

The children of Israel, in the war against Midian, killed all the men, took women and children captive and carried away their live stock.

Moshe was angry with the commanders of the army for saving the women against Hashem's orders.

He tells them to kill the male children and all non-virgin women.

He also tells them to purify the objects they have taken.

Eleazar then explains how to purify the different objects – and this is the basis for our laws of koshering today – items made by fire are purified by fire, others by water.

Why was it Eleazar that explained the laws of Kashering and not Moshe ?

Rashi explains that Moshe was angry and anger makes you forget what you know and make mistakes.

As Ben Zoma (Ethics of the Fathers Chapter 4) says:

Who is strong ?

איזהו גבור

One who conquers his desires (impulses)

הכובש את יצרו