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ON **VAYIKRA - HACHODESH** - 5775

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**Rabbi Yisroel Reisman** – Parshas Vayikra 5774

1. A couple of thoughts on the Parsha. The first has to do with the Korban Minchas Nedava which we find at the beginning of Perek 2 (בְּתֵּי תִּקְרִיב קֶרְבָּן ) (בְּתֵּי תִּקְרִיב לִירֵךְ). It is the only place that we find the expression Nefesh in regard to one of the Korbanos. Chazal Darshun from here that Korban Zeh Ba Leratzos Al Hanefesh that there is a Kapparah involved in the Mincha just as there is in the Olah, Chatos, and the Asham. All Korbanos are connected to Kapparah and that a Minchas Nedava (donated Mincha) is something which comes for Kappara. However, we don't find anywhere, not in the Gemara, not in the Midrashei Chazal what the specific Kappara of a Mincha is. We find regarding the Olah, the Chattas, and the Asham, but nothing regarding the Mincha.

The Netziv in the Hameik Davar on the Parsha makes a suggestion. It is absolutely incredible the Gadlus of the Netziv. He comes to a conclusion based on Pesukim (Pesukim all over Tanach). Normally we find that Gedolim say Nir'e Misugya D'shas or Nir'e Misugya D'shmaytsa. They take a Sugya, but the Netziv from Diyukim from the word Mincha in assorted places comes to a conclusion. His conclusion is the following. He says, this (Korban Mincha) comes for a Kappara for Aveiros that are done due to Middos. Middos here doesn't mean Middos in the sense of Middos Tovos. It means misbehavior which is due to depression, due to jealousy, due to obsession, due to anger. When somebody misbehaves due to a Kilkul Hamiddos, something which is causing him to misbehave due to Middos. So the Mincha is a Kappara specifically for misbehavior due to Kilkul Hamiddos. Where does he get this from? I will mention a few of the Pesukim. In Shmuel Aleph 26:19 when Shaul is pursuing Dovid and Dovid confronts him. Dovid says (אִם-יִרְוֶךְ הִסִּיתֶךָ בִּי, יָרָה ) (אִם-יִרְוֶךְ לִי מִן-הַקָּפָרָה) for what you are doing to me the Kappara comes from smelling a Mincha. What in the world does a Mincha have to do more than any other Korban which is a Kappara? The Netziv explains, because we know that Shaul pursued Dovid because of a Ruach Hashem, a depression which came upon him so he said (אִם-יִרְוֶךְ לִי מִן-הַקָּפָרָה) if Hashem led you to pursue me (יָרָה מִן-הַקָּפָרָה), smell the Mincha and that will be the Kappara for you.

Another example, in the Haftorah of Chazon Yoshiyahu which is found in Yeshaya Perek Aleph. Yeshaya tells the people 1:13 (לֹא תוֹסִיפוּ, הִבִּיא מִנְחַת-שָׁוְא) don't continue bringing worthless Menachos. Why Menachos? All Korbanos were brought, what is special about the Mincha? Again the Netziv explains, the Mincha is a Kappara for misbehavior which is due to a person who is depressed, is jealous, is angry, anyone of the different Kilkul Hamiddos. However, the

generation of Yeshaya were making a deliberate effort, a Beshita effort to sin. Therefore, he tells them (לֹא תוֹסִיפוּ, הִבִּיא מִנְחַת-שָׁוְא) you bring a Kappara for the wrong thing, you are pretending that it is a Kilkul Hamiddos that leads you to this behavior. It is not.

In Chumash in Parshas Korach 16:15 Moshe Rabbeinu says to the Ribbono Shel Olam (אֶל-תִּפְּנֶן אֶל-מִנְחָתָם) don't turn to their Mincha offering. What does a Mincha offering have anything to do with Korach? The same thing. The Netziv explains, because had the Aveira of Korach been because of Kilkul Hamiddos they would not deserve such a severe punishment, such a once in the history of the world punishment. However, it is not that way. Moshe Rabbeinu says to the Ribbono Shel Olam their Kilkul comes from a Shittas Hachaim, from an opinion that they have certain rights to go against what HKB"H decreed and for that reason (אֶל-תִּפְּנֶן אֶל-מִנְחָתָם).

We find a similar use in the second Perek of Malachi 2:13 (מֵאֵין עוֹד, פְּנוּת אֶל-) (הִמְנַתָּה). The same idea of not turning towards a Mincha where people sin deliberately. It is amazing the Gadlus of the Netziv from these Pesukim in various places in Tanach to come to a conclusion which fits beautifully in these places and in others regarding the uniqueness of a Mincha.

We find four types of Mincha. 1) is flour and water, 2) when it is baked, 3) when it is on a (Machavas) pan, and 4) which is cooked in a pot and it is a softer Mincha. Four types of Mincha. The Netziv explains that it comes for the four types of Kilkul Hamiddos. 1) depression, 2) when the person is too involved in levity and in Kalus, 3) anger, and 4) that which comes from Taiva or the pursuit of pleasure. Four types of Menachos against these four dangerous Kilkul Hamiddos.

Based on this Netziv we understand that we find by the Mincha a Lav in 2:11 (לֹא תִשָּׂה, חֶמֶץ) that it is not allowed to be Chometz. Why a Lav on it being Chometz, we all understand. Since Chometz is a symbol of Kilkul Hamiddos it can hardly be a Michapeir on Kilkul Hamiddos and therefore, these Menachos were all Matzah Dafka. We find Chometz, we find a few Korbanos that could be Chometz but not a Minchas Nedava. Minchas Nedava is never Chometz unlike for example the Shte Halechem that we bring on Shevuos which is allowed to be Chometz. This is a Vort regarding the Korban Mincha.

2. Let's move on to something regarding to Korbanos, the other half of Sefer Vayikra. As you all know we find the expression Raiach Nichoach by every Korban (Menachos too). They are Raiach Nichoach Ishei L'Hashem. There is one Korban where we don't find anywhere in the Torah the expression of Raiach Nichoach. As a matter of fact it is probably the Korban mentioned the most times in Chamishei Chumshai Torah and we don't find the expression of Raiach Nichoach once, and that is the Korban Pesach. It is a bit of a Pele. I would think that the Korban that has to do with Yetzias Mitzrayim should have the biggest Raiach Nichoach to the Ribono Shel Olam. It needs an explanation.

In the Sefer Tzitz Hasadeh on Chag Hapesach he has a beautiful explanation and if you remember you can save this as a Vort for the upcoming Chag HaPesach. The Ramban in the beginning of Vayikra 1:9 quotes the Rambam. The Rambam says that the reason for the Mitzvah of Korbanos was because the Goyim had Korbanos to their Avodah Zorah and to offset that HKB"H gave Klal Yisrael a Korban. We shouldn't have a Taiva to bring Korbanos to an Avodah Zorah so HKB"H said you can have Korbanos here. This is what the Rambam writes in Moreh Nivuchim. It is of course a Ketzas Pele. The whole purpose of a Korban is as a safeguard against Avodah Zorah? The Ramban along with virtually almost every Rishon that quotes the Rambam disagrees vehemently. The Ramban says what do you mean? A Korban is Raiach Nichoach Lashem. The Korban is brought as a Raiach Nichoach as something which is positive. He asks that Noach brought a Korban when he came out of the Taiva. Kayin and Hevel brought Korbanos, there was no Avodah Zorah in the world and therefore, the Rambam is seen as a Pliya Atzuma.

It could be says the Sefer Tzitz Hasadeh that Ain Hachi Nami, all Korbanos that are Raiach Nichoach come for positive reasons. Nevertheless, the Korban Pesach which is unique is not called a Raiach Nichoach Lashem, can be understood based on the Rambam that it is brought as a Geder against Avodah

Zorah. So that all Korbanos come as a Siman of Ahavah and Hiskarvus to the Ribbono Shel Olam and the Korban Pesach which is different in so many ways, it is different not only on when it is brought and when it is eaten but also in the Halachos of the Korban. There is no part of the Korban which is offered onto the Mizbaich, there is no Raiach Nichoach opportunity. It may be that the Korban Pesach remains as the Rambam says as a Geder to Avodah Zorah. Shemos 12:21 (מִשְׁחֻי יִדְאִיחֵם לֶכֶם), when the Ribbono Shel Olam commanded Korban Pesach he said (מִשְׁחֻי יִדְאִיחֵם לֶכֶם). Mishchu Yidaichem Mai' Avodah Zorah and go take a Korban Pesach. How beautiful. It fits absolutely into this Machshava that the Korban Pesach is not Raiach Nichoach. It is meant as a Hakdara a Sur Maira, a Mishchu Yidaichem Mai' Avodah Zorah. We find by the Korban Pesach that there was a certain amount of Mesiras Nefesh in bringing the Korban Pesach. That again fits well. It was again a Geder against Avodah Zorah.

What we gain with this is something incredible for those at least who are interested in learning Nach. We find in Nach when Malchei Yisrael started movements of Teshuvah that they had Klal Yisrael come together and bring a Korban Pesach. We find it at least twice. Yoshiyahu Hamelech in Melachim II 23:21 when he has Klal Yisrael doing Teshuva and Yoshiyahu was the last great Machzir B'teshuvah from all the Malchei Yisrael. He says (וַיִּצַי הַמֶּלֶךְ, אֶת-כָּל-קְדָשׁ (לְאֵמֹר, עֲשׂוּ פֶסַח, לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם). We find the same thing regarding Chizkiyahu who of course the Posuk says was the greatest person that brought Klal Yisrael to Teshuva in Divrei Hayamim II at the beginning of Perek 30 it is brought that Chizkiyahu or as it is brought in Divrei Hayamim Yechizkiyahu had Klal Yisrael bring a Korban Pesach (וַיִּשְׁלַח יְחִזְקִיָּהוּ עַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיהוּדָה, וְגַם-אֲגָרוֹת כְּתָב עַל-אֶפְרַיִם) וַיִּשְׁרָאֵל (וּמְנַשֶּׁה, לְבֹא לְבֵית-יְהוָה, בִּירוּשָׁלַם--לַעֲשׂוֹת פֶּסַח, לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל to bring a Korban and if you know anything about Nach it is an incredible thing that he said (וְגַם-אֲגָרוֹת כְּתָב עַל-אֶפְרַיִם וּמְנַשֶּׁה). Chizkiyahu was only the Melech on the two Shevatim as it was in his days that the 10 Shevatim went to Galus. As part of his Teshuva movement he brought a Korban Pesach. This fits well with this Yesod. The Korban Pesach is a Geder against Avodah Zorah. Of course this sheds new light on the Seder Shel Pesach. The Pesach Seder is supposed to have Matza, Maror, and the Korban Pesach. Pashtus they have no connection to each other, they are just the three Mitzvos Hayom. If the Korban Pesach is Raiach Nichoach then it doesn't fit into the idea of Chametz Umatza. However, given our understanding that the idea of having Matza and not Chametz is part of Biur Hara, Biur Chametz, getting rid of that which is bad, then the Korban Pesach fits absolutely beautifully. The Korban Pesach is the Hakdara against Avodah Zorah. And so, we have an insight into the Korban Pesach and I am sure as we study the Korban Pesach in preparation for Chag HaPesach we will find additional places where this Yesod fits. Any solid Yesod that a person comes up with if it is true fits in other places.

Rav Chaim Brisker used to say if you go on a good road you will meet people. In learning, if you go on a good road, if you have a Mehaleich, an approach, a Klaliyosdika approach and it is true then you see that it fits in numerous places. And so, in the 5 weeks or so until Pesach, in these weeks learn about the Korban Pesach. Looking forward to finding other places where this Yesod fits well.

The question of the week:

We spent the last half of Sefer Shemos learning about the Klei Hamishkan. When did the Klei Hamishkan get their Kedusha? We find two ideas and it seems that they can't both be true. We find the idea that Avodosom Mechancham that every Keili didn't get its Kedusha until it was used. The Avoda, the first time it is used is Mechaneich it. That is Sefer Vayikra where the Keilim are finally used. We also find in Shemos that there was a Meshicha with the Shemen Hamishcha. A Meshicha with the Shemen Hamishcha, that presumably gave it its Kedusha. That is what the Posuk says. Was it with the Shemen Hamishcha or was it with the Avodasam Mechanchim? It seems to be two different competing ideas both of which are supposed to give it its Kedusha. Tzorech Iyun! IY"YH we will revisit it at some future date Bli Neder. Wishing absolutely everyone a wonderful Shabbos Kodesh!

YUHSB Shma Koleinu Vayikra 5774

### Speaking Lashon Hara Rabbi Michael Taubes

The opening Posuk of this Parsha states "VaYedaber Hashem Eilav MeOhel Mo'ed Leimor", "And Hashem spoke him (Moshe) from the Ohel Mo'ed-Leimor" (Vayikra 1) The word "Leimor" is usually translated as "saying," and thus seems here to be simply the concluding word of an introductory phrase similar to many others in the Torah. The Gemara in Yoma (4b), however, derives from this "Leimor" that when one is told something by someone else, he is forbidden to repeat it to another person unless directly told to do so by the first person. Rashi there (ibid. Shehu) explains this derivation by saying that the word "Leimor" can be understood as implying "Lo Emor", meaning "do not tell" unless specific permission is granted. The Maharsha ibid. Chiddushei Aggados, She'Hu) explains more simply that since Hashem had to explicitly say "Leimor" to Moshe, thereby telling him to repeat those words to Bnai Yisrael, we may derive that without specific permission, it would have been forbidden for Moshe to do so, thus teaching us that in general one cannot tell something that he has heard another person.

The Semag (Mitzvas Lo Ta'aseh-9) writes that this prohibition constitutes a full fledged "lav", that is, a true Torah violation, a notion which he says is actually derived from the word "Leimor" itself; he thus holds that there exists in general a "lav" to repeat to others things which one has heard. The Semag (ibid.) places this prohibition together with other prohibitions concerning what one may not say to or about others, such as Rechilus, Lashon Hora and lying about other people or things, all of which, he documents, are serious transgressions. The Torah Temimah on the Posuk in this Parsha (ibid. Os Beis) believes that this may not actually be a real "lav", but it is rather a less severe prohibition merely hinted at by the Torah. The Magen Avraham (Orach Chaim 156:2), however, does list this prohibition among all the other things one must avoid saying or doing during the course of the day. He also adds that if that which one does relate is something negative about another person, he has violated the prohibition of Lashon Hora. It is clear, therefore, that one must be very careful about what one tells to someone else.

The Rambam (Hilchos De'os 7:1-2) outlines and explains the three different violations which fall within this prohibition of relating things to other people. The first is Rechilus, which is when one runs around telling lots of other people things he has heard about from others. The second is Lashon Hora, which is when that which is said about another person is negative or detrimental to him. In both of these cases, the fact that one's report may be true makes no difference. The third violation is Motzi Shem Ra, which is when that which one relates is false. The Rambam adds (ibid. 7:5) that one who speaks Lashon Hora violates the transgression when he talks in front of the subject of his remarks or not. He concludes (ibid. 7:7) that it is forbidden to dwell among people who speak Lashon Hora or to even listen to what they have to say.

The Gemara in Pesachim (118a) makes it clear that besides the prohibition to speak Lashon Hora, there is an independent prohibition to accept Lashon Hora. The Rashbam (ibid. - Hamekabel) explains that this means that one cannot believe Lashon Hora even if he happens to hear it. The Semag (Mitzvas Lo Ta'aseh-10) enumerates this as a separate prohibition on his list of Mitzvos; The Rambam (Hilchos De'os 7:3) writes that the transgression is worse for the one who believes Lashon Hora than for the one who speaks it. The Chafetz Chaim, in his Hilchos Lashon Hora (Klal 6, Se'if 1) elaborates on this prohibition, documenting additional sources. He then adds (ibid Se'if 2) that although even listening to Lashon Hora is usually forbidden, it is permitted for one to listen if the information is directly relevant to him and can prevent him from having some problem in the future. He concludes, however, that believing Lashon Hora as absolute truth is forbidden in all cases. In his Hilchos Rechilus (Klal 5, Se'ifim 1-2), the Chafetz Chaim points out that the same prohibition exists to believe Rechilus. We therefore see that if one unfortunately has to hear Lashon Hora or Rechilus reported by another person, it is still forbidden for him to believe it.

What should one do if he has already heard and believed Lashon Hora or Rechilus? In both Hilchos Lashon Hora (ibid. Se'if 12) and in Hilchos Rechilus (ibid Se'if 4), the Chafetz Chaim says that one must make every effort to remove this information from his mind and stop believing it. He should also

make up his mind that he will no longer accept such information from anyone, and conclude that those repeated it to him must have exaggerated or embellished the story on their own so that it doesn't fully represent the whole truth. If he himself has already gone and repeated this to others, the Chafetz Chaim, in Hilchos Lashon Hora (Be'er Mayim Chayim, Klal 6, Se'if Katan 34), writes that he must ask forgiveness from the subject of his report and try to convince anyone he spoke to that the story is not really true.

We can see from all this how severe a transgression excessive talking can lead to. The Chafetz Chaim introduces his book, the Sefer Chafetz Chaim, by documenting that one can violate as many as thirty one different commandments by following a course on which he will relate, listen to, or believe stories about other people.

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**Rabbi Benjamin Yudin**  
**Just Beneath the Divine**

Ma nishtana Pesach, how different Pesach is, that it has a Parshas HaChodesh preceding it, with the enumeration of the many mitzvos associated with it - there is no special reading of the Torah with the laws of Rosh HaShana, Yom Kippur or Sukkos before those yomim toivm. Parshas HaChodesh gets its name from one passuk (Shemos 12:2) that deals with the mitzvah of Rosh Chodesh and the unique Lunar/Solar calendar that the Jewish nation follow. The remaining eighteen pesukim, however, deal with the laws of Pesach, so why do we refer to this special reading as "Parshas HaChodesh" instead of "Parshas HaPesach"?

I believe that a very insightful Medrash (Shemos Rabbah 15:24) sheds light and clarity on this matter. The Talmud (Sanhedrin 42a) teaches that upon seeing the new moon each month one is to recite a blessing, but the Talmud does not provide us with the text of the bracha. The Medrash posits three possibilities: the first is the text that we follow, reciting a bracha that concludes, "Mechadash Chadoshim - He who renews the months." The second opinion is that of "Mekadash Chadoshim - He who sanctifies months." The third view is "Mekadash Yisroel - He who sanctifies Israel." The Medrash continues and says that we shouldn't be amazed or startled at this last opinion, for indeed if Hashem did not sanctify Israel they in turn could not sanctify the new moon. Thus, the foundation of the first mitzvah given to the Jewish people in Egypt is the special gift and privilege extended to Am Yisrael to sanctify.

There are, our Rabbis note, three different forms of kedusha (holiness): there is the kedusha of zman (time), makom (location), and that of guf - an individual and/or an object. I believe the appellation given to this special reading does not necessarily herald an enumeration of upcoming mitzvos, but rather the opportunities for upcoming sanctifications. In the ensuing eighteen pesukim we encounter all different types of kedusha. We are charged (12:16) that the first and last day are to be mikra kodesh, holy gatherings for proclaiming His holiness, a personification of kedushas ha-zman, sanctifying time. The second kedusha we find is that of kedushas haguf. At first glance it is most strange that the Torah has to charge us (12:17) "ushmartem es ha-matzos - you shall guard the matzos." This guarding must mean something additional to preventing the matzos from becoming chometz since the Torah already warns us (12:15) not to eat chometz. Therefore our Rabbis understand this to mean that we are not simply to bake matza, but we are also to inject into this unleavened bread a lishma - a focus and concentration that charges this bread with an elevated status, as it is now an object of mitzvah. Just as with the writing of a sefer Torah, it is the mindset and focus of the scribe thinking and articulating that his efforts and energies are directed towards the fulfillment of the mitzvah, similarly regarding matzah man endows the matzah with an elevated status, akin to kedushas haguf. Finally, the placing of the blood of the korban Pesach (12:7) on the two mezuzos (doorposts) and lentil was endowing that home with kedushas ha-makom, elevating the home to the status of the mizbeach (altar) which received the blood in place of an altar.

In light of the above, one cannot question why we don't have similar special Torah readings prior to the other yomim toivm. In Parshas HaChodesh we are highlighting not only the first mitzvah given to the Jewish people, namely our unique calendar, but we are also noting that the former slaves are now likened to a klei shares (a holy vessel) that sanctifies all that is placed therein.

The Sefer HaChinuch notes, regarding several mitzvos that focus on the remembrance of the Exodus, that through the events of yetzias Mitzrayim we did not only go from slavery to freedom, but we even went from slavery to aristocracy. Parshas HaChodesh reminds us that our geula (freedom) begins when man is a mekadeish, i.e. when the individual and community endowed with holiness and charged to be G-d like do so by sanctifying all else. Freedom does not mean to do what one pleases within the law (including, for example, doing nothing), rather it means to actualize one's potential of being created in the image of G-d.

Parshas HaChodesh is not only a check list of mitzvos to do and abstain from regarding the forthcoming yom tov. Rather it charges each of us to generate more kedusha in our personal and communal lives. We are not only to gather and remove from our homes ten small wrapped pieces of chometz, but also remove those factors and gadgets that introduce a non-sanctified environment into the home. We don't put blood on our doorposts and lentils, but our dining tables, in lieu of the mizbeach, transform our homes. Are our tables set with divrei Torah or with frivolous conversation? Most importantly, the special reading - HaChodesh - is a charge to sanctify more of one's time by sharing one's Torah and kindnesses with others. If we strive to attain these lofty goals, we can attain the appellation of King David regarding man, "you have made him but slightly less than the angels, and crowned him with soul and splendor" (Tehilim 8:6.)

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**Rabbi Hershel Schachter**

**Understanding Properly**

About fifty years ago the Yiddish press carried a news item that the Vaad Halacha of the conservative movement issued a "psak halacha" that one may drink Welch's Grape Juice. Their reasoning was that Talmud states that there is no prohibition of stam yainom on yayin mevushal and the grape juice was cooked.

Rav Soloveitchick came into his class the next day, related to the students what he had read, and asked if anyone knows what was incorrect with the statement. The only one among the students who knew anything about the topic at the time was Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein who had a smile on his face. The Rav asked him to explain to the other students where the error was. So R' Aharon explained:

The main reason Chazal prohibited stam yainom was out of fear that it could possibly lead to intermarriage; the concern that perhaps the nochri may have been menasech the wine and then later allow someone to drink it was very farfetched. However, once Chazal instituted the prohibition out of concern of chasnus, they extended the issur to include even kosher wine handled by a nochri lest the nochri was menasech it for avodah zora. In the event that the wine had previously been cooked, it would be even more unlikely that the nochri would be menasech it, and therefore in that case magah ha'nochri would not make the wine prohibited. But since in the case of Welch's Grape Juice the wine was processed by nochrim before being cooked, the fact that they cooked it afterwards was irrelevant. The wine was forbidden because the concern of b'noseihem (intermarriage), which is the primary reason for the issur of stam yainom to begin with, still applied even though the farfetched concern of nissuch no longer applied.

The fatty parts of the sacrifices that have to be burnt on the mizbeach must be raw; if they are first cooked, the kohein does not fulfill his mitzvah of haktorah. This haktorah lacks the element of raiach nichoach because the smell will simply not be the same. Similarly, the blood of a korban may not be cooked before being sprinkled upon the mizbeach; if it is cooked first, it's not considered dam (blood) but merely the "juice of the meat". It is for this reason we assume in Shulchan Aruch that eating dam shebishlo is only forbidden m'dirabbonon - such blood would not be acceptable in a korban, and that is the entire basis for the biblical prohibition forbidding dam.

The same is true regarding wine. Yayin mevushal is considered inferior and would not be accepted for nissuch on the mizbeach. Since it would not be accepted on the mizbeach in the Beis Hamikdash, we assume that the nochrim would probably also not use it for their avodah zora. For that reason, if a nochri

handled kosher wine where there is no issue of "binoseihem" but only the concern of nissuch, if the kosher wine had already been mevushal the chachomim never prohibited it.

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### **The Unfulfilled Legacy of Sara Schenirer**

**By Rabbi Yair Hoffman**

They were a group of forgotten neshamos. An entire segment of Klal Yisroel that was neglected. No one cared about their chinuch. And, as a consequence of this wholesale neglect, many of them were lost forever to the beautiful vine that is Klal Yisroel. But then, a young seamstress from Krakow in turn-of-the-century Poland, whose yartzeit was yesterday, began to turn the Torah world upside down. Yes, upside down. Sara Schenirer, daughter of a prominent Belzer and Sanzer Chasidisha family, was a seamstress. She was a seamstress that had attended a Polish public school – a goyish public school. She didn't know lashon hakodesh. She studied commentaries on the Torah not in Hebrew – but in Yiddish translation. And seamstress Sarah Schnirer listened. She listened with empathy to her clients. Customers who told her tales of woe of their off-the-derech daughters. The winds of progress were blowing, and daughters of Israel were abandoning their birthright of Sinai in droves. Boys went to Cheder. Girls stayed home or went to Polish public schools and were exposed to all the "ism"s in the world – communism, socialism, humanism, ad infinitum. Ad infinitum and ad nauseam. She writes in her diary: "And as we pass through the days prior to the Yomim Noraim, fathers and their sons travel off to Ger, to Belze, to Aleksander and to Bobov. They travel to all those places that have become citadels of ruchniyus, led by the Rebbes. Yet we stay at home, the wives, the daughters and the little ones. Ours is an empty Yom Tov. Ours is a fate devoid of Torah intellectual content. The women have never learned anything about the spiritual meaning that lies within a Yom Tov." Her words and actions struck a raw nerve. How dare she? How dare this insolent woman question our way of life? How dare this upstart challenge centuries of tradition – Mesorah? Her opponents tried to stop her. It is said that when her detractors came to the Chofetz Chaim to sign a letter against her, the Chofetz Chaim exited the room and came back with a sum of money. He responded, "My thoughts are.. that she should be supported – please give her these rubles." Soon her support grew. The Gerrer Rebbe stood behind her fledgling movement. Moneys were raised. Summer programs were started. Sara Schnirer was focused, and she built. "Frau Schnirer" was undeterred by any negativity, she had vision and a burning sense of achrayus. Reb Shmuel Deutschlander supported her efforts, as did Yehudis Rosenbaum. A building was rented at 10 Stanislawa Street. It was the top floor of a dilapidated tenement building. No matter. Soon schools were opened across the country – across the continent, and over the seas. Tragedies struck. The Holocaust. Assimilation. Religious apathy. The holocaust brought on some serious religious challenges to the Sheris HaPleitah – those that survived the evil that was Nazi Germany. And yet, somehow, somehow, her legacy is such that this week – 13,000 girls from 92 different Bais Yaakovs came to pay tribute. They paid tribute to this remarkable woman in the Barclays Center in the heart of Brooklyn on the occasion of her 80th yartzeit. The Bais Yaakov world that Sara Shnirer built was responsible for the building of another world as well. It is plain and simple: No Bais Yaakov movement – no Kollels. And no yeshivos. The Bais Yaakov movement, and the resurgence of Torah learning in our world are two remarkable legacies of Sara Schnirer. But there is, however, an unfulfilled legacy. Let's re-read that first paragraph once again. They were a group of forgotten neshamos. An entire segment of Klal Yisroel that was neglected. No one cared about their chinuch. And, as a consequence of this wholesale neglect, many of them were lost forever to the beautiful vine that is Klal Yisroel. There is another group of people, this time made up of both genders. They are the off-the-derech kids that are now in every single one of our communities. Each community among us, whether it be chassidisha, litvisha, or modern orthodox, has children that have left the fold. Look around. They are hanging out on the street corners, at the late night Dunkin Donuts – hechsher and sans hechsher, and worse. Much worse. Our kids have issues of self-esteem, serious alcohol consumption, and some are even abusing drugs. Many OTD kids have tattoos and multiple

piercings. They are everywhere – on Ocean Parkway in Brooklyn, in Lakewood, New Jersey. They are leaving Williamsburg in droves. And their parents toss and turn at night worrying about them. It is to the point where, to echo a Pesach theme – "ain bayis asher ain bo mais – There is not a home that has not been affected." We need a new Sara Schnirer. Where are the visionary leaders who can revolutionize what is not working with our systems? Where are the people who can fix things so that the off-the-derech children do not find solace in areas foreign to Torah? We need someone with the strength and vision of Sara Shnirer, someone undeterred by opponents. Undeterred by those who will oppose the revolution that is necessary to keep our youth enthused in their Yiddishkeit. We must conceive of not merely a stop-gap measure, but something more. We must research what the largest risk factors are. We must develop and innovate programs, plans and ideas that will reduce these risk factors. We need to put our collective minds and our financial pocket books together. Torah society needs a Sara Shnirer who will conceive of a comprehensive solution to address this ever widening problem. Indeed, the Sefer Chasidim (308) explains that even if there is significant financial strain we need to create separate institutions for our different types of children. True, there are the Rabbi Zechariah Wallersteins, the Rabbi Yaakov Horowitzs, the TOVA mentoring programs. But we need to support them and replicate what they do on a massive, massive scale. We need an FDR social security program, a Marshall Plan. A GI bill. We need someone to step to the plate, someone that can make a profound change that will effect and save generations. And we need to put our moneys where our mouths are. We sweep all of this under the carpet and do not talk about it, but this issue, hands down, eclipses all others. How can we attend gala Bar mitzvahs and weddings, Yeshiva dinners and functions while knowing that there are children out there that we have failed? We as a community must regroup and come up with a viable, palatable solution. How can we not cry for thousands of holy mothers in Klal Yisroel whose every thought and prayer centers around her lost son or daughter? How can we not cry when former Bais Yaakov girls walk the streets in halter tops and shorts? When former Yeshiva boys enter bars and abuse drugs? And time is ticking. Let's not kid ourselves. One or two years in the off-the-derech lifestyle almost guarantees a point of no return. Those that do make the trip back are few and far between. Our Rabbonim, our leaders, and our wealthy askanim need to hear from us. They need to hear of the heartaches that we suffer. Our voices need to be heard so that this issue will be given the prominence that it demands. But until that Sara Shnirer emerges, everyone can do something. We can create happier homes and happier classrooms. We need to reach out to the people we see and smile at them. Of course, there are a myriad of reasons as to why these things can happen, and we cannot chalilah ever be judgmental. We need to be that resource, that Rock-of-Gibraltar that genuinely cares about the neighbor's child who has that missing or divorced parent. We need to put our collective heads together to create tools, resources, and institutions that will address the issue of our ever growing lost brethren. This all needs leadership, direction, and vision. These forgotten souls must be placed once again on our agenda. Sara Shnirer, where are you?

### **Thanks to hamelaket@gmail.com for collecting the following items:**

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**Weekly Blog :: Rabbi Berel Wein**

#### **Disconnection**

One of the problems that faces religious leadership in the Jewish world, especially the leadership of the great scholars and heads of the leading educational institutions here in Israel, is that there is a chasm of disconnect between them and the masses that they wish to lead and influence.

I remember that once when I was a rabbi in Miami Beach many decades ago, a noted Israeli Talmudic scholar asked permission to speak on Shabbat in my synagogue. I immediately arranged for him to do so but I spoke to him in advance and said that the makeup of the synagogue would not allow for an intricate Talmudic lecture that would not be understood or appreciated.

Ignoring my advice, a situation that I am well accustomed to, the scholar proceeded to deliver a thirty five minute discourse on a very esoteric and little known subject mentioned in the Talmud. Naturally, his words were ill received and I suffered the indignities of being reprimanded by many in the synagogue for allowing that scholar to speak.

I asked the scholar why he ignored my advice and chose to speak about a subject that had no relevance or interest to the assembled audience. He facetiously or perhaps seriously answered: "I was trying to raise them to a higher level of total Torah knowledge." I said to him that I thought his goals were admirable but that his methods were deplorable.

I explained to him that in my opinion a speaker and certainly a religious scholar, who views one's self as a person of leadership and influence in the Jewish world, cannot afford to have a complete disconnect with the people to whom he is speaking and trying to lead.

The Torah teaches us that our teacher Moshe "descended to the people." That is not only a physical description of Moshe coming down from Mount Sinai but its broader implication is that Moshe had to have had connection and empathy with the people of Israel. He could not lead them from the heights of Sinai but rather he could do so only if he were willing to descend from the mount, so to speak, to the level of the people.

Much of the struggle, both within and without the religious Jewish world here in Israel, is over this issue of disconnection. For various reasons, some of which are true but most of which are exaggerated or based on ignorance, the Israeli public has little confidence, respect or adherence to its rabbinic leadership. This is not only true regarding the sorry state of the official Chief Rabbinate but even in those sectors of religious society which claim to follow the wishes of the great scholars of Israel. The influence of these scholars at ground level is minor. This again is because of the enormous disconnect between the world and environment that the scholars live in and the true environment of daily life and its challenges and problems that confront the masses. Raising the level of knowledge and spirituality amongst people is a lengthy and arduous process. It can only be done if the leadership truly understands and appreciates the situations and difficulties that the mass public faces.

The Talmud itself stated that religious leaders should not establish decrees that most of the public will find impossible to abide by. Yet we are witness on a regular basis to the utterances and decrees of the great scholars which if followed would make it impossible for most Jews in Israel to live and survive. This disconnect is apparent to all – it is the elephant in the room that is ignored by both the leadership and the masses. We are forced to live in some sort of fantasy land of theoretical obedience to the scholars and the practicality of ignoring their pronouncements. Disconnect eventually breeds disrespect.

There are currently a number of initiatives to try and bridge this disconnect and rebuild the authority of the rabbinate and the scholars here in Israel. All of these initiatives are being fought against tooth and nail by the established powers and political interests that are so embedded in Israeli public and religious life.

There is a false sense of accomplishment and by those who continue to protect this disconnect and to believe that what was once can be imposed on what now is. The struggle to create a rabbinate that understands and speaks to the people, and one that could gain the respect of the public and restore itself to spiritual and moral leadership in the country, has been an ongoing one for the past century. It does not appear that this struggle will be won by either side in the very near future. Nevertheless, the problem of the disconnect in religious Jewish society here in Israel will not disappear nor will it be solved by benign neglect. It is one of the major issues that we must think about and act upon in order to initiate a process that will eventually lessen, if not even eliminate, this disconnection. Shabbat shalom

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subject: Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

**Weekly Parsha Blog:: Rabbi Berel Vayikra**

The word vayikra that begins this week's Torah reading, and is the name of the third book of the Chumash, is distinguished by having a miniature alef at the end of the word. I have written about this exceptional script/font in previous years. I

concentrated then mainly on the traditional explanation that this small letter was inserted in the Torah to highlight the abject humility of our teacher Moshe, with this character trait of humility being the basis for his extraordinary relationship with the Creator. The focus of the explanation regarding this miniature letter was placed on Moshe. However, if I may, I would suggest another type of interpretation in which the focus is not on Moshe, the recipient of God's words, but rather is on God Himself, so to speak.

In the famous vision of the prophet Elijah as recorded for us in the book of Kings, the Lord illustrates to the prophet and through him to all of Israel and mankind that God is not to be found in thunder and earthquakes, tornadoes and hurricanes and the other majestic and awe-inspiring vagaries of natural sound. Rather He is to be found in the still small voice that constantly emanates from Heaven.

God calls out to us in that modulated whispered tone of voice. He calls out to us with a small alef, reduced in size and volume. But the loud voice cannot maintain itself for all times, whereas the small voice that Elijah heard still echoes in our ears thousands of years later.

If one wants to hear God's voice, so to speak, speaking to one's self, then one has to strain to hear the whispered utterances, the nuances of tone, the drama of almost silence itself.

The rabbis of the Talmud emphasized this message and cautioned us: "The words of the wise are heard and appreciated when they are said with calm and softness." In our world of constant sound, the cacophony of shouting and disagreements dominate the sound waves of the world. In such an environment it is difficult, if not almost well nigh impossible, to hear the whispered voice of Sinai, which is broadcast daily to the human race.

One of the basic tenets of Judaism is to somehow attempt to imitate the traits, so to speak, of our Creator. Therefore if God speaks to us in a soft and calm voice and manner, then that should be the voice and manner that we should constantly employ when communicating with others. King Solomon in Proverbs taught us that shouting is the weapon of fools. The greatness of Moshe is emphasized in his ability to hear the Godly voice speaking to him, while others, outside the holy precincts of the Mishkan/Tabernacle were unable to do so.

In an expansive way, one can say that those who cannot hear the still small voice of God, so to speak, are really deaf to the spiritual demands that the Torah places upon us – they are outside the precincts of the holy structure of Judaism. My revered teachers in my student years emphasized to us that high volume while praying does not always equal proper intent and concentration. God hears the silence of our hearts. We should all attempt to hear the softness of His communication, in His relationship to us.

Shabbat shalom

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**Ohr Somayach :: Torah Weekly :: Parshat Vayikra**

**For the week ending 21 March 2015 / 1 Nisan 5775**

**by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - www.seasonsofthemoon.com**

**Insights**

***Aromatherapy "A pleasing aroma for G-d" (13:17)***

Why is it that when someone takes some unidentifiable glob out of the fridge that has been hiding there for more than a month, they bring it over to you and say, "This smells terrible! Smell it!"?

Why is that we have to share the smell of something terrible with others?

Truth be told, the sense of smell is unique. Smell was the only human sense not party to the sin of Adam and Chava. The other senses were all involved in the sin. Chava started off by listening to the snake and then, "The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and it was appetizing to the eyes... and she took (touch) from its fruit and she ate (taste)." (Ber. 3:6)

Notice that the sense of smell is conspicuously absent here.

The nose is the place where life begins. G-d blew the living soul of man into his nostrils (Ber. 2:7). Perhaps it is for that reason that the nose is the first place that we sense decay, for decay is no more than the evidence that life has left the living.

The “shehechyanu” blessing that we recite on eating fruits that we have not eaten since their previous season is not recited on a fragrance that we have not enjoyed since its previous season. Maybe this is because the sense of smell was never blighted by the sin of Adam and Chava and remained on a higher realm — beyond time.

A scent is something that we discern from afar, and thus anything that we recognize before we actually encounter the thing itself can be called its “aroma.” It is the job of a korban sacrifice to be a harbinger of good to come; that we sense now the good deeds that will emanate from the person bringing the korban from now on. This is because the essence of a korban is teshuva — a return to G-d by rectifying our negative actions. And without this resolution to change for the better, the korban itself is valueless. As G-d says, “What good to Me are the multitude of your sacrifices?” (Yeshayahu ch. 1)

The precursor of good deeds to come is “a pleasing aroma to G-d.”

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**Orthodox Union / www.ou.org**

**Britain's Former Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks**

***Why Do We Sacrifice?***

The laws of sacrifices that dominate the early chapters of the book of Leviticus, are among the hardest in the Torah to relate to in the present. It has been almost 2,000 years since the Temple was destroyed and the sacrificial system came to an end. But Jewish thinkers, especially the more mystical among them, strove to understand the inner significance of the sacrifices and the statement they made about the relationship between humanity and God. They were thus able to rescue their spirit even if their physical enactment was no longer possible. Among the simplest yet most profound was the comment made by R. Shneur Zalman of Ladi, the first Rebbe of Lubavitch. He noticed a grammatical oddity about the second line of today’s parsha:

“Speak to the children of Israel and say to them: when one of you offers a sacrifice to the Lord, the sacrifice must be taken from the cattle, sheep or goats. (Lev. 1:2)

Or so the verse would read if it were constructed according to the normal rules of grammar. However, in Hebrew the word order of the sentence is strange and unexpected. We would expect to read: adam mikem ki yakriv, “when one of you offers a sacrifice”. Instead what it says is adam ki yakriv mikem, “when one offers a sacrifice of you”. The essence of sacrifice, said R. Shneur Zalman, is that we offer ourselves. We bring to God our faculties, our energies, our thoughts and emotions. The physical form of sacrifice – an animal offered on the altar – is only an external manifestation of an inner act. The real sacrifice is mikem, “of you”. We give God something of ourselves. [i]

What exactly is it that we give God when we offer a sacrifice? The Jewish mystics, among them R. Shneur Zalman, spoke about two souls each of us has – the animal soul (nefesh ha-behamit) and the Godly soul. On the one hand we are physical beings. We are part of nature. We have physical needs: food, drink, shelter. We are born, we live, we die. As Ecclesiastes puts it:

“Man’s fate is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. Both have the same breath; man has no advantage over the animal. Everything is a mere fleeting breath. (Ecclesiastes 3: 19)

Yet we are not simply animals. We have within us immortal longings. We can think, speak and communicate. We can, by acts of speaking and listening, reach out to others. We are the one life form known to us in the universe that can ask the question “Why?” We can formulate ideas and be moved by high ideals. We are not governed by biological drives alone. Psalm 8 is a hymn of wonder on this theme:

“When I consider your heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars,  
which you have set in place,  
what is man that you are mindful of him,  
the son of man that you care for him?  
Yet You made him a little lower than the angels

and crowned him with glory and honor.

You made him ruler over the works of your hands;  
you put everything under his feet . . . (Psalm 8: 4-7)

Physically, we are almost nothing; spiritually, we are brushed by the wings of eternity. We have a Godly soul. The nature of sacrifice, understood psychologically, is thus clear. What we offer God is (not just an animal but) the nefesh ha-behamit, the animal soul within us.

How does this work out in detail? A hint is given by the three types of animal mentioned in the verse: behemah (animal), bakar (cattle) and tzon (flock). Each represents a separate animal-like feature of the human personality.

Behemah represents the animal instinct itself. The word refers to domesticated animals. It does not imply the savage instincts of the predator. What it means is something more tame. Animals spend their time searching for food. Their lives are bounded by the struggle to survive. To sacrifice the animal within us is to be moved by something more than mere survival.

Wittgenstein, when asked what was the task of philosophy, answered “To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle”. [ii] The fly, trapped in the bottle, bangs its head against the glass, trying to find a way out. The one thing it fails to do is to look up. The Godly soul within us is the force that makes us look up, beyond the physical world, beyond mere survival, in search of meaning, purpose, goal. The word bakar, cattle, in Hebrew reminds us of the word boker, “dawn”, literally to “break through”, as the first rays of sunlight break through the darkness of night. Cattle, stampeding, break through barriers. Unless constrained by fences, cattle are no respecters of boundaries. To sacrifice the bakar is to learn to recognize and respect boundaries – between holy and profane, pure and impure, permitted and forbidden. Barriers of the mind can sometimes be stronger than walls.

Finally tzon, flocks, represents the herd instinct – the powerful drive to move in a given direction because others are doing likewise. [iii] The great figures of Judaism – Abraham, Moses, the prophets – were distinguished precisely by their ability to stand apart from the herd; to be different, to challenge the idols of the age, to refuse to capitulate to the intellectual fashions of the moment. That ultimately is the meaning of holiness in Judaism. Kadosh, the holy, is something set apart, different, separate, distinctive. Jews were the only minority in history consistently to refuse to assimilate to the dominant culture or convert to the dominant faith.

The noun korban, “sacrifice”, and the verb le-hakriv, “to offer something as a sacrifice” actually mean “that which is brought close” and “the act of bringing close”. The key element is not so much giving something up (the usual meaning of sacrifice) but rather bringing something close to God. Le-hakriv is to bring the animal element within us to be transformed through the Divine fire that once burned on the altar, and still burns at the heart of prayer if we truly seek closeness to God.

By one of the ironies of history, this ancient idea has become suddenly contemporary. Darwinism, the decoding of the human genome, and scientific materialism (the idea that the material is all there is) have led to the widespread conclusion that we are animals, nothing more, nothing less. We share 98 per cent of our genes with the primates. We are, as Desmond Morris used to put it, “the naked ape”. [iv] On this view, Homo sapiens exists by mere accident. We are the result of a random series of genetic mutations and just happened to be more adapted to survival than other species. The nefesh ha-behamit, the animal soul, is all there is.

The refutation of this idea – and it is surely among the most reductive ever to be held by intelligent minds – lies in the very act of sacrifice itself as the mystics understood it. We can redirect our animal instincts. We can rise above mere survival. We are capable of honouring boundaries. We can step outside our environment. As Harvard neuroscientist Steven Pinker put it: “Nature does not dictate what we should accept or how we should live,” adding, “and if my genes don’t like it they can go jump in the lake.” [v] Or as Katharine Hepburn majestically said to Humphrey Bogart in *The African Queen*, “Nature, Mr Allnut, is what we were put on earth to rise above.”

We can transcend the behemah, the bakar and the tzon. No animal is capable of self-transformation, but we are. Poetry, music, love, wonder – the things that have no survival value but which speak to our deepest sense of being – all tell us that we are not mere animals, assemblages of selfish genes. By bringing that

which is animal within us close to God, we allow the material to be suffused with the spiritual and we become something else: no longer slaves of nature but servants of the living God.

[i] R. Shneur Zalman of Ladi, *Likkutei Torah*, Brooklyn, N.Y., 1984, *Vayikra* 2aff.

[ii] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, New York: Macmillan, 1953, 309.

[iii] The classic works on crowd behavior and the herd instinct are Charles Mackay, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, 1841; Gustav le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, 1897; Wilfred Trotter, *Instincts of the herd in peace and war*, 1914; and Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, New York, Viking Press, 1962.

[iv] Desmond Morris, *The Naked Ape*. New York: Dell Pub., 1984.

[v] Steven Pinker, *How the Mind Works*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1997, 54. Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks is a global religious leader, philosopher, the author of more than 25 books, and moral voice for our time. Until 1st September 2013 he served as Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, having held the position for 22 years. To read more from Rabbi Sacks or to subscribe to his mailing list, please visit [www.rabbisacks.org](http://www.rabbisacks.org).

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**Rabbi Yissocher Frand - Parshas Vayikra  
*Sanctifying Oneself Through The Physical***

The Medrash in this week's parsha says, "Rabbi Yochanan said, G-d only reveals himself to idolaters at night -- a time when people separate from one another -- as it is written 'G-d came to Avimelech in a dream at night' [Bereshis 20:3] or 'G-d came to Bilaam at night' [Bamidbar 22:20]. However, G-d reveals Himself to Jewish prophets during the day, as it is written 'And he sat at the opening of the tent in the heat of the day [Bereshis 18:1]'."

What is the meaning of this Medrash? The Ateres Mordechai explains that this Medrash is teaching a very significant difference between Judaism and other religions. Many religions believe in a basic dichotomy between the physical and spiritual. They believe that if a person really wants to reach the highest levels of spirituality, he must separate himself from physical things, be celibate, become a monk. The more separate a person can become, the more holy he can become. Judaism teaches us just the opposite. Torah teaches that the highest form of holiness comes through material matters. As the Kotzker Rebbe explains "V'ANSHEI-Kodesh Te'heyu Li" -- holy PEOPLE you shall be to Me. I want you to be both 'holy' and 'people', not holy angels. We believe that a person can sanctify that which is physical. He can take a meal and make it into a Shabbos meal. He can take any act and elevate it to a higher form. That is our goal. "Through all your paths, know Him" [Mishlei 3:6]. By infusing all of our activities -- our eating and sleeping and drinking and work -- with holiness, we can become close to G-d.

This is precisely the meaning of the Medrash. G-d must come to Bilaam the idolater at night, at a time when people are separated from one another and when physical activity is on the wane. Only then can Bilaam deal with spirituality. Otherwise, he is not able to deal with the conflict between the spiritual and the physical. However, G-d can come to a Jewish prophet, I'havdil [to distinguish (between two very different things)], even during the day, when the prophet is occupied with daily activities. Even in the midst of all that, there can be spirituality.

This is a powerful ethical teaching. The essence of a Jew's life is about taking his daily activities -- the accounting and the doctoring and the practicing of law -- and infusing them with a Kedusha [Holiness]. Every act that a person performs should be for the sake of Heaven.

Transcribed by David Twersky Seattle, WA; Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman, Baltimore, MD  
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**Rav Kook List**

**Rav Kook on the Torah Portion**

***Vayikra: The Goal of Sacrifices***

Sacrifices are not an innovation of the Jewish people. Noah also offered sacrifices to God. However, not all offerings are equal. The Midrash employs the following parable to illustrate this idea:

"There was once a king who hired two chefs. The first chef cooked a meal that the king ate and enjoyed. Then the second chef cooked a meal that the king ate and enjoyed. How can we know which meal the king enjoyed more? When the king subsequently commanded the second chef, "Make for me again the dish that you prepared," we realize that the second meal was the king's preferred dish."

In other words, by the fact that God commanded the Jewish people to offer sacrifices, we know that God prefers their offerings to those which Noah initiated on his own accord.

But how do we evaluate the relative worth of different sacrifices? What distinguishes the service of Israel from that of Noah?

**Two Goals of Offerings**

The key to assessing an offering is to examine its purpose. The more elevated the goal, the more acceptable the offering. Noah's objective in offering sacrifices after the Flood was very different than that of the Jewish people. Noah sought to preserve the physical world, to protect it from Divine retribution. Noah's offerings achieved their goal - "God smelled the appeasing fragrance and said to Himself, 'Never again will I curse the soil because of man'" (Gen. 8:21).

The offerings of the Jewish people aspire to a far greater objective. Their goal is to enable Israel to merit heightened levels of Divine providence and prophecy.

The Torah explicitly sets out the purpose of the Temple service: "Make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst" (Ex. 8:25).

**Fragrance and Bread**

The difference between Noah's offerings and those of Israel is reflected in the metaphors that the Torah uses to describe them. Noah's offerings had an "appeasing fragrance," while those of Israel are referred as "My bread." What is the difference between a fragrance and food?

When an animal consumes vegetation, the plant life is absorbed into the animal and becomes part of it. In this way, the plant has attained a higher state of being. When a human consumes an animal, the animal is similarly elevated as it becomes part of that human being. This transformation to a higher state through consumption parallels bringing an offering with the objective of attaining a higher state of existence. The offerings of the Jewish people are called "My bread," since the magnitude of change to which they aspire - perfection as prophetic beings - is similar to the transformations of plant to animal and animal to human. The offerings of Noah, on the other hand, had only an "appeasing fragrance." They produced a wonderful scent and appealed to the natural senses, but they did not attempt to effect a fundamental change in nature. Their purpose was to maintain the world, to refine humanity within the framework of its natural moral and intellectual capabilities.

In fact, the offerings of the Jewish people encompass both of these objectives. They are described both as "appeasing fragrance" and as "My bread," since we aspire to perfection in two areas - natural wisdom and Divine prophecy.

(Sapphire from the Land of Israel. Adapted from Midbar Shur, pp. 155-158)

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