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A Sin By Dereliction
Abraham J. Twerski, MD

In the viduy we confess, "We have sinned, we have deceived, we have stolen, etc." Inasmuch as we are frail and fallible humans, we may be unable to withstand temptations and we, therefore, may commit transgressions.

Whereas I can understand the vulnerability to sin when there is personal gain, I am unable to understand why we confess "Yoatznu ra (we have given bad counsel)". What personal gain could there possibly be from giving someone bad advice? Why would anyone commit this sin?

I have come to the conclusion that "giving bad counsel" is not an intentional sin, but one which we commit unknowingly. I.e., we think we are giving the person good advice, but in reality the advice is bad, and since this can result in harm to the person, we are culpable for having caused an individual harm even though our intentions were good.

However, the Talmud states that an unintentional sin committed by a scholar is equivalent to an intentional sin, because the scholar, in possession of knowledge, should have known better. In his case, ignorance is not a defense. Lay people are not necessarily scholars, nor is their counsel frequently sought. Rabbis, on the other hand, are learned and are considered authorities who can provide proper counsel. If they fail to do so because of lack of adequate knowledge, even though their intentions were good, they are held responsible as though it were an intentional transgression. I, therefore, suspect that "Yoatznu ra" is a confession intended for rabbis.

I have had considerable experience with cases brought before rabbis for advice and guidance, where, due to inadequate knowledge, rabbis have given

advice which has turned out to be extremely harmful. Namely, there are many problems in the Jewish community of which rabbis may be unaware, such as addictive gambling, alcoholism and/or drug addiction, spouse abuse, child abuse, and other social ills, which, for some reason there is a misconception that these do not occur among Jews, and certainly not among observant Jews. Couples have come to the rabbi with marital problems, and no inquiry is made as to whether there is a problem of alcohol or substance abuse. Both men and women are susceptible to alcoholism, and there is fairly widespread abuse of prescription drugs, which can be every bit as devastating as heroin and cocaine. Incidentally, even the latter occur among some of the finest families. There are families who are in financial straits, and it does not occur to the rabbi to inquire about the possibility of addictive gambling. Spouses and children may be victims of both physical and emotional abuse, and this may go unsuspected. One battered wife complained, "Our rabbi would never believe if I told him about my husband's behavior at home. On the outside he is an absolute tzaddik, and if I told the rabbi about how he mistreats me, the rabbi would think I am fabricating and consider me meschuge." A number of rabbis who have consulted me about problems of their congregants who were alcoholic, whose problems became so manifest that denial was no longer feasible, have become interested in some of these problems, and have said to me, "I am shocked at how ignorant I was about these conditions." I recall very well that when I received my semicha, I was quite well versed in halacha, and could render reasonable decisions on problems of ritual. However, nowhere in my education was I exposed to the various problems that I have enumerated. Ironically, even in psychiatric training these were not taught, and unfortunately some psychotherapists who are otherwise quite competent fall into the same trap of not recognizing these conditions, and treating their patients for those diagnoses with which they are familiar but which may be incorrect.

While I do not wish to be an alarmist, let me point out that while making an error in most questions of halacha is a serious matter it pales before errors in dinei nefashos. Lives that are lost and families that are decimated by addictive conditions or abusive behavior fall into the category of "defects that are irreversible." As rabbis, we should make every effort to see that when we beat our heart for "Yoatznu ra", that it not be a true confession.

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YESHIVAT HAR ETZION VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH PROJECT
(VBM)
THE 13 MIDOT OF RACHAMIM
by Menachem Leibtag

[Note: The following shiur is a revised version of the shiur which I sent out last year. It's a bit late for "slichot" but it should be helpful towards understanding our tfilot on Yom Kippur. I recommend that you first review Shmot 20:1-15, 23:20-24:14, & 32:1-34:30 before reading the shiur. As usual, you should also follow the shiur with a Tanach Koren handy.]

The recitation of the "13 midot ha'rachamim" (God's thirteen attributes of mercy), the central refrain of the Slichot prayers, is often understood as a 'mystical' formula capable of invoking Divine forgiveness. This perception appears to be supported by Rav Yochanan's statement concerning the 13 midot: "va'yavor Hashem al panav va'yikra..." : Rav Yochanan stated ... whenever Am Yisrael sins, they should say before Me these psukim (the '13 midot') and I will forgive them."
(Mesechet Rosh Hashana 17b)

Could this perception be correct? Are such 'short-cut' methods for attaining forgiveness consistent with our concept of "teshuva" (repentance)?
INTRODUCTION

We are all familiar with God's attributes of Mercy which were revealed when Moshe Rabeinu received the SECOND LUCHOT. However, almost no

one notices God's more exacting attributes which were revealed at the time of the FIRST LUCHOT. In order to fully appreciate the significance God's 13 MIDOT of RACHAMIM, the following shiur analyzes these midot, in comparison to God's 'original' midot which were revealed when Bnei Yisrael first received the Ten Commandments at Ma'amad Har Sinai.

We must begin our discussion with a review of the events which take place at Har Sinai, focusing our their covenantal nature. THE FIRST COVENANT - BRIT MA'AMAD HAR SINAI

When Bnei Yisrael first arrive at Har Sinai, God proposes that they enter a special COVENANT which will facilitate their development into an "am kadosh" (a holy nation):

"Now then, if you will obey Me faithfully and keep MY COVENANT ["ushmartem et briti"]... then you shall become for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Shmot 19:5-6)

Because Bnei Yisrael accept this proposition (19:7-8), God gives them the Torah at Har Sinai as part of this Divine covenant. The conditions and details of this special covenant are detailed in the Ten Commandments (20:1-14) and in the additional laws which follow in Parshat Mishpatim (see 20:19->23:33).

This covenant is then formalized in an official public ceremony (better known as "brit na'aseh v'nishma"/ 24:1-11). At the conclusion of that ceremony, Moshe ascends Har Sinai to receive the FIRST LUCHOT - the physical symbol of this covenant (24:12-13).

This covenant contains not only the mitzvot which Bnei Yisrael must keep in order to become an "am kadosh", but also the TERMS by which God can punish them should they disobey these commandments. These terms include the detail of HOW God will punish or reward Bnei Yisrael, i.e. His attributes. THE MIDOT OF THE ORIGINAL COVENANT

The clearest examples of Divine attributes are found within the Ten Commandments themselves, when God forewarns Bnei Yisrael of their punishment should they disobey Him: (1) Do not worship any other gods... for I am the Lord Your God

- KEL KANA - a ZEALOUS God..." (20:3-5)

(2) ...EXACTING PUNISHMENT [not only on he who sins but also] of the father on his offspring - POKED A'VON AVOT AL BANIM - L'SONAI, to those who HATE Him (who disobey His commandments);

(20:5) (3) EXACTING KINDNESS (reward) - O'SEH CHESED... L'OHAVAI - to those who LOVE Him, (who obey His commandments).

(20:6) (4) Do not mention God's Name in vain, for God will NOT FORGIVE

- LO Y'NA'KEH HASHEM - he who says His Name in vain (20:7)

These four attributes found in the Ten Commandments all exhibit the same basic characteristic of what we call "midat ha'DIN" - exacting punishment. Not only do they threaten immediate PUNISHMENT for those who transgress ("l'sonei"), they also assure immediate REWARD for those who obey ("l'ohavei"). Therefore, they reflect a very INTENSE relationship between God and Bnei Yisrael, i.e. a very high level, requiring absolute obedience. This intense MIDAT HA'DIN does not imply only immediate punishment, but also immediate reward.

At the conclusion of the mitzvot which follow the Ten Commandments (20:19-23:19), we find, once again, a very similar attribute: (5) "I am sending a 'malach' before you to guard you and to bring you into the Promised Land. Be careful of him and OBEY him, Do not defy him - FOR HE SHALL NOT PARDON YOUR SINS - "KI LO YISAH L'FI'SHEICHEM" - since My Name is with him. [However] should you obey Him and do all that I say - I shall defeat your enemies..." (Shmot 23:20-22)

Again, we find the basic characteristic of exacting punishment - should Bnei Yisrael not follow God; and immediate reward (helping them conquer Eretz Canaan) - should they obey Him.

Subsequently, when Bnei Yisrael sin by worshiping the Golden Calf ("chet ha'egel"), God plans to exact immediate punishment - precisely according to these conditions. In the Torah's description of those events, we find yet

another attribute: (6) "And now, let Me be, so that I can KINDLE MY ANGER against them - V'YICHAH API BA'HEM - that I may destroy them..." (Shmot 32:10)

The above examples, all reflecting MIDAT HA'DIN, indicate that God expected Am Yisrael to maintain a very high level of spiritual behavior. This level seems to have been necessary in order for Bnei Yisrael to become an "am kadosh".

[Note that this intense and close relationship between God and His people parallels the environment found in Gan Eden (see Br.2:16-17 "v'akmal").]

Before continuing with the story of "chet ha'egel", let's summarize these Divine attributes which we have found in the covenant associated with the FIRST LUCHOT, for we will soon compare them to God's attributes in the SECOND LUCHOT.

- 1) KEL KANA
- 2) POKED AVON... L'SONAI
- 3) O'SEH CHESED... L'OHAVAI
- 4) LO Y'NA'KEH
- 5) LO YISAH L'FI'SHEICHEM...
- 6) CHARON AF

CHET HA'EGEL / THE COVENANT IS BROKEN

As we have shown, according to the terms of the original covenant, immediate punishment was due for Bnei Yisrael's sin at "chet ha'egel" (32:8). God is faced with two alternatives:

- A) To PUNISH Bnei Yisrael according to these terms, thus leading to their destruction. God will make a nation out of Moshe instead. (See Shmot 32:10.)
- B) To ANNUL the original covenant, so that its terms will not have to be implemented.

Due to Moshe's petition (32:11-13), God decides not to evoke His anger (32:11-13). Consequently, He must choose the second alternative, which unfortunately requires the ANNULMENT of the original covenant of Har Sinai.

[Two subsequent events attest to this annulment:

- (1) Moshe Rabeinu's decision to break the first "luchot" - the symbol of that covenant (32:15-16).
- (2) God's demand that Bnei Yisrael remove 'their jewelry' - the symbol of the spiritual level of Har Sinai (33:5-6).]

Although BRIT HAR SINAI had been broken, a earlier covenant between God and Bnei Yisrael remained - "brit Avot". In that covenant, God promised the Avot that their offspring would become a great nation in Eretz Canaan. Moshe Rabeinu reminds God of this covenant (which can NEVER be annulled) in his petition:

"Remember Your servants, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, your servants to whom YOU SWORE... that their offspring will inherit the Land" . (Shmot 32:13)

The logical, yet unthinkable, conclusion ensues - God instructs Moshe to lead Bnei Yisrael to the Eretz Canaan, as He promised the Avot, WITHOUT "brit Har Sinai", and thus WITHOUT the SHCHINAH in their midst:

"And God said to Moshe - Set out from here, you and the people which you have brought out of Egypt to the Land which I swore to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov (i.e. "brit Avot")... but I WILL NOT GO IN YOUR MIDST for you are a stiff-necked people, lest I destroy you on the journey" (33:1-3)

Reluctantly, God must fulfill His promise to the Avot, and lead them to Eretz Canaan. However, WITHOUT the His Divine Presence.

Moshe Rabeinu, unwilling to accept this conclusion, threatens God with a 'sit down strike', imploring that the SHCHINAH must remain with His chosen people:

"[and Moshe said:] Unless YOUR PRESENCE WILL GO WITH US do not make us leave this place ("iyam ayn pa'necha

holchim al ta'aleyenu m'zeh"). For how should it be known that Your people have gained Your favor unless You GO WITH US..." (33:12-16)

Moshe's threat leaves God ("k'vayachol") in a most difficult predicament. On the one hand, He can not allow His "shchinah" to remain with the people, for Bnei Yisrael are an a stiff necked people. His anger - midat ha'Din - would undoubtedly be kindled against them. On the other hand, he can not leave them in the desert, for BRIT AVOT must be fulfilled!

To resolve this dilemma, God must forge a NEW covenant, a covenant which allows the SHCHINA to remain EVEN THOUGH Bnei Yisrael may sin!

NEW TERMS/ A NEW COVENANT

God acquiesces to Moshe Rabeinu's forceful appeal (see again 33:12-16!): "And God told Moshe: I will also do this thing that you request... [Moshe asked...] 'Let me behold Your Presence' (Moshe wants to know HOW God will allow the SHCHINA to dwell).

God answered: ' I will pass all my goodness before you, and I will proclaim MY NAME (ha'va'ya) before you, and I WILL PARDON he whom I will pardon and I WILL HAVE MERCY on he to whom I give mercy (v'chanoti et asher achon, v'richamti et asher arachem"... (33:17-19)

At NIKRAT HA'TZUR God informs Moshe concerning his NEW attributes - He will grant MERCY in certain situations, which will thus allow Bnei Yisrael a 'second chance'.

However, this statement comprises only God's answer to Moshe's question. Before they become effective, these new attributes must be formalized in a NEW covenant, one that will replace the original covenant which had been broken.

Just as the terms of the original covenant required an official proclamation and ceremony on Har Sinai, so too the terms of this new covenant. Thus, a formal ceremony, PARALLEL to Ma'amad Har Sinai, is necessary. Moshe, once again, must ascend Har Sinai (see 34:1-5 and its parallel in Shmot 19:20-24) to receive the SECOND LUCHOT.

In this new covenant, there is no reason to change the mitzvot. They obviously remain the same as before, for by keeping them Bnei Yisrael become an "am kadosh". God's attributes, however, MUST change. Therefore, in this SECOND Ma'amad Har Sinai, we do not find the mitzvot. Rather, in the parallel event, precisely at the moment when the "dibrot" should be proclaimed, we find instead the proclamation of God's NEW midot:

"And God came down in a cloud ("vayered Hashem b'anan") ... and God passed before him and proclaimed: ' Hashem, Hashem kel rachum v'chanun, erech apaiim v'rav chesed v'emet(the 13 midot)"... (Shmot 34:5-8)

Based on this explanation and background, we can now appreciate the precise choice of the words which describe God's attributes of Mercy. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE ATTRIBUTES

The following table, followed by a more detailed explanation, compares the attributes found in the original covenant (FIRST LUCHOT) to those of the new covenant (SECOND LUCHOT).

FIRST LUCHOT	SECOND LUCHOT	
-----	-----	1) kel KANA kel RACHUM
V'CHANUN 2) POKED AVON... L'SONAI	POKED AVON AVOT AL BANIM... 3) O'SEH chesed l'alafim RAV chesed V'EMET	
... L'OHAVAI	NOTZER chesed l'alafim... 4) lo y'nakeh	
V'NAKEH, lo y'nakeh 5) LO YISAH L'FISHEICHEM	NO'SAY AVON V'FESHA... 6) CHARON AF ERECH A'PAYIM	

[The detailed comparison will follow the order of the thirteen midot.]

SECOND LUCHOT	FIRST LUCHOT	
-----	-----	HASHEM KEL RACHUM V'CHANUN -->

(1) HASHEM KEL KANA rachum v'chanun based on 33:19 (see above) a MERCIFUL God as opposed to a ZEALOUS God ERECH A'PAYIM

--> (6) CHARON AF SLOW to anger as opposed to INSTANT anger RAV CHESED V'EMET --> (3) O'SEH CHESED... L'OHAVEI ABOUNDING kindness for all, potentially even for the wicked (allowing the possibility of "rasha v'tov lo") as opposed to EXACTING kindness limited to those who obey Him. [Note that the midah of "emet" is now required, for this abounding kindness for all must be complemented by the attribute of truth to assure that ultimate justice will be done.]

NOTZER CHESED L'ALAFIM --> (3) O'SEH CHESED L'ALAFIM... L'OHAVEI

He STORES His kindness, so that even if it were not given immediately, there will be an ultimate reward (allowing the possibility of "tzadik v'rah lo"), as opposed to IMMEDIATE kindness and reward.

NO'SAY AVON V'FESHA... --> (5) LO YISAH L'FISHEICHEM ...

FORGIVING sin as opposed to NOT FORGIVING sin. V'NAKEH, LO Y'NAKEH --> (4) LO Y'NAKEH SOMETIMES He will forgive, sometimes not (see Rashi, forgives those who perform t'shuva) as opposed to NEVER forgiving.

POKED AVON AVOT AL BANIM... --> (2) POKED AVON... L'SONEI

He WITHHOLDS punishment for up to four generations (in anticipation of t'shuva) as opposed to EXTENDING punishment for up to four generations. (Even though these two phrases are almost identical, their context forces this interpretation. See Rashi and other m'forshim.)

These striking parallels demonstrate that each of the "13 midot" lies in direct contrast to the "midot" of the original covenant at Har Sinai. These Divine attributes of mercy allow the "shchinah" to dwell within Yisrael even though they may not be worthy. MIDOT HA'RACHAMIM allow man to approach God and thus develop a close relationship, without the necessity of immediate punishment for any transgression.

CONCLUSION

This interpretation adds special meaning to our recitation of these "midot ha'rachamim" when we say SLICHOT, for they comprise much more than simply a mystical formula. By reciting these MIDOT, we must remind ourselves of the special conditions of the covenant of the SECOND LUCHOT. God's attributes of mercy, as we have shown, DO NOT GUARANTEE automatic forgiveness. Rather, they ENABLE THE POSSIBILITY of forgiveness. As the pasuk stated, God forgives only he whom He chooses ("et asher a'chon... v'et asher arachem" /33:19). To be worthy of that mercy, the individual must prove his sincerity to God, while accepting upon himself not to repeat his bad ways.

Thus, our recitation of the "13 midot" must remind us that even though God's MIDOT HA'RACHAMIM exist, they are NOT automatic. Indeed they allow man the POSSIBILITY for forgiveness, however, they must also remind us that we must prove our WORTHINESS to become recipients of this Divine Mercy. Their recitation should encourage us to perform proper teshuva, in anticipation of God special day of Mercy - Yom ha'Kippurim.

shabbat shalom
u'gmar v'chatima tova
menachem

----- FOR FURTHER IYUN

A. Based on this shiur, attempt to provide an alternate explanation of Rav Yochanan's statement in the gemarah in Rosh Hashanah (17b).

"brit kruta l'shlosh esray midot, sh'eynan choz'rot ray'kan, sh'ne'emar: hinei anochi koret brit" 1. Make note of the phrases in the gemara:

"ilamei katuv, iy efshar l'omro" & "YA'ASEH k'seder hazeh" B. As the new covenant allows for mercy, the perception of God becomes

less clear. While the first covenant boasted a clear relationship of "panim el panim" (face to face/ 33:11), this new covenant, even to Moshe, is represented by a "face to back" relationship:

"But, He said, you can not see my face ... Station yourself on the Rock as My Presence passes by ... you will see my back, but My face must not be seen."["LO Tuchal l'rot PANEI - ki Lo Yirani Hadam Vchai -... vRa'ita et ACHOREI - uPANEI LO Yi'rau.] (33:20-23)

This new Level has a clear advantage, midat ha'rachamim - however there is still a price to pay - the unclarity of Hashem's Hashgacha. No longer is punishment immediate, however reward may also suffer from delay. Hashem's "hashgacha" becomes more complex and now allows apparent situations of "Tzadik v'Rah lo- rasha vTov lo." 1. See chazal's explanation of "ho'diena na et drachecha" (33:12)

How does this relate to our explanation. 2. As communication is clearer when talking face to face with someone as opposed to talking to someone with his back turned, attempt to explain the symbolism of the above psukim. 3. Why must Moshe Rabeinu also go down a level in his n'vuah? C. The second luchot are carved by man, and not by God. 1. Attempt to relate this requirement based on the nature of the "brit 13".

YESHIVAT HAR ETZION VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH PROJECT(VBM)

SHABBAT SHUVA SICHA OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A

THE THIRTEEN ATTRIBUTES OF MERCY

Summarized by Aviad Hacoen

'And God passed before him and proclaimed...' (Shemot 34:6) Rabbi Yochanan said: Were it not written in the text, it would be impossible for us to say such a thing; this verse teaches us that God enwrapped Himself like the sheliach tzibbur (prayer leader) of a congregation and showed Moshe the order of prayer. He said to him: Whenever Israel sin, let them carry out this service before Me, and I will forgive them. (Rosh Hashana 17b)

The Torah writes "And He passed over" (VaYa'avov) - which implies that God did not make do with words alone. In order to teach Moshe this essential concept of forgiveness through enwrapping oneself like a sheliach tzibbur (atifa), God physically demonstrated the act. What is the meaning of this atifa? Atifa hides the personality of the sheliach tzibbur; it conceals him. Any individual can pray without a tallit over his head; but the sheliach tzibbur must cover his head. Only then can he serve as an emissary of the community.

Sometimes, atifa can silence any attempt to pray. This is the kind of atifa which causes one to "enter into the rock and hide in the dust for fear of God and for the glory of His majesty" (Isaiah 2:10). A person who conceals himself in the underground tunnels amongst the rocks for fear of facing God, stands totally helpless before Him. However, there is another kind of atifa, that of the sheliach tzibbur, who conceals his entire personality, lowers his stature, and at the same time lives continually with a sense of mission and responsibility towards the community. Only then may he recite the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.

To become a sheliach tzibbur in this sense, one must understand how God leads and guides His world and thus discover how a Jew should be seen by others. Every Jew must be a leader, each one of us must be responsible for the entire community. This is achieved through identification with God's attributes, which constitute his relationship with the community of Am Yisrael. In order to empathize with God's attributes, it is enough to identify with the first one, which the Kabbalists linked to the verse "Who is a God like You" (Micha 7:18). Rabbi Moshe Cordovero (in his Tomer Devora) expounds:

'Who is a God like You' - This attribute refers to the Holy One as a tolerant King Who bears insult in a manner beyond human understanding. Without doubt, nothing is hidden from His view. In addition, there is not a moment that man is not nourished and sustained by virtue of the Divine power bestowed upon him.

Thus, no man ever sins against God, without - at that very moment - God bestowing abundant vitality upon him, giving him the power to move his limbs. Yet even though a person uses this very vitality to transgress, God does not withhold it from him. Rather, He suffers this insult and continues to enable his limbs to move. Even at the very moment that a person uses that power for transgression, sin, and infuriating deeds, the Holy One bears them patiently...

...This, then, is a virtue man should emulate - namely, tolerance. Even when he is insulted to the degree mentioned above he should not withdraw his benevolence from those upon whom he bestows it.

Only when man has enwrapped himself like a sheliach tzibbur, when his personality, his ego, does not exist, when his whole being is like that of a sheliach tzibbur - only then can he emulate God's tolerance. And if we succeed in emulating God's relationship with His people, we are assured forgiveness for our sins.

The Mishna in Rosh Hashana (1:2) states that on the Day of Judgment "All creatures pass before Him like Bnei Maron." The Talmud (Rosh Hashana 18a) explains:

Like Bnei Maron - IN BAVEL it was translated, 'like a flock of sheep' [Rashi - like lambs counted for the animal tithe, which are counted one by one as they pass through a small opening]. RESH LAKISH said: As in the ascent of Beit Maron [a textual variant reads 'Beit Choron': Rashi - a narrow pass where wayfarers had to proceed in single file, since the valley was deep on both sides]. RAV YEHUDA SAID IN THE NAME OF SHEMUEL: Like the troops of the House of David [Rashi - (which pass in review one by one) as they go out to battle].

All three of these explanations express the experience of a man standing alone before the Throne of Glory. Generally, a person is able to console himself by virtue of his membership in the community. When he contemplates the tzibbur as a whole, he sees that he is not so bad. He integrates himself into the community, and does not stand out as being so much worse than everyone else. The Mishna states: "On Rosh Hashana all creatures pass before Him like Bnei Maron", one by one; God assesses each person and looks in all those corners that he himself has no wish to bring to light, at all those points which he is trying to hide; but "if a person will hide himself away - will I not see him?"

One opinion states that each individual comes for judgment alone, by himself, just as lambs are counted for tithing. The other Amoraim add the fear of judgment that accompanies this phenomenon - as in the ascent of Beit Choron - where the chasm yawns beneath him. Man must climb alone, up a steep ascent, while at every moment the danger of falling into the abyss seems imminent.

Rav Yehuda is not satisfied with this. He likens the experience to that of soldiers of the House of David who go forth with the awareness that there can be no battle without casualties!

And yet, the above Gemara continues, "Rav Yochanan said: [All the same,] they are all viewed together...[as it says,] 'He fashions their hearts TOGETHER, He who considers ALL their deeds.'" We may also be judged as a community, and thus draw God's mercy down upon us. How can we accomplish this task? If a person is able to enwrap himself as a sheliach tzibbur, to conceal his personality, to feel with every fiber of his being a sense of communal responsibility, and thus to proclaim the Thirteen Attributes - then "a covenant has been made that they will not be turned

away empty-handed".

This feeling of responsibility and mission must pervade our self-assessment. In the words of the Gemara (Kiddushin 40b): "A person should always see himself [and the whole world] as half guilty and half innocent ... If he does one mitzva - happy is he for having tilted himself and the entire world to the side of merit. If he transgresses one aveira - woe is he for having tilted himself and the entire world to the side of guilt..." A person must live with the sensation that an isolated act of his can cause revolutions and decide the fate of the entire world. With the sense that one's actions will affect the fate of the community, we may recite the Thirteen Attributes and merit God's mercy.

The first two attributes of God are "Hashem, Hashem" - "I am He before man sins, and I am He after he has sinned and done Teshuva". Why is there a need for mercy BEFORE the sin? A person may feel that he is unworthy of acting as a sheliach tzibbur. He might ask himself: "Am I able to carry the responsibility for an entire world upon my puny shoulders? Surely I am as grave a sinner as any." Therefore we must respond: God was also there before the sin, and saw to it that no Jew would be able to distance himself to such an extent that he would be incapable of returning to God! This is the meaning of "I am Hashem before he sins."

We now stand before the Day of Judgment, knocking on God's doors, "as beggars and paupers." We have come to beg God to "hear our jubilation (rina) and prayer." There are two types of prayer: the prayer of jubilation, and the prayer which is akin to "the prayer of a pauper when he faints (ya'atof)" (Tehillim 102:1). ["Ya'atof" can also be translated "enwraps."] Rina abounds when a person thanks God for everything that has passed, and requests: "Keep this forever." But there is another aspect of prayer, "A prayer of the afflicted when he faints (or enwraps)", when a person - as the Zohar describes King David - removes his crown, divests himself of his royal robes, covers himself with sackcloth, sits on the ground, and utters: "Master of the Universe, I am poor and lowly!"

"I am poor and lowly." There are times when prayer is that of "the pauper when he faints". Man is likened to a fleeting breath. He is like broken shard and like a passing dream.

But a prayer of the pauper before he faints is so, first and foremost, because of his frustration. How optimistically he viewed things at the start of the year, and yet the year has passed, and a person searches in vain for his accomplishments. Has he achieved even half of what he had hoped for? It is this same frustration which forms the basis of the month of Elul. The Tur explains this idea (beginning of Siman 585) in the name of Pirkei DeRebbi Eliezer. After the sin of the Golden Calf, that same immense frustration was felt by Am Yisrael. Just a few weeks earlier, the angels themselves had harbored jealousy towards Am Yisrael! When Moshe ascended Har Sinai for the second time, on Rosh Chodesh Elul, God commanded him to cause the shofar to be blown in the camp. This was to warn them not to stray after idolatry. Therefore, Chazal enacted that the shofar be blown annually on Rosh Chodesh Elul and throughout the entire month, to warn us to repent.

The Jewish people at that time experienced that same feeling of frustration, of broken-heartedness. They had reached the heights of spirituality when Moshe first ascended the mount - and yet they fell from the highest levels to the lowest depths. And so Moshe Rabbeinu ascended that same height once again, vividly recalling the exalted joy of his first climb. Yet, alas, he had to ascend once more and begin again, only forty days later. This is the experience of Elul.

We could have lived and experienced the spectacle of the Giving of the Torah all year long. The Gemara relates how certain Tannaim studied Torah while a fire raged around them. They said: Why be amazed? Was not the Torah itself given in fire! At that time, the Words were as joyous as when they were given on Sinai.

And yet we cannot always maintain the link between our prayers for spiritual heights, and our everyday lives. We pray every day: "Enlighten our eyes in Your Torah, and cause our hearts to cleave to Your mitzvot". However, if - God forbid - the prayer stands by itself, and when we understand words of Torah, we fail to connect between our prayer and our

achievements in learning - then we risk losing the ability to experience the raging fire of Torah from Sinai.

We can sit in the Beit HaMidrash and learn, and experience the sweetness of Torah - and yet lose the link between prayer and learning. For when a person removes the tallit from his head, he sees his "self" reflected everywhere he turns, and it becomes difficult for him to refrain from revealing his own individuality. It becomes almost impossible to remain a "sheliach tzibbur" throughout the day.

And so, our prayer is the "prayer of the pauper who enwraps himself." Needy and destitute, we knock on God's doors, full of frustration over the distance between our prayer and our reality. However, this very prayer of poverty and frustration can also redeem us. If we empathize totally with this aspect of being paupers, we sense how wholly poor and empty we really are, this can push us to completely enwrap ourselves and live with the perception of being a sheliach tzibbur. In no other period of our history was Am Yisrael so desperately in need of a leader. No one may divest himself of the obligation to enwrap himself, and to live as a sheliach tzibbur.

We live with this sensation of "the prayer of a pauper." In this manner we will knock on God's doors, contemplate the Thirteen Attributes, and thus we will attain emulation of God. With God's help, we will not be turned away empty-handed. In this spirit we draw near to pray and to recite the Thirteen Attributes. We will request mercy for ourselves and for the entire Jewish People. We must search our hearts and ask ourselves honestly if we have risen to the tasks that we took upon ourselves. Have others really seen us as Bnei Torah in every step we have made, at home, in the army, in the Beit HaMidrash, on the street?

If our prayer is coupled with sincere self-examination and renewed desire to act as leaders of our people, then a covenant has been made that we will not be turned away empty-handed. God will fulfill our requests, and we will merit forgiveness and mercy, and a year of life and peace - for us and for all the Jewish People.

[Originally delivered on the first night of Selichot, Elul 5745 (1985).

Translated by Simon M Jackson and Gila Weinberg]

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YOM KIPPUR PACKAGE

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These shiurim are dedicated in memory of Mr. Julius Katz, father of David Katz, adviser to Shana Alef students at the Yeshiva, who passed away today, the 6th of Elul.

THE MITZVA OF 'SHABBATON' ON YOM HA-KIPPURIM

based on a shiur by Harav Aharon Lichtenstein

Translated and adapted by Rav Eliezer Kwass

The Torah refers to the Jewish holidays as "mikra'ei kodesh," days of holy assembly. This holiness manifests itself most prominently through the prohibition against work. In Parashat Emor, the Torah reiterates this as it lists each one of the holy days - "This day is a holy assembly; do not do any work ("melakha" or "melekhet avoda") during it." On Yom Kippur, in addition to the prohibition against work, there is a requirement of "innui" (affliction) - that includes a prohibition against eating and drinking.

In light of this, one question naturally emerges in any attempt to understand the nature of Yom Kippur and its mitzvot: What is the relationship, if any, between the prohibition of work on the one hand and that of eating and drinking on the other?

At first blush, one is inclined to see no relationship at all between the two. Both happen to apply to Yom Kippur, but beyond this incidental characteristic they share nothing. In the lists of the 613 mitzvot they feature separately as two distinct mitzvot - a positive and negative commandment regarding work and a positive and negative commandment regarding affliction. The situation can be likened to the coinciding on the Seder night

of the prohibition of breaking a bone in the Pesach sacrifice with the mitzva of eating matza - they apply at the same time but are otherwise unrelated.

A closer look, though, reveals a surprisingly strong connection. Quite a few times I merited hearing the following principle from the Gaon, Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, zt"l, in the name of his father, the Gaon, Rav Moshe Soloveitchik, zt"l. He based himself on the Rambam's formulation of the positive mitzvot of "mikra kodesh" with regard to Yom Kippur.

The Rambam writes (Hilkhot Shevitat Asor 1:1):

"It is a positive mitzva to desist from work on the tenth of the seventh month, for it says, 'It should be a day of rest ("Shabbat Shabbaton") for you."

Later, in halakha 4, he adds:

"There is another positive mitzva on Yom Ha-kippurim, to desist ("lishbot") from eating and drinking, as it says, 'Afflict yourselves.' Based on tradition we learn, 'What is affliction? It is fasting."

The Rambam continues (halakha 5):

"We have also learned from tradition that it is prohibited to wash, to anoint oneself, to wear shoes or to have sexual relations on this day. There is a mitzva to desist from these just as one desists from eating and drinking, for it says, 'Shabbat Shabbaton' - 'Shabbat' with regards to eating [according to another version, 'with regards to work'], and 'Shabbaton' with regards to these matters."

According to the second version in which "Shabbat" refers to work, work and affliction are mentioned together in the same verse ("these matters" would then include eating and drinking along with the other afflictions). According to the first version, since "Shabbat Shabbaton" appears twice in the passage about Yom Kippur, we have one for work and the other for afflictions. According to both, the positive mitzva of affliction stems from "Afflict yourselves" (as the Rambam quoted in halakha 4).

Either way, though, we can see that the Torah is using these two verses to communicate a single directive: Transform the day of Yom Kippur into a Shabbat Shabbaton, both through refraining from work and through refraining from eating and drinking. To be sure, these are distinct mitzvot; one who both eats and does work on Yom Kippur has transgressed twice. Yet the two, when observed properly, fulfill a common goal - the transformation of the day into a Shabbat Shabbaton.

We can adduce several proofs for this principle, and in doing so, shed light on certain enigmatic passages in the gemara.

I. Rav Moshe zt"l brought a proof from the mishna (Yoma 66b):

"The elite of Jerusalem would escort him [the man leading the goat to the wilderness] until the first booth. There were ten booths from Jerusalem until Tzuk, [a distance of] ninety ris, seven and a half [ris] for each mil. At each booth they would say to him, 'There is food here. There is water.'"

The gemara (Yoma 67a) comments, "None of these men ever needed to eat the food, but one cannot compare a person with food available to him [for whom it is relatively easier to fast] with one who has none." One could understand this gemara to mean that the calls of the onlookers from the booths were only intended to show support for the messenger, but the ban on eating remains in force. The Rambam (Hilkhot Avodat Yom Ha-kippurim 3:7), though, clearly rules that he can eat if he needs to: "At every booth they say to him, 'There is food here. There is water.' If his strength fails and he needs to eat he can eat, but no one ever actually needed to." (Compare this with the comments of the Tosafot Yeshanim s.v. Lo [though the text there is unclear].)

And, in fact, we can almost say that the gemara must be read the way the Rambam does, for one cannot really describe as "one who has food available to him" a person who merely can see food but knows that he is prohibited to eat it! Since it is too far-fetched to posit that the gemara refers solely to a messenger who is unversed in the halakha, we must conclude that he is permitted to eat should he need to.

Such a dispensation, however, deviates sharply from the normal guidelines of Temple worship. Would one entertain the possibility that a priest who, for reasons of health, must consume non-kosher food in order to perform the service, would be permitted to do so? True, we have a biblically-derived principle that on Yom Kippur, the sacrifice should be

brought "'in its proper time' - even in impurity, 'in its proper time' - even on Shabbat." But this teaches us only that the prohibition of work can be waived. It makes no mention of eating.

Apparently, said Rav Moshe zt"l, the Rambam views the prohibition of work and the requirement of affliction as two manifestations of one phenomenon - Shabbaton. The two mitzvot together - as a unit - are pushed aside by the imperative of the Yom Kippur sacrifices.

Alternatively, one can agree with the opinion of the Tosafot Yeshanim that the messenger may not eat (and in fact, the gemara on 81a says, "Affliction, which was not permitted, differs from work, which was permitted," and Rashi there explains that work was permitted for purpose of worship in the Temple, but affliction was not waived. The Rambam would have to say either that the two passages represent different talmudic views, or that while work is totally permissible ["hutra"], affliction is only minimally waived ["dechuya"]) and still maintain our thesis that the ban on work and the ban on eating operate jointly by saying that though they share a common goal, they still abide by different rules.

II. Another proof can be brought from a parallel passage on Mo'ed Katan 9a.

The gemara discusses the unique celebration of Sukkot that took place the year that King Shlomo dedicated the Beit Ha-mikdash. It lasted fourteen days, starting a week before the holiday.

"Rav Parnakh said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan, 'That year Yisrael did not observe Yom Ha-kippurim, and they were worried, saying, "Maybe the enemies of the Jews (euphemism for "we") will be punished?" A heavenly voice came out and said to them, "You are all invited to the World to Come."

How can one derive this? Through the following kal va-chomer: If during the dedication of the mishkan (in the desert) the sacrifices of the heads of the tribes were offered on Shabbat, even though the mishkan only had temporary sanctity and those sacrifices were individual and the punishment for Shabbat desecration is death by stoning - it should certainly be permissible to offer sacrifices to dedicate the Beit Ha-mikdash on Yom Kippur, for the mikdash is permanently holy, the sacrifices are communal, and transgressing Yom Kippur only carries with it the punishment of kareit (lit., "cutting off," considered less stringent than the death penalty). Why were they worried, if they had a strong logical basis to legitimize what they were doing? The sacrifices of the heads of tribes in the time of the dedication of the mishkan were totally devoted to Heaven, whereas during the dedication of the Beit Ha-mikdash, they were involved in a human celebration. Why did they, in fact, not just bring sacrifices and forgo the eating [on Yom Kippur]? There can be no real celebration without eating and drinking."

This kal va-chomer is puzzling if one does not assume a connection between eating and work on Yom Kippur. Why else should one compare work done at the dedication of the mishkan with eating and drinking done at the dedication of the mikdash? So again we see that since fasting and resting from work operate in tandem to endow Yom Kippur with the status of Shabbaton, it naturally follows that if one is waived, so is the other.

III. Further support for this concept can be brought from the mishna on Yoma 81a:

"If one forgot that it was Yom Kippur and ate and drank during one period of forgetfulness, he brings one sin-offering. If one eats and works during one period of forgetfulness, he brings two sin-offerings."

The second statement of the mishna seems superfluous: would we need a mishna to teach us that if one worked and ate non-kosher food on Shabbat he brings two sin-offerings? But once we realize that on Yom Kippur, the ban on work and the ban on eating are intrinsically linked, we understand the need to teach that, after all, the two still are distinct transgressions and therefore obligate two separate sin-offerings.

IV. In light of this approach, we can understand an unclear gemara, also found on Yoma 81a.

"Five passages are written referring to forbidden labor [on Yom Kippur]: one warning about the day; one warning about the night; one stating the punishment for work during the day; one stating the punishment for work at night; and one remains for us to derive from it a warning about the afflictions both during the day and the night (even though there is no explicit warning

in the Torah about the five afflictions of Yom Kippur, this passage is considered the warning, for the Torah does not punish unless it states a warning.)"

The gemara is puzzling. Why the need for separate commands against work, one for the day and one for the night? For all the other holidays, one recorded prohibition of work suffices for both day and night. The Tosafot Yeshanim on the passage (s.v. Chad) relate to this, commenting, "I do not know if in every place there is a need for a separate warning about the punishment for work at night and in the day, on Shabbatot, the holidays, and the intermediate days of the festival."

Utilizing Rav Moshe zt"l's principle, though, we are now able to understand this enigmatic gemara. The distinction between the day and the night of Yom Kippur emerges from a discussion on Shevuot 13a. The gemara asks: According to Rebbe's opinion that Yom Kippur brings atonement even to those that do not repent, how can the punishment of kareit for Yom Kippur itself ever exist? For other sins, even though Yom Kippur atones for everything, God is able to mete out a punishment before Yom Kippur, but the punishment for transgressing Yom Kippur itself will always be immediately and automatically atoned for - so when can this kareit ever apply? The gemara answers: "When one transgresses Yom Kippur at night and then dies right away, the DAY DOES NOT ATONE FOR HIM." Rashi explains that only the daytime of Yom Kippur atones, as it is written, "On this day He will atone for you."

If, as we have seen, the prohibition against work on Yom Kippur is instrumental in producing the special character of the day, the possibility arises that it would be limited to the time in which the day effects its atonement. It is because of this that there is a need for individual derivations for both the day and the night. This also explains the need for the Torah to emphasize, "From nightfall to nightfall you should rest," with regard to Yom Kippur alone. One might have thought to distinguish between the night and day of Yom Kippur, and the Torah tells us not to.

On Shabbat and Yom Tov, though, one would not have even thought of making such a distinction. This is either because the day and night are not separate halakhic entities (although the principle that "The honor of the day precedes that of the night" [Pesachim 105a], seems to go against this, but this is not the forum for a full discussion of this issue. Likewise, according to the Jewish mystical tradition, the day and night of Shabbat certainly are separate entities [see Ramban Shemot 20:8], but this is a realm I am not qualified to speak about), or because even if they are, there is no reason to prohibit work in one part of the day and not the other.

The most likely explanation for the difference between Shabbat and Yom Tov on the one hand and Yom Kippur on the other, though, is related to what is involved in creating "Shabbaton." On Shabbat and Yom Tov, the "Shabbaton" is identified solely with the prohibition against work. These are, in fact, two sides of the same coin, for there is no other factor involved in the composition of this Shabbaton. Just as the whole day is a Shabbaton, so too on the whole day work is prohibited. On Yom Kippur, though, both the prohibition of work and that of eating transform Yom Kippur into a "Shabbaton." Hence it might have made sense to define the scope of the prohibition against work differently and limit it to that part of the day in which the essence of Shabbaton is manifested. To reject this possibility, the derivation teaches that all of the prohibitions of Yom Kippur apply during the day and the night.

To be sure, this solution works less smoothly if one is inclined to view the two elements of Shabbaton on Yom Kippur as discrete and to say that the two prohibitions - of work and of eating - only fall out by chance, as it were, on the same day. One could, of course, still say that even if the prohibition of work is a distinct entity, there is room to posit that it is connected to the time of atonement, and in this way distinguish Yom Kippur from other holidays. However, it is clear that R. Moshe zt"l's principle explains the matter much more clearly and fully.

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Revelation and Repentance

by Rav Yair Kahn

The significance of the period which begins with Rosh Chodesh Elul and ends on Yom Kippur dates back to the biblical era. According to tradition, the first set of tablets were shattered by Moshe on the 17th of Tammuz, in the wake of the sin of the golden calf. The next forty days were spent praying for forgiveness. Subsequently, Hashem agreed to allow Moshe to return to Har Sinai in order to receive the second tablets. The period of preparation time necessary to receive the Torah the second time was identical to that of the first time, i.e., forty days. These final forty days began on Rosh Chodesh Elul and culminated on Yom Kippur. (See Ta'anit 30b, Rashi ibid.)

During the period of Elul it is customary to wake up early in the morning in order to say selichot. Sephardim recite selichot the entire month of Elul, while Ashkenazim begin the week preceding Rosh Ha-shana. The main focus of the selichot is the public recitation of the thirteen middot ha-rachamim (attributes of mercy). The selichot reach a climax on Yom Kippur when they function as an integral part of the service. I think that we can gain a deeper insight into the nature of this forty day period in general, and of Yom Kippur specifically, if we explore the significance of the recitation of the middot ha-rachamim.

The source for the public recitation of the thirteen middot is a baffling gemara in Rosh Ha-shana: "And Hashem passed over his (Moshe's) face and called" - Rav Yochanan said: if not for an explicit verse it would not be possible to suggest such a thing; this verse teaches us that the Holy One, blessed be He, wrapped himself in a tallit like a shaliach tzibbur and showed Moshe the order of prayer. He said to him (Moshe): whenever Israel sins let them do the following service in my presence and I will forgive them: 'Hashem Hashem' it is I (Hashem) before man sins and it is I after man sins and repents... Rav Yehuda said there is a covenant forged with the thirteen middot that they will not return empty (unanswered), as it says, 'I hereby forge a covenant' (17b). What form of prayer is the mere recitation of the thirteen middot? How does it result in automatic forgiveness? Is it some magical formula or incantation? What is the nature of the covenant? Finally, what is the significance of Rav Yochanan's shocking discovery, that Hashem Himself recited the middot to Moshe Rabbeinu?

Let us briefly return to the biblical context of the thirteen middot ha-rachamim. After praying for forgiveness for forty days, Moshe makes a very bold request: "Show me Your glory." Hashem's enigmatic response is as follows: "I will pass all My goodness before your face and I will proclaim the name Hashem in your presence and I will be gracious with whom I shall be gracious and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy. And He said, You cannot see My countenance, for man cannot see Me and live... and you shall see My back but My face will not be revealed" (Shemot 33:18-23). Moshe is then invited to return to Har Sinai in order to receive the second set of tablets. "... And he climbed up Har Sinai ... and he took in his hand two stone tablets. And Hashem descended in a cloud, and He stood there with him, and He proclaimed the name Hashem. And Hashem passed before his face and proclaimed Hashem Hashem ... (the thirteen middot ha-rachamim) ... and Moshe hurried and bowed to the ground" (Shemot 34:4-8).

Although the exact meaning and symbolism is far beyond my comprehension, the basic point is clear. Moshe's quest is divine revelation. Hashem responds that he is willing to grant Moshe's request, but only partially. Moshe will experience the greatest and most profound encounter with God; he will push his finite human capability to the very limit. He will succeed in catching a brief glimpse of the infinite glory of Hashem. Moshe's request was fulfilled by Hashem's recitation, as it were, of the thirteen middot. The meaning and significance of the middot therefore become clear: the thirteen middot are an act of divine revelation, the greatest and deepest form of revelation possible. Rav Yochanan was electrified by the depth of Moshe's religious experience. "If not for an explicit verse, it

would not be possible to suggest." Moshe was there, in the very presence of Hashem as He revealed His attributes. Hashem was so close, although mysteriously hidden and wrapped in His tallit.

But why a shaliach tzibbur? Are there no other metaphors to describe the dialectical nature of the divine encounter? Chazal appear to be conveying an additional message. The thirteen middot were not only the personal religious experience of Moshe, but they were and are an eternal covenant forged between Hashem and the people of Israel: "I hereby forge a covenant, before your entire nation I will work wonders" (Shemot 34:10). The first tablets were shattered in the wake of Israel's sin. However, the second tablets were carved within the context of the covenant of the divine attributes. The content of the covenant is that the divine presence dwells within the Jewish people even after they sin. If the people of Israel turn away from Hashem (heaven forbid), they become distanced and alienated from God. Nevertheless, upon repentance God is there. The return to the presence of a loving God is by definition forgiveness: "And I will pass all my good before your face, and I will be gracious with whom I shall be gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy" (Shemot 33:19).

The recitation of the thirteen middot requires a minyan, which represents the entire Jewish people. When the shaliach tzibbur wrapped in a tallit calls out the divine attributes, Hashem is present. The divine presence results in the forgiveness associated with the recitation. This is the essence of the covenant of the thirteen middot, and this is the meaning of R. Yochanan's metaphor. The recitation of the middot, therefore, is neither an incantation nor a prayer in the classic sense. Rather, it is an experience of divine revelation. In some remote way it is a reenactment of Moshe Rabbeinu's experience.

Historically, Moshe Rabbeinu's encounter with the infinite occurred at the beginning of Elul, when Moshe was summoned to receive the second set of tablets. However, the message of the thirteen middot was delivered to Klal Yisrael only on Yom Kippur. It was on that day that the Jewish people actually received the second set of tablets. It was on that day that the Children of Israel beheld with awe and astonishment the light of the divine encounter shining on Moshe's face. Through that light, the entire nation experienced at a distance the encounter with God.

Yom Kippur is the day in which the Children of Israel achieve atonement for their iniquities. Our Rabbis teach us that the essence of the day of Yom Kippur brings forgiveness for those who repent. (Rambam, Hilkhos Teshuva 1:3). Yom Kippur is historically and intrinsically a day of encounter between the People of Israel and the God of Israel. At the time of the beit ha-mikdash, this encounter formed the heart of the Yom Kippur service, when the high priest entered the inner sanctum. It is this encounter, which is expressed by the thirteen middot, that results in the forgiveness and purification of the Jewish people. "For on this day He will atone you to purify you, in the presence of Hashem will you be purified" (Vayikra 16:30). "Rabbi Akiva said, happy are you O Israel -- in whose presence are you purified and who purifies you? Your father in heaven" (Yoma 85b).

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Shabbat-B'Shabbato -- Parshat Ha'azinu

No 614: 8 Tishrei 5757 (21 September 1996)

SHABBAT-ZOMET is an extract from SHABBAT-B'SHABBATO HA'AZINU AND TESHUVAH

by Rabbi Yehudah Shaviv

The Haftarah read this week is not the regular one for the Torah portion of Ha'azinu, which is the epic poem of David, but the call of Hoshaiya, "Return, Yisrael, to your G-d" [14:2]. This is a call that is most appropriate to this Shabbat, which is dedicated to the subject of repentance. However, there would seem to be a conflict between the call of the prophet and the Torah reading.

Here is a summary by the Ramban of the message to be learned from Ha'azinu: "This epic poem does not present a necessary condition of

repentance and worship, but it bears witness that we will do bad deeds, and the Almighty will then respond with anger and retribution but He will not eradicate our memory. Instead, He will become consoled and will repay our enemies with his mighty sword and forgive our sins in order to glorify His Holy name. Thus, this epic poem is a promise of future redemption."

[Devarim 32:40]. That is, the redemption is unconditional, even if Yisrael does not repent. If so, this would seem to be the opposite of the call of the prophet, "Return, Yisrael."

It may be that there are two alternatives: redemption without teshuvah, or redemption as a result of teshuvah. The first is with power, full of revenge and blood and the sword, while the second is replete with love. This Shabbat, in the midst of the most appropriate days of the year for repentance, Yisrael is called to choose the better path.

Another possibility is that the two alternatives are a difference between the nation as a whole and each individual. The entire nation can be sure of redemption and forgiveness even if they do not perform the act of teshuvah. However, the salvation of an individual depends on his actions and on his repentance. Thus, based on the clear message of the epic poem of Ha'azinu, it is necessary to repeat the cry to the individual: "Return, Yisrael!"

Another aspect is related to individual feelings. It may be that one feels a need to repent, but he hesitates because of the heavy responsibility that this entails. The vision of perfection that is the result of teshuvah is wonderful, but at the same time it is also frightening. "The darkness of existence is fraught with vain fears ... The Baal Teshuvah is afraid that he has already lost all because of his sins and he has no hope for redemption ... The Earth itself did not grow perfect trees because of its fear. Mankind is fearful ..." [Rabbi A.Y. Kook, Orot Hateshuvah 16:2]. The very thought that the redemption of the nation of Yisrael may depend on individual repentance is frightening due to the heavy responsibility that it brings, and may lead to despair. Thus, the message of Ha'azinu is that redemption of the future is absolute and does not necessarily depend on individual repentance or actions. Once the burden of responsibility has been removed, it is possible to answer the call of the prophet, "Return, Yisrael, to your G-d."

EXPLAIN A MIDRASH: Prayer and Repentance

by Rabbi Eliezer Gur-Arieh

Prayer and crying out to G-d are important aspects of the process of teshuvah. The Ten Days of Awe are days of intensive prayer. "Even though repentance and contrition are proper for the world, they are most suited to the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and teshuvah is accepted immediately during this time." [Rambam, Teshuvah 2:6]. "One of the ways of teshuvah is for the penitent one to cry and pray before G-d continually" [2:4]. Especially on Yom Kippur, which is "a time for repentance for all, both the individual and the community" [2:7], we add special prayers, with five separate prayer services during the day.

The Midrash compares prayer and teshuvah, and comes to the conclusion that teshuvah is the more powerful of the two. A passage in Tehillim explicitly mentions prayer but only hints at repentance: "Hear prayer, your ornament, which will come from all flesh. My sins have overpowered me, you will forgive my sins. Happy is he who was chosen and brought closer, he will dwell in your courtyard ... Answer us with justice, G-d of our hope, He who keeps the promises of all the ends of the earth and the far seas." [65:3-6]. As is written in the Midrash, "Rabbi Chanina Bar Papa asked Rabbi Shmuel Bar Nachmani: What is the meaning of the passage, '... because of prayer' [Eichah 3:44]. He replied: the gates of prayer are sometimes open and sometimes closed, but the gates of teshuvah are never closed, as is written, 'He who keeps the promises of all the ends of the earth and the far seas.' Just as the sea is never closed, but everyone who wants to swim in it can do so at any time, so it is of teshuvah. Whenever one wants to repent, G-d is willing to accept it. However, prayer has its set times. Rabbi Yossi Ben Chalafta said: 'I will pray to you at the proper time' [Tehillim 69:14] -- there are proper times for prayer."

Similarly, in the Pesikta of Rav Kahana: "Teshuvah has been compared to the sea ... and prayer has been compared to a mikveh. Just as a mikveh is

sometimes open and sometimes closed, so the gates of prayer are sometimes open and sometimes closed." [Chapter 24]. Both a mikveh, a ritual bath, and the sea are places of ritual purification, but the sea is not as limited as a mikveh. It may be that the difference is because of their different sources. The sea was created by G-d, while a mikveh is man-made. Prayer is man-made, similar to a mikveh, and it is therefore limited and bound by the proper time. But teshuvah is a gift from G-d. As is written: "They asked wisdom, what should be the punishment of a sinner? The answer was, 'Let sinners be chased by evil' [Mishlei 13:21]. They asked prophesy, and the answer was, 'The soul who sins should be put to death [Yechezkel 18:4]. But when they asked the Almighty what punishment should be given to a sinner, His answer was, 'Let him repent and he will be forgiven.'" [Talmud Yerushalmi, Makot 2:6]. A human being has it in his power to cause his prayers to be answered. This is the interpretation given to the above passage, "Hear prayer, your ornament, which will come from all flesh." "The passage does not say, all human beings, but all flesh. From this the sages learned that the prayer of a man is not answered unless he makes himself as lowly as simple flesh. We must also make ourselves as flesh in the matter of teshuvah." [Midrash Tehillim]. Teshuvah softens the heart, and when prayer is heard from a heart that has been broken by repentance, it will without a doubt reach the Almighty above.

The Weekly Internet
 P A R A S H A - P A G E
 by Mordecai Kornfeld
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This year's Yom Kippur issue has been dedicated by Mr. Alan Ziegler of Har Nof, Jerusalem to the memory of his father, Reb Binyamin Baruch ben Avraham Ziegler Z"L, whose Yahrzeit is on Rosh Chodesh Elul.

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YONAH AND HIS MISSION I YONAH'S ADVENTURE

Following the afternoon Torah reading of Yom Kippur, we read the story of Yonah the Prophet. Yonah ben Amitai visited the Beit Hamikdash along with the other Succot holiday pilgrims. He rejoiced there with his brethren in the special love that Hashem bestows upon the His people.

The climax of the yearly celebration came during the "Simchat Beit Hasho'evah" -- The Celebration of the Water Drawing -- an evening event, held daily from the second until the seventh days of the Succot holiday. During this ceremony, Yonah's joy reached ecstatic heights. The Holy Word of Hashem may rest upon a person when he is rejoicing in the performance of a Mitzvah, and that is exactly what happened in the case of Yonah ben Amitai. Yonah suddenly found himself overwhelmed by the Holy word of Hashem. He became a divine emissary, appointed to warn the gentile population of Ninveh to repent. (Yerushalmi Succah 5:1)

For reasons which will not be discussed here, Yonah balked at his assignment. He refused to accept his mission (see Jewish Thought, vol. 3:1, p.7, for further discussion of this matter). Yonah tried to flee from the word of Hashem by boarding a boat headed for Tarshish. When Hashem stirred up a storm that nearly sank the ship, Yonah publicly admitted his guilt in evading his duty. He advised the other passengers on the boat to throw him overboard. When they accepted his counsel and tossed him into the sea, the sea immediately calmed. (Book of Yonah, Ch. 1)

The passengers on the boat were so inspired by what had transpired, that each of them vowed to bring Korbanot, or offerings of thanks, to Hashem. (Targum Yonah, end of Ch. 1). In fact, they became so convinced of the omnipotence of Yonah's G-d, that they all eventually became proselytes. We refer to people such as these boatmates of Yonah, when we pray three times daily for Hashem to have mercy on "the righteous proselytes" (Pirkei D'Rebbi Eliezer, end of Ch. 10).

Yonah was undoubtedly plagued by the nagging question, "Why me?" It is obvious, however, that if *he* was chosen for the mission, Hashem must

have had good reason for the choice. Perhaps, after a careful look at the words of Chazal, we can offer at least somewhat of an answer to this question, and gain a better understanding of Yonah's mission as well.

II ZEVULUN'S EMISSARY

Harav Chagai Preschel, a good friend of mine who is presently dean of Shvut Amenu, the Moscow Yeshiva High School, once shared with me an intriguing thought concerning Yonah and his mission.

As Chazal tell us, Yonah's father stemmed from the tribe of Zevulun (Yerushalmi Succah 5:1). It is for this reason that Yonah's first impulse, upon fleeing the word of Hashem, was to board a ship. The tribe of Zevulun were primarily traders, who spent much time sailing to distant parts of the world in order to sell their wares (Rashi Devarim 33:18). It would therefore be natural for Yonah to feel safe and at ease when voyaging upon a boat.

Moshe Rabbeinu blessed all of the tribes of Yisroel on the day of his death. Implicit in his words were many revelations about their future destinies. Rashi describes Moshe's blessing for Zevulun in the following manner:

[The tribes of] Zevulun and Yissachar made a partnership. Zevulun traded at sea. He then shared his profits with Yissachar, who remained at home and studied the Torah... [it therefore can be said that] Yissachar's knowledge of Torah, was to Zevulun's credit.

"Zevulun," said Moshe Rabbeinu, "you shall trade successfully, and rejoice in your success. Yissachar -- you shall succeed in your Torah studies, and rejoice in that. You shall master the intricacies of the lunar calendar, and dictate to the tribes of Yisroel when to gather at Har Hamoria [i.e., the Beit Hamikdash] for the yearly holiday pilgrimages."

Alternatively, the verse means that *foreign nations* will gather at the Temple Mount through Zevulun's tradings. When foreign traders would cross the seas to trade with Zevulun, they would say, "Since we have already come this far, we might as well visit Jerusalem and see what these people worship." When they would come and see all of Yisroel serving a single deity and eating a single diet, they would be so overcome with awe that they would become proselytes.

(Rashi Devarim 33:18-19)

Rashi reveals to us the dual mission of the tribe of Zevulun. Through his support of Yissachar, Zevulun plays a major role in bringing about the yearly pilgrimages. Through his foreign trade, Zevulun makes the G-d of the Jews known to the other nations of the world.

It is now evident why Yonah's prophesy came in the manner it did, and why *he* was chosen for this prophetic mission. As a member of the tribe of Zevulun, his was a pivotal role in the pilgrimages and their associated festivities. (*Rejoice*, Zevulun, when you go out..." -- Devarim ibid.) They were "his" Mitzvah, so to speak. (The Gemara tells us that even Yonah's wife, who, as a woman, was exempt from making the yearly pilgrimages, would also come to Jerusalem three times a year, out of her love for the Mitzvah -- Eruvin 96a.) Yonah was therefore able to take full advantage of these Mitzvot, and gain from them true spiritual growth -- even unto prophesy.

The prophetic message he was entrusted with, however, was not directed towards his brethren, the Bnai Yisroel. Rather, his assignment was to go out to the nations of the world and bring them to repent and follow the just and moral ways of Hashem. When Yonah refused to do so, there was only one way for him to correct his wrongdoing. He had to be thrown into the sea! The miraculous end that this brought to the storm demonstrated clearly to the gentile passengers aboard the ship that Hashem is the true master of the universe.

III YONAH, THE DOVE

I would like to add a further observation to what Chaggai has shown. Out of the entire tribe, it was "Yonah" who was chosen for this mission. This, too, was not by chance. It may well be that Hashem brought Yonah to this world solely for the purpose of fulfilling this mission. As we are taught in Gemara

In honor of Joseph's (belated) birthday! - Mireet and Yael Wolf

Is the 'Day of ATONEMENT' a precise translation for YOM KIPPUR?

The word 'atonement' implies amends for a certain wrongdoing. In this sense, the 'Day of Atonement' implies expiation for transgressions which may have been committed over the course of the previous year. However, in Chumash we find numerous instances in which the word "kippurim" is used in a different context.

In the following shiur, we examine the use of the shoshet k.p.r. in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of the nature and significance of YOM KIPPUR.

THE SHOSHET K.P.R. [chaf peyh reish]

We begin our discussion by bringing several examples of the use of the shoshet - "k.p.r." - in Chumash.

* A PROTECTIVE COATING

In Parshat Noach, we find the first use of this shoshet:

"And God said to Noach: Make a ARK out of gopher wood... - V'CHAFARTA alav - and you shall COAT IT from within in and from without with - KOFER - pitch (a PROTECTIVE COATING)." (Breishit 6:14)

The ark must be coated with a protective covering in order for it to withstand the mighty waters of the flood. This first usage of "k.p.r." indicates that this shoshet relates to a 'protective covering'.

* A PROTECTION GIFT

In Parshat Va'yishlach, the shoshet "k.p.r." is used once again to describe a form of protection. Yaakov Avinu sends a gift to appease his brother Esav. Note how Yaakov explains the reason for sending this gift:

"Maybe, - A'CHA'PRA pa'nav - I can APPEASE him - with this gift that I am sending..." (Br. 32:20)

Yaakov is not asking Esav for forgiveness, rather he hopes that this gift will deter Esav from attacking him. The gift is intended to PROTECT Yaakov from Esav's anger.

* A COVERING OF THE GROUND

In Sefer Shmot, the shoshet "k.p.r." is used to describe the manner in which the 'manna' covered the ground:

"And behold it was on the face of the wilderness thin and flaky - k'KFOR - like 'frost' on the land." (Shmot 16:14)

[Note: The biblical meaning of KFOR is not quite clear, but it undoubtedly relates to a type of covering, such as frost which covers the ground. See Thilim 147:16 - "kfor k'efer y'fazer" (from daily davening).]

* PROTECTION MONEY

In Parshat Mishpatim (Shmot 21:30), the word "kofer" is used to describe a payment which can be made in lieu of punishment. This can be understood as PROTECTION from the punishment. Similarly, in Bamidbar 35:31 we find the prohibition of accepting "kofer nefesh" - payment in lieu of capital punishment.

SHOSHET K.P.R. AND THE MISHKAN

With this background, we now examine the use of the shoshet "k.p.r." in relation to the MISHKAN in Parshiot Trumah/Tzaveh.

* THE KAPORET

Recall that the "aron" (the holy ark) was an open, gold-plated wooden box that contained the LUCHOT (Shmot 25:10-11,21). To PROTECT the "aron", Moshe is commanded to make a KAPORET (25:17-22). This KAPORET (again shoshet k.p.r.), a golden lid with two KRUVIM upon it, served as the COVER for that "aron", thus, PROTECTING the luchot.

To emphasize the PROTECTIVE nature of this covering, this

lid for the "aron" is NOT called a "michseh" (the hebrew word for a box cover/ see Breishit 8:13 & Shmot 26:14), rather it is called a KAPORET (shoshet k.p.r.). The placement of KRUVIM on the kaporet supports this interpretation. Just as the kruvim PROTECT the path to Gan EDEN (see Breishit 3:24), so too, the KRUVIM of the kaporet PROTECT the LUCHOT. [See shiur on Parshat Nitzavim.] [Note also that the PA'ROCHET (a related shoshet p.r.k) - the curtain which protects the "kodesh ha'kadoshim" - is also embroidered with "kruvim" (see Shmot 26:30).]

KIPPURIM & THE SEVEN DAY MILUIM CEREMONY

The first use of the word KIPPURIM is found in the commandment to perform a seven day dedication ceremony for the Mishkan, better known as the MILUIM. During those seven days a special korban CHATAT was offered, whose blood was sprinkled on the MIZBAYACH (see Shmot 29:1,12). At the end of the parsha, the Torah refers to this procedure as KIPPURIM:

"And each day [of the MILUIM] you shall bring a PAR CHATAT for the KIPPURIM... (Shmot 29:36)

In a similar fashion, the KOHANIM also required KAPARA.

During this seven day ceremony, the blood of the AYIL, an additional korban brought for this purpose (see Shmot 29:1,19-21), was sprinkled on the earlobes, thumbs, and toes of the kohanim. This procedure is also referred to as KAPARA:

"This [meat of the korban] shall be eaten only by [the kohanim] - asher KUPAR bahen - who had KAPARA from them [from the blood of this animal]... " (Shmot 29:33)

[See also parallel account in Vayikra 8:1-36, see 8:34]

Thus we find that the primary purpose of the seven day MILUIM ceremony was to perform KAPARA on the MIZBAYACH and on the KOHANIM.

What was the purpose of this "kapara"? Was it necessary for the atonement of any specific sin?

Even if one would suggest that the KOHANIM need atonement for "chet ha'egel" (the sin of the Golden Calf/ even though the Torah does not record this event until the next Parsha), surely the MIZBAYACH did nothing wrong. Why does it need a KIPPURIM procedure?

Based on our understanding of the shoshet k.p.r. above, it would seem this KAPARA procedure was necessary to PROTECT the MIZBAYACH and the KOHANIM.

Why would they need protection?

PROTECTION FROM THE SHCHINA

Recall from our shiurim on Sefer Shmot that the primary purpose of the Mishkan was to create a site where the God's SHCHINA (His Divine Presence) could dwell:

"And they shall make for Me a sanctuary - v'SHACHANTI b'tocham" - that I may dwell among them." (Shmot 25:8)

[See also Shmot 29:45-46]

The presence of SHCHINA in the MISHKAN creates an environment similar to MA'AMAD HAR SINAI (see Ramban Shmot 25:1). As was the case at Har Sinai, the presence of SHCHINA results in immediate punishment for any transgression. [See previous shiur on the 13 MIDOT.] Because the KOHANIM are to work in the MISHKAN, and the MIZBAYACH is designated to become the site where the SHCHINA will descend and consume the KORBANOT which Bnei Yisrael will offer (see Vayikra 9:24), PROTECTION is necessary.

[For example, on the very next day, Nadav and Avihu made one small mistake and they received immediate punishment!]

Thus, this entire KIPPURIM ceremony could be understood as symbolic, for it reflects the nature of the Divine encounter which takes place in the Mishkan. Performing this procedure teaches Bnei Yisrael that encountering the SHCHINA requires not only preparation and readiness, but also protection from its

consequences.

THE MIZBACH KTORET

The word KIPPURIM is mentioned once again at the end of Parshat Tzaveh, when the MIZBACH KTORET [the incense alter] is first introduced (Shmot 30:1-10). Here, to our surprise, we find the first reference in Chumash to YOM KIPPUR itself!:

"v'CHI'PER Aharon al kar'no'tav - Aharon must KAPARA [sprinkle blood] on its corners ONCE A YEAR from the blood of the CHATAT HA'KIPURIM. Once a year y'CHA'PER a'lav - he must do KAPARA on it..." (Shmot 30:10)

Here, the Torah only tells us that this special procedure must be performed once a year, however it does not tell us on what day. In Parshat Acharei Mot (Vayikra 16:1-34) we find the complete details of this CHATAT HA'KIPPURIM, including the precise date - the tenth day of the SEVENTH month.

[See also Bamidbar 29:11.]

In Parshiot Trumah/Tzaveh, two aspects are unique to the MIZBACH KTORET:

1) It is the only vessel which requires this special CHATAT KIPPURIM.

[Note: In Acharei Mot we see that also the PAROCHET and KAPORET need to be sprinkled with the blood of the CHATAT HA'KIPPURIM, however it is not mentioned in Sefer Shmot.]

2) It is LEFT OUT of the primary presentation of the Mishkan and its vessels.

[Scan Shmot chapters 25->29/ note that 25:8 and 29:44 form 'bookends' which include almost all the vessels of the Mishkan, except for the mizbach ktoret which is left out until the very end (30:1-10/ note that this ends the "dibur" which began in 25:1). See previous shiur on Parshat Tzaveh.]

Once again, the meaning of the shoresh k.p.r. can help us understand why. The ANAN KTORET (cloud of smoke created when burning the ktoret) in the Ohel Moed acts as a BUFFER between the SHCHINA in the Kodesh Kdoshim and the MIZBAYACH in the AZARA (courtyard), thus protecting Bnei Yisrael. [Note parallel to the ANAN on Har Sinai.] Because the MIZBACH KTORET protects Bnei Yisrael each day when the ktoret is offered, it requires a yearly CHATAT HA'KIPPURIM!

YOM HA'SHMINI - THE EIGHT DAY DEDICATION CEREMONY

An additional link between Yom Kippur and our interpretation of "kapara" can be found by examining the korbanot of the YOM HA'SHMINI ceremony (the eighth day/ read Vayikra 9:1-24), the first day in which the MISHKAN began to function.

Once again, special korbanot are offered for the purpose of "kapara". From the psukim describing these korbanot, one could suggest that this KAPARA is necessary to protect Bnei Yisrael from the SHCHINA which is to appear on this day:

"This is the procedure which you must do, and God's glory (KVOD HASHEM) will appear unto you... Go near the mizbayach and offer you chatat and olah - v'CHA'PER - on your behalf and on the behalf of the people..." (9:6-7)

It should come as no surprise that the korbanot offered at that inauguration ceremony are almost identical to the korbanot offered yearly on YOM KIPPUR. In each ceremony, there is a special CHATAT & OLAH offered both by AHARON and by the PEOPLE.

The following table summarizes this parallel between Vayikra 9:1-3 and 16:1-5:

	YOM HA'SHMINI	YOM KIPPUR	NOTE
AHARON			
Chatat	Egel*	Par	An EGEL is a baby PAR
Olah	Ayil	Ayil	
AM YISRAEL			

Chatat Seir Seir

Olah Egel + Keves Ayil A Keves is baby Ayil

In each case Aharon offers a PAR CHATAT and AYIL OLAH (an EGEL is simply a baby PAR/ this change most probably relates to chet ha'egel). Likewise, Am Yisrael offers a SEIR CHATAT and AYIL OLAH (a keves is a baby ayil). Despite these minor differences, they are basically the same type of korban.

[See article by Rav Yoel Bin Nun in Megadim Vol. #8] YOM KIPPUR - A YEARLY "YOM HA'SHMINI"

The above parallel indicates that Yom Kippur can be considered as a 'yearly repetition of the korbanot of the Mishkan's inauguration ceremony on YOM HA'SHMINI.

This parallel underscores the very nature of YOM KIPPUR. It suggests that the primary purpose of the "avodat Kohan Gadol" is to PREPARE the Mikdash for the FORTHCOMING year, just as the korbanot of YOM HA'SHMINI prepared the Mishkan for its original use. Likewise, the "kapara" can be understood in a similar fashion. Once a year, it is necessary to perform a procedure which will PROTECT Am Yisrael from the consequences of HITGALUT SHCHINA. This KAPARA process, which enables Bnei Yisrael's encounter with the SHCHINA in the MISHKAN, must be 'renewed' once a year.

Parshat Acharei Mot alludes to this concept in the pasuk which completes the commandment to sprinkle the blood on the KAPORET:

"v'CHI'PER - And he [the kohen] shall do KAPRA [sprinkling the blood] on the KODESH, from the uncleanness of Bnei Yisrael... and thus he must do to the Ohel Moed - ha'SHOCHEN iy'tam - He who dwells among them, EVEN WHILE THEY ARE TAMEY' [spiritually unclean]..." (Vayikra 16:16)

EVEN THOUGH Am Yisrael may become TAMEY (due to their sins), the SHCHINAH can remain in their midst! However, Bnei Yisrael require KAPARA to PROTECT them from the SHCHINA.

[Note: Vayikra 18:24-27 shows the relationship between TUMAH & sin.]

ATONEMENT or PROTECTION

In Sefer Shmot we find an additional use of the shoresh k.p.r. when Moshe ascends Har Sinai to ask God to forgive Bnei Yisrael for their sin at chet ha'egel:

"And Moshe told the people, you have committed a terrible sin, and now I will go up to God, possibly - A'CHAPRA [I can achieve KAPARA] - for your sins." (Shmot 32:30)

When reading this pasuk, we usually understand A'CHAPRA as asking for forgiveness. However, one could understand that Moshe is asking God to PROTECT Bnei Yisrael from the punishment which they deserve. Undoubtedly, this protection from punishment leads to ultimate forgiveness. This explains why later in Chumash, the word "chapara" may actually imply forgiveness.

The classic example is found in Parshat Vayikra in relation to the korban CHATAT & ASHAM (4:1-5:26). Note that each type of korban concludes with the phrase:

"v'CHI'PER alav ha'Kohen, v'NIS'LACH lo..." (see Vayikra 4:21,26,31,35; 5:10,13,18,26)

Based on our understanding of k.p.r. one could suggest that the sprinkling of the blood (the technical "kapara") by the kohen PROTECTS the owner of the korban from his due punishment for his transgression (the conceptual "kapara"). Then - v'NISLACH lo - God forgives him for that sin. Thus, the KAPARA 'process' enables the SLICHA 'effect'.

WHY ON THE 10th of TISHREI

Although we have explained the necessity of offering a yearly CHATAT KIPPURIM in the Mishkan, we have not explained why it must be performed on the tenth of Tishrei. In fact, based on the parallel to YOM HA'SHMINI, the first of Nisan would seem to

be a more logical date!

Most probably this date was chosen for a historical reason. On the tenth of Tishrei, Bnei Yisrael received the SECOND LUCHOT and were thus forgiven for chet ha'egel. Due to His MIDOT HA'RACHAMIM, the essence of these LUCHOT, God agreed to allow His SHCHINA to remain with Am Yisrael, EVEN THOUGH they may not be worthy. [See Shmot 34:9, and last week's shiur on the 13 MIDOT.]

On the anniversary of this event, the day on which Bnei Yisrael received the Torah at the level which they can maintain, we re-enact Ma'amad Har Sinai for it is a day of HITGALUT SHCHINA. Just like Moshe Rabeinu, we can neither eat nor drink (Dvarim 9:9), nor wear shoes (see Shmot 3:5). We must also prepare ourselves for this awesome day (See Yoma 2a).

However, specifically BECAUSE this is a day of HITGALUT, Bnei Yisrael require PROTECTION from the SHCHINA. Therefore, the CHATAT HA'KIPPURIM must be offered, for we are privy to a relationship which we may not deserve. It is this HITGALUT which enables the forgiveness of our sins on this day, just as it enabled the forgiveness of chet ha'egel several thousand year ago.

YOM KIPPUR

True atonement is accomplished only by teshuva. However, YOM KIPPUR allows for the special relationship between God and Am Yisrael to continue. By understanding the protective nature of the AVODAT YOM KIPPUR by the Kohen Gadol, we can better appreciate God's CHESED (kindness) in allowing us this special relationship, even though we may not deserve it. That understanding should encourage us not only to take advantage of the opportunity for atonement on this special day, but also to grasp any opportunity for spiritual growth during the course of the year to come.

"Yhi ratzon" that God should enact His MIDOT HA'RACHAMIM on this Yom Kippur, and enable us to meet the many challenges that face our Nation this coming year.

Gmar Chatima Tova,
lanu u'lchol beit Yisrael
menachem

FOR FURTHER IYUN

A. Note that the parsha describing YOM KIPPUR in Chumash is presented in relation to the death of Nadav and Avihu which took place during that inauguration ceremony on YOM HA'SHMINI/ See 10:1-4, and relate to 16:1.

1. Based on the above shiur, why do you think Nadav and Avihu thought it necessary to offer specifically ktoret, and specifically when they saw HITGALUT?

2. Were they wrong? If not, why were they punished?

3. Is there any other case in Chumash where ktoret is offered to protect Bnei Yisrael from punishment?

B. Note that on Yom HaShmini, also a Korban Shlamim was offered (see Vayikra 9:3-4)

1. Why is this korban not offered on Yom Kippur?

2. Can you relate this question to why the tzibur brings a korban shlamim davka, and only, on Shavuot (see shte'i ha'lechem in Parshat Emor /see also previous shiur on Shavuot!)

C. Based on our shiur on Rosh Hashana, one could suggest an additional reason why this procedure is necessary in the SEVENTH month. After we request that God show His Providence over us on Rosh Hashana. If we ask for His special HASHGACHA on the land and the rainfall, we must be ready for its consequences.

1. Relate this to last week's shiur on Rosh Hashana and the nature of all CHAGEI TISHREI.

D. Sefer Shmot never states the specific day in which the SECOND LUCHOT were given. Read Dvarim 9:8-10:11 to understand how Chazal

reach the conclusion that it took place of 10 Tishrei.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~akiva/HOJMI/droscho.html>

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Dvar Torah: Yom Kippur 5757

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JUDAISM: ONE STEP AT A TIME

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[Based on thoughts by Rabbi Dr. Nisson E. Shulman]

Why do we recite the Yizkor prayer today, on Yom Kippur? Many reasons are offered. The Zohar teaches that he who is moved to tears by the death of the righteous shall be forgiven their sins. In addition, the departed also have forgiveness on Yom Kippur, and giving charity in their name, an integral part of the prayer, helps achieve forgiveness for them as well as for ourselves.

But the simplest answer is, as usual, the most profound: The merit of our forbears stands as an inspiration to us all. During the Viduy, some Mahzorim have the phrase: Aval anachchnu va'avoteinu chatanu, "we and are parents have sinned". This is not meant to accuse our parents of sin, G-d forbid. It is meant rather to compare ourselves to our forbears: We compared to them - we realise how far we have strayed from the ideals which were theirs. Therefore, "chatanu - we realise we have sinned and must repent. At no time is this feeling more powerful than at Yizkor.

TESHUVA - NOT BA'AL TESHUVA

Teshuva, Repentance, is the obvious central theme of Yom Kippur. So many times during the course of this day we pound our chests in confession. Yet how many of us really do proper Teshuva? In our minds, Teshuva refers to the Ba'al Teshuva, those who have revolutionised their way of life, as well as their personality. It refers to the non-religious becoming religious. How many of us are prepared to make such a complete change in our lives? How many of us place ourselves into that category of Ba'al Teshuva?

In reality, however, nothing could be further than the true notion of Teshuva. Teshuva applies to everyone, even to the vast majority of us who cannot, or would not, at once change our personalities, and our life-styles. Every one of us can do Teshuva, in some way. We can all become a little better, a little more committed. It is the little things that we CAN DO which measure our sincerity.

ONE STEP AT A TIME

The great Chafetz Chaim taught this lesson. Consider the statement in the Talmud about how we pray:

"When we pray, we must face the land of Israel. When we are in Israel, we must face the city of Jerusalem. When we are in Jerusalem, we must face the place where the Holy Temple stood. When in the Holy Temple, we face the Holy of Holies."

The question asked by the Chafetz Chaim is why is the law formulated in this seemingly redundant fashion? Why not say directly, "Wherever a man stands,

anywhere in the world, he must pray facing the site of the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem?"

The Chafetz Chaim answered that when a man travels towards a goal, he must go one step at a time. Just so when a man reaches up towards an ideal, he can only ascend one step at a time. That lesson is taught by the way this rule is formulated. "When outside of Israel, pray toward the Holy Land. In Israel, face Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, face the Holy Temple. In the Temple face the Holy of Holies." One step at a time.

How important a lesson this is for us, today, standing in judgement before the Almighty. We CAN improve our lives, and our life styles, we can do TESHUVA, ONE STEP AT A TIME!

FRONTIERS OF JUDAISM

Now this works both ways! Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, the RaMCha"l, wrote that every person has their personal frontier of Judaism. At any given moment, a person's crisis of faith lies in the observance of only one particular commandment that at that moment defines their frontier. On that frontier, and in connection with only that Mitzvah, is he or she struggling with their Yetzer Harah, their impulse to do wrong, and their Yetzer Hatov, their impulse to do good.

Supposing, for instance, a man has just eaten meat, but craves a cup of coffee, and as a creature of habit, cannot have coffee without milk. He wonders whether to succumb to temptation, and just this once have the milk. Should he give in, after a while this violation becomes routine for him, and that habit, once formed, is no longer a crisis with him. The Yetzer Harah, the powers of temptation, have taken over that territory. The next crisis for him might be non-kosher meat! Finally, it might be pork. Thus he slips ONE STEP AT A TIME.

The process works in reverse as well! Having conquered the Yetzer, refusing the cup of coffee, one can form a habit of a higher standard of Kashrut, a new frontier, and from there new and higher ones, closer and closer to full observance. The next frontier might be the donning of Tefilin and morning prayer, or Sabbath observances, or higher ethical practices in business. The good impulse, the Yetzer Hatov, has won a bit more ground.

We are, taught the RaMCha"l, constantly fighting on the frontier of our inclination of our impulses. These frontiers are constantly moving. It is our task to make them move up to a higher standard of observance; to make sure that the Yetzer Hatov wins, and not the other way around.

In fact, this is a Mishnah in Ethics of our Fathers: Aveira goreret aveirah, One transgression will lead to another. And one Mitzvah will lead to another. It's all a question of direction.

JUDAISM DESTROYED

Judaism itself can be destroyed - one step at a time!

There once was a movement that wanted to do no more than remove the BIMA from the middle of the Synagogue and place it further forward. From that beginning they went on to institute a mixed choir, then seating changes, then basic changes in the ritual and the prayers, then a rejection of the binding nature of halacha, and finally produced a "cultural" Judaism, void of all spirituality! This destruction of Judaism didn't happen overnight! It happened step by step, by moving the time-honoured boundaries bit by bit. Aveira goreret aveirah. One thing lead to the next.

A mother and father decide that there's nothing wrong with their 15 or 16 year old child dating a non-Jewish friend, because, after all, at that age they are so far away from marriage - they're not getting married for years. That permission at 15 or 16 has moved a boundary, and that movement has

increased the probability of ultimate intermarriage manyfold, for these boundaries are never static; they go up or down. Aveirah goreret aveirah. JUDAISM REBUILT

On the other hand, just as we can destroy Judaism step by step, so can we rebuild Judaism step by step, recreate it, save it, and ourselves with it. When Jacob dreamed of heaven, he saw a ladder with angels ascending and descending. Why a ladder? Because a ladder's rungs ascend step by step. Even only one step at a time, we can eventually reach the heavens themselves!

The most devastating concept to spiritual growth is the notion of ALL OR NOTHING! We've heard many ideas over the course of these High Holidays, about Mitzvoh, Torah study, Israel, goals, living Judaism today - and we say to ourselves - it's all too overwhelming. ALL OR NOTHING!

When the Jews worshipped the Golden calf after Mount Sinai, G-d didn't say all or nothing! When we followed the idolatries of Ba'al, and the Canaanite nations, G-d pleaded with us to return - He never said all or nothing! When the Morannos of Spain had to openly denounce their Judaism, but guarded it secretly, they never said ALL OR NOTHING!

Our sages declare: "The Torah was not given to angels". "For it is not in the Heavens." The Torah was meant for humans, mortal, failing, unsure. It is for the imperfect. Judaism doesn't demand perfection. It demands effort. It demands movement. It demands that tomorrow we are better Jews than we were yesterday! One Mitzvah at a time!

Shabbat begins with lighting candles, then a Shabbat meal, perhaps some Shabbat songs, and building gradually into observance of other areas as well. and so it is with all aspects of Jewish life!

We must grow. We must move from step to step, or else we stagnate, and wither! G-d forbid we should ever become complacent with who and what we are. "We like our level of Jewish knowledge and commitment", "we're comfortable." "we'll stay here", on this rung of the ladder.

Because we're not really climbing a ladder. We're climbing up a down escalator!. If we don't climb higher, then the temptations of the culture around us will pull us off the road completely! Each and every one of us, without exception, no matter where we are Jewishly, can grow a little more - one step at a time!

This is the message of Yizkor at this moment to every Jew in the world: "Listen with your own voice; strive upward, according to your own spiritual capacity. Take one step only; But TAKE IT!! Don't use the excuse that I am unworthy! We are all worthy!

STORY: The great Rebbe of Kotzk once asked how far is the distance between East and West? 100 km.? 100,000 km? The Rebbe answered - as far as the distance that it takes to turn ones head from one direction to the other! That's all it takes. One step - but in the right direction. We can build our lives according to Mitzvah goreret Mitzvah = Moving up the ladder one rung at a time. Or, G-d forbid, we can slide down the ladder, through moving the boundaries little by little, Aveirah goreret aveirah.

We are all mortal men and women. For us, God is with us if we simply turn our hearts and minds towards him, and open our hearts. And with each step we take, we will find God's blessing. May the Lord be with you, each step of the way, throughout the coming year. Shana Tova.

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