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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON **VAYIKRA** - 5771

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Covenant & Conversation

Thoughts on the Weekly Parsha from

Lord Jonathan Sacks

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British
Commonwealth

Vayikra 5771

<http://www.chiefrabbi.org/tt-index.html>

Our parsha, which deals with a variety of sacrifices, devotes an extended section to the chatat, the sin offering, as brought by different individuals: first the High Priest (4: 3-12), then the community as a whole (13-21), then a leader (22-26) and finally an ordinary individual (27-35).

The whole passage sounds strange to modern ears, not only because sacrifices have not been offered for almost two millennia since the destruction of the Second Temple, but also because it is hard for us to understand the very concepts of sin and atonement as they are dealt with in the Torah.

The puzzle is that the sins for which an offering had to be brought were those committed inadvertently, be-shogeg. Either the sinner had forgotten the law, or some relevant fact. To give a contemporary example: suppose the phone rings on Shabbat and you answer it. You would only be liable for a sin offering if either you forgot the law that you may not answer a phone on Shabbat, or you forgot the fact that the day was Shabbat. For a moment you thought it was Friday or Sunday.

It's just this kind of act that we don't see as a sin at all. It was a mistake. You forgot. You did not mean to do anything wrong. And when you realise that inadvertently you have broken Shabbat, you are more likely to feel regret than remorse. You feel sorry but not guilty.

We think of a sin as something we did intentionally, yielding to temptation perhaps, or in a moment of rebellion. That is what Jewish law calls be-zadon in biblical Hebrew or be-mezid in rabbinic Hebrew. That is the kind of act we would have thought calls for a sin offering. But actually such an act cannot be atoned for by an offering at all. So how are to we make sense of the sin offering?

The answer is that there are three dimensions of wrongdoing between us and God. The first is guilt and shame. When we sin deliberately and intentionally, we know inwardly that we have done wrong. Our conscience – the voice of God within the human heart – tells us that we have done wrong. That is what happened to Adam and Eve in the Garden after they had sinned. They felt shame. They tried to hide. For that kind of deliberate, conscious, intentional sin, the only adequate moral response is teshuvah, repentance. This involves (a) remorse, charatah, (b) confession, vidui, and (c) kabbalat he-atid, a resolution never to commit the sin again. The result is selichah umechilah, God forgives us. A mere sacrifice is not enough.

However there is a second dimension. Regardless of guilt and responsibility, if we commit a sin we have objectively transgressed a boundary. The word chet means to miss the mark, to stray, to deviate from the proper path. We have committed an act that somehow disturbs the moral balance of the world. To take a secular example, imagine that your car has a faulty speedometer. You are caught driving at 50 miles per hour in a 30 mile an hour zone. You tell the policeman who stops you that you didn't know. Your speedometer was only showing 30 miles per hour. He may sympathise, but you have still broken the law, transgressed the limit, and you will still have to pay the penalty.

That is what a sin offering is. According to R. Shimshon Raphael Hirsch it is a penalty for carelessness. According to the Sefer Ha-Hinnukh it is an educational and preventive measure. Deeds, in Judaism, are the way we train the mind. The fact that you have had to pay the price by bringing a sacrifice will make you take greater care in future.

R. Isaac Arama (Spain, 15th century) says that the difference between an intentional and an unintentional sin is that in the former case, both the body and the soul were at fault. In the case of an unintentional sin only the body was at fault, not the soul. Therefore a physical sacrifice helps since it was only the physical act of the body that was in the wrong. A physical sacrifice cannot atone for a deliberate sin, because it cannot rectify a wrong in the soul.

What the sacrifice achieves is kapparah, not forgiveness as such but a "covering over" or obliteration of the sin. Noah was told to "cover" (ve-chapharta) the surface of the ark with pitch (Gen. 6: 14). The cover of the ark in the Tabernacle was called kaporet (Ex. 25: 17). Once a sin has been symbolically covered over, it is forgiven, but as the Malbim points out, in such cases the verb for forgiveness, s-l-ch, is always in the passive (venislach: L:ev. 4: 20, 26, 31). The forgiveness is not direct, as it is in the case of repentance, but indirect, a consequence of the sacrifice.

The third dimension of sin is that it defiles. It leaves a stain on your character. Isaiah, in the presence of God, feels that he has "unclean lips" (Is. 6: 5). King David says to God, "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (me-chatati tahareni, Ps. 51: 4). About Yom Kippur the Torah says, "On that day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you [letaher etchem]. Then, before the Lord, you will be clean from all your sins" (Lev. 16: 30).

Ramban says that this is the logic of the sin offering. All sins, even those committed inadvertently, "leave a stain on the soul and constitute a blemish on it, and the soul is only fit to meet its Maker when it has been cleansed from all sin" (Ramban to Lev. 4: 2). The result of the sin offering is tehora, cleansing, purification.

So the sin offering is not about guilt but about other dimensions of transgression. It is one of the stranger features of Western civilization, due in part to Pauline Christianity, and partly to the influence of the philosopher Immanuel Kant, that we tend to think about morality and spirituality as matters almost exclusively to do with the mind and its motives. But our acts leave traces in the world. And even unintentional sins can leave us feeling defiled.

The law of the sin offering reminds us that we can do harm unintentionally, and this can have psychological consequences. The best way of putting things right is to make a sacrifice: to do something that costs us something.

In ancient times, that took the form of a sacrifice offered on the altar at the Temple. Nowadays the best way of doing so is to give money to charity (tzedakah) or perform an act of kindness to others (chesed). The prophet said so long ago: "For I desire loving-kindness, not sacrifice" (Hosea 6: 6). Charity and kindness are our substitutes for sacrifice and, like the sin offering of old, they help mend what is broken in the world and in our soul.

From: **Rabbi Yissocher Frand** [ryfrand@torah.org] Sent: Friday, March 31, 2006 11:41 AM To: ravfrand@torah.org Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Vayikra "RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas

The Name Moshe Defined The Essence of Our Leader's Personality
The Yalkut Shimoni comments that Moshe had ten names and lists all ten of these names. One of the names was "chaver" because he joined (chiber) Israel to their Father in Heaven. Another name was Avigdor because he was the founder (Avi) of fences (g'darim), as a result of being the first person to institute precautionary enactments to the Torah. Tuvia was another name of Moshe.

The Medrash comments regarding the opening words of the book of Vayikra ("And He called to Moshe" [Vayikra 1:1]): "By your life, the Almighty said, of all your names, I will only call you by the name given to you by Basya the daughter of Pharaoh." When Pharaoh's daughter found the Jewish baby floating down the Nile, she drew him out of the river and gave him the name Moshe, "for I have drawn him out of the water" (ki min haMayim m'sheeseehu) [Shmos 2:10]. This is the exclusive name that Hashem uses in his communication with the leader of the Jewish people. Nowhere in the Torah do we find explicit reference to any of Moshe's other nine names.

I saw an attempt to explain the reason for this in the Birkas Mordechai by Rav Baruch Mordechai Mizrahi. I am not sure if this is exactly what the Birkas Mordechai is saying, but even if not, perhaps we can elaborate upon this Medrash as follows:

The word "shem" [name] defines what a person is supposed to be and what a person is. According to Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch, the word "shem" is related to the word "sham" [there]. "Sham" defines where an item is and "shem" defines where a person is. Moshe Rabbeinu, the master of all prophets, the giver of the Torah, had many attributes. There were many aspects to his personality, his career, and his talents. But perhaps the underlying facet that really defined Moshe, was his modesty (anivus). "The man Moshe was very modest, more so than any person on the face of the earth." [Bamidbar 12:3]

It is only because of Moshe's humility that the Almighty could trust him to transmit the Torah and to be the master of all prophets. All the other attributes and achievements of Moshe Rabbeinu's career stem from his unique modesty. The unchallengeable role he played in the life of our nation represents virtually "absolute power." The only reason why Hashem felt "comfortable" giving Moshe such power, was because of Moshe's extraordinary humility and modesty.

What incident in Moshe Rabbeinu's life gave birth to this quality of humility? The answer to that question, I believe, is "from the water I have drawn him forth." It has a profound effect on a person's ego if he goes through life with the understanding that "but for the grace of G-d and the daughter of Pharaoh, I would not be here."

If a person lives his whole life thinking "I am here only as a chesed" [by virtue of a Divine favor], it changes his entire outlook on life. Nothing is taken for granted anymore. Everything in life is viewed as

a gift because "my whole being here, indeed, was a gift and a chesed."

Truth be told, the fact that we are all here is a chesed. We are here as a chesed because of all our parents did for us and we are here as a chesed because of all the Ribono Shel Olam did for us. However, the individual who realizes this is rare and the individual who constantly thinks of it is rarer still. We don't think of the fact that we are here as a chesed. We think of ourselves having a right to be here.

This is especially true in America which is such a rights oriented and rights dominated culture. The foundation of this country is a Bill of Rights. It seems as if every other major issue in this country becomes a right: A right to live, a right to die, a right to abort, a right not to abort, a right over one's body. Everything is a right! Everything is "coming to me." This is not the way it really should be, but this is our indoctrination.

Moshe Rabbeinu did not live his life like that. He was the most modest of all people because his name -- his shem -- had this profound effect upon him. "I will call you by none other than the name given to you by Basya, daughter of Pharaoh because that is the defining name of your entire personality.

You lived your life recognizing that you were 'drawn from out of the water' and that if not for her chesed and for My chesed you would have wound up like the thousands of other Jewish children."

Metaphorically, The Waters Were Also Crying

The Torah commands us: "You shall salt your every meal-offering with salt; you may not discontinue the salt of your G-d's covenant from upon your meal-offering -- on all your offerings shall you offer salt." [Vayikra 2:13] This requirement is a Gezeiras haKasuv [Divine decree], with no explicit reason given. One commentary goes so far as to explain that the prohibition against offering leavening or honey with offerings [Vayikra 2:11] is because salt is not able to penetrate these substances.

Our Sages state [See Rashi Vayikra 2:13]: "A covenant was enacted with salt from the six days of creation that the lower waters were promised that they would be offered on the altar." During the "Division of the Waters" that took place on the second day of creation, the "lower waters" were assigned the role of being the oceans, the lakes, and the rivers. These waters complained to G-d that the "upper waters" were left in proximity to the Divine Throne in Heaven and they (the "lower waters") were being spiritually discriminated against. The promise mentioned in the above stated Medrash refers to the answer to this complaint. The "lower waters" were promised that they too would have a spiritual role. The salt from the waters would be offered with the sacrifices and the water itself would be poured on the altar as libations during Succos.

The Imrei Shammai cites an interesting interpretation of the following pasuk in Tehillim, in the name of Rav Moshe Teitelbaum: "Upon the rivers of Bavel, there we sat, we also cried (gam bachinu), when we remembered Zion" [Tehillim 137:1]. What is the word "gam" (also) coming to teach us? Rav Teitelbaum suggests that "gam bachinu" (we also cried) implies that we were not the only ones who cried -- someone else also cried.

Who else cried? The rivers of Bavel themselves cried. Why did they cry? They cried because now they no longer had the consolation that kept them going all those years after the original separation from the "upper waters." Now, the Temple was destroyed and the sacrifices were nullified. No longer would there be water libations on the altar. No more would salt be brought with every offering. Therefore, the waters -- the rivers of Bavel as well as all the waters of the entire "lower world" -- began to cry.

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

From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein
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Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

Jerusalem Post :: Friday, March 11, 2011
Listening to G-d :: Rabbi Berel Wein

With the beginning of the reading of the book of Vayikra this Shabat in the synagogue services, the title of the book itself calls out to us for understanding what is meant when the Torah tells us that God called out to Moshe. Moshe experiences a special and unique method of Godly revelation. The Torah testifies to this by describing that God, so to speak, talks to Moshe 'face to face.'

The prophets of Israel received Godly communication while in a dreamlike trance. But the thrust of Jewish tradition is that even though there is no longer any type of Godly prophecy present in our world, God still communicates with humans. But, He does so in very subtle means - in reflections of human behavior and world events themselves.

Free will allows humans to behave as they will, yet there is a guiding heavenly hand in world affairs visible to those who wish to see it. A few decades ago two scientists won a Nobel Prize for proving their ability to yet hear the echo of the sounds of the original birth of the universe at the moment of its creation. We all know that human hearing is possible only within a limited range of wave frequencies. Judaism preaches that good deeds, moral behavior, Torah observance and loyalty to traditional Jewish values help expand our hearing ability – and that this enables us to tune into heavenly sound frequencies which were originally blocked to us.

The auxiliary message of Vayikra - that God called out to Moshe, is that Moshe's hearing is so perfectly attuned to heavenly communication he is always 'face to face' with his Creator. That is the true indication of the greatness of Moshe, it is what makes him the most unique of all the world's prophets, teachers and leaders.

The word Vayikra as written in the Torah contains a miniature letter 'aleph.' This indicates to us that God's message to us is subtle, quiet,

and easy to ignore temporarily – but, nevertheless, persistent and ongoing. As the Lord told the prophet Elijah 'I do not appear in the great wind or in earthquakes or other terrifying natural phenomena, but rather in a small, still voice.' Listening to a still, small voice requires good hearing acumen and intense concentration. Casual hearing will never do it anymore.

Therefore in our times, the small 'alef' requires us to really listen and pay attention to what transpires in our personal and national lives. Oftentimes, we like the prophet Yonah, attempt to flee from the still small voice that continually echoes within us. But it remains persistent, and waits patiently for our hearing ability to improve to the extent that it is truly listened to in our everyday lives.

The Bible teaches us that Shimshon began his career as the savior and Judge of Israel when he was able to hear the spirit of the Lord beating within his heart. In our busy and noisy lives, with so much incessant sound exploding all around us constantly, we really have little time or ability to listen to our true selves – those small voices that are always speaking to us. Our inner voice is the medium that Judaism uses to teach us that the Lord calls out for our attention, to give us moral, and courageous guidance. But it can only be of value if we listen - and that requires concentration, thought and commitment.

A great sage once remarked that when a Jew prays to God he or she is talking to God. But, when a Jew studies Torah then God, so to speak, is talking to him or her. That is one of the reasons that Judaism places such a great emphasis on Torah study. As the Talmud says: 'the study of Torah outweighs all other commandment.' It is the proven method for attuning to the spiritual frequencies that beat within us. Our Creator constantly calls out to us, and we have to make every effort to improve our hearing and our listening Shabat shalom.

From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein
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Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

Weekly Parsha :: VAYIKRA :: Rabbi Berel Wein

The parsha of Vayikra concerns itself with the topic of kodshim - animal sacrifices which constituted the core service of the kohanim/priests and the people of Israel in the Mishkan/Tabernacle and later in the Temple in Jerusalem. Much ink has flowed and much human genius has been expended to attempt to explain and rationalize the nature of this type of service and why, somehow, it should be found as being pleasing in the eyes of the Lord.

Regarding the sacrifices of animals on the altar by Abel and Noach in the book of Bereshith, we see that their offerings were received with Divine favor. But the entire issue, as to how killing an animal somehow might expiate a human sin and bring forgiveness to that, is mysterious, especially from the perspective of current Western values. It would be foolish to deal with this issue as far greater people than me have been reticent to go there. Suffice it to say that we must treat this area of kodshim as being on a plane and level of beyond human understanding and appreciation.

But just as in the physical world there are so many things that work and we cannot explain why they should work, so too in this spiritual realm of kodshim we have to accept that animal sacrifices somehow do accomplish their Torah purpose - even though we are unable to understand why this should be true. Judaism is a faith of rational thought and moral values. But, it is also a faith of mystery and other-world spirituality. It is this combination of wisdom and truth that make Judaism so unique.

The Torah presupposes human error and sin to be a constant. Even the most righteous person is not truly free of sin. Yet, Judaism does not foster any idea of "original sin." It believes that we are born with noble souls and enter this world unsullied. Nevertheless, it also recognizes human nature - and that it can become cruel, violent, lustful and sinful even from an early age.

The Torah, of necessity, must provide a mechanism to cleanse one's soul once more if the person has sinned. This mechanism is kodshim/animal sacrifices. With the absence of the Temple that mechanism has morphed into prayer, good deeds, and true repentance for wrongs committed. The goal is the same - to reintroduce into our lives a sense of holiness and higher purpose. It teaches us that we can right wrongs and repair broken hopes and hearts.

The details of kodshim as written in the Torah and, as expounded and expanded in the Mishna and Talmud, are like the mysterious formulae and equations used by physicists and chemistry professors that are unintelligible to the ordinary man on the street but nevertheless work and accomplish their stated functions and goals. We have to find our way without the Temple being present, without these formulae and equations to help us to cleanse ourselves. The Torah has provided us with an alternate route to arrive at that goal. We should constantly exploit these opportunities - prayer, good deeds and honest repentance and improvement. Then our lips will truly replace the kodshim that we no longer have. Shabat shalom

From Shema Yisrael Torah Network

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Subject Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Lieb Scheinbaum Parshas Vayikra

He called to Moshe. (1:1)

The commentators note the diminutive aleph, which is the last letter of the word, vayikra, He called. They explain that the miniature aleph is the symbol of Moshe Rabbeinu's intense modesty, not wanting to call attention to the fact that the Almighty called him. The Midrash Tanchuma states: "Anyone who pursues shera'rah, rulership/dominion/honor, shera'rah runs from him. One who runs from shera'rah, it pursues him." Moshe did not want to accept honor. He conferred it on others, but he himself ran from glory. Yet, as much as he attempted to evade honor and avoid calling attention to himself, it kept on "catching up" with him. Why should it be this way? Would it have been so bad if his wishes to be modest had been respected? If he does not seek kavod, honor, let him be. While it may be difficult for most of us to understand, for such an individual, however, glory is like an albatross around his neck.

The Sefas Emes explains that the true boreiach min hakavod, one who runs from glory, does not just avoid it. He defers this honor to Hashem, the source of all honor. He is the Melech HaKavod, King of Glory. The truly modest person acknowledges that whatever qualities he possesses that are worthy of honor are his because Hashem has willed it to be so. Thus, Hashem should be the focus of honor - not he. Therefore, the glory which he has succeeded in attributing to its Source waits for him, so that he receives his due honor in the future. A chasid once queried Horav Bunim, zl, m'Peshischa, "Rebbe, I flee from kavod; yet, it does not pursue me. Where is the truth in Chazal's statement?"

The Rebbe replied, "From your question, I can deduce that when you run from kavod you turn around to see if it is pursuing you. That is not considered fleeing from kavod."

The Chafetz Chaim was once approached by a Torah scholar who, after having spent some time in Radin, was slightly disconcerted that the students with whom he had conversed in learning failed to give him the respect that he demanded. Actually, his arrogating respect was a turn-off to the students, who reciprocated by denying his "request." "Why is it," he asked the Chafetz Chaim, "that you receive all of the kavod, while I am showered with disdain? Are you not comparable talmidei chachamim?"

The venerable sage replied, "The key is in the word 'kol,' 'everyone' who pursues glory - it runs from him. 'Everyone who flees from glory, it will chase after him.' The word kol, 'everyone,' means that anyone - regardless of his level of erudition - who runs from kavod will, nonetheless, be pursued by it. Likewise, when anyone pursues honor - regardless of his worthiness - it will not catch up with him. It has nothing to do with his merit or erudition. It is all in the pursuit. Is one running after it - or from it?"

"My friend, you are certainly great in Torah, yet the kavod you yearn for seems to elude you. It is because you are pursuing it. I, on the other hand, am not worthy of honor; yet, it seems to catch up with me, because I do not pursue it!"

He called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him from the Ohel Moed. (1:1)

Chazal teach us that Hashem appeared to Moshe Rabbeinu every day and commanded him to teach various mitzvos to Klal Yisrael. Rabbi Yehudah bar Simon says that this was for a purpose. He compares it to a craftsman who was making an atarah l'melech, crown for the king to wear. This would be "the" crown; thus, it would have to be exceptional. A passerby asked him what it was he was doing. The craftsman said, "I am making a crown for the king." The passerby told him, "Be sure to put in as many diamonds, rubies and other precious jewels as you can, because this crown will be worn by the king. He will rejoice in its splendor. Therefore, spare no effort or expense in creating the perfect, resplendent crown that will be fit for the king."

Chazal conclude that Hashem likewise told Moshe, "Whatever you can do to praise and exalt Klal Yisrael - do so. Whatever you can do to bring out this nation's distinction and splendor - do so. As they are glorified, so will I be. They are My crown."

In his collection of divrei Torah from Horav Avraham Pam, zl, Rabbi Sholom Smith quotes the Rosh Yeshivah, who underscores this Midrash as the cornerstone and raison d'etre of the life of a mechanech, Torah teacher. Those who teach Torah to Jewish children are entrusted with a noble mission: to bring out the beauty and splendor of each child, to polish these diamonds until they shine. This is accomplished by drawing out the inner beauty embedded in their souls. Each child is endowed with unique abilities and potential. The rebbe has to focus on these qualities, so that they surface. The only way this can occur is by stressing the positive. The rebbe who criticizes and denigrates a child's shortcomings and faults destroys the child's potential. No child is perfect - neither is the rebbe. While much toil, blood, sweat and tears goes into the teaching relationship, one must never forget that children are fragile. In addition, as we have just learned, they will be the future Klal

Yisrael; they will adorn Hashem's crown. To turn off a child is to destroy his chance to make it into that crown. It is an egregious sin for which one must answer to the child and to Hashem.

Let us take this thought to the next level. The personal mission of every Jew is that his neshamah be "set" in Hashem's crown. If we would give this matter the thought it deserves, we might conduct ourselves on a more dignified level. When we realize our enormous value as jewels in Hashem's crown, we stop doing things that downgrade us. We talk differently, dress differently, act differently. Yosef Hatzadik refrained from sinning with Potifar's wife when he

realized that his name would be engraved in the Choshen Hamishpat. Our names will be zocheh to be in Hashem's crown. Can we have a greater incentive for the positive reinforcement of our spiritual goals?

When a man among you brings an offering to Hashem. (1:2)

The word mikem, from you, has a deeper connotation. The Jew who brings a korban places his essence on the Altar. He delivers "himself" to Hashem. The animal replaces the human being who perceives himself to be on the Altar. Our concept of religion is quite different from that of the secular world. Serving G-d is not about delivering gifts and messages. We have no place in our relationship with Hashem for an intermediary. We speak directly to Hashem. When He calls us, He wants us - not something from us. Hashem focuses on the individual - not what he has to offer.

This was the dialogue that played out between Moshe Rabbeinu and Pharaoh when our leader asked to have the Jewish People - lock, stock and barrel - leave Egypt. Pharaoh asked how many Jews were going. Moshe replied that the number was not negotiable. All Jews - all ages, all genders - were leaving. It was a festival with G-d. Everybody was attending. Were Pharaoh and Moshe contending in numbers, or did their debate go deeper - into the fundamentals of religion?

Pharaoh's idea of divine service was fulfilling some responsibilities, discharging some duties to the gods. Give them what they need, and they will reciprocate with favors. Thus, anyone can deliver the message. An entire nation need not go to deliver the message or to pay homage.

Moshe explained that this might work for the deities which serviced the perverted Egyptian mind, but Judaism is completely different. Hashem does not need our gifts or our messages. He wants us! Each and every Jew has an obligation to be present and accounted for. We serve Hashem with ourselves - not with our gifts. It is mikem, from among you. When Hashem calls out to us, when He sends us a message, He expects us to respond. He wants us - not our surrogate. A festival with Hashem involves every Jew. Indeed, if a Jew is left out, it is a blemish on the observance of everyone. We must see to it that all Jews participate with Hashem. A Jew's relationship with Hashem is exactly that: a relationship. It is personal, non-transferrable and the mainstay of our religion.

When a man among you brings an offering to Hashem. (1: 2)

Rashi explains the use of the word adam, man, as a reference to Adam HaRishon, who serves as the paradigm of integrity in the offering of a korban. The korbanos offered by Adam were all his, as the entire creation was his. Likewise, the korbanos we offer should belong to us - not stolen from someone. Rashi's exposition seems superfluous, since we already have a limud, derivation, from the word korbano, his offering (1:3), explaining that one may not bring an offering min ha'gazul, from that which is stolen. Why does Rashi emphasize that we derive that gezel is prohibited from the word adam?

Horav Moshe Bik, zl, explains that the Torah is addressing the effect of the yetzer hora, evil inclination, on us. It uses its guile to find a way to convince us that certain forms of gezel, theft, are really permissible. We fall for its ruse all of the time, because we want to believe it. Thus, the owner might even view the korban as korbano, his offering. Adam HaRishon did not have that problem. Everything was his. It rightfully belonged to him. This level of ownership serves as the paradigm for proprietorship which is essential for bringing a korban. There may not be the slightest vestige of impropriety connected to one's claim to the animal.

Concerning the type of korban which the Torah is hereby addressing, Rashi interprets the words, ki yakriv, "brings an offering," as referring to a korban nedavah, free-willed offering. Rav Bik explains the significance of this explanation. Due to human nature, guided by

the yetzer hora's "engine," many people invariably feel that if they are giving charity, the money does not necessarily have to be that legitimate. Even if it was originated from a source that was less than de rigueur - if it is for tzedakah, it is acceptable. This concept cannot be further from the truth. As the korban of Adam HaRishon was the height of rectitude, so, too, must every offering we give - regardless of who is on the receiving end - be the paragon of integrity.

Rav Bik feels this is consistent with the adam, definition of man, which may be derived from the well-known pasuk in Michah 6:8, Higid lecha adam, "He has told you, O man, what is good! What does Hashem require of you but to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your G-d?" Who is worthy of offering a korban to Hashem? Only one who may be called an adam, one who reflects the Navi's definition of humility, kindness and justice. For some, this may be a tall order, but the korban is being offered to Hashem. We could have no less.

We acknowledge and accept that for one who gains funds inappropriately, expecting to perform a mitzvah with this money, the mitzvah will not atone for his sinful behavior. This is what Chazal refer to as a mitzvah ha'baah b'aveirah, "a mitzvah that was derived through the medium of a sin." The tzedakah, charity, he gives is not acceptable to Hashem. Chazal take this idea to the next level. They say that it would have been far better for him had he taken this questionable money and purchased food and eaten it, than to have used it for charity. When one sanctifies money by designating it for a noble purpose, such as charity, this "elevated" money stands before Hashem, Who looks at it with disdain. The man's sinful appropriation stands shamelessly before the Almighty as a liability for the individual. In other words, the fact that the stolen money was used for a mitzvah increases the sinner's liability.

Horav Shimshon Pincus, zl, paints a grim picture for us, but not nearly as grim as the one we paint for ourselves when we use money gained inappropriately for charitable purposes. The age-old custom of hanging tablets in a shul with the words, l'zeicher olam b'heichal Hashem, "for eternal memory in the hall of Hashem," or embroidering the name of a benefactor on the shul's paroches, curtain over the Ark, is performed so that the supporter's name will be emblazoned before Hashem in a positive light. While this may be a great merit for the contributor, charity given in a more covert manner has a much greater impact before Hashem. Having said this, we ask: Would a sane person have the paroches embroidered with the following: "I, so and so, swindled and stole money, part of which I have donated to the shul." It sounds incredible, but this is exactly what is achieved when one uses illegally derived money for tzedakah. He is making a public declaration to the Almighty. This is what I did! By sanctifying the money, one is calling attention to his iniquity. Rav Pincus demonstrates how, in fact, a good portion of our income is appropriated for holy endeavors, which is essentially a way of underscoring the origin of the funds. A large family with a number of boys studying in yeshivah, and girls in the Bais Yaakov - or affiliated - schools has a considerable tuition bill. If this money is earned under questionable means, it is used against us. If the Kohen Gadol was not permitted to enter the Kodesh HaKedoshim, Holy of Holies, on Yom Kippur wearing gold vestments, because it brought to mind the sin of the Golden Calf, why would we foolishly call attention to our miscreancies by using money questionably gained for Torah purposes? It just does not make sense. Regrettably, this has not yet stopped anyone from doing it.

We have an obligation to heed Hashem's word, regardless if an incredible opportunity to gain a fortune appears on the horizon, or even if we have what appears to be an opportunity for unrestricted spiritual growth. We are not smarter than the Almighty, by any stretch of the imagination. If He instructs us not to do something,

then we do not do it - period - regardless of vast opportunities for a quick profit. Nothing overrides the word of Hashem. Yet, there are many of us who refuse to accept this idea. They feel that the end justifies the means, so that if I were to give money gained inappropriately to a yeshivah, I am purifying myself. This is total nonsense.

In his Kovetz Maamarim, Horav Elchanan Wasserman, zl, quotes Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl, on this topic. The founder of the Mussar movement posits that some individuals justify the use of ill-gained money for charity or acting anti-thetically to Torah dictate, if it will, in the end, positively enhance spirituality. They foolishly think that if a positive development arises from a negative activity, it justifies any iniquity. In other words, the end justifies the means. What they do not realize is that whatever positive achievements may materialize, they will be short-lived, because the individual is transgressing the word of G-d. He has crossed the line. This does not engender enduring, positive results.

Rav Yisrael offered the following analogy to explain this idea. A king once sent his prime minister to another land. The king instructed the minister in very clear terms: "If the ministers of the other country engage you in conversation, be brief. I do not want you to get involved with them and under no circumstances should you agree to a wager." These instructions were repeated a number of times. The king was, for some reason, obsessed with his minister limiting his conversation with these people. Well, so be it.

The prime minister arrived in the distant country and quickly concluded his country's business. As he was preparing to leave, the ministers of that country asked him, "Tell us, are you a hunchback?" "Absolutely not," replied the prime minister. "We do not believe you. In fact, we think you are, and we can prove it!" "I am not a hunchback," was his repeated reply. "We are willing to wager one million dollars that you are a hunchback," they countered.

The prime minister remembered his king's warning against making a wager with these people, but these circumstances were clearly different. There was no question that he would win the wager and return to his king with one million dollars. Being a trusted servant to his king and an altruistic soul, he deferred and made the wager. After all, he was risking no harm. He was not a hunchback.

"We expect you to prove your claim by undressing completely and showing us that you are indeed not a hunchback." The prime minister quickly undressed and displayed that his posture was perfectly aligned. The ministers looked at him sheepishly, as they handed over one million dollars to him. The prime minister returned home very excited about the unexpected gift that he had for the king.

When he related to the king the story of his successful trip and how he had won the bet, the king's face suddenly turned ashen: "You fool! I told you not to accept a wager from them. Do you have any idea how much your disregard of my instructions will cost me? Ninety-nine million dollars!"

The prime minister was shocked by his king's reaction, and he stared in disbelief as the king continued to berate him. "A few months ago, I made a one-hundred million dollar wager with the king of that country that he could never convince my prime minister to undress himself in public. He, of course, claimed that he could persuade my minister to undress. Well, he won. You made one million dollars for me, but your lack of adherence to my command cost the royal treasury ninety-nine million dollars."

We often think that our goals and objectives take precedence, overshadowing the means we employ for getting there. Apparently, we are wrong. Not only do our achievements not endure, we ultimately create an environment which will take us even further back than we originally had been.

When one shall become guilty regarding one of these matters, he shall confess what he has sinned. (5:5)

Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl, makes note of the Torah's use of the reflective form, v'hisvadah, which actually means, "And he shall acknowledge/confess to himself." Indeed, the Torah usually uses this form of expression concerning the sinner's confession. The reason is simple: The sinner does not have to express his guilt to another man - and certainly not to Hashem. The Almighty is quite aware of his iniquity, and people have no business knowing. One must confess to himself; he must confront the fact that he has sinned. Such an admission of guilt to oneself is the very first, critical step on the road to teshuvah, complete repentance. This solemn resolution, this personal acknowledgement of his wrongdoing, is a pre-requisite for his Korban Asham, Guilt-Offering. For the korban, as such, presupposes the sinner's sincere decision to repent; the offering is the external expression of his inner resolve. Without viduy, the offering is meaningless.

Self-knowledge is the first step in the individual's resolve to repent. Free of delusions, one sees with acuity exactly what it is that he did and where he went wrong. No cover-ups, no self-deceptions cloak reality and conceal the truth. With such an attitude, the sinner can be expected to continue his life in a punctilious manner, free of guilt and the various "hang-ups" that accompany it. Upon confessing to "himself," it is essential that the sinner not speak in general terms, but rather, focus on the specific sin, its source and motivation. Only then can he begin to grapple with its aftermath in order to commence on the road to recovery. Without confronting the actual misdeed, the fear remains that he could be enticed to sin again.

Every time an individual brought a Korban Chatas, Sin-offering, Asham, Guilt-Offering, or Olah, Elevation/Burnt-Offering, he expressed Viduy. As the owner/sinner placed his hand upon the offering, he would utter the words of Viduy. The concept of v'hisvadah is far-removed from the popular notion of confession, which is so much a part of the religious dogma of several other religions. The admission of guilt to another person is a mistake. The truly repentant sinner should keep an improper exposure of shame, within his heart. This does not preclude cases of therapy, in which admission of guilt to the therapist is a factor in his cure. It is just that disclosure of sins that involve only our relationship with Hashem need be known only to Him.

Another aspect to self-awareness and self-knowledge comes to the fore when we instruct others - students, children and friends - how to act. We must remember that we cannot expect others to do more than we ourselves do, and, for that, we must know ourselves. In Sefer Tehillim 147:19, David HaMelech says, Magid devarim l'Yaakov, chukav u'mishpatav l'Yisrael. "He relates His word to Yaakov, His statutes and judgments to Yisrael." The commentators observe that Hashem has given us His laws and statutes, which He Himself observes. The Almighty does not ask us to do what He Himself does not do.

Some individuals have the audacity to expect of others what they themselves do not do. Parents often expect greater perfection from their children than they do of themselves. This is hypocritical and ineffective. Perhaps we might say in defense of these parents that they are unaware of - or refuse to confront - the realities governing their own lives. Often, those who expect more of their children than they do of themselves are unaware of their own missteps and lack of achievements. They have found ways to justify their own shortcomings, usually by blaming others, but refuse to do the same for their children. One should confront his own demons before placing heavy, unrealistic goals on his children. It will avert much pain and depression later on in life, for both parent and child.

Rabbi Dr. Abraham Twerski relates the story of a couple who had a son who indulged heavily in sweets. Aware that this practice was detrimental to their son's health, they were desperate for him to stop. The son had a great interest in the political activist and Indian ideologue, Mahatma Ghandi. The parents decided that they would take their son to Ghandi; perhaps he could exercise his authority and prevail upon the boy to refrain from eating sweets. It took some time, and the expense was great, but they finally reached Ghandi and told him of their problem. He told them to return in two weeks. They begged and pleaded with him, explaining that the cost in time and money was prohibitive. Ghandi refused to yield. It would either be two weeks or nothing. The parents could do nothing but agree to return. Two weeks went by, and they returned to Ghandi, who embraced the boy and said gently, but firmly, "Son, you must stop eating sugar and candy. It is harmful to your health." That was it. The entire conversation took less than a minute. The parents were understandably incredulous. "Why did you make us wait two weeks at such great expense to us. What you told our son could have been said two weeks ago!" Ghandi shook his head and replied, "No. I could not have said this two weeks ago. You see, two weeks ago, I was still myself hooked on sweets. I could not tell your child not to do something that I myself was doing." One should never ask someone to do something that he himself is not doing.

I'zchar nishmas Yehoshua ben Avraham Pinchas z"l Mr. Josh Norowitz niftar 8 Adar 5769 By Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Norowitz

From Rabbi Yissocher Frand ryfrand@torah.org & genesis@torah.org
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Subject Rabbi Frand on Parsha

Rabbi Yissocher Frand - Parshas Vayikra

The Netziv and Lord Acton Convey The Same Idea

Parshas Vayikra deals almost exclusively with the various sacrifice offerings people bring on different occasions. Chapter 4 specifically deals with the varying sin offerings different individuals have to bring, depending on their status and the circumstances of their sin. We have laws regarding "a soul who sins", then laws regarding "the anointed priest who sins", then laws regarding sins by the nation as a whole, based on an erroneous ruling by the Beis Din [Jewish Court], and finally we have the laws of a "Nasi" (referring to the Jewish King) who sins.

When introducing the various laws, there is something unique about the wording used to refer to the sin of the King (Nasi). In speaking about the individual, the Kohen, and the Congregation as a whole the pasuk always uses the expression "Im" or "Ki" (connoting "if"). However, by the King, the pasuk uses the expression "ASHER Nasi yecheta" (WHEN the Nasi will sin), connoting a certainty that this will happen.

Why is this so? The Seforno writes that it is indeed to be expected that the King will sin. He cites the pasuk "And Yeshurun waxed fat and revolted" [Devorim 32:15]. This is one of the truths of the ages, most famously articulated by a British foreign minister, Lord Acton, who said: "Power corrupts." This is what the Torah is saying and this is what the Seforno is saying as well. "ASHER Nasi yecheta" – We

can almost count on it that the King will commit a sin because of his power and position.

The Netziv in his He'Emek Davar expands upon the Seforno's idea. The pasuk [Vayikra 4:22] reads: "When the Nasi will sin and will do one of all the commandments of Hashem, His G-d, that should not be done, inadvertently and he will be guilty." Now let us put ourselves back into High School English class and diagram this sentence. No doubt if we wrote such a sentence and tried to diagram it, our English teacher would cut us into pieces. The modifier is in the wrong place. The word "b'shgaga" (inadvertently) should really be written near the beginning of the pasuk – "v'asa b'sh gaga" (and he will do inadvertently that which Hashem said not to do).

That is not how the pasuk reads. The pasuk reads, "He will do one of the commandments Hashem said not to do inadvertently..." In explaining this apparent misplacement of the word "inadvertently," the Netziv writes that the pasuk is hinting that monarchy leads to the transgression of such serious sins that normally one would not even do them inadvertently.

This is an amazing Netziv. The pasuk is saying that because he is the Nasi, he is going to commit a sin that is so bad that most people would not even do it by accident! The average person would never worship Avodah Zarah [idolatry] even inadvertently. But the Nasi has such power and operates in such circles that he is likely to commit even those sins that normally no one commits, even accidentally! This idea of the Netziv is very much in line with the second part of the above-quoted saying of Lord Acton: "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Another Interpretation of the Same Phrase

Rashi quotes a Medrash regarding this above cited expression "Asher Nasi Yecheta." The Medrash links the word "Asher" with the word "Ashrei" [Happy are they]. The connotation is "Happy is the generation who has a leader who is concerned enough to offer a sin offering to seek atonement for his iniquities."

The Pasuk is dealing with an unintentional sin. The King has to admit that he has committed such a sin. This takes a lot of courage. He must humble himself and go to the Kohen in the Temple and tell him that he sinned by accident. This is not so easy to do. In spite of the embarrassment and political ramifications and even Chilul Hashem that may be involved, he humbles himself and admits that he acted in error. If the King can rise above all the pressures to ignore his mistakes and admit them, then indeed happy is the generation who has such a ruler.

I recently read the following story about the Steipler Gaon (Rav Yakov Yisrael Kanievsky) written up by Rav Mordechai Kamenetsky. Everyone wanted to have the honor of the Steipler Gaon, one of the great men of the generation, attending his sons' Bar Mitzvah. As Steipler Gaon became older, it became more difficult for him to go to Simchas. He could spend his whole Shabbos in Bnei Brak going from one Bar Mitzvah to another. There came a point where he had to tell people that he was no longer able to attend Bar Mitzvahs.

However, the Steipler Gaon made an exception and did attend one Bar Mitzvah. After davening, the Steipler Gaon wished the boy Mazal Tov, bent over to whisper something into the boy's ear and spoke to the young boy for a couple of minutes. The boy responded, "No, no, it is alright!" Then the Steipler left.

This was not your typical "Mazal Tov you should grow up to be a Gadol b'Yisrael." It took longer than that. Everyone was wondering what the Steipler wanted from this young Bar Mitzvah boy and what was the meaning of the Bar Mitzvah boy's reaction (No, no, it's alright!)?

What had happened? Six years previously, when this boy was 7 years old, he was davening in the same shul where the Steipler davened

and apparently he had a very large Siddur. The Steipler saw him and thought he was learning out of a Gemara in the middle of davening. He went over to him in the middle of davening and mistakenly criticized him for learning while he should be davening. The boy showed the Steipler he was using a Siddur not a Gemara. The Steipler was very apologetic and asked for forgiveness. The seven year old told him at the time it was okay, he forgave him.

However, the Steipler made a mental note of the event and 6 years later, came to this boy's Bar Mitzvah and explained to him that when he was a katan [a minor], he was not legally eligible to give mechilla [forgiveness]. Therefore, the Steipler was once again asking for forgiveness from him as a adult (gadol). It was regarding this that the young Bar Mitzvah boy responded to the Steipler, "No, no, it's alright I've forgiven you already!"

This is an illustration of Rashi's comment: Happy is the generation who has leaders and Gedolim who are big enough to admit mistakes... and to admit them even to young children! Asher Nasi Yecheta. Ashrei [Happy is] the generation that has such a Nasi. Transcribed by David Twersky Seattle, WA; Technical Assistance by David Hoffman, Baltimore, MD RavFrاند, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Torah.org.

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Parsha Parables By Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Parshas Vayikra- 5771

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Parsha Parables Stories & Anecdotes that Illuminate the Weekly Torah Portion and Holidays

5 Adar 2 5771 - Friday, March 11, 2011

Animal Rites and Rights

This week we begin Sefer VaYikra, the Book of the Torah that deals mostly with sacrifices, the esoteric service of bringing animals upon the altar of the mizbeach, either as atonement or as grace or for a variety of reasons or circumstances explicated throughout the Book of Leviticus.

It is not the domain of Faxhomily to analyze the complex issues and abstruse meaning of these sacrifices; after all, tomes have been written by the sages of history, Maimonides and those on his level, to understand the complexities of the theology of sacrifice. However, I do want to point to an interesting Rashi that seems to be a bit superfluous. The parsha begins, "And Hashem called to Moshe from the Ohel Moed, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: When Adam (a man) from [among] you brings a sacrifice to the Lord; from animals, from cattle, or from the flock you shall bring your sacrifice'" (Leviticus 1:2).

Rashi immediately notes the curious expression, "When Adam from among you." Indeed Adam can mean man or a human, but the Torah normally does not use that noun to connote individuals. Instead it uses the word Ish, man. Why does the Torah use the word Adam? Rashi explains that the Torah comes to teach us a lesson. Just as Adam owned everything and it was impossible to offer any stolen merchandise upon the altar, thus his descendants should be like Adam and not bring stolen animals to the altar.

I recently saw a poignant question, posed in the name of the Chasam Sofer. Using stolen items for mitzvos is taboo across the board. It is known as Mitzvah Habah b'Aveirah, a good deed done via a sin. Such an act is rendered invalid. In fact, the prophet compares a stole animal to a wounded one, "And you say, 'Here is a weary one,' and you cause it pain, says the Lord of Hosts. And you brought that

which was taken by violence, and the lame, and the sick. And you bring an offering - will I accept it from your hand?" (Malachi 1:13). So why does Rashi have to establish a new prohibition? After all service through stealing is already prohibited.

The Story

Rav Sholom Schwadron, famed Maggid of Jerusalem, once was accosted by a group of self righteous teens who mocked his Shabbos attire, particularly his fur shtreimel, the staple of the sartorial splendor of the Yerushalmi Shabbos wardrobe. He did not cower, instead he declared to them, "Chicken killers! You all are chicken killers!" The teens stopped in their tracks. What was the arcane rabbi referring to? He did not stop. "Because the chicken can't fight back you have to kill it?"

The leader of the group looked at him incredulously, "Rabbi. Everyone eats chicken!"

"Is 'Everybody doing it' a reason that it is acceptable?" asked Rav Sholom.

"OK!" said the boy, and this time he began to have a civil dialogue.

"So why do people eat chickens?"

Rav Sholom answered softly, "How old are you?"

"Seventeen."

"So this is a question that you should have asked four years ago! Before your bar mitzvah. Truth be told, the Talmud says that a boor cannot eat meat. If one is no better than an animal, he has no right to rule over it. If one lives a Torah life, then he has permission to rule over the anima and use it for his benefit. However, if one is no different than an animal in his behavior, than killing it for his pleasure is prohibited."

The Message

Rav Ezra Attiah zt'l (1885 -1970), Rosh Yeshiva of Porat Yosef in Israel, explains that Rashi is telling us a poignant secret. Bringing a sacrifice is not a simple act. If one does not have the proper intent, he is stealing as well! If one is not on the level of a true penitent, then he is indeed stealing. He may not be stealing an animal from another human, but he is stealing the life of the animal from the animal itself! Indeed, the Torah tells us, that if one himself is not right, then he has no right to dominate an animal for his own rite!

Good Shabbos

Dedicated by Yaakov and Ruchi Hagler in honor of the upcoming marriage of their son Yosef, to Daniella Samuels

In honor of Ronald and Sonya Krigsman shetichyu. Saadia and Sorala Krigsman and family, Chaim and Ann Krigsman and family, Tzvi and Hudi Krigsman and family, Meyer and Sharon Weissman and family
Yeshiva of South Shore | 1170 William Street | Hewlett | NY | 11557

From Jeffrey Gross <jgross@torah.org>

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Subject Weekly Halacha - Parshas Terumah

by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt (dneustadt@cordetroit.com)

Yoshev Rosh - Vaad HaRabanim of Detroit

Weekly Halacha

by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

Lighting Shabbos Candles * Part III

Question: Is it permitted to light one Shabbos candle from another?

Discussion: Yes, it is permitted. While it is not permitted to use a lit Shabbos candle to ignite a match or to melt the bottom of another candle so that it should adhere to the candlestick, it is permitted to

use a lit candle to light another candle.¹ The best way to do this is to pick up the unlit candle, light it, and then put that candle back into its candlestick.²

Question: Is it preferable to kindle the Shabbos lights with olive oil rather than with wax candles?

Discussion: Many early sources speak about olive oil as being the preferred medium for the Shabbos lights,³ as the flame that it produces is the clearest and the purest. On Shabbos, when we want to avoid anything that could lead to tampering with the wicks or adjusting the light source, the Sages preferred the use of olive oil because the light it casts is superior to that of other oils. Nowadays, however, when wax candles cast as good — or even better — a light as olive oil, there is no halachic advantage to using olive oil rather than candles.⁴

Question: What should a woman do if, after lighting the candles, a gust of wind blows them out, or they tip over and are extinguished?

Discussion: That depends on the particulars:

* If some or all of the candles blow out before the woman recites the blessing over them, she should relight the candles and recite the blessing.⁵

* If some or all of the candles blow out after the blessing is recited, she should instruct a household member who did not yet “accept” Shabbos to relight the candles on her behalf.⁶ No blessing is recited over the second lighting.

* If there are no household members available who can kindle the lights for her, or if the candles blow out after sunset (or even before sunset but after Shabbos has begun for the entire community), she should do nothing.⁷ If, however, she will be distressed or even merely upset about not having lit candles for Shabbos, she may instruct a non-Jew to relight the candles on her behalf.⁸

Question: Last week we mentioned that women customarily observe all Shabbos restrictions upon lighting candles, even though they are lighting well in advance of sunset. Is this custom mandatory or is it optional, i.e., may a woman stipulate that she is not “accepting” Shabbos when she lights candles?

Discussion: This is a matter of dispute among the Rishonim. Some maintain that Shabbos begins automatically with candle lighting, and women have no choice in the matter. Accordingly, any stipulation that they may make to the contrary is invalid. Others, however, hold that women may stipulate that they do not “accept” Shabbos when lighting candles.⁹

The final halachic ruling is a compromise between the two views. Under normal circumstances, not “accepting” Shabbos when lighting candles is forbidden. But if a special need arises, then an exception is made and a woman is allowed to make such a pre-condition — either verbally or mentally — before lighting candles.¹⁰

It is difficult to define what exactly falls under the “special needs” category and what does not. When in doubt, one should consult a rabbinic authority.¹¹

Question: Must all members of the household “accept” Shabbos when the lady of the house kindles the Shabbos lights?

Discussion: Not necessarily. The basic halachah holds that Shabbos begins with the lighting of candles only for the lady of the house who is lighting the Shabbos candles. All other household members, including any girls in the house who do not light candles, are not obligated to begin observing Shabbos until sunset, or at a designated earlier time when the entire community “accepts” Shabbos.¹²

The poskim stress, however, that it is highly praiseworthy for all members of the household to make every effort to begin

Shabbos when the ladies light candles.¹³ There are two reasons for this:

* There is a minority view among the Rishonim that Shabbos actually begins about fifteen minutes before sunset.¹⁴ Although most poskim do not rule in accordance with this view, it is still advisable to attempt to satisfy this opinion as well.¹⁵

* Waiting until the last minute before sunset places one in great danger of “missing the deadline” and inadvertently desecrating the Shabbos.¹⁶

In addition, Rav M. Feinstein writes that he undertook a personal stringency not to ride in a car after candle lighting time, since it appears to some people as a desecration of Shabbos.¹⁷

Question: Are all Shabbos restrictions in full effect once the lady of the house has lit candles?

Discussion: A number of exceptions apply in the interim period between candle lighting and the onset of Shabbos:

* The lady of the house may instruct any other person — Jew [who has not yet “accepted” the Shabbos] or non-Jew — to do anything on her behalf that is needed for Shabbos.¹⁸

* If, after lighting candles, she realized that she forgot to wrap a towel around the soup pot (in order to retain its heat), some poskim permit her to do so,¹⁹ while others are more stringent.²⁰

* If she is very thirsty, she may drink some water to quench her thirst.²¹

Some poskim hold that, b’diavad, she may daven Friday’s Minchah even after lighting Shabbos candles.²²

1 Mishnah Berurah 263:4.

2 To satisfy the opinion which holds that once lit, Shabbos candles should not be moved; see Discussion for Tishrei 21.

3 See Tosafos, Shabbos 23a (s.v. mereish), Sefer Chasidim 272 and Ma’asei Rav, quoting the custom of the Gaon of Vilna.

4 Mishnah Berurah 264:23. See Az Nidberu 3:4.

5 Rav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos k’Hilchasah 4, note 183).

6 O.C. 263:17.

7 She would not be required to add an additional candle in subsequent weeks, since her failure to light candles was not her fault.

8 Based on Beir Halachah 263:1 (s.v. lehadlik).

9 Both views are quoted in O.C. 263:10. There is a minority view that permits women to accept Shabbos “partially,” i.e., accepting it for certain restriction and not for others. See, however, Har Tzvi, O.C. 139, who rejects this opinion.

10 Mishnah Berurah 263:44.

11 For instance: Praying at the Kosel is definitely an uplifting and inspiring experience. Yet Rav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos k’Hilchasah 43, note 137) ruled that a woman may not stipulate that she is not accepting Shabbos in order to travel there after lighting candles, as this is not considered a “special need.”

12 Rama O.C. 263:10.

13 Mishnah Berurah 261:23.

14 This is the view of Sefer Yere’im, and it is quoted as halachah by the Bach and the Magen Avraham.

15 Sha’ar ha-Tziyun 261:21 and Beir Halachah (s.v. m’tchilas); Igros Moshe, O.C. 4:62.

16 Mishnah Berurah 263:16.

17 Igros Moshe, O.C. 1:96.

18 O.C. 263:17.

19 Rav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos k’Hilchasah, 43, note 113).

20 Igros Moshe, O.C. 4:74, hatmanah 1.

21 Da’as Torah, O.C. 271:4.

22 See Shemiras Shabbos k’Hilchasah 43, note 128.

mitzvah was counted, there should be seventeen mitzvos, eleven positive and six negative ones.

Explaining our Question

Now I can explain what I meant in the title to this article. Although we generally follow the Rambam's count of mitzvos, in this instance the Rambam is a minority opinion. Based on substantive proofs, the later authorities contend that we should not follow his approach, but consider this a lo saaseh (Malbim; Sfas Emes, Zevachim 64a; To'afos Re'im; Hirsch; Rav Yeruchem Fishel Perla's commentary of Rav Saadiah, Lo Saaseh 194). That means that we have a total of 614 mitzvos, the Rambam's 613 plus this mitzvah, or, even more specifically, we will have 366 negative mitzvos, rather than the 365 that the Gemara mentions. Obviously, we have counted something as a mitzvah that we should not have! We need to determine which negative mitzvah counted by the Rambam must be removed from the list in order to make room for this one.

Since none of the mitzvos that the Rambam selected have volunteered to resign, we are left with the unenviable responsibility of deciding which one to remove.

Assuming this awesome responsibility brings to my mind the epigram originally written by the Eighteenth Century English poet, Alexander Pope: Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

Of course, I am not advocating the rewrite of any part of Sefer Hachinuch. I am merely suggesting that there is much to gain by exploring some candidates for de-mitzvah-ication. This certainly provides an opportunity to examine and appreciate what is involved in "counting mitzvos."

Watch that Mikdash!

One possible candidate could be the lo saaseh requiring the kohanim and the levi'im to guard the Mishkan/Beis Hamikdash by posting watchmen in various places. Just as Buckingham Palace has a military detail guarding the monarch's residence, so too, the "palace" that we erect in Hashem's honor must have an honor guard (Rambam, Hilchos Beis Habechirah 8:1). The Mishkan and the Beis Hamikdash certainly deserve as much pomp and honor as a mortal king receives!

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

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

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Making Way for a new Mitzvah - Or - Which Mitzvah Should we Drop?

By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

What do you mean by "dropping" a mitzvah? Drop it from what? And what does this question have to do with this week's parshah? To understand the question properly, we need to study some background material. The Gemara (Makkos 23b) teaches that Hashem commanded 613 mitzvos, 365 negative mitzvos (lo saaseh) and 248 positive (mitzvos aseh) ones, although it does not list them. In two other articles, I discussed a bit about the dispute among the Geonim and Rishonim which mitzvos to count and a detailed analysis of the Rambam's rules for counting Mitzvos. This article will discuss a very specific problem that the Rambam creates in his interpretation of one of the mitzvos in this week's parshah.

In this week's parshah, the Sefer Hachinuch, whose list of the 613 mitzvos is entirely taken from the Rambam, counts sixteen mitzvos, eleven positive and five negative ones. The problem is that, according to most authorities, both he and the Rambam should have counted one more negative mitzvah, for a total of six negative mitzvos and seventeen mitzvos in the parshah.

Which mitzvah are they accused of omitting?

The Torah mentions many types of korbanos in the course of the parshah, some of animals, some of birds, and some of flour. When the olah offering is placed on the mizbei'ach, the altar, the Torah requires that it first be cut up into large pieces, similar in size to the large pieces of meat that a butcher may receive. It is forbidden to cut the meat into smaller pieces in order to place them on the mizbei'ach, nor may one place the entire carcass on the mizbei'ach without first cutting it up.

However, when the Torah discusses offering a bird as an olah, usually called the olas ha'of, the halachah is different and one may place the entire bird on the mizbei'ach at once, just as people commonly barbecue an entire bird. But what happens if the kohen chose to separate the bird in half before placing it on the mizbei'ach? According to the Rambam, one may separate the bird into parts if one chooses (Hilchos Maasei Hakorbanos 6:22). However, most authorities prohibit this, contending that severing the bird violates one of the 365 negative commandments of the Torah (Behag; Yerei'im). Thus, in their opinion, one who severs the bird commits a punishable offence similar to wearing shatnez or eating non-kosher!

Lo Yavdil

The above dispute stems from two differing approaches how to interpret two words at the beginning of this week's parshah: "lo yavdil," (Vayikra 1:17). Does the Torah mean, he (the kohen processing the olas ha'of) is not required to separate it, or does the Torah mean, he shall not separate it.

Since the Rambam interprets the words according to the first explanation, and therefore rules that one may separate the bird, he does not count this as a mitzvah, and the Sefer Hachinuch follows this approach. As a result, the Sefer Hachinuch does not count this mitzvah among those of this week's parshah. He counts sixteen mitzvos, eleven positive and five negative ones, whereas if this

dropped from the Rambam's count to make room for the mitzvah in this week's parsha that we want to include.

A Tamei Entering the Mikdash

We will now explore a different candidate, counted by the Rambam, that we might want to remove from the list in order to resolve our original question. The Torah prohibits a tamei person from entering the Beis Hamikdash area. This mitzvah is of course very dear to us in a discussion taking place in the season when our thoughts are drawn to our desire to bring the korban Pesach soon.

People usually become tamei by contacting tumah from a tamei source, such as a corpse or animal carcass. Such people are prohibited *min haTorah* only from entering the courtyard (*chatzeir*) of the Mishkan, or its corresponding area of the Beis Hamikdash, the Azarah, but not the rest of the Mishkan or the Beis Hamikdash (*Pesachim* 67a). The Rambam counts this prohibition as *lo saaseh* 77, deriving it from the verse: They shall not contaminate their encampments (*Bamidbar* 5:3).

There is another, more severe, category of tumah called *tumah yotzei migufo*, tumah that originates in the body, which includes such types of tumah as *zav* and *niddah*. These types of tumah are listed in *Parshas Tazria*, which we will read shortly after Pesach. People afflicted with these types of tumah may not enter the entire area called *machaneh leviyah*, which includes the entire *Har Habayis*, called in English, "The Temple Mount." It is for this reason that someone entering the *Har Habayis* must immerse himself verse in a *mikveh* before entering this holy area. (I am not advocating entering the *Har Habayis* area. I personally am opposed to doing so because of several potential violations involved. I am merely noting here that one who does enter must be certain to be *tahor* from these types of tumah.

One Mitzvah or Two?

Although everyone agrees that the Torah created two different levels of prohibition in entering holy areas, the question is whether we count them as two separate mitzvos within the count of 365 negative mitzvos, or as one. The Rambam counts them as two separate *lo saaseh* mitzvos, numbers 77 and 78, deriving the second prohibition from the verse, He shall not enter the middle of the camp (*Devarim* 23:11), whereas others count these as one mitzvah (*Smag*, *Lo saaseh* #304). Thus, by following the *Smag*'s decision to count these two laws as one mitzvah, we would now have only 364 mitzvos *lo saaseh* and be able to add our parshah's extra mitzvah, not to sever the *olas ha'of*, in order to bring our numbers back up to 365.

Kosher Choices

Having discussed several mitzvos germane to the Beis Hamikdash where we might be able to "delete" a mitzvah, let us see if there are any other candidates. In the world of *kashrus* we can nominate not one, but two candidates:

The Rambam counts a total of five different negative commandments connected with eating insects and other small creatures (*Lo saaseh* numbers 175- 179) that fall under five different categories. These mitzvos are not mutually exclusive; quite the contrary, a particular creature may be included under several, or perhaps even all, of these prohibitions. The five prohibitions are:

1. Not to eat small flying creatures.
2. Not to eat small crawling creatures.
3. Not to eat creatures that appear to generate from rotting material (*Hilchos Maachalos Asuros* 2:13).
4. Not to eat creatures that develop within fruits and seeds (*Hilchos Maachalos Asuros* 2:14).

5. Not to eat any small creatures. The fifth category includes any of the others, as I will explain (*Hilchos Maachalos Asuros* 2:12). One who consumes a creature that has several of these features violates a separate *lo saaseh* for each category that includes it. Thus, eating a small swimming creature will violate only one of these prohibitions (the fifth one); consuming a creature that both flies and crawls will involve three prohibitions (1, 2 and 5); if it also appears to develop from rotting material, one will violate four prohibitions (1, 2, 3, and 5), and if it develops within fruit or seeds, one will violate all five.

Where is the dispute?

Although the Rambam counts all five of these prohibitions as different mitzvos, each with its own rules, many of the other *Rishonim* do not count the third and fourth mitzvos that the Rambam counts as separate mitzvos (*Smag*; *Ramban*, *Notes to Sefer Hamitzvos*, *Shoresh* 9:9). Thus, according to the latter approach, someone who ate a small creature that flies, crawls and appears to develop from rotting material, will violate three prohibitions, not four. Consequently, they could count our original candidate, not to sever the *olah*-bird, without exceeding the limit of 365 negatives mitzvos. In fact, by excluding two mitzvos and adding only one, we would end up one mitzvah short and need to find one more to add to the list. We will leave that question for a different time.

Conclusion

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

Why the Bird?

Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch (*Vayikra* 1:17) notes that the many laws involved in the processing of an *olas ha'of* are considerably different from those of other *korbanos*. To explain this *korban*'s many anomalous rules, he notes that *Tanach* often uses a bird as a metaphor for an imperiled, defenseless person in flight from his pursuer, and that an *olas ha'of* is symbolic of how a forlorn, suffering individual relates to Hashem because of his fate. The imperiled person can use the anguish itself as a springboard for ascent and advancement by clinging to the heights of Torah ideals even in his predicament. This *korban* teaches that even when the going gets tough, one must never let go the yearning to draw closer to Hashem.