative as his guiding light, the believer affirms his unconditional acceptance of G-d and his truth.

Rabbi Hirsch says: "Now we understand the death of Aaron' sons. Their death at the time of the first dedication of the Sanctuary is a warning to all future *Cohanim*. It bars all arbitrariness, all personal caprice, from the precincts of the Sanctuary, whose whole purpose is to be a Sanctuary for the Torah! In Judaism and in the Bible the priest's function is not to introduce innovations in the Service, but to carry out G-d's command."

APOSTOLIC WRITINGS — ROMANS 12:16-21

According to the text of the parasha we must be humble before the L-rd and to remember every day that we have a service to perform, which necessitates discernment, "You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean; and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the LORD has spoken to them through Moses." (Leviticus 10:10-11).

Following our reading of the letter written by Rabbi Shaul to the community of the believers in Rome, we discover several commandment given by God to his children in order to make a proper service, acceptable by the Lord.

1. "Live in harmony with one another." It is so easy to be in conflict today, we see wars everywhere, but the Lord invite us to live in harmony with other, not to quarrel, not to fight, not be in conflict and to be nice with other people.

2. "Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly" To practice this quality we need humility, if we are really humble before G-d and our fellow neighbor, thus we will not be haughty.

3. "Do not claim to be wiser than you are." It is so easy to consider ourselves wise, and wiser than any other person. Even you we have been immersed with the *Ruach HaKodesh* (the Spirit of God) we still need to look for advice and new ideas, that is why the best

way to lead a group, a congregation or even a company is the counsel of other, 10 heads thinking about a challenge will be more inventive, creative to find solutions than only 1 head.

4. "Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all." It is human to repay our enemy evil for evil, "eye for eye, teeth for teeth" but this behavior has never solved any conflict. It is better to repay evil by goodness, then we will demonstrate that the love of God is in our heart.

5. "If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all." From time to time it does not depend on us. Peace is not the work of one person, or one country, but of all the parties involved in the conflict. As far as we are concerned we should make all effort to live in peace with others and to promote understanding between the cultures, that is why our center and congregations are dedicated to make friendship with the Jewish people and to work for reconciliation between Israel and the Church.

6. "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'" The Lord is big enough to take care of his business by himself, it is not our role to avenge the honor of God.

7. "if your enemies are hungry, feed them." That order goes well with the

teaching of Yeshua who recommended his talmidim: "I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you," (Luke 6:27) and "love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil." (Luke 6:35). That is the behavior of a true disciple of Yeshua.

8. "if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Our example in this matter is Abraham Avinu (our father), he was quiet at the gate of his tent when he saw three travelers coming to him, he did not wait to know who they were, he just run to them in order to invite them to rest, to drink and to eat "if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree," (Genesis 18:3-4).

9. And the last advice in Romans 12:16 to 21 is "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good

with the measure of faith God has given you." Living these qualities and advice every day will help us "to distinguish between the holy and the common" and will be a powerful testimony for the L-rd, because everyone will see what the Almighty has done in our life and our heart.

oxen shook it. The anger of the L-RD was kindled against Uzzah; and G-d struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of G-d." (2 Samuel 6:5-7).

This text asks a question about our own relationship to G-d, his temple and the manner we lead the holy service on Shabbat. Do we perform the service, do we worship our Lord remembering that we are all standing before the kind and the creator of the universe?

Serving the L-rd in a proper way is a great blessing "The ark of the L-RD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and the L-RD blessed Obed-edom and all his household." (2 Samuel 6:11).

Then David understood that he must perform the service of the L-rd following the Bible instructions and with respect, So "David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet..." (2 Samuel 6:15).

STORIES AND TRADITIONS

Inspirational Corner

❖ After the dedication of the tabernacle, the priests were consecrated to their sacred office. These services occupied seven days, each marked by special ceremonies. On the eighth day they entered upon their ministrations. Assisted by his sons, Aaron offered the sacrifices that God required, and he lifted up his hands and blessed the people. All had been done as God commanded, and He accepted the sacrifice, and revealed His glory in a remarkable manner; fire came from the Lord and consumed the offering upon the altar. The people looked upon this wonderful manifestation of divine power with awe and intense interest. They saw in it a token of God's glory and favor, and they raised a universal shout of praise and adoration and fell on their faces as if in the immediate presence of G-d. (PP 359)

LOVE SOCIETY

About 100 years ago, a group of neighbors in Jerusalem wanted to form a *Chesed* (love) Society amongst themselves. Proposed activities included: inviting each other over for Shabbat meals, collecting clothes for families who couldn't afford it, and providing interest-free loans for someone wishing to start a business.

So the group went to the great sage, Rabbi Yehoshua Leib Diskin, to get his blessing for their new *Chesed* Society. The rabbi asked them, "What if someone outside your neighborhood needs help?" To which they replied, "We would have to politely refuse, because we've limited our activities to just amongst our own group of neighbors."

The rabbi replied: "It's very nice that you want to help your friends and family. In fact, the Talmud states that our obligation is to help those closest to us first — our family, our community — and only then the rest of the world."

The rabbi continued: "But real *chesed* is about caring for others — and since all the kindness you're proposing comes back to you, you're essentially only caring for yourselves!"

WHEN ARE YOU COMING?

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi asked Mashiach: "When are you coming?" Today replied Mashiach. Later, Rabbi Yehoshua met Elijah the Prophet and complained: "He told me that he is coming

today, yet he didn't come. -This is what he meant: answered Elijah, "if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts" (Psalm 95:7).

G-D LEADS US

That day a caravan carrying vats of wine was attacked and sped past the cemetery to outrun the attackers. A barrel rolled off the wagon and when the man woke up from his drunken sleep, he was surprised to find the spigot of the barrel next to his face. And he continued to drink.

The Almighty leads us in the direction we desire to go. The greater your desire to do something, the more successful you will be. Therefore, choose well what you desire in life. When you wish to accomplish in spiritual matters, build up a strong desire to accomplish and the Almighty will lead you in that path!

KHALLOT AND TRIBES

Commemorating the "Twelve Breads," in the Holy Temple, the Kabbalist Rabbi Yitzchak Lurie, would place twelve *Khallot* on his Shabbat table. Although we put only two *Khallot* for each Shabbat meal, some make the *Khallot* long so they resemble the Hebrew letter, "Vav," which has a numerical value of six. Thus, the two *Khallot* remind us of the number 12 (2x6=12). Some braid each *Khallah* out of six braids, so the two *Khallot* together represent the number 12.

THAT DEPENDS UPON YOU

The story is told of a young boy who heard about a "miracle rabbi" who could see to the depths of your soul and could perform wonders. Deciding to expose the rabbi as a fraud, the boy devises a plan -- he will hold a bird in his hands behind his back and ask the rabbi what he has. If the rabbi happens to guess correctly that he has a bird, then the boy will ask "Is it alive or dead?" If the rabbi says "Alive," he will kill the bird and drop it to the ground in front of him; if the rabbi says "Dead," he will hold up his hands and let the bird fly away.

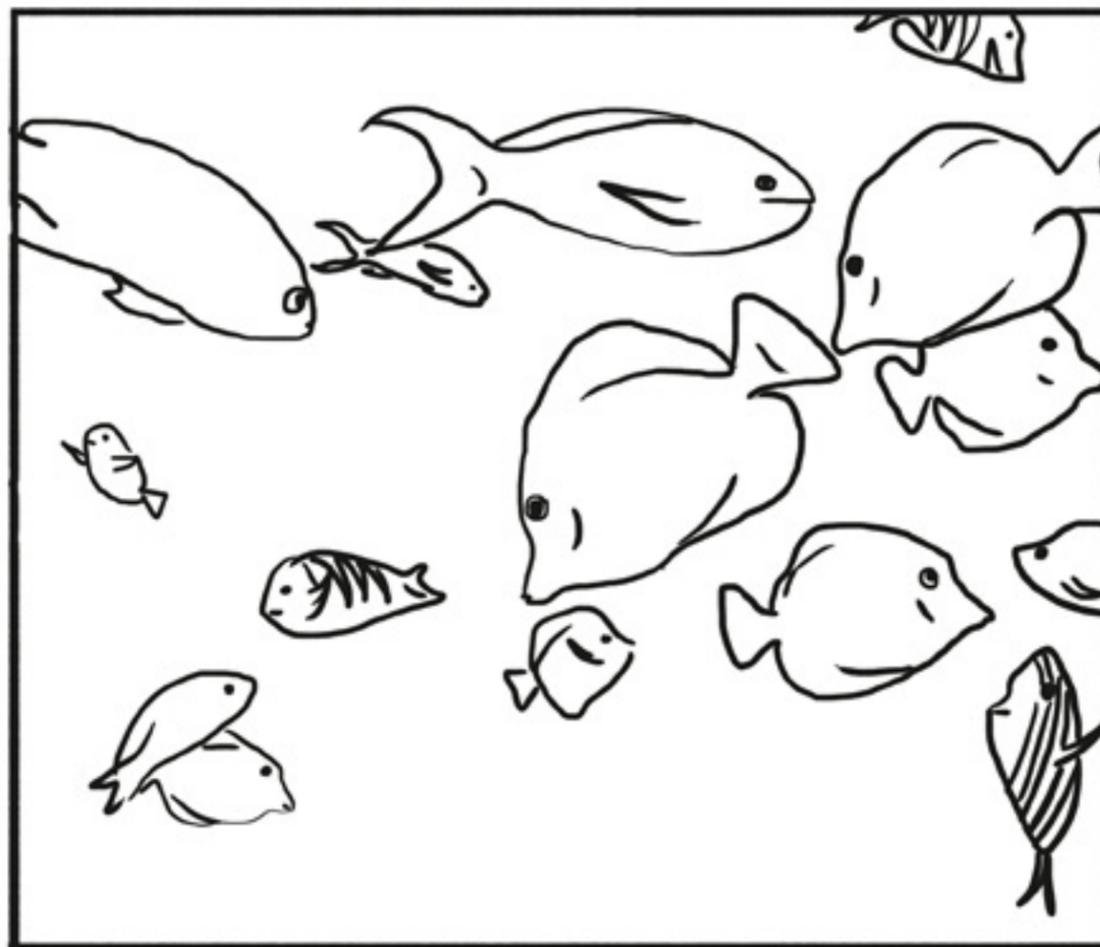
Brought before the rabbi, the boy asks, "What do I have in my hands?" "A bird" says the rabbi. The boy then asks, "Is the bird dead or alive?" The rabbi looks the boy straight in the eye and is quiet for several seconds. Then the rabbi says, "That depends upon you. The decision is in your hands."

HE WENT TO HEAVEN

A father was at the beach with his children when his four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore, where a seagull lay dead in the sand. "Daddy, what happened to him?" the son asked. "He died and went to Heaven," the dad replied. The boy thought a moment and then said, "Did God throw him back down?"

KIDS PARASHA SHEMINI

שְׁמִינִי



Leviticus 9:1 - 11:47

"These you may eat, of all that are in the waters. Everything in the waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers, you may eat. But anything in the seas or the rivers that does not have fins and scales, of the swarming creatures in the waters and of the living creatures that are in the waters, is detestable to you. You shall regard them as detestable; you shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall detest their carcasses. Everything in the waters that does not have fins and scales is detestable to you." (Leviticus 11:9-12)

Inspirational Corner

❖ Next to Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Avihu had stood highest in Israel. They had been especially honored by the Lord, having been permitted with the seventy elders to behold His glory in the mount. But their transgression was not therefore to be excused or lightly regarded. All this rendered their sin more grievous. Because men have received great light, because they have, like the princes of Israel, ascended to the mount, and been privileged to have communion with God, and to dwell in the light of His glory, let them not flatter themselves that they can afterward sin with impunity, that because they have been thus honored, God will not be strict to punish their iniquity. This is a fatal deception. The great light and privileges bestowed require returns of virtue and holiness corresponding to the light given. (PP 359-360)