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Tzav (Leviticus 6-8)

Understanding Sacrifice by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

One of the most difficult elements of the Torah and the way of life it prescribes is the phenomenon of animal sacrifices - for obvious reasons. First, Jews and Judaism have survived without them for almost two thousand years. Second, virtually all the prophets were critical of them, not least Jeremiah in this week's haftarah.[1] None of the prophets sought to abolish sacrifices, but they were severely critical of those who offered them while at the same time oppressing or exploiting their fellow human beings. What disturbed them - what disturbed God in whose name they spoke - was that evidently some people thought of sacrifices as a kind of bribe: if we make a generous enough gift to God then He may overlook our crimes and misdemeanours. This is an idea radically incompatible with Judaism.

Then again, along with monarchy, sacrifices were among the least distinctive features of Judaism in ancient times. Every ancient religion in those days, every cult and sect, had its altars and sacrifices. Finally, it remains remarkable how simply and smoothly the sages were able to construct substitutes for sacrifice, three in particular: prayer, study and tzedakah. Prayer, particularly Shacharit, Mincha and Musaf, took the place of the regular offerings. One who studies the laws of sacrifice is as if he had brought a sacrifice. And one who gives to charity brings, as it were, a financial sacrifice, acknowledging that all we have we owe to God.

So, though we pray daily for the rebuilding of the Temple and the restoration of sacrifices, the principle of sacrifice itself remains hard to understand. Many theories have been advanced by anthropologists, psychologists and Bible scholars as to what the sacrifices represented, but most are based on the questionable assumption that sacrifice is essentially the same act across cultures. This is poor scholarship. Always seek to understand a practice in terms of the distinctive beliefs of the culture in which it takes place. What could sacrifice possibly mean in a religion in which God is the creator and owner of all?

What, then, was sacrifice in Judaism and why does it remain important, at least as an idea, even today? The simplest answer - though it does not

explain the details of the different kinds of offering - is this: We love what we are willing to make sacrifices for. That is why, when they were a nation of farmers and shepherds, the Israelites demonstrated their love of God by bringing Him a symbolic gift of their flocks and herds, their grain and fruit; that is, their livelihood. To love is to thank. To love is to want to bring an offering to the Beloved. To love is to give.[2] Sacrifice is the choreography of love.

This is true in many aspects of life. A happily married couple is constantly making sacrifices for one another. Parents make huge sacrifices for their children. People drawn to a calling - to heal the sick, or care for the poor, or fight for justice for the weak against the strong - often sacrifice remunerative careers for the sake of their ideals. In ages of patriotism, people make sacrifices for their country. In strong communities people make sacrifices for one another when someone is in distress or needs help. Sacrifice is the superglue of relationship. It bonds us to one another.

That is why, in the biblical age, sacrifices were so important - not as they were in other faiths but precisely because at the beating heart of Judaism is love: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." In other faiths the driving motive behind sacrifice was fear: fear of the anger and power of the gods. In Judaism it was love.

We see this in the Hebrew word for sacrifice itself: the noun *korban*, and the verb *lehakriv*, which mean, "to come, or bring close". The name of God invariably used in connection with the sacrifices is Hashem, God in his aspect of love and compassion, never Elokim, God as justice and distance. The word Elokim occurs only five times in the whole of the book of Vayikra, and always in the context of other nations. The word Hashem appears 209 times. And as we saw last week, the very name of the book, Vayikra, means to summon in love. Where there is love, there is sacrifice.

Once we realise this we begin to understand how deeply relevant the concept of sacrifice is in the twenty-first century. The major institutions of the modern world - the liberal democratic state and the free-market economy - were predicated on the model of the rational actor, that is, one who acts to maximise the benefits to him - or herself.

Hobbes' account of the social contract was that it is in the interests of each of us to hand over some of our rights to a central power charged with ensuring the rule of law and the defence of the realm. Adam Smith's insight into the market economy was that if we each act to maximise our own advantage, the result is the growth of the common-wealth. Modern politics and economics were built on the foundation of the rational pursuit of self-interest.

There was nothing wrong with this. It was done for the highest of motives. It was an attempt to create peace in a Europe that had for centuries been ravaged by war. The democratic state and the market economy were serious attempts to harness the power of self-interest to combat the destructive passions that led to violence.[3] The fact that politics and economics were based on self-interest did not negate the possibility that families and communities were sustained by altruism. It was a good system, not a bad one.

Now, however, after several centuries, the idea of love-as-sacrifice has grown thin in many areas of life. We see this specifically in relationships. Throughout the West, fewer people are getting married, they are getting married later, and almost half of marriages end in divorce. Throughout Europe, indigenous populations are in decline. To have a stable population, a country must have an average birth rate of 2.1 children per female. In 2015 the average birth-rate throughout the European Union was 1.55. In Spain it was 1.27. Germany has the lowest birth-rate of any country in the world.[4] That is why the population of Europe is today rendered stable only on the basis of unprecedented rates of immigration.

Lose the concept of sacrifice within a society, and sooner or later marriage falters, parenthood declines, and the society slowly ages and dies. My late predecessor, Lord Jakobovits, had a lovely way of putting this. The Talmud

says that when a man divorces his first wife, "the altar sheds tears" (Gittin 90b). What is the connection between the altar and a marriage? Both, he said, are about sacrifices. Marriages fail when the partners are unwilling to make sacrifices for one another.

Jews and Judaism survived despite the many sacrifices people had to make for it. In the eleventh century Judah Halevi expressed something closer to awe at the fact that Jews stayed Jewish despite the fact that "with a word lightly spoken" they could have converted to the majority faith and lived a life of relative ease (Kuzari 4:23) Equally possible though is that Judaism survived because of those sacrifices. Where people make sacrifices for their ideals, the ideals stay strong. Sacrifice is an expression of love.

Not all sacrifice is holy. Today's suicide bombers sacrifice their lives and those of their victims in a way I have argued (in Not In God's Name) is sacrilege. Indeed the very existence of animal sacrifice in the Torah may have been a way of preventing people from offering human sacrifice in the form of violence and war. But the principle of sacrifice remains. It is the gift we bring to what and whom we love.

NOTES: 1. Jeremiah 7:22, "When I freed your fathers from the land of Egypt, I did not speak with them or command them concerning burnt offerings or sacrifice" - a remarkable statement. See Rashi and Radak ad loc., and especially Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed, III: 32. 2. The verb "to love" - a-h-v - is related to the verbs h-v-h, h-v-v and y-h-v, all of which have the sense of giving, bringing, or offering. 3. The classic text is A. O. Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, Princeton University Press, 1977. 4. The Observer, 23 August 2015.

Tzav: Symbolic Garments

Rabbi Nissan E. Shulman – Heard from Avi-Mori, **Harav Moshe Yitzchok Shulman**, zt"l

The symbolic meaning of clothing, designating social status, occupation, beliefs, and function. Thus, the four garments unique to the High Priest, Tzitz, Choshen, Efod and Meil. What each one symbolizes. How garments played a part in every facet of the Purim story starting with Achasueros' first banquet when the Midrash tells us he donned the priestly garments. TZAV (Shamati meAvi-Mori, Harav Moshe Yitzchok Shulman, zt"l)

"Clothes do not make the man". But they do designate his station in life, often his profession, and also express his personality. For a man or woman dresses as they would like to appear to others.

The philosopher Spencer actually tried to prove that clothing was used to designate social status long before it was used for protection against the elements.

In the same spirit Rav Yohanan said, mani mechabduti, "My clothes give me honor.

We are all familiar with uniforms. The soldier, the diplomat, the clergyman, the doctor, have that in their garments which designates what these men do in life. So, too, the apron of the Mason and the Fez of the Shriner, are symbols of the credo of the group. And therefore, in the Megillah, garments stood for something.

Mordechai in sackcloth and ashes expressed the sorrow and contrition of a people that were facing catastrophe. Before Esther appears in Achasueros' forcourt, she dons special clothing, "Vatilbash Esther malchus". Haman's ambition to seize the King's throne, is perceived in his answer to the King, saying that the man the king wishes to honour be paraded before the people in the king's garments and on the king's horse – note that Haman's request was the the replica of the King's crown be placed upon the horse. The king omitted that instruction. Apparently, Achasueros thought Haman went a little too far with that request. Mordechai's promotion to the king's grace is expressed in the statement that he left the King's presence in royal garb – umordechai yatza milifney hamelech bilevush malchut, techelet vargaman.

That is why the Talmud stresses that the sacrifices in the Holy Temple had to be performed by priests only after they had dressed in the proper priestly uniform, because each garment had a symbolic significance.

To understand the role of the priest, and the "priest people" - for such we are - we ought to learn something about the garments of the priests, especially about those worn by the High Priest.

There were four garments worn exclusively by the High Priest, mentioned in our Torah portion: tzitz, choshen, efod, and meil. The "Tzitz" represented holiness, and on it were engraved the words, "holy to the Lord". The "Hoshen" was the breastplate with twelve stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel, united as one. It was tied to the "Ephod", the apron, which was affixed to the shoulders, to emphasize that we not only feel the love, but must also bear the burdens of the tribes of Israel. The "Meil", the outer garment, was floor length, and around its edge were bells, to let others know of the priest's presence. Just so the gifts of holiness, of Torah and the message of Israel must be taught to the world.

These garments were to teach lessons, not only to the High Priest, but also to all the people of Israel that he represented. They teach that all of us must strive together for the goal set before us; to be a people "holy" or dedicated to the Lord, ready to bear the hardship of our brothers everywhere, bearing responsibility to our Jewish people whatever their condition, arevim ze laze, enveloped by the mitzvot in every action, symbolized by the floor length coat, and we must live in such a way as to be an example of love, kindness, righteousness and justice to all the world, the bells which ring out to others.

Then these garments will be lekavod uleliferet.

So when Achasueros, at the banquet he made at the beginning of the Megillah, donned the garments of the High Priest, he was mocking basic attitudes of our people.

Some say the Megillah should have started with Mordechai. NO! With Achasueros! We have to know how to live in an alien society!

Shma Koleinu

YU High School for Boys

How to Approach "Compromise" in Religious Matters

Rabbi Michael Taubes

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After presenting the many details of the consecration of Aharon and his sons as the Kohanim who would serve in the soon to be opened Mishkan (and subsequently, of course, in the Beis HaMikdash), the Torah reports, in the last pasuk of our parashah, that Aharon and his sons in fact did everything at that time just as Hashem had commanded through Moshe (Vayikra 8:36). Rashi notes there that this pasuk indicates that Aharon and his sons did not veer even one iota from the exact instructions shared by Moshe, and that they were thus deserving of praise. The question raised by many is why Rashi states that Aharon and his sons were worthy of special praise just because they properly adhered to Hashem's directives – is it not obvious that that was what they would indeed do? Is that not what is expected of everybody?

The Pardes Yosef on this pasuk (No. 94) suggests that Aharon realized that many of the activities relating to the Mishkan were intended to help atone for the sin of the golden calf, as a kind of antidote, and just as it is understood that one cannot tamper with precise, physician prescribed medication dosages because the results could be disastrous, so too it would be disastrous to "adjust" the precise commandments of Hashem regarding the Mishkan. One might add that Aharon was himself particularly sensitive to this issue, as it was he who, though undoubtedly wellintentioned, helped bring about the catastrophic consequences associated with the terrible sin involving the golden calf, and it was he who was held accountable for it to the point that Hashem was angry enough to want to destroy him and his children (see Devarim 9:20 with Rashi, s.v. lehashmido). In other words, Aharon had already learned firsthand what can happen when even someone with noble intentions tries to alter what Hashem has commanded, as he did when he allowed the construction of the golden calf; he was therefore especially

careful here not to implement any changes whatsoever in what he was told to do, and for that he is praised.

Upon further reflection, however, one may ask what exactly it was that Aharon did wrong in terms of the golden calf to be deserving of such wrath from Hashem, which needed to be atoned for here at the time of his consecration and the inauguration of the Mishkan. What should Aharon have done then? He was approached by people from the community asking for the creation of some sort of symbolic leader to replace Moshe, who had apparently been removed from the picture, as a focal point of their religious lives, not as something to actually be worshipped like a god, as explained by the Ramban (to Shemos 32:1) and others. This was a seemingly reasonable request, at least at face value; should Aharon have automatically and immediately rejected it outright?

And even if one wishes to claim that he should have, could he have, realistically? The Gemara in Sanhedrin (7a) alludes to the fact that Chur, the son of Miriam (and hence Aharon's nephew), who was left in charge of the people together with Aharon when Moshe ascended Mount Sinai (see Shemos 24:14; see Rashi there, s.v. Chur regarding his lineage), was actually killed when he rebuked the people for their desire to build the golden calf (see Rashi to Shemos 32:5, s.v. vayomar). Seeing such a tragedy unfold before his very eyes, Aharon clearly could not follow the same course of action, because, as the Gemara there elaborates, doing so would lead to even more terrible results. The Gemara thus indicates that Aharon decided to make a compromise and allow the golden calf to be built because he considered that to be the lesser of two evils, an understandable conclusion under the circumstances.

But why, then, was Hashem so furious with Aharon for what he had done, as pointed out above? It is obviously difficult for any of us to say with certainty, but Rashi on that Gemara (s.v. ela kenegged ma'aseh ha'eigel) offers an interesting interpretation. Aharon did indeed engineer a compromise of sorts, correctly taking into account the bigger picture. The problem, though, was that he made this compromise independently, without consulting anybody else – he concluded on his own that it was permissible to create the golden calf. Perhaps, then, in line with Rashi's comment, the mistake made by Aharon was that he acted a little too hastily, that he did not wrestle sufficiently with his conscience, that he did not include other qualified individuals in his decision making process – all significant errors when religious principles are at stake. And for this, Hashem was greatly displeased with him.

The following more contemporary story (taking place just over 150 years ago) illustrates what ought to be done when there is a desire to compromise on a religious practice; the full account of this event may be found in an article by Rabbi Dr. Shnayer Z. Leiman in the Winter 1994 edition of Tradition (Vol. 28 No. 2).

In 1860, Rabbi Shmuel Salant (1816-1909) was the Chief Rabbi of the Ashkenazic community in the Old City of Yerushalayim (at that time, of course, there was nothing more to Yerushalayim than the Old City), a position he held for some 70 years. That year, he traveled to Europe in order to meet with Jewish leaders there about what was known as the "chalukah," the system of distribution of tzedakah funds raised in Europe on behalf of the residents of Yerushalayim, many of whom depended upon these donations as a primary source of their income. In Germany, the person in charge of the collection of contributions from the Jews of that land was Rabbi Yitzchak Dov HaLeivi (also known by his more Germanic name, Seligmann Baer) Bamberger (1807-1878), who then served as the rabbi of the city of Wurzburg. (Though certainly a prominent Talmid Chacham in his own right, Rabbi Bamberger is not as well known as other German rabbinic authorities of his time, like Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer, and Rabbi Yaakov Ettlinger, author of Teshuvos Binyan Tziyon, Aruch LaNeir, and Bikkurei Yaakov; the standard editions of the latter work include Rabbi Bamberger's comments.) Wishing to discuss the chalukah

situation with Rabbi Bamberger, Rabbi Salant arranged to spend a Shabbos in Wurzburg.

Upon entering the large Shul in Wurzburg, Rabbi Salant was surprised to see that Rabbi Bamberger was wearing the kinds of clerical robes associated with other religions, and not traditional Jewish garments. He also noticed that the bimah was not in the middle of the Shul, as required by the Rambam (Hilchos Tefillah 11:3) and the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 150:5, in Ramo; see also Teshuvos Chasam Sofer, Orach Chaim No. 28), but rather in the very front. Both of these practices were associated with the Reform movement at that time, a movement that was then gaining significant momentum in Germany. Knowing, however, that Rabbi Bamberger was indeed a great scholar and a pious man, Rabbi Salant did not react, at least not publicly. Later on, when the two rabbis got together for the Shabbos meal, Rabbi Bamberger told Rabbi Salant that there must be a few things that disturbed him about the Shul in Wurzburg. And although Rabbi Salant professed not to have noticed anything unusual, Rabbi Bamberger shared the following explanation:

With Reform on the rise throughout Germany, he (Rabbi Bamberger) was determined to do all he could to keep the movement from getting any kind of foothold in his community of Wurzburg. He held that if he would concede to a compromise on a few less essential and relatively minor issues, like wearing the clerical robes and moving the bimah to the very front of the Shul, he would placate many of the potential supporters of Reform and thus maintain the purely Orthodox character of his community, thereby saving people from far more serious infractions. And, he reported, this plan worked, as Wurzburg was the only large Jewish community in Germany at the time where Reform in fact failed to make any important inroads.

But, Rabbi Bamberger stressed, even though he was completely convinced that what he was proposing was indeed necessary to secure the very religious future of his community, he first checked with and gained approval for his moves from his own Rebbe and Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Avraham Bing (1752-1841), himself a student, like the Chasam Sofer, of Rabbi Nosson Adler. And even after his Rebbe agreed to and expressed support for his plans, Rabbi Bamberger spent three days and three nights in fasting and prayer, struggling with his conscience before making a change and implementing a compromise in a religious matter.

The lesson is clear. There may indeed be occasions when a compromise must be made regarding a particular religious matter for the sake of the greater good and in consideration of the bigger picture. But to do so on one's own and in a cavalier or flippant manner would be to repeat what might have been the mistake made by Aharon regarding the golden calf. In the final analysis, only someone of great stature in Torah learning and piety may make such a compromise, and even he may do so only after consulting with others, after wrestling with his conscience, and with absolute koved rosh, appropriate seriousness reflecting true soul searching, in the manner of Rabbi Bamberger of Wurzburg.

From: ravfrand-owner@torah.org [mailto:ravfrand-owner@torah.org]
Rabbi Yissocher Frand To: ravfrand@torah.org Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Tzav

"RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Tzav
Rabbi Yissocher Frand - Parshas Tzav Aharon Was Hesitant To Spend Money On Koban Olah, So Hashem Charged It The parsha begins with the instruction: "Command Aharon (Tzav es Aharon) and his sons saying: This is the law of the olah-offering: It is the olah-offering [that stays] on the flame, on the Altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the Altar shall be kept aflame on it." [Vayikra 6:2] The Olah offering is a sacrifice that was totally burnt. With most sacrifices someone eats something. Most of a peace offering (Korban Shelamim) is eaten by the person who brings the sacrifice; the sin offering is eaten by the Kohanim. However, the Korban Olah is consumed entirely by the fire of the Mizbayach. Rashi says that the

connotation of the word "Command" (Tzav) is "charge" (lashon zeerus). Why was it necessary to "charge" Aharon? He certainly does not need any special kind of motivation lecture? R. Shimeon states that it is necessary for the Torah to emphasize a command through "charging" when monetary loss is involved. [Kiddushin 29a] People do not like to waste money or lose money. When a mitzvah involves cost with no apparent "payback," the Torah finds it necessary to "charge" those commanded to more fully motivate them and help them overcome their hesitancy. People find it hard to take an animal, which may have cost them a thousand dollars, and merely have it "go up in smoke" without anyone getting any physical benefit from it. Therefore, by the Olah offering, the Torah says "Tzav es Aharon" -- encourage him, give him a Tzav -- because a monetary loss is involved. Why is that? I saw an interesting observation from Rav Moshe Shmuel Shapiro. The world says "Time is money" but the way it should really be stated is "Money is time" -- meaning in order to make money, a person needs to spend time on it and time is the most precious commodity in the world. Almost anything else can be replaced, but time can never be replaced. Our Sages tell us a strange thing: "For righteous people, their money is more precious to them than their bodies". This is counter-intuitive. We would think: Tzadikim? They don't care about their money. The reason that "for righteous, money is more precious than their bodies" is because Tzadikim realize that in order to gain money, they somehow need to invest time. Therefore their money is precious to them because "my time was invested in acquiring this." This is why "in a place where monetary loss is involved" even people of the highest stature (like Aharon the High Priest) need to be charged and encouraged to nevertheless diligently proceed with the mandated expenditure. Rav Moshe Shmuel Shapiro was a disciple of Rav Yitzchak Zeev Soloveitchik (the Brisker Rav) and was himself a Rosh Yeshiva in Israel. He writes as follows: It is known that the people of America have been blessed with a fluency and no doubt G-d rewarded them in this fashion due to the merit of their generosity and the merit of the charities they occupy themselves with. However, I believe, there is also another factor here. I have noticed two significant attributes which certainly also merit the bestowal of riches upon them: First of all, they are diligent in their businesses (zerizusam b'iskeihem). From the time they start their task at work until they finish, they do not allow anything to disturb them. This is different than the workers in our country who take coffee breaks every half hour. Americans appreciate their time and in that merit they have been successful financially. Rav Moshe Shmuel Shapiro then mentions the following very interesting incident. The Ponnivitzer Rav and Rav Elchanan Wasserman learned together as study partners (b'chavrusa) in the Kollel in Radin. They wanted to look up something in a certain book quoted by the Chofetz Chaim in his Shaar HaTziyon commentary to Mishneh Berura. The sefer was not available in the Beis HaMidrash so they went to the Chofetz Chaim's house, knocked on his door, and asked "Can we see that sefer you quote in the Shaar HaTziyon?" The Chofetz Chaim told them he did not have the Sefer. They were surprised inasmuch as he quoted it in his commentary. He told them that when he needed to look up something in a sefer he borrowed it from someone and then returned it. The Chofetz Chaim told them "I did not want to buy the sefer because I only buy sefarim I actually need! If I don't need a sefer I don't buy it." At that point, the Chofetz Chaim turned to his bookshelf and let out a sigh. They thought he let out the sigh because he had so few volumes in his personal library. He corrected them: "No. What bothers me is that maybe I bought a sefer amongst my collection that I don't use enough and therefore I really shouldn't have purchased it -- I gave out my money for something I didn't really need."
 This is a very interesting story and it is contrary to conventional wisdom. Conventional wisdom is that people like to have large libraries. The Chofetz Chaim's opinion was if you do not absolutely need something you do not buy it, because money was very precious to him -- because time was very precious to him. This is in line with the idea that "in a place where there is monetary loss encouragement and 'Tzav' is necessary. In Lieu Of Korban Todah: A Short Psalm (#100) Or A

Long Shmoneh Esrei Parshas Tzav also contains the Thanksgiving offering - the Korban Todah. The Korban Todah was brought when a person emerged from an inherently dangerous situation, such as traveling on the high seas, recovering from a serious illness, or being released from captivity. A person who brought a Korban Todah had to bring 40 loaves of bread together with it. Furthermore, even though it is a type of Korban Shelamim (which are normally eaten for two days and one night) it could only be eaten for one day and one night. The Netziv notes a peculiarity here: We have a lot to eat (more than a regular Shelamim) and a very minimal time in which to eat it (less than a regular Shelamim). Why is that? The Netziv answers that this is because a Todah is brought when the Almighty does a miracle for a person. When Hashem does a miracle for someone, that person has an obligation to publicize the miracle. For this reason the Torah specifically requires a large amount of food to be eaten in a short amount of time to force the person to invite people to share the offering with him and thereby share with them news and celebration of the miracle performed for him by the Almighty. All this is well and good when the Bais Hamikdash was standing and we could offer Thanksgiving sacrifices. But the Almighty does miracles for us today as well. He is Kind to us today as well. How, in the absence of a Bais Hamikdash might we publicize His Kindness to us? What do we do in lieu of a Korban Todah? The Kav HaYashar suggests that today when we are beneficiaries of Divine intervention in our favor -- be it escape from danger, from injury, from illness, and so forth -- then it becomes incumbent upon us to take some positive action or improve our behavior in some recognizable fashion in appreciation of the Almighty's Kindness to us, in lieu of our inability to offer a Korban Todah. The Shibalei Haleket (Rav Zedekiah ben Abraham Anaw) writes "I was deathly ill. My family members gave up hope for me. I had a vision at that time in which a short man stood before me with a candle in his hand. He started blowing out the candle and then he relit it. I asked him what the meaning of all that was. He told me "The candle symbolizes your soul. It was time for you to die just like the candle was about to burn out. But just as I relit the candle, so too you will recover in three days and have a new lease on life because G-d recognizes that you still have the ability to help the community'. And so it happened. I recovered and I made special efforts to write a commentary on the Torah in appreciation of having been saved." The commentary to which he refers is the Shibalei HaLeket, the name by which this 13th century Rabbinic scholar was known for all future generations. We cannot bring a Korban Todah and we cannot write a Shibalei HaLeket. If something happens to us what should we do? We should at least say the Chapter Mizmor L'Sodah [Tehillim 100] with great intent and kavanah. This is why our Sages instituted the recital of this Psalm as part of our daily prayer. Every day we have an opportunity to thank the Almighty for the miracles he does for us on a daily basis. Chazal did us another favor. They provided a prayer which we say even on Shabbos and even on Pessach (unlike Mizmor S'Todah) -- the prayer called "Modim anachnu lach" (we thank You). We say it every single day -- three times a day! A Yeshiva student once noticed that his Rosh Yeshiva would take a long time to recite Shmoneh Esrei. He wanted to emulate his Rosh Yeshiva so he said every paragraph very slowly, focusing on each word with kavanah. Try as he might, however, he could not make his Shmoneh Esrei as long as his Rosh Yeshiva's Shmoneh Esrei. He went to his mentor and said "Rebbe, what is your secret? How can you say such a long Shmoneh Esrei? What do you think about? I've tried everything and I cannot say such a long prayer!" The Rebbe told his student "I say Shmoneh Esrei as fast as everyone else; but before I get to Modim, I stop and I think 'What do I have to be thankful for?' I think that I have my health and I have my family. I have my children and I have my grandchildren and I have this and I have that. In my mind, I go through all the things that I am thankful for. That is what takes me so long." Chag Kasher V'Sameach. Transcribed by David Twersky Seattle, WA; Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman, Baltimore, MD RavFrاند, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Yisrocher Frاند and Torah.org.

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Everyone **Needs a Push**

by **Rabbi Yehoshua Berman**

Tzav(Leviticus 6-8)

"Command Aharon and his sons [by] saying, this is the teaching of the olah, it is the olah on its fire on the altar the whole night, and the fire of the altar will burn in it (Vayikra 6:2)." Rashi explains that the Hebrew word "tzav," command, implies ziruz - encouragement and urging - for that time and for all generations. Particularly when it comes to situations involving loss of money (because the Kohanim do not receive anything from a burnt offering other than the hide), is there a need to encourage and urge. Rav Yaakov Weinberg pointed out that the above verse is discussing Aharon Ha'Kohein, one of the greatest Jewish figures of all time; so we see that even he had a need for ziruz, encouragement. This, explains Rav Weinberg, does not mean that without the ziruz Aharon would not have put forth his full effort. It goes without saying that Aharon would have certainly put forth his utmost effort despite any lack of external ziruz. Rather, what it means is that every person has untapped strengths that are often only manifest as a result of the prodding pressure of ziruz. "One time", recounted Rav Weinberg, "I was arranging chevrusos (study partners) at the beginning of the zman (semester), and there was one bachur for whom I just could not manage to work out an appropriate chevrusah. I tried numerous different ideas, but nothing worked. Unfortunately, he began the zman having to learn on his own without a chevrusah. About two weeks into the zman, I received a desperate phone call from his father. He said, 'Please! Please find a chevrusah for my son! He is suffering so much from not having a chevrusah!' So, I tried again and, lo and behold, this time I managed to find a suitable chevrusah for him! Don't think that I didn't try my hardest the first go-around. I can assure you that I truly did. But the desperate urging of the boy's father extracted a latent energy without which just would not surface." We all need and can benefit from ziruz, concluded Rav Weinberg, no matter how great we are or how hard we are trying. What is very interesting to note, is that we see from Rashi's explanation that in situations where the individual stands to gain some monetary benefit there is not nearly as much of a need to have other people providing the ziruz. The monetary gain in of itself provides the lion's share of the external push that is needed.

Now, obviously, Aharon Ha'Kohein (or any of his sons, or other tzaddikim for that matter) were certainly not carrying out the avodah (service) for the sake of personal monetary gain. To even suggest such a thing would be absolutely preposterous; it is safe to assert that the thought of monetary gain did not enter his conscious thoughts at all, even for one moment. Certainly, his sole motivation for carrying out the avodah was his drive to fulfill the Will of God. Nevertheless, we see that the monetary aspect would play at least a subconscious role of ziruz even for an Aharon Ha'Kohein. And, for people of a much lesser stature, it could very well occupy a place in the conscious thought process. However, it is still just a ziruz, not the main motivating factor. As an illustration of this idea, imagine an athlete competing for the gold medal. In the midst of the race, he begins to feel tired and weak and his pace begins to slow down a bit. Upon seeing this, his fans start cheering him on to give him a boost. And it works! He surges forward with newfound strength and achieves his goal of winning the medal. Now, would you say that his primary motivating factor was the momentary cheering that occurred in the middle of the race? Of course not! What was motivating him from beginning to end was the accomplishment itself of winning the gold. So, what function did the cheering fulfill? Ziruz. Ziruz is that external push that helps propel us towards our goals without supplanting the actual motivation of our actions. That is why it is not inappropriate that monetary gain act as a ziruz in the realm of Torah and mitzvos. One may wonder why there are many monetary incentives involved with various learning programs and endeavors, whether in the Kollel system or otherwise. Based on the above, though, it should become perfectly clear that there is in

fact nothing negative about this whatsoever. On the contrary, we see that using monetary incentives as a ziruz is actually a positive thing to do. Those that are engaged in serious learning are clearly not doing so for the sake of money, God forbid.(1) They are motivated to learn for the sake of carrying out the loftiest endeavor that Hashem charges us with. The paltry bits and pieces of monetary incentives that they receive here and there are merely a ziruz. And ziruz, as we have learned, is a very positive thing! So, for others and for oneself, find that positive, encouraging, and urging force of ziruz. As we have seen, ziruz can take the form of cheering someone on, a desperate plea, or a monetary incentive. The truth is that it doesn't really matter what particular form the ziruz takes, as long as it will have a beneficial, positive effect given the situation. So, for others and for oneself, find the one that works. NOTE 1. And, in fact, it would be utterly ridiculous to suggest such a thing, because if it is money that people want, there are much, much better ways to get it. All the monetary incentives that exist in the Kollel world and otherwise do not amount to more than relative peanuts for each individual. So, if it was money that they were truly interested in, they'd look for it elsewhere. As an aside, this is akin to how Rav Yaakov Weinberg explained that the Kollel system is not at all in contradiction to the Rambam's statement that it is a chillul Hashem to take money for learning Torah (Hilchos Talmud Torah, 3:10). The Rambam's statement, explained Rav Weinberg, is referring to someone who is learning in order to get money. Avreichim in Kollel are doing the exact opposite - they are willing to subsist on a measly amount of money in order to be able to remain in full time learning!

Rabbi Berel Wein <info@jewishdestiny.com> reply-to: info@jewishdestiny.com date: Wed, Mar 23, 2016 at 1:01 PM subject:

Parshat Tzav 5776- **Rabbi Berel Wein**

TZAV

The parsha deals initially with the concept of an eternal flame or light that would continually be present on the holy altar in the Mishkan/Tabernacle. This is not the sole instance in the Torah where this concept of an eternal flame, fire or light is discussed. The great golden candelabra in the Mishkan/Tabernacle was also to have one light that was to be deemed an eternal light that was never to be extinguished. Millennia later, our synagogues commemorate this concept of an eternal light in the holy house of prayer with the presence of a ner tamid fixture over the holy ark of the Torah scrolls. The question arises as to the symbolism and meaning of this eternal fire. Who and what does it represent and what is its message to our society and world. The simple explanation of the eternity of this flame is that it symbolizes God's constant and unending presence in our lives and in the national life of the Jewish people. He is always present even if He is unseen, unrecognized and even purposely ignored by His creatures. The eternal fire reflects the eternity of the Creator, the eternity of Torah and of the people of Israel. In a world where little today is held to be lasting let alone eternal, the reminder of an eternal flame is necessary and vital. There have been myriad temporary gods that have bedeviled humankind over the ages. The entire pantheon of paganism was built upon differing and constantly changing gods. Only Israel had the vision of a universal, unchanging and eternal God.

But, perhaps there is an even more cogent message from the eternal flame to us. Many times in life we make sacrifices in order to achieve ends that we desire. This is certainly true in the material sphere of our lives. Long hours and great exertion are the norm of our workday lives. Not always are our sacrifices rewarded with social, professional or monetary success and achievement. We tend then to view them - our efforts and sacrifices - as being in vain and a wasted effort. However we may feel about those material spheres of our lives, this does not hold true for our spiritual efforts and pursuits. No effort, even if it appears to us to be unsuccessful and even inconsequential, is wasted. The spirit remains eternal. The rabbis in Avot taught us that according to the effort so is the reward. There are a number of interpretations of this cryptic phrase. One meaning is that the effort will be

rewarded even if the goal of that effort has not yet been achieved. For effort on behalf of spiritual matters – charity, Torah study, the welfare of the Jewish people, etc. – is blessed with an eternal quality that survives because it becomes part of our eternal soul. The sacrifices made on behalf of our souls live on as part of our Godly nature, the eternal flame that the Creator has placed within us all. Shabbat shalom Rabbi Berel Wein

From: Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein <ravadlerstein@torah.org> to: mchochmah@torah.org date: Wed, Mar 23, 2016 at 4:42 PM subject: Meshech Chochmah - Parshas Tzav

**Meshech Chochmah
by Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein**

Parshas Tzav
Priestly Garments and Yom Kippur He placed the shirt upon him, and tied the sash/avneit around him.
Meshech Chochmah: We know the fabric content of the kohen gadol's avnet, because it is described explicitly in the Torah as containing both wool and linen thread. We have no such description for the avnet of the common kohen. According to one opinion,[2] the avnet of the commoner did not contain the usually forbidden shatnez mixture. Tosafos[3] explain that it is reasonable to limit the surprising allowance of shatnez to the kohen gadol, whose other garments (ephod, choshen) also contained shatnez, and exclude the allowance from ordinary kohanim, whose other garments were of plain linen, without any admixture of wool.

The deeper meaning behind this distinction stems from the function of the bigdei kehunah, which is to serve as kapparah for certain sins.[4] The avnet is linked to thoughts of sin. Now, the garments of the common kohen atoned for murder and for illicit relations, both of which are active transgressions. The garments of the kohen gadol, however, included the ephod, which atoned for avodah zarah. This last transgression differs markedly from the others, in that it is primarily a transgression of mind and attitude; it can be violated without any active manifestation. Sinful thoughts of avodah zarah are thus much more significant than those of other aveiros, in that they are part and parcel of the primary sin. This means that the sins of mind addressed by the avnet of the kohen gadol are on a different plane than the thoughts of sin of the common kohen addressed through his own avnet. The latter show a deficiency that needs addressing, but not a deficiency as deep as that of thoughts of avodah zarah. The Torah underscores the difference by making the two avnets of different materials. Since the kohen gadol wore an ephod that atoned for the most serious inner transgressions of mind and thought, his avnet matched the ephod he wore at the same time.

We can take the discussion further. Ultimately, all sins are branches reaching out from three roots, i.e. the three cardinal sins. All sins of lust and desire are sourced within the sin of gilui arayos. Sins that involve jealousy of and harm to others are related to murder. That leaves avodah zarah as the source of all aveiros between Man and G-d.

On Yom Kippur, we are told[5], Soton holds no sway over us. Yet the gemara[6] speaks of many people violating young women on this holiest of days itself! We must realize that we are freed on Yom Kippur from only one class of aveirah. By desisting from eating, drinking and other activities, we downplay the importance of the physical, allowing us to become more angelic, for our spirits to return to their Divine source. The kohen gadol dramatizes this by taking his avodah into the kodesh kodashim itself, symbolically restoring our neshamos to the place from which they came.

In such an environment, there is no room for transgressions of the mind and spirit. No need on such a day for atonement for thoughts of avodah zarah. The kohen gadol wears no ephod in that inner avodah; his avnet is of pure linen. Man's spirit is elevated by the day itself; what remains are the coarser elements of the nature that we share with lower animals. The urge to violate young women, coming from this more primitive part of ourselves, is not naturally quashed. Coarser individuals succumb even on Yom Kippur!

Yom Kippur, we learn,[7] is like a mikvah, purifying those who immerse themselves within it. We have seen how the avodah of the kohen gadol in the Holy of Holies expresses this. We use the immersion procedure in yet another way. The Jewish people as a mystical entity – Knesset Yisrael – remains always connected to HKBH. In the days before Yom Kippur, we multiply acts of tzedakah and chesed, immersing ourselves, so to speak, more deeply into a union with that entity. By doing this, we become like branches grafted on to a tree, becoming one with the trunk itself, and through it, to Hashem as well.

[1] Based on Meshech Chochmah, Vayikra 8:7 [2] Yoma 5B [3] Yoma 6A s.v amar [4] Zevachim 88B [5] Yoma 20A [6] Yoma 19B [7] Yoma 85B
Torah.org: The Judaism Site Project Genesis, Inc. 122 Slade Avenue, Suite 250 Baltimore, MD 21208 <http://www.torah.org> (410) 602-1350