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ON VAYIKRA - 5777

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Rabbi 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 (וַיִּקְרָא, כִּי-תִקְרִיב) (קָרְבָּן מִנְחָה לַיהוָה). 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 (גַּם-יָרִיר הָסִיתָדָּבָר) 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-יָרִיר הָסִיתָדָּבָר) if Hashem led you to pursue me (גַּם-יָרִיר הָסִיתָדָּבָר), 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 מִנְחָת-יְשָׁעָא) 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 מִנְחָת-יְשָׁעָא) 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-תִּפְּנֹן אֶל-מִנְחָתְכֶם) 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-תִּפְּנֹן אֶל-מִנְחָתְכֶם).

We find a similar use in the second Perek of Malachi 2:13 (מֵאִין עוֹד, פְּנוּת אֶל-) (הִמְנִיחָה). 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 תִשָּׂא, הַמִּזְעָה) 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 Noah 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 Mizbaiach, there is no Raiach Nichoach opportunity. It may be that the Korban Pesach remains as the Ramban says as a Geder to Avodah Zorah. Shemos 12:21 (מִשְׁכֹּחַ, וְהָיָה לְכֶם), when the Ribbono Shel Olam commanded Korban Pesach he said (מִשְׁכֹּחַ, וְהָיָה לְכֶם). 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 (לִירֵרָךְ אֱלֹהֶיכֶם, וַיִּצְוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ, אֶת-כָּל-הָעָם, לֵאמֹר, עֲשׂוּ כִסֵּה). 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 וְגַם-אֲגָרוֹת כָּתַב עַל-אֲפָרַיִם וּמְנַשֶּׁה, לְבוֹא לְבֵית-יְרֵרָךְ, וְחִזְקִיהוּ עַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיהוָה (בִּירֵרָשְׁלָם--לְעֲשׂוֹת כִּסֵּה, לִירֵרָךְ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל). Again he asks them to bring a Korban and if you know anything about Nach it is an incredible thing that he said (וְגַם-אֲגָרוֹת כָּתַב עַל-אֲפָרַיִם 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"H we will revisit it at some future date Bli Neder. Wishing absolutely everyone a wonderful Shabbos Kodesh!

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The “Yitzchak Effect” Impacted The Mishkan Service For All Future Generations

The first day of Nisan is a very important date in Jewish history. On that date the Mishkan (Tabernacle) was first set up. In truth, the entire construction of the Mishkan was finished on the 25th of Kislev. Moshe Rabbeinu came down from Mt. Sinai on Yom Kippur and announced that Hashem had forgiven the people for the sin of the Golden Calf. On the day after Yom Kippur — 11 Tishrei — Moshe gave Klal Yisrael the mitzvah to build the Mishkan. The building of the Mishkan was in fact the topic of the last five Parshiyos of Sefer Shmos — Terumah, Tezaveh, Ki Tisa, Vayakhel and Pekudei. The process took place during the end of the month of Tishrei, throughout the month of Cheshvan and was ultimately completed on the twenty-fifth day of Kislev.

The Mishkan sat unassembled in its component parts during the end of Kislev, throughout Teves, Shvat, and Adar all the way until Rosh Chodesh Nisan. The Medrash Tanchuma comments on this delay in setting up the Mishkan: Rabbi Shmuel Bar Nachman states that the Mishkan was completed in less than 3 months, but sat unassembled for another three months. Why was this so? It is because G-d wanted to mix the simcha (rejoicing) of the day in which the Mishkan would first be set up with the simcha of the day in which Yitzchak Avinu was born. Yitzchak Avinu was born on Rosh Chodesh Nisan!

The Medrash goes on to say that the scoffers of the generation were mocking and saying “Why is there such a delay? Why isn't the Mishkan being set up right away when it was completed?” (Some things never change — the kibitzers always find something to focus on to express their cynicism.) The Medrash states about these scoffers “But they didn't know that the Almighty had a Master Plan”. Concerning this plan King David said “For you have gladdened me, Hashem, with Your deeds; at the works of Your hands I sing glad song. How great are Your deeds, Hashem, exceedingly profound are Your thoughts.” [Tehillim 92:5-6].

The Medrash interprets “For you have gladdened me, Hashem, with Your deeds” refers to the Tent of Meeting (Ohel Moed); “at the works of Your hands I sing” refers to the Beis HaMikdash; “How great are Your deeds, Hashem, exceedingly profound are Your thoughts” refers to the fact G-d planned to mix one joy with that of another (i.e. — the setting up of the Tabernacle with the birthdate of Yitzchak). The next verse goes on to say: “A boor cannot know, nor can a fool understand this” [Tehillim 92:7]. The clueless did not get the great significance of the convergence of these two joyful dates. The scoffers who wanted to know why the Mishkan was not set up when it was first completed did not understand the Divine Thought

Process which waited until Nisan 1 to first set it up. G-d had a plan — to set up the Mishkan on the very day that the Patriarch Yitzchak was born.< /p>

Rav Dovid Kviat raises two difficulties with this Medrash:

1) The rule of thumb normally is that we do not mix one joyous event with another (ayn m'arvin simcha b'simcha).

2) What does the birth of Yitzchak have to do with putting up the Mishkan?

He suggests that Yitzchak is the “pillar of Avodah“. He is the patriarch that represents Divine Service. Yitzchak himself was a “korban” — he was about to be sacrificed. Not only was he “about to be sacrificed” against his will, he did it willingly! He did it joyfully (b'simcha). He set the tone of Divine Service performed with joy. Chazal tell us that he wanted to make sure that he would not be accidentally invalidated and asked his father to bind him tightly to make sure he did move and thereby make the sacrifice pasul (invalid).

When one is contemplating putting up a Mishkan — which is all about korbonos, the Ribono shel Olam wanted the influence of Yitzchak Avinu and his joyful approach to Divine Service to be present as a segulah (fortuitous omen) for the initial erection of the Tabernacle.

In Judaism, as we all know, dates on the calendar are not merely commemorative. What happened on a particular day in history has impact on all future generations. The Yom Tov of Pessach is the Time of Freedom and every single year on Pesach there are emanations of holiness and redemption that we can also take part in. When the Torah was given on Shavuos emanations of Torah learning potential are forever more present on that date which is the reason we make extra efforts to learn on Shavuos — to seize those Heavenly emanations. Likewise, the fact that Yitzchak was born on Rosh Chodesh Nisan and b'simcha went to do the Avodah (Divine Service of Sacrifice) made an effect on the first day of Nisan for all future generations. Therefore when G-d established a Mishkan, he wanted that effect — the “Yitzchak effect” to lend character to the Service that would take place in this Mishkan during all future generations.< /p>

So therefore even though the normal rule of thumb is that “ayn m'arvin simcha b'simcha” — here there is no difficulty understanding why G-d decided to set aside this rule. The rule means we do not take two disparate reasons for rejoicing (e.g. — rejoicing on a holiday and rejoicing over taking a new bride) and mix them by, for example, getting married during a Jewish holiday. But here we are talking about the same “simcha” — the “simcha of Avodah” (joy of Divine Service). Here there is no conflict. On the contrary G-d wanted to take this Divine Influence which existed within creation (by virtue of Yitzchak's birth on Nisan 1) and place it within the Mishkan, so therefore the Mishkan was first erected on Rosh Chodesh Nisan, to mix one joy with another — the joy of the new Tabernacle with the joy of the day in which Yitzchak was born.

A Novel Interpretation of the Term “Ray-ach Nichoach L'Hashem“

I saw in the sefer HaKsav V'HaKabbalah a beautiful observation. There is a recurrent theme throughout Sefer Vayikra: When the Torah speaks of the burnt offering, it refers to it quite often as olah, eeshay, ray-ach nichoach l'Hashem — an olah-offering, a fire-offering, a pleasing fragrance to Hashem. Most of us understand that the term ray-ach nichoach (a pleasing fragrance) refers to the sacrifice. For some reason, the Ribono shel Olam gets some type of pleasure from the aroma of Korbonos.

HaKsav V'HaKabbalah brings from a sefer called Ma'aseh HaShem an opinion that this is incorrect. He interprets that the term ray-ach nichoach L'Hashem is not referring to the Korban. It is referring to the person who brings the korban. To what can the matter be compared? Erev Shabbos most of us walk into our homes and we smell something delicious. Maybe it will be the chicken soup coming to a boil, maybe it will be freshly baked Challah, maybe it will be the chicken that is roasting in the oven. Whatever it is going to be, when one walks into the door of a traditional Jewish home on Erev

Shabbos — even if one is on a different floor, even if he is 50 feet away from the kitchen — Aaah! It smells so good!

Smell, to use an idiom from the business world can be called “a leading economic indicator.” This means that one does not have to taste the chicken soup, one does not even have to see the chicken soup to know that “tonight I am going to have a delicious meal.” I know I am going to have fresh challah and kugel and chicken soup and it is all going to be geshmak! I know that already without having tasted a morsel, because I smell it. The nature of smell is that it is anticipatory. Our sense of smell allows us to anticipate what it going to be.

HaKsav v'HaKabbalah writes that when a person brings a korban he wants to do Teshuva. It is not the korban that the Almighty wants so much — it is what the korban is going to bring out in the person. Korban comes from the word karev — which means coming closer. When a person brings a korban that says he wants to be better. Either it is a sin offering and he wants to bring atonement for what he has done or it is a burn offering (olah) or a peace offering (shelamim). In any event his bringing the Korban is an anticipatory act. He thereby anticipates what is going to happen by virtue of him having brought the sacrifice. The ray-ach nichoach l'Hashem is that now the Ribono shel olam sees — smells, if you will — from this activity of bringing a korban that this person is going to be better in the future.

The Korban is the “smell” that indicates what is going to be. His offering is indicative of what he is going to do and who he is going to be in the future. That which is going to happen in the future is always referred to as smell. One “smells it” before one is actually there. HaKadosh Baruch Hu loves the smell of the person who wants to become better and who wants to become closer to Him. That is why a korban is “ray-ach nichoach l'Hashem” — the person, not the animal.

Transcribed by David Twersky; Jerusalem DavidATwersky@gmail.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD dhoffman@torah.org This week's write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissochar Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Series on the weekly Torah portion. A complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. To Support Project Genesis- Torah.org Rav Frand © 2017 by Torah.org. Do you have a question or comment? Feel free to contact us on our website. Join the Jewish Learning Revolution! Torah.org: The Judaism Site brings this and a host of other classes to you every week. Visit <http://torah.org/> to get your own free copy of this mailing or subscribe to the series of your choice. Need to change or stop your subscription? Please visit our subscription center, <http://torah.org/subscribe/> -- see the links on that page. Permission is granted to redistribute, but please give proper attribution and copyright to the author and Torah.org. Both the author and Torah.org reserve certain rights. Email copyrights@torah.org for full information. Torah.org: The Judaism Site Project Genesis, Inc. 2833 Smith Ave., Suite 225 Baltimore, MD 21209 <http://www.torah.org/> learn@torah.org (410) 602-1350 FAX: (410) 602-1351

אמירת הסימנים

כדי לבאר מנהג אמירת הסימנים שנהגו בו כל ישראל, נקדים כמה הקדמות:

חז"ל תקנו שאכילת הלילה תהיינה בהסיבה דרך חירות, ומצינו ענין הסיבה גם במקום אחר, בדין קביעות סעודה להוציא את חבירו בברכת המוציא או ברכת המזון, כמבואר במשנה (ברכות מב). שאינו יכול להוציא אחרים אלא אם כן אכלו יחד בהסיבה, כי כל שלא הסיבו אינו נחשב שקבעו לאכול יחד, וכתבו התוספות והרא"ש (שם) ועד ראשונים שבזמן הזה, שהדרך לקבוע סעודה בלא הסיבה, יכולים להוציא אחד את חבירו בברכת המוציא וכן לברך ברכת המזון בזמן אפילו אכלו בישיבה בלא הסיבה.

ונראה ברור שמה שמצינו דין הסיבה לענין קביעות סעודה ומה שנאמר דין הסיבה לענין חירות הכל דבר אחד, שזוהו עצמו הטעם שהסיבה נחשבת דרך בני חורין, כי מנהג בני חורין לאכול אכילת קבע.

וכמו שכתבו הראשונים הנ"ל לענין קביעות סעודה, שבזמן הזה אין לנו הסיבה ודי בישיבה, כך כתב הרמ"א (סי' תע"ב) בשם הראב"ה לענין ליל פסח, שכיון שבזמן הזה אין דרך בני חורין לאכול בהסיבה לכן אין צריך להסב בליל הסדר. ועל זה סומכות הנשים שאינן נוהרות בהסיבה (אף שכל הנשים שלנו חשבות הן, ומבואר בגמרא שאשה חשובה חייבת בהסיבה עיי"ש ברמ"א). אבל האנשים נהגו להסב בליל הסדר גם בזה"ז.

עד נקדים מה שמבואר בגמרא (ברכות ט): שגם בזמן חז"ל שלא הייתה נחשבת אכילת קבע בלא הסיבה, מכל מקום אם אמרו ינוויל

וניכול לחמא בדרך פל"י (נלך ונאכל לחם במקום פלוני) הייתה נחשבת על ידי זה אכילת קבע גם אם אכלו בישיבה, בלא הסיבה. שעל ידי ההזמנה לאכול יחד במקום מסוים נעשה אכילת קבע אפילו בלא הסיבה.

ומעתה, הנה בליל פסח אנו רוצים לעשות מעשה להורות שאכילת לילה זה היא בקביעות כדרך בני חורין, ואינה אכילת עראי. שזוהו עיקר ענין הסיבה. וכמשי"כ הרמב"ם (פ"ו ח"י"ג) "בכל דור דור חייב אדם להראות את עצמו כאילו הוא בעצמו יצא עתה משעבוד מצרים... לפיכך כשסוער אדם בלילה הזה צריך לאכול ולשתות והוא מיסב דרך חירות". והרי ראינו שלדעת הראב"ה הסיבה שאנו עושים אינה כלום, כיון שאינה מנהג בני חורין בזמן הזה, ואף אם כן נוכל להפגין שאנו אוכלים אכילת קבע כדרך בני חורין.

ואף שבזמן הזה יכולים להוציא בהמוציא ובברכת המזון בישיבה בלבד, ומשום שאצלינו שאין לנו הסיבה אין הישיבה סותרת לאכילת קבע, כי אנו אוכלים אפילו אכילת קבע בישיבה. אבל מכל מקום גם אכילת עראי אנו עושים בישיבה, כי דרך אכילת עראי לא נשתנה מזמן הגמרא. ואם כן הישיבה שלנו אין בה הוראה לכאן או לכאן אם אכילתנו בתורת קבע או בתורת עראי. והרי אנו רוצים בליל זה להראות את עצמינו - זאת אומרת להפגין - שאנו אוכלים אכילת קבע דוקא, כדרך בני חורין.

ובאמת נראה שזוהו טעם הרא"ש שאף שלענין אכילת קבע להוציא את חבירו בברכת המוציא או ברכת המזון בכל השנה כתב (בהתוספות ועד ראשונים) שבזמן הזה אין צריך הסיבה, אבל לענין ליל הסדר כתב בפשיטות שהסיבה מעכבת, ולא הזכיר סברת הראב"ה שנשתנה הדין בזמן הזה. ונראה ברע"ה, שאף שאצלינו שייך אכילת קבע גם בישיבה, אבל הרי גם אכילת ארעי עושים בישיבה, ובמה יקיים החיוב להראות את עצמו שאוכל דרך חירות. ולכן בליל הסדר צריך הסיבה גם בזמן הזה, להראות שאין זה אכילת עראי כלל אלא אכילת קבע כדרך בני חורין.

אבל דעת ראב"ה כפי הנראה שהסיבה בזמן הזה משוללת

משמעות, ואינה מוסיפה כלום. ולדעתו עדיין חסר לנו בחיוב להראות את עצמינו שאנו אוכלים במפגין כדרך בני חורין.

ולכן אומרים הסימנים בתחילת הסדר: "קדש ורחץ...". שמוזמנים את עצמינו לכל אכילת הלילה, וחרי זה כאילו אמרנו ינוויל וניכול לחמא בדרך פל"י, שמעילה להחשיבה סעדת קבע אפילו בישיבה.

וראיתי בשם כמה גדולים הערה נכונה למעשה שגם הנשים שאינן מקפידות לאכול בהסיבה, אבל צריכות להקפיד עכ"פ לאכול אכילת הלילה בישיבה, ולא בעמידה. והסברא ברורה, כי זה ראי היה נחשב אכילת עראי גם בזמן הזה, וגם אינו מתעיל אמירת ניוויל וניכול לחמא בדרך פל"י כשאכל בעמידה, כמבואר בגמרא (שם).

לבישת קיטל

שמעתי טעם למנהג לבישת קיטל משום שמבואר בגמרא (תענית יא): שכל שמונת ימי המילואים ששימש משה בכהונה לבש חלוק לבן. הרי שחלוק לבן הוא הבגד הראוי לזר שעושה עבודה, ובפסח מצרים כל אחד ואחד זרק דם בעצמו על המשקוף ושתי המזוזות, שהיה בזה דין עבודת זריקה על המזבח (כמבואר בגמרא פסחים צו), ומן הסתם לבשו גם הם חלוק לבן.

סידור הקערה

כתב הרמ"א (סי' תע"ג) שסידור הקערה באופן שהכרפס סמוך לו ואח"כ חומץ (או מי מלח) ואח"כ מצה ואח"כ מרור והורסת ואח"כ שני התבשילין, כדי שבמשך הלילה לא יצטרך לעבור על המצוות, שהרי כלל

* אמנם התוספות ברכות מב. כתב שהקביעות אצלינו בזה"ז עיי' שאוכלים בשולחן אחר. ולפי"ז גם בליל הסדר מראה שאוכל אכילת קבע עיי' שאוכלים יחד בשולחן אחר. אבל הרא"ש שם לא הזכיר מזה ומשמע דלית ליה סברא זו. ואין כאן המקום להאריך בזה.

from: Shabbat Shalom <shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org> date: Thu, Mar 30, 2017

The Sin Offering

Britain's Former Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks Vayikra is about sacrifices, and though these laws have been inoperative for almost 2000 years since the destruction of the Temple, the moral principles they embody are still challenging.

One set of sacrifices, set out in detail in this week's sedra, warrants particular attention: chattat, the 'sin offering'. Four different cases are considered: the anointed priest (the High Priest), the assembly (the Sanhedrin or supreme court), the Prince (the King), and an ordinary individual. Because their roles in the community were different, so too was the form of their atonement.

The sin offering was to be brought only for major sins, those that carried the penalty of karet, 'being cut off'; and only if they were committed unintentionally or inadvertently (be-shogeg). This could happen in one of two ways, either [a] because the person concerned did not know the law (for example, that cooking is forbidden on the Sabbath) or [b] he or she did not know the facts (for instance, that today is the Sabbath).

Unintentional sins stand midway between intentional sins (where you knew what you were doing was wrong) and involuntary action (ones, where you were not acting freely at all: it was a reflex action, or someone was pointing a gun at your head). Intentional sins cannot be atoned for by sacrifice. Involuntary actions do not need atonement. Thus, the sin offering is confined to a middle range of cases, where you did wrong, but you didn't know you were doing wrong.

The question is obvious: Why should unintentional sins require atonement at all? What guilt is involved? The sinner did not mean to sin. The requisite intent (*mens rea*) was lacking. Had the offender known the facts and the law at the time, he would not have done what he did. Why then does he have to undergo a process of atonement? To this, the commentators gave a variety of answers.

R. Samson Raphael Hirsch and R. David Zvi Hoffman give the most straightforward explanation. Ignorance – whether of the facts or the law – is a form of negligence. We should know the law, especially in the most serious cases. We should also exercise vigilance: we should know what we are doing. That is a fundamental obligation, especially in relation to the most serious areas of conduct.

The Abarbanel argues that the sin offering was less a punishment for what had been done, than a solemn warning against sin in the future. The bringing of a sacrifice, involving considerable effort and expense, was a vivid reminder to the individual to be more careful in the future.

Nahmanides suggests that the sin offering was brought not because of what led to the act, but rather because of what followed from it. Sin, even without intention, defiles. ‘The reason for the offerings for the erring soul is that all sins [even if committed unwittingly] produce a “stain” on the soul and constitute a blemish in it, and the soul is only worthy to be received by its Creator when it is pure of all sin.

The late Lubavitcher Rebbe, following midrashic tradition, offered a fourth interpretation. Even inadvertent sins testify to something wrong on the part of the person concerned. Bad things do not come about through good people. The Sages said that God does not allow even the animals of the righteous to do wrong; how much more so does He protect the righteous themselves from error and mishap (see *Yevamot* 99b; *Ketubot* 28b). There must therefore have been something wrong with the individual for the mishap to have taken place.

This view – characteristic of the Chabad approach, with its emphasis on the psychology of the religious life – shares more than a passing similarity with Sigmund Freud’s analysis of the unconscious, which gave rise to the phrase, ‘a Freudian slip’. Remarks or acts that seem unintentional often betray unconscious desires or motives. Indeed, we can often glimpse the unconscious more readily at such moments than when the person is acting in full knowledge and deliberation. Inadvertent sins suggest something amiss in the soul of the sinner. It is this fault which may lie beneath the threshold of consciousness, which is atoned for by the *chattat*.

Whichever explanation we follow, the *chattat* represents an idea familiar in law but strangely unfamiliar in Western ethics. Our acts make a difference to the world.

Under the influence of Immanuel Kant, we have come to think that all that matters as far as morality is concerned is the will. If our will is good, then we are good, regardless of what we actually do. We are judged by our intentions, not our deeds. Judaism does recognise the difference between good will and bad. That is why deliberate sins cannot be atoned for by a sacrifice, whereas unintentional ones can.

Yet the very fact that unintentional sins require atonement tells us that we cannot dissociate ourselves from our actions by saying: ‘I didn’t mean to do it.’ Wrong was done – and it was done by us. Therefore we must perform an act that signals our contrition. We cannot just walk away as if the act had nothing to do with us.

Many years ago a secular Jewish novelist said to me: ‘Isn’t Judaism full of guilt?’ To which I replied, ‘Yes, but it is also full of forgiveness.’ The entire institution of the sin offering is about forgiveness. However, Judaism makes a serious moral statement when it refuses to split the human person into two entities – body and soul, act and intention, objective and subjective, the world ‘out there’ and the world ‘in here’. Kant did just that. All that matters morally, he argued, is what happens ‘in here’, in the soul.

Is it entirely accidental that the culture most influenced by Kant was also the one that gave rise to the Holocaust? I do not mean – Heaven forbid – that

the sage of Königsberg was in any way responsible for that tragedy. Yet it remains the case that many good and decent people did nothing to protest the single greatest crime of man against man while it was taking place. Many of them surely thought that it had nothing to do with them. If they bore the Jews no particular ill will, why should they feel guilty? Yet the result of their action or inaction had real consequences in the physical world. A culture that confines morality to the mind is one that lacks an adequate defence against harmful behaviour.

The sin offering reminds us that the wrong we do, or let happen, even if we did not intend it, still requires atonement. Unfashionable though this is, a morality that speaks about action, not just intention – about what happens through us even if we didn’t mean to do it – is more compelling, more true to the human situation, than one that speaks of intention alone.

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Psalm 34: Who Wants a Good Life?

How does one go about living a good life? The psalm reveals the secret to good living:

“מִי הָאִישׁ הַחֲפִיץ חַיִּים, אֲהַב יָמִים לְרְאוֹת טוֹב? נָצַר לְשׁוֹנֵף מִרָע, וּשְׁפָתָיִךְ מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה. (סוּר מִרָע וּנְעֹשֶׂה טוֹב; בִּקֵּשׁ שְׁלוֹם וְרַדְפֵהוּ. ” (תהילים ל"ד: ג-ט"ו)

“Who is the person who desires life, who loves days to see good? Watch your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile. Turn away from evil and do good. Seek peace and pursue it.” (Psalm 34:13-15)

The recipe for good living, the psalmist teaches, lies in good speech. Why does speech play such an important role?

Two Worlds

We all live in two realms. The first is our outer world — our needs and activities, as individuals and as members of society. The second is our inner world, a private realm of holiness and purity.

The psalm appears to be repetitive because it relates to both of these aspects of life.

“Who desires life?” This refers to our inner world, a realm of life itself, unrestrained by the framework of time. “Loving days to see good,” on the other hand, refers to our time-bound external world, our life of productive activities performed over the years. These actions are like the outer peel which protects the inner fruit. They are means to a goal; they acquire meaning as they lead towards their final objective.

Thus, the psalmist is speaking of our natural aspiration for good life on both levels: in our inner world of life itself, as well as a longevity of days that will enable us to extend our efforts to help others and benefit the world.

Inner and Outer Speech

Just as we live in two realms, so, too, we have two forms of speech, one for each realm. One form of speech is directed inward, while the second is directed outward for interpersonal relations.

Our inner speech is employed in spiritual activities, such as prayer and Torah study.¹ Our outer speech, on the other hand, is used for interpersonal communication to satisfy our various needs, both personal and social.

The two phrases, guarding our “tongue from evil” and “lips from speaking guile,” correspond to these two forms of speech. Our tongue and lips are the principal organs we use to produce sounds of language. The tongue, located inside the mouth, represents our lofty, inner speech. The lips, outside the mouth, indicate our practical, external speech.

We need to take care in both types of speech. We protect our inner life by watching over the tongue, the organ of inner speech. “Watch your tongue from evil.” Our inner speech must be protected from evil itself, by avoiding the expression of spiritually-damaging thoughts and concepts. For example, we find that the Torah prohibits even mentioning the names of idolatry (Ex. 23:13). When we guard our inner speech, our soul preserves its pristine purity, and we secure the inner strength needed to do acts of kindness and good. By guarding the tongue, we “avoid evil and [are free to] do good.”

The faculty of external speech, represented by the lips, is used for interpersonal relations. The psalmist cautions that we should guard our “lips from speaking guile.” If we do not properly supervise what comes out of our mouths, our social interactions will be sullied by guile and deception. But when we are careful with our communications with others, we will advance social harmony and peace. As the verse concludes, “seek peace and pursue it.”

*(Adapted from Olat Re'iyah vol. II, pp. 65-66)
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Ohr Somayach :: Torah Weekly :: Parshat Vayikra Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - www.seasonofthemoon.com For the week ending 1 April 2017 / 5 Nisan 5777 Insights Walking with the King “And He called...” (1-1)

The Vizhnitzer Rebbe zatzal used to say that it escaped him how someone could be charmed by being honored. Surely this honor would just fill a person with acute embarrassment to the extent that he wouldn't know where to put himself. He gave a parable to explain his reasoning: Once there was a king of who appointed an official to govern a provincial town. As the governor of this town, the official received a great deal of respect from the local inhabitants. One day the king arrived in the town to see how his official was doing. The king had decided to travel incognito and didn't look like anyone special. Only the official knew the king's true identity. As they passed through the town, the inhabitants tipped their caps with great respect to the official, and completely ignored the ordinary-looking stranger who was accompanying him. Understandably, the more respect and honor which the official received, the more embarrassed and uncomfortable he became, acutely feeling how this respect should rightfully belong only to the king. This feeling of embarrassment is the way we should all feel. We know that all honor is only due to G-d, and it's only because G-d accompanies us wherever we go that we are respected for the virtues that He has bestowed on us. Moshe Rabbeinu was the humblest of all men. When G-d told him to write the first word in this week's Torah portion, Vayikra, “And he called...” — Moshe wrote it with a small aleph. The aleph is the letter of the “I”, of the ego. Moshe wrote the aleph at the end of the word smaller than the rest of the word, and it looks like the word Vayikar — “And He happened upon.” Moshe felt that he wasn't important enough to be intentionally called upon. Rather, from his humble perspective G-d “happened upon him”. Sources: based on the Mayana Shel Torah who heard this from the Sadigura Rebbe in Pashmishel © 2017 Ohr Somayach International

from: **Rabbi Berel Wein** <genesis@torah.org> to: rabbiwein@torah.org
date: Thu, Mar 30, 2017 at 9:14 PM subject: Rabbi Wein - A Guide to Choosing Proper Sacrifices

A Guide to Choosing Proper Sacrifices
Rabbi Berel Wein

This Shabat we begin to read the book of Vayikra. This book of Vayikra has very little narrative to it and concentrates mainly on the sacrifices that were offered in the Temple service of the mishkan and the beit hamikdash; the laws of purity and defilement; and a listing of many of the commandments of the Torah and Jewish ritual.

This makes this section of the Torah a difficult one to comprehend, internalize and attempt to teach to others. Therefore our educational sense would have postponed the teaching of this book of the Torah until the years of maturity and life experience have fashioned us as Torah devotees and scholars. Yet the rabbis of Jewish tradition have ordained that children begin their Torah experiences by studying the book of Vayikra.

Their statement is: “Let those who are still pure and holy begin their education by studying the concepts of purity and holiness.” Purity and

holiness are difficult concepts to study. They are states of being, more of the heart and soul than that of the mind.

Someone who does not ever deal in being holy and pure will never be able to fathom the secrets of the Torah that lie in this book of Vayikra. That person will only see a seeming hodgepodge of laws and rituals, many of which would be judged to be anachronistic in our “enlightened” age.

But our Torah is a Torah of experience and emotion as much as it is one of soaring intellect and deep analytical thought. To begin to understand the concepts of purity and holiness, one must be, or at least strive to be, a person of holiness and purity. And that is a most significant lesson that the book of Vayikra teaches us.

Purity and holiness are inextricably bound to the overriding value of constant sacrifice in Jewish life. It is no coincidence that the laws of the sacrificial worship in the Temple are connected to the laws of purity in this book of Vayikra. Without sacrifice, constant daily sacrifice, purity and holiness are unachievable goals.

In a very contaminated environment, it is most difficult to keep one's self clean and pure. It requires great discipline and restraint, care and will – in short, a supreme sense of sacrifice. In life we are always faced with myriad, daily choices. Every choice that we make indicates that we have sacrificed another choice that we could have made.

Then the only question that remains is whether we made the correct sacrifice. Will our choice bring us closer to a sense of holiness and purity and purpose in our lives or, perhaps, will it do the opposite? The seeming jumble of laws in the book of Vayikra is meant to guide our choices of which sacrifices we should wisely make in our lives.

The Torah details for us all of the categories of sacrifices – public, private, those of leaders and of paupers – and thereby points the way to our sacrificing wisely and productively. This is the overall thrust of this great biblical book of Vayikra.

from: Shabbat Shalom <shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org> reply-to: shabbatshalom@ounetwork.org date: Thu, Mar 30, 2017 at 11:55 PM

The Future of Reproductive Medicine: What Does Halachah Say?
March 21, 2017

By John D. Loike, Moshe Tendler, Tzvi Flaum and Ira Bedzow

The year 1978 marked the beginning of the technological revolution in reproductive medicine when the world was introduced to the first test tube baby, Louise Brown. Baby Brown was featured on the cover of Time Magazine as the first child born through in vitro fertilization (IVF). Today, IVF is a household word. Since 1978, almost six million babies have been born through IVF and related procedures. Following IVF, reproductive medicine experienced yet another revolution: pre-implantation genetic diagnosis. Commonly known as PGD, pre-implantation genetic diagnosis involves genetically screening a pre-implanted fertilized egg to ascertain whether it harbors specific disease-causing mutations such as Tay-Sachs disease, cystic fibrosis or fragile X syndrome. Only those pre-implanted embryos that do not carry disease-causing genetic mutations are selected for implantation, thereby reducing the number of babies born with these diseases. This is especially vital within the Jewish Ashkenazic community, where PGD has reduced the number of Tay Sachs babies born by more than 90 percent (<http://www.healthline.com/health/tay-sachs-disease>).

At this point in time, we are currently witnessing the beginnings of the next wave in reproductive medical technology: gene editing and mitochondrial replacement therapy. Using methods such as CRISPR, gene-editing technologies can change the genetic code of an individual, potentially correcting any of the 6,000 genetic-based diseases that plague our society. In addition, we can help women with genetic mutations have healthy children. Normally, women with specific mutations in their mitochondria develop serious health conditions that will be passed on to their children. Now, scientists are able to use genetic material from a woman with healthy

mitochondria, the genetic material from the woman with unhealthy mitochondria and sperm to create healthy children free of mitochondrial disease.

These new technologies in reproductive medicine are particularly important to the Orthodox Jewish community because of the value placed on family and children. However, these biotechnologies raise important ethical and halachic questions, some of which include: a) Under what conditions can a couple engage in IVF? b) Does genetics or gestation confer motherhood? c) Under what medical or non-medical conditions can gene editing be halachically acceptable? And d) Is there a social responsibility for Orthodox Jews to volunteer for early clinical studies to assess the efficacy and safety of these new technologies?

In order for our posekim to resolve these halachic questions, experts—that is, from medical professionals including scientists and physicians who specialize in these areas—must educate rabbis about the underlying technologies. This is not an easy task and requires a time commitment on both the part of the experts and the rabbanim.¹

Below is a sampling of some of the recent responsa related to reproductive technology:

– Can Orthodox Jews engage in new biotechnologies (IVF and gene editing)? Halachah recognizes the suffering of Jewish infertile couples and therefore encourages pursuing research in these new technologies with the hope of developing therapies to overcome infertility. Most posekim today encourage couples to engage in IVF (See, for example, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, I Noam at 157 [5718]). Under what conditions can couples engage in IVF? This question is predicated upon a major principle in Jewish law—that intervention in reproductive medicine is an “option,” not a mandatory halachic “obligation” and should never be used to replace normal marital relations in fulfilling the mandate of “peru u’revu.” (See Nishmat Avraham, Even HaEzer 1:5.)

– a) Can IVF be used by couples who are not infertile to increase the odds of a successful pregnancy? b) Can IVF be used for gender selection in order to fulfill the mitzvah of peru u’revu (i.e., two children, one of each gender)? And c) Can women engaged in IVF be allowed to violate Shabbat in order to undergo the various medical protocols necessary for successful IVF? The answers to these questions are usually determined on a case by case analysis; however, some general principles are valid. For example, couples who do not present with infertility problems should not engage in IVF to have children (Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Iggerot Moshe, Even HaEzer 4:73). In addition, planned scheduling of the various medications administered and procedures involved in IVF can be managed such that the woman need not violate Shabbat to undergo IVF. Proper scheduling of IVF is therefore the preferred halachic way to avoid violating Shabbat. However, there may be situations where a woman requires medical attention on Shabbat and halachah allows IVF procedures to be performed on Shabbat, especially if a non-Jewish physician can administer these procedures. Regarding sex selection using IVF, only when there are medical reasons to engage in IVF can sex selection be considered as a halachic option (Joel B. Wolowelsky, et al. “Sex Selection and Halachic Ethics: A Contemporary Discussion,” Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought 40:1 [2007]: 45-78).

– Under what conditions can gene editing be halachically acceptable? As mentioned above, gene-editing technologies, such as CRISPR, are being designed to correct genetic diseases by editing the code within the human genome. The secular ethical barriers are, in part, based upon the belief that manipulations in human beings that tamper with the human genome are unethical (Jennifer Sills, ed. “Letters: Eugenics Lurk in the Shadow of CRISPR,” Science 348: 6237 [May 2015], p. 871). In fact, due to these ethical concerns and safety issues associated with this technology, the US government will not fund gene-editing research in human embryos. Yet according to halachah, tampering with the genetic code in order to improve health is in fact an ethical endeavor that is acceptable; as such, genetic research thus fulfills an important obligation—God instructs human beings

to serve as partners with Him in the creation process (Fred Rosner, “Jewish Medical Ethics: Genetic Screening & Genetic Therapy,” Jewish Virtual Library, accessed December 14, 2016, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Judaism/genetic.html>).

Therefore, from a halachic standpoint, genetic research should be pursued with vigor and careful analysis, given its tremendous potential medical benefits.

Research in these new technologies have either begun to enter clinical trials (such as mitochondrial replacement therapy) or will begin to enter clinical trials (in the case of gene-editing technologies). In some situations, there have been reports in the medical literature and in the mainstream media about the successful application of gene editing to cure a wide variety of human diseases.

Human beings serve as partners with God in the creation process. This means that we have a social responsibility to engage in ethically researching these technologies and to volunteer for such clinical trials. Volunteering for such trials represents a great act of chessed.

Furthermore, there is a real need for rabbinical scholars to gain a deeper understanding of new biotechnologies, as the Jewish community needs to have halachic positions on various complex bioethical issues related to reproductive medicine. Thank God, the Jewish community has world-class experts in the medical and reproductive fields—there are plenty of frum doctors, family counselors and scientists who can and should devote time and effort to properly educate our rabbis about the underlying science and medicine, as well as the benefits and health risks of these technologies.

Note 1. One effective way to teach rabbanim and the public about the newest technologies in reproductive medicine and the halachot associated with them is through organizing conferences on the subject. In December 2015, for example, we organized a groundbreaking symposium on halachah and reproductive medicine that was co-sponsored by Touro’s Lander College for Women, New York Medical College, and Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. Held in New York, the conference, entitled “The Future of Reproductive Medicine: A Jewish Perspective,” provided a forum for rabbis and medical professionals to speak to one another and exchange ideas.

Listen to Dr. John D. Loike discuss halachah and reproductive technology at https://www.ou.org/life/community/savitsky_loike/.

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from: Mordechai Tzion toratravaviner@yahoo.com [ravaviner]

to: ravaviner@yahooogroups.com

date: Tue, Mar 28, 2017 at 1:03 AM

subject: [ravaviner] How to do your Pesach Cleaning Cheerfully in Less than One Day [1 Attachment]

Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit'a

How to do your Pesach Cleaning Cheerfully in Less than One Day

Going away for Pesach

If you are going away for Pesach and will not be at home during the entire holiday, you can be lenient and not clean for Pesach. You should sell all of the Chametz (leaven) in the house, including all of the crumbs -- but not just the crumbs on their own, because that would have no halachic value. It is possible, however, to sell the food in the cabinets and closets including the "Chametz dirt." If someone is staying in your house, you need to clean the rooms which will be used. The remaining unused rooms must be closed off with tape, and you must sell any Chametz that is in them.

There is still the question of how to fulfill the Mitzvah of Bedikat Chametz (the search for leaven). If you arrive at your Pesach destination by the fourteenth of Nisan, perform the search there. If you arrive on the morning of the fourteenth, you should clean well and check a small room, i.e. the entrance way and not sell the Chametz in that room. You must also perform the search for Chametz, with a blessing, in the rooms in which you will live during Pesach - if no one else has done so.

Chametz smaller than a "Kezayit" (the volume of an olive) Chametz which is less than a "Kezayit" may obviously not be eaten, but it is not included in the Torah prohibition of "Bal Yeira'eh" and "Bal Yimatze" (Chametz may not be seen or found on Pesach – Shemot 12:19, 13:7) (Responsa Igrot Moshe, Orach Chaim 1:145). Regarding the Mishnah Berurah's statement (Sha'ar Ha-Tziun 451:6) that Chametz which can be seen is included in the prohibition of "Chametz She-Avar Alav Ha-Pesach" (using Chametz that has spent Pesach in a Jew's possession) -- the fact is that if it was included in the sale of Chametz, there is no problem (see Mishnah Berurah 142:33 and Chazon Ish, Orach Chaim 117:15). A "Kezayit" is 27 cubic centimeters - 3 centimeter square or a little over a square inch. Usually, only rooms in which children are allowed to bring sandwiches or cookies are likely to contain such big pieces of Chametz. A room in which people do not walk around with food does not need to be cleaned at all. Incidentally, you must take care not to hide pieces of Chametz which are larger than a "Kezayit" before "Bedikat Chametz," in case one of the pieces should get lost. That way, you do not find them, you will not need to bother much to hunt for them, and you can rely on the "Bittul Chametz" (declaring Chametz ownerless) that you do after the search (Responsa Yechaveh Da'at 5:149).

Bedikat Chametz

Start "Bedikat Chametz" in a place where Chametz was used, so the blessing will apply to it. Only search for Chametz in places in which there is a reasonable chance of finding it. It is nearly impossible for Chametz which is a square inch to be hidden inside a book! If there is a chance that the book has Chametz in it, then it must be thoroughly checked. Most books, however, do not need to be cleaned or checked. Cleaning and checking a sample is sufficient. It is customary not to place books that have not been checked for Chametz on the table during Pesach. Everybody knows their kids' habits. Peek, and open here and there. Regarding crumbs in the corners of the house: 1. They are not a "Kezayit." 2. They are inedible to a dog. If there is bread behind a cabinet in an unreachable place, nobody will get to it on Pesach and it is as if it is buried -- just as you do not have to search under stones or under the house's foundations, since nobody will take Chametz from there.

Educating Children

If you want to do a spring cleaning, this is certainly possible, but not before Pesach – this is not the appropriate time. Pesach vacation is for taking trips, playing with the kids, being happy, dancing and preparing stories for the Seder. A woman works hard all year long: "They enslaved the Jewish women with back-breaking work" (play on Shemot 1:13). If the husband is on vacation too, this may be a good time to leave him with the kids, and give the wife a vacation! That is what vacation is for – not for working like a donkey and scraping floors. You can take trips, enjoy yourself, and arrive at the Seder rested in order to make a beautiful Seder and inspire the children. If a woman wants to work like a donkey, and be a kind of slave, she is permitted to do so, but it is not good educationally. She should be free in

order to play with the kids. We left the slavery of Egypt, and it was not to enter into our own slavery! We do not have anything against house cleaning, but you should spread it out over the course of the year – each few months clean another room. This is not the time for projects of cleaning and arranging. In any event, when the Seder arrives there will still be disorder and cleaning that has not been completed.

If a woman is happy with suffering, she is allowed and it subtracts from the suffering of "Gehinom": Any suffering in this world is deducted from the suffering of "Gehinom." If someone desires, this is legitimate, but not before Pesach. The month of Nissan is a happy month.

Husband's Help

Question: Does a husband have to help his wife?

Answer: A husband does not have to help his wife nor does a wife have to help her husband. Rather, the two of them have to clean together since this is a shared home, and theirs is a shared life as well.

Children's Clothes

There may be cookies in your kids' pockets. Even the crumbs must be removed, since a child may put his hand into his pocket and then into his mouth. You only have to check the clothes you will be wearing that season. It is unnecessary to check any clothes that are put away and will not be worn now, such as winter clothes.

Question: Is it possible to simply wash them in a washing machine?

Answer: Running the clothes through a washing machine will not necessarily get rid of all of the crumbs. The clothes must be checked.

Toys

Toys must also be checked. However, you may put some or all of the toys away, and buy new toys as a present for the holiday! This serves a double purpose of saving work and making the children happy.

Bathroom Cabinets

These may contain Chametz, such as wheat germ oil and alcohol derived from wheat. What a waste to clean it. Close and tape the cabinets and include it in the sale of Chametz.

Couches

You have to check between the pillows. It is an interesting experience to find lost objects.

Books

There is no need to clean them, just do not put them on the table on which you eat. The custom is not to check books for the crumbs that remain in them, but to rely of the nullification (Haggadah Chazon Ovadiah of Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef, p. 21). Clean the books which you will want to read at the table on Pesach, or clean a few books for Pesach.

Dining Room

You do not have to clean everything, just the place where people eat, i.e. the chairs and the table.

Chairs: If the chairs are clean, there is no need to clean them. If the kids throw cereal or other things on them and they do not look clean, clean them with a wet rag.

Table: There are two options: 1. Kashering with boiling water. 2. Covering with several layers of plastic and cloth tablecloths.

High Chair

If it is plastic, it may be immersed in a tub with boiling water and cleaning agents. Clean the cracks with a stiff brush. It is unnecessary to take the chair apart, because whatever is in the cracks and holes is inedible to a dog.

Kitchen

This room must be thoroughly cleaned and not one crumb of Chametz left. A crumb is not nullified even in a thousand times its volume.

Dishwasher

It is preferable not to Kasher a dishwasher. You can do the dishes by hand as in previous generations. It is also possible to use disposable dishes.

Question: Is it at all possible to clean a dishwasher?

Answer: It is possible, but it is a lot of work; there are a lot of rubber parts and connections.

Oven

If you do not have a self-cleaning oven, it is best not to Kasher it. Seal the oven and buy baked goods or buy a "wonder-pot" which allows you to bake on a stove.

Stove

Grates: Clean and cover the grates with as much aluminum foil as possible. Use aluminum foil that is thick enough not to tear, but thin enough to bend and shape. What a waste of time and effort! The best thing is to use special Pesach burners.

Burners: There is no need to clean them; they get burned up in the course of use. Bottom Pan (where everything falls): In general, if some food falls into it, we do not pick it up, and it is considered "treif;" nevertheless, put aluminum foil on it.

Knobs: Wipe them clean.

Refrigerator

Clean it, but it does not have to be a lot of work. Of course, defrost the freezer (if you have an older model which does not defrost automatically) and clean it. It is best to eat up all Chametz before Pesach, but if expensive Chametz food products are left over, i.e. frozen foods, they may be wrapped up well, labeled "Chametz," stored in the back of the freezer/refrigerator and included in the list of Chametz sold before Pesach.

If you have an old refrigerator with cracks or crevices in the door which is difficult to clean, do not use its inner shelves, but cover them with plastic. Similarly, you must clean the door's rubber part well. If it is old, sometimes it is easier to replace it.

Food Pantry

Do not clean. It is a waste of time. Seal, put sign or sticker not to use and include it in sale of Chametz.

Cabinets of dishes, utensils, pots and pans

Dishes, shelves, and drawers that will not be used on Pesach may be sealed, and need not be cleaned. There are those who are strict to clean even the things which are used for Chametz, but one can be lenient on account of three reasons, each of which would be enough:

1. We sell all the crumbs together with the sale of Chametz.
2. The dishes are clean -- nobody puts a dirty dish away in the cabinet.
3. Even if there is "Chametz dirt," it is definitely less than a "Kezayit."

By the way, sometimes it is easier to paint than to clean. You can paint the corner of the kitchen where food flies using a water-based paint and the gas grates using aluminum paint.

Microwave

It can be Kashed by not using it for twenty-four hours, cleaning it for five minutes and boiling water in it for half an hour. All food cooked or baked in it on Pesach should be placed in a covered utensil.

Counters

It is possible to cover them with thick aluminum foil, and then there is no need to Kasher them at all; just wipe them with a rag. Sometimes it is complicated to cover, and then one can Kasher it. Where there are holes, pour floor bleach in them and then pour water from an electric kettle which is still boiling. It is good for two people to do this: One to pour and the other to unplug.

Sink

Regarding the kitchen sink, there are a few solutions:

1. Do not put anything into the sink on Pesach, and wash the dishes in the air. This, however, is unrealistic.
2. Put a plastic bin inside. Just make sure there is still a direct flow down the drain.
3. Thoroughly clean and Kasher the sink like the counters.

Toaster

It is impossible to clean a toaster, but there is no need. Put it in the cabinet of sold Chametz.

Mixer

You have to do "Hagalah" (Kashering by dropping into boiling water) for the bowl and blades. As for the body of the mixer, wrap it in plastic -- making sure not to block the air holes. The best thing is to buy a cheap hand-mixer for Pesach.

Kashering dishes

This is a tremendous amount of work. It is preferable to buy new dishes. True, it is expensive, so buy a few things each year. As for pots, it is possible to buy cheap aluminum ones which are okay for just seven days. There are cheap plastic plates as well as cheap cutlery.

Car

You have to clean it. Take out the mats and gather the "Chametz dirt" -- there is no need for a vacuum cleaner -- and clean the compartments and containers. There is no need to pour water or dismantle the seats. In general, there is no need to dismantle anything with screws. Any way you look at it -- if the Chametz is accessible, you can take it out without a screwdriver, and if it is not accessible, it will not come out on Pesach either.

Chumrot - Being Strict

If you know that you are being stricter than Halachah requires, and you choose to be strict, you deserve a blessing. And if you accepted a stricture on yourself and now you want to stop, the way to do that is to do "Hatarah" (getting the vow annulled). But if you thought that a particular act was the actual Halachah, and now you realize it is a stricture, you do not need a "Hatarah." If you have a strong desire to clean a lot, you deserve a blessing, especially for Pesach, "whoever is strict deserves a blessing." You should not, however, force a stricture on yourself, but accept it with love.

Summary

In light of what is written above, it should take about an hour for the dining room, two-three hours to Kasher the kitchen, and another hour to clean the rest of the house. In short, about one day!

All the rest of the cleaning jobs are either strictures or just made up. When we work hard, we use up our energy and get mad at the kids. You have to educate the kids -- but not to educate them to be aggravated: "I told you not to go into this room anymore! Why did you go in?! Eat on the porch! Eat standing up! Don't touch!" The whole kitchen looks like it was overturned by vandals; the husband and kids are trembling in fear in some corner and eating; the mother looks at them like a drill sergeant; there's anger between husband and wife. This is preparation for Pesach?! This is educating the kids? This is definitely not setting a positive example! Our memories of Pesach should not be of a reign of terror.

If you clean together with the kids, that is great, but it must be a happy adventure. First of all, you have to clean what you must -- taking half a day -- and after that if you want to do other things, you can clean with happiness and joy. Clean, sing, pour water and "you will clean with joy from the wellsprings of salvation" (based on Yeshayahu 12:3).

The Rama rules in the Shulchan Aruch: "Every person should sweep his room before Bedikat Chametz, and check his pockets for Chametz, and the pockets or cuffs where you sometimes put Chametz also need to be checked" (Orach Chaim 433:11) The Mishnah Berurah (#46) adds: "It is the custom to sweep the whole house on thirteenth of Nisan, so that it will be ready to check immediately after nightfall on the fourteenth." This custom is enough. Beyond that, "whoever is strict deserves a blessing" -- as far as Pesach goes, but not as far as the kids go.

It is understood that I am not forcing my opinion on anyone. I am simply stating my humble opinion with explanations. Whoever accepts the explanations will listen and whoever does not accept them will not. I heard most of the practical suggestions about how to shorten the cleaning from women themselves. It is possible that a woman has a strong desire not to shorten this work, and just the opposite, she finds joy in it. That is okay. Even she will benefit from all of the above, because she will not feel pressured that she might violate the Halachah, but rather she will clean with satisfaction and tranquility.

The essential point is the distinction between Chametz, which there is an obligation to clean with all the severity of the Halachah, and dirt – which should obviously be removed, but not necessarily before Pesach. You can spread out the work of removing dirt over the whole year, so that we and our families do not suffer before Pesach. I am not advocating poor housekeeping. We should stand before Chametz with awe and fear, but not all dirt is Chametz. Do not treat Chametz cavalierly, G-d forbid, but at the same time, not everything that is accepted as Pesach cleaning is directed at Chametz.

Have a kosher and happy Pesach. We should ensure that we have a HAPPY Pesach and a KOSHER Purim (!). We should arrive at the Seder night neither tired nor aching but happy, so that this night will be a powerful experience for the kids, and a great source of faith in Hashem, the Redeemer of Israel.

"Dirt is not Chametz and children are not the Pesach sacrifice!"

from: Rabbi Kaganoff <yorkkaganoff@gmail.com> to: kaganoff-a@googlegroups.com
date: Mon, Mar 27, 2017 at 1:42 AM subject: Which Mitzvah Should We Drop?

Which Mitzvah Should We Drop? By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff
What do you mean that we need to drop a mitzvah? Drop it from what? And what does this question have to do with this week's parshah?

To understand the question properly, we need to study some background material. The Gemara (Makkos 23b) teaches that Hashem commanded 613 mitzvos, 365 negative mitzvos (mitzvos lo saaseh) and 248 positive ones (mitzvos aseh), although it does not list them. Yet we know that there are thousands of places that the Torah commands us what to do. Obviously, most of these are not counted; but which ones? And, more so, if the Gemara mentions that there are 613 specific mitzvos, this implies that it is important to identify them. This last question led many early authorities to calculate exactly what the 613 mitzvos are. In fact, the Geonim and Rishonim authored a vast literature debating and categorizing what exactly comprises these 613 mitzvos.

Two Early Counts Of the lists that date back to the days of the Geonim, one is authored by Rav Saadiah Gaon. He wrote a poem in which he listed all the mitzvos, but, of course, did not explain why he counted certain commandments as mitzvos, but not others. In pre-war Europe, a talmid chacham of note, Rav Yeruchem Fishel Perla, made it his life's project to analyze the mitzvah list of Rav Saadiah and compare it with the other lists and opinions that we find among the Geonim and Rishonim. It is rumored that it took Rav Perla thirty years to write the work. The three-volume magnum opus is a classic, if underutilized, resource.

Baal Halachos Gedolos The Rambam mentions that the accepted counting of the 613 mitzvos prior to his writing Sefer Hamitzvos was that of the Halachos Gedolos, a halachic work authored by Rav Shimon Kaira in the era of the Geonim, which is usually referred to as Behag, short for Baal Halachos Gedolos. (Although the Behag is often cited as the work of Rav Yehudai Gaon, the work quotes Rav Yehudai Gaon many times, so he obviously could not be the author.) Subsequent to the Behag's organizing a list, many other authors followed his approach and others made minor adjustments to his list. However, it appears that until the Rambam penned his Sefer Hamitzvos, no one disputed the basic approach that Behag used to determine what counts as a mitzvah. In addition, many liturgical poems were written based on his list.

Will the Real Mitzvah Please Stand Up? The Rambam disagrees sharply with the Behag's list, and he wrote much of his work, the Sefer Hamitzvos, to clarify what the 613 mitzvos really are. The Rambam even mentions that many piyutim were written, in his opinion in error, based on the Behag's list, but he does not fault the authors involved, noting that they are poets and not rabbis (Introduction to Sefer Hamitzvos).

What significance is there to whether something is a mitzvah? Although many authors discuss what exactly is included in the count of the 613 mitzvos, it is important to note that few of them actually discuss reasons why it is important to know them -- other than to understand the Gemara's statement that I quoted above.

The Rambam, however, does explain why he listed the mitzvos. In his introduction to Sefer Hamitzvos, he describes how he decided to write a work that would include all of the halachos of the Torah without the sources and debate, a work that he eventually did write and called the Mishneh Torah. The Rambam describes his deliberation concerning how to structure the Mishneh Torah and his decision to organize everything according to related mitzvah topics, rather than follow the order of the Mishnah. After deciding how to organize the Mishneh Torah, the Rambam describes that he then decided to include an introduction before each section, in which he would list the mitzvos whose laws he would be discussing.

Why the Sefer Hamitzvos? At this point, the Rambam notes a concern. Prior to his time, the commonly used work listing the 613 mitzvos was the Behag. This meant that if the Rambam explained the mitzvos involved in each section of his Mishneh Torah, and his list of mitzvos differed from that of the Behag, he needed to explain why he had departed from accepted ways. The Rambam decided that his Mishneh Torah would not be complete if he did not list the mitzvos, and that his mitzvah list would be rejected, if he did not first explain what his rules were. For this reason, the Rambam explains that he wrote the entire Sefer Hamitzvos as an introduction to his Mishneh Torah to clarify the rules that determine what counts as a mitzvah and what does not. In a way, the Rambam's writing of the introduction, the Sefer Hamitzvos, was bolder and more innovative than his writing either the Moreh Nevuchim or even the Mishneh Torah itself, since the Sefer Hamitzvos disputed a theretofore completely accepted system.

Although other authors dispute parts of the Rambam's system, subsequent to his writing the Sefer Hamitzvos and the Mishneh Torah, the Jewish people have, for the most part, accepted his list and his rules. For example, a later work written by one of the baalei Tosafos, the Sefer Hamitzvos HaGadol, usually called by its Hebrew abbreviation, the Smag, compiled his own list of the 613 mitzvos. Although he disputes the Rambam's conclusions on a number of occasions, he still follows most of the Rambam's basic definitions as to what comprises a mitzvah and what does not. His disagreements with the Rambam are, for the most part, on specific interpretations and applications, not on the basic rules.

The Sefer Hachinuch The most familiar list of the 613 mitzvos is that of the Sefer Hachinuch. Actually, this author did not develop his own count of 613 mitzvos, as he mentions, himself, several times in his work. Rather, he followed the Rambam. However, whereas the previous mitzvah counters, Rav Saadiah, the Behag, the Rambam and the Smag, all listed the mitzvos in a logical pattern, the Sefer Hachinuch rearranged the Rambam's list, numbering each mitzvah according to its appearance in the Torah. He further introduced each parshah with its list of mitzvos. The Sefer Hachinuch's reorganized list is the most commonly used today to count the 613 mitzvos. By the way, although it is important to know and understand the 613 mitzvos, there is no halachic significance in knowing the chronological number associated with a particular mitzvah. For this reason, there is no reason to memorize the mitzvos according to the number assigned them by the Sefer Hachinuch, although I am aware that many schools have made this an educational project.

This Week's Mitzvos At this point, I can explain what I meant about dropping a mitzvah. In this week's parshah, Vayikra, the Sefer Hachinuch counts sixteen mitzvos, eleven positive and five negative ones. The problem is that, according to most authorities, both he and the Rambam should have counted one more negative mitzvah.

Which mitzvah are they accused of omitting?

In the course of the parshah, the Torah mentions many types of korbanos, some of animals, some of birds, and some of flour. When the olah offering is placed on the mizbei'ach, the Torah requires that it first be cut up into large pieces, similar in size to the large pieces of meat that a butcher may receive. One is not permitted to place small pieces on the mizbei'ach, nor may one place the entire carcass on the mizbei'ach without first cutting it into large pieces.

However, when the Torah discusses offering an olah that is a bird, usually called the olas ha'of, the halachah is different, and one may place the entire bird on the mizbei'ach at one time, just as one might barbecue an entire bird at once. What happens if the kohen chose to cut the bird in half before placing it on the mizbei'ach? According to the Rambam, one may separate the bird into parts, if one chooses (Hilchos Maasei Hakorbanos 6:22).

However, most authorities prohibit cutting the bird in half, contending that doing so violates one of the 365 negative commandments of the Torah (Behag; Yerei'im). Thus, in their opinion, one who severs the bird commits a punishable offense, approximately equivalent to wearing shatnez or eating non-kosher!

Lo Yavdil These two opinions stem from different interpretations of the Torah's instruction "lo yavdil" (Vayikra 1:17). Does the Torah mean, He (the kohen processing the olas ha'of) is not required to separate it, or does the Torah mean, He shall not separate it.

Since the Rambam interprets the words according to the first explanation, and therefore rules that one may cut up the bird, he does not count this as a mitzvah, and the Sefer Hachinuch follows this approach. As a result, when he counts mitzvos taught in this week's parshah, he counts sixteen mitzvos, eleven positive and five negative ones. If this mitzvah is counted, there would be seventeen mitzvos, eleven positive and six negative ones.

Explaining Our Question We can now explain our opening question about dropping a mitzvah. In general, we follow the Rambam's count of mitzvos. But in this instance, the Rambam is a minority opinion, and the later authorities contend that we should not follow his approach, but we should count lo yavdil as a lo saaseh (Malbim; Sfas Emes, Zevachim 64a; To'afos Re'im; Hirsch; Rav Yeruchem Fishel Perla's commentary of

Rav Saadiah, Lo Saaseh 194). That means that we have a total of 614 mitzvos, the Rambam's 613 plus this mitzvah, or, even more specifically, we will have 366 negative mitzvos, rather than the 365 that the Gemara mentions. Obviously, we have counted something as a mitzvah that we should not have! We need to determine which negative mitzvah counted by the Rambam will be removed from the list to make room for this one.

Which mitzvah is volunteering to be demoted or deleted? Since no mitzvah that the Rambam selected has volunteered to resign, we have the unenviable responsibility of deciding which one to remove.

Anyone want to assume this responsibility? I am reminded of the words of the eighteenth century English poet, Alexander Pope: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

Of course, I am not advising that we rewrite any part of the Sefer Hachinuch. I am merely suggesting that we can gain educationally by exploring some candidates for demitvah-ization. This certainly provides an opportunity to examine and appreciate what is involved in "counting mitzvos."

Watch that Mikdash! One lo saaseh proposed deals with the Torah's requirement that the kohanim and the levi'im guard the Mishkan/Beis HaMikdash by posting watchmen in various places. Just as Buckingham Palace has a military detail guarding the monarch's residence, so too, the "palace" that we erect in Hashem's honor must have an honor guard (Rambam, Hilchos Beis Habechirah 8:1).

This requirement would appear to be a positive mitzvah: Safeguarding the holy place. Yet, in observing this requirement, the Rambam and the Sefer Hachinuch (Mitzvah 391) count both a positive mitzvah, to maintain the watch (aseh 22; Sefer Hachinuch, Mitzvah 388), and a negative one, not to abandon the guard (Rambam, Hilchos Beis Habechirah 8:3; Sefer Hamitzvos, lo saaseh 67; Sefer Hachinuch, Mitzvah 391). What is even more interesting is that the source for the negative mitzvah sounds like a positive mitzvah, since they quote the following verse in Parshas Korach: "And you shall safeguard the charge of the holy area" (Bamidbar 18:5). This expression is almost verbatim that of the previous verse, which is quoted as the source for the positive mitzvah, "And they shall safeguard the charge of the holy area" (Bamidbar 18:4). Indeed, this is presumably the reason why other Rishonim count this only as a positive command and not as a negative one (Smag).

To explain the position of the Rambam, the Sefer Hachinuch and the Mahari Korkos note the Gemara that states that the word *hishameir*, Guard, always introduces lo saaseh mitzvos, and both the Sefer Hachinuch and the Rambam quote a Medrash Halachah that explains that the repeated verse is to teach that this mitzvah is both a positive mitzvah and a negative one. Many later authorities debate whether to accept this conclusion of the Rambam, and offer other interpretations of this Medrash (Birkei Yosef, Orach Chayim 30:1).

There are many other possible choices of "disputed mitzvos," ones that some rishonim and others do not, but I will leave this discussion for another article.

Conclusion Should one count the mitzvah of lo yavdil in this week's parshah as one of the 613 mitzvos? According to most authorities, one should. If the follow-up question is, "But then we have 366 lo saaseh mitzvos, and the Gemara says that there are only 365," I would answer that although it is not our place to determine definitely which the 613 mitzvos are, we should study the topic thoroughly to see which mitzvos are disputed. We have now seen some possible choices, and this exercise has provided an opportunity to understand more deeply what it means that we count something as a "mitzvah."

Why the Bird? Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch (Vayikra 1:17) notes that the many laws involved in the processing of an *olas ha'of* are at times opposite to those of other *korbanos*. To explain the many anomalous rules pursuant to this particular *korban*, he notes that Tanach often uses a bird as a metaphor for an imperiled, defenseless person in flight from his pursuer, and that an *olas ha'of* represents how a forlorn, suffering individual relates to Hashem because of his fate. The imperiled can use the anguish itself as a springboard for ascent and advancement, by clinging to the heights of Torah ideals even in this predicament. This *korban* is to teach that even when life does not go the way we would like it to, one still yearns to become closer to Hashem.