

בעזהשׁי״ת

Parshah Insights

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Insights on the Parshah

פרשת ויקרא

ALSO INCLUDED

Shabbos Erev Pesach Guidelines – part 1

Translated from the outstanding Lev Shomaya Parsha series that contain highlights of the lectures and deroshos given by:

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פרשת ויקרא

רְחֹמָא לְבָא בְעֵי

וּנְפֶשׁ כִּי־תִקְרִיב קָרְבָּן מִנְחָה לַה' סֵלֶת יְהִי קָרְבָּנוֹ
וַיִּצַק עָלֶיהָ שֶׁמֶן וְנָתַן עָלֶיהָ לְבָנָה: (ב א)

And a soul (person), when he brings a meal offering to Hashem, his offering shall be of fine flour. He shall pour oil over it and place frankincense upon it.

The Sefer of the Avodah

Right now, we stand at the beginning of Sefer Vayikra, in which the Torah instructs us with regard to the *korbanos* and all other aspects of the *avodah* in the Beis Hamikdash. Most of the *mitzvos* mentioned in this *sefer* are connected in some way to the *avodah* of the *korbanos*. (see Ramban in his preface to *Sefer Vayikra*)

It is therefore the appropriate time to study these *mitzvos* in depth. There are various *sefarim* explaining the reason and purpose of the *Avodah* of the *korbanos*. Whilst some of the explanations are easier to comprehend, others expound upon lofty ideas, more difficult for us to grasp. According to all the *meforshim*, however, the underlying purpose for the entire *avodah* in the Beis Hamikdash was to bring us closer to אָבִינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמַיִם, our Father in Heaven.

The Poor Man's Korban

הַקְרִיבָה אֶלֶיךָ - achieving closeness to Hashem, is our constant goal, regardless of the fact that we no longer have a Beis Hamikdash.

Therefore, it is worthwhile to delve into the fundamental concept of Divine closeness, to see how the *korbanos* brought it about, and how we, too, can still achieve this essential connection.

The *Posuk* directs us on how to sacrifice an עֹלֹת הָעוֹף, a bird offering. This *korban* would be offered by one who could not afford to sacrifice livestock. The Torah instructs that the wings and feathers of a תּוֹר or יוֹנָה or בְּנֵי יוֹנָה should be sacrificed together with the rest of the bird, on the *mizbeach*.

Rashi quotes a Midrash, saying that when the wings and feathers were sacrificed, they would release an unpleasant odor, one difficult for a person to withstand. The Midrash asks why the Torah commanded the bird to be sacrificed this way, given the unpleasant result. The Midrash continues, with a fascinating answer: כְּדֵי שִׂיְהֶא הַמִּזְבֵּחַ שְׂבַע וּמִהֲדָר בְּקָרְבָּנוֹ שֶׁל עָנִי - *that the Mizbeach be satisfied and beautified through the poor man's korban.*

A Sacrifice of the Heart

At first glance, the answer of the Midrash is perplexing. How exactly does a *korban* exuding an unpleasant odor beautify and satisfy the *mizbeach*? The reverse would typically be inferred.

When this Midrash is properly understood, it sheds an entirely new light on the subject of *korbanos*. The Torah commands the measly wings and feathers of a simple bird to be sacrificed in order to demonstrate that the entire purpose of the *avodah* is to bring one closer to Hashem. Therefore, whatever exactly was being sacrificed is completely irrelevant. The large and beautiful oxen offered by some were not in any way more meaningful to Hashem than the simple bird offered by others. Rather, it was the passion and heart of the one offering the *korban* that Hashem desired. Often, it is the simple contribution of the poor man, sacrificed out of immense love for Hashem with the correct intention and thought, that ultimately beautifies the *mizbeach* in the most ideal way.

The 'foul smell' of the wings and feathers is sweetened and elevated by the desire and love of the offerer. The smell thus becomes entirely inconsequential, and the *korban* brings a tremendous *nachas ruach* to Hashem. Therefore, the heartfelt *korban* of the זָבִיחַ should be sacrificed in its entirety, including the wings and feathers; no part should be left behind, since each is so precious and meaningful to Hashem. Every part of a sacrifice offered with feeling is beloved.

This clarifies a fundamental concept of the *avodah* in the Beis Hamikdash and our *avodah* in general. Hashem does not only desire "large offerings", which require a significant financial or physical outlay. Rather, it is correct intent and yearning to do His will that elevates every *mitzvah*, making it beautiful in Hashem's eyes. Regardless of how "grandiose" or conversely, how "simple" the *mitzvah* may seem, the intention and anticipation of the one who performs it determine its value.

More Beloved Than a Thousand Korbanos

The Midrash relates an episode that attests to this concept. Agrippas Hamelech once wanted to perform a truly meaningful act that would have a great impact. He decided to sacrifice one thousand *korbanos* in one day. He instructed the Kohen Gadol not to accept any other *korbanos* on that day, so that all the Beis Hamikdash's resources could be channeled towards sacrificing the one thousand עֹלוֹת he would offer, an overwhelming show of absolute love for Hashem.

That night, after all the *korbanos* had already been sacrificed, he had a dream in which he saw that the "simple" and seemingly basic *korban* of two birds sacrificed by a poor man was more beloved on High than his one thousand expensive *korbanos*.

Perplexed, he approached the kohen and asked if any other *korbanos* had been offered on that day, contrary to his original request. The Kohen Gadol replied in the affirmative. He explained that there was a poor man who would go out into the forest every day to capture

four birds. He would bring two of these birds to the Beis Hamikdash as a *korban* for Hashem and use the other two to feed his family. That day, just like every other day, he brought his *korban* of two birds to the Beis Hamikdash. However, the Kohanim told him it would not be possible to be *makriv* his *korban*.

The poor man pleaded and beseeched, claiming his entire sustenance was dependent on the sacrificing of this *korban*. Perhaps he believed that he only merited to capture four birds every morning, two of which were used to feed his family, in the *zechus* of his intention to sacrifice the other two. Or maybe he would not have permitted his family and himself to eat the other two birds that day, had he not first sacrificed two as a *korban*. Either way, upon seeing his desperation and determination, the kohanim could not refuse his request, and ultimately allowed him to be *makriv* the two birds.

The Kohen Gadol then asked Agrippas whether he believed he should have refused the poor man's heartfelt desire to be *makriv* a *korban* to Hashem, and Agrippas conceded that he was obliged to accept it. According to what Agrippas saw in his dream, it was this *korban* that had a greater impact than the thousand *korbanos* Agrippas had brought that day.

This clearly demonstrates how the heartfelt offering of a poor man who refused to acquiesce from sacrificing his *korban* could have a seemingly disproportionate impact on High. His sincere and profound understanding that his entire sustenance was only due to the sacrifices he offered was so beloved by Hashem, more meaningful than a thousand *korbanos* offered by the king.

It is important not to underestimate the great *Kiddush Hashem* the *korbanos* of Agrippas Hamelech generated. The Mishnah in (פ"ב משנה י"ז) (פ"ב) tells us that each day, dozens of kohanim were involved in the *avodah* of every single *korban* sacrificed. On the day Agrippas brought his many *korbanos*, many more kohanim had to be recruited in order to accomplish the feat. This definitely generated a significant

Kiddush Hashem, which was a great zechus. However, according to Agrippas' dream, the small but sincere offering of the poor man had an even greater impact on High.

(ויקרא רבה ג ה)

Sacrificing One's Soul

In the next *perek*, the Torah instructs us regarding the קָרְבַּן מִנְחָה, the meal-offering. The *posuk* says 'וְנִפְּשׁ כִּי תִקְרִיב קָרְבַּן מִנְחָה לַיהוָה - and when a soul will offer a *Korban Minchah* to Hashem. Rashi points out that regarding all קָרְבָּנוֹת נְדָבָה - voluntary sacrifices, the only instance the word נִפְּשׁ - "soul", is used is by *Korban Mincha*, the meal-offering. Why then is it applied here?

To explain this, Rashi relates the words from Chazal (מנחות קד:): Since the meal offering contains no animal component, it is most often sacrificed by the pauper. Hence, Hakadosh Boruch Hu says: "I account for him as though he had sacrificed his very soul!"

The *Korban Minchah* was sacrificed by the indigent, who could not afford to pay for a more expensive *korban*, not even a bird. When a desperately poor man takes off from his already meager sustenance and offers the little bit he has, it is most beloved by Hashem. Thus, the term נִפְּשׁ is used in this case. The deep-seated desire of the destitute man to sacrifice a *korban* despite his poverty is regarded as the highest sacrifice, as though he has offered his own soul. Again, it is not the *korban* itself, but the accompanying intention which is so cherished by Hashem.

The Midrash relates a story regarding a woman who brought a *Minchah* of a קִמְחָה - the smallest type of *Minchah* offering. The Kohen who received it disgraced it, saying "What are they sacrificing? What is there in it to eat, and how much exactly is there to be sacrificed?". He then saw in his dream that it had been improper of him to disgrace this *korban*, for it was as though she had been *makriv* her *nefesh*.

Whether the *korban* contains enough to eat or sacrifice is irrelevant; rather, it is the heart and soul invested in the mitzvah that counts.

(ויקרא רבה שם)

A Basket Woven with Love

By the mitzvah of *Bikkurim*, the Mishnah (ביכורים ג ח) says that the *Yidden* would bring their first-grown fruits with much fanfare and flourish, presenting them in the most exquisite possible way. In great detail, the Mishnah expounds upon the ritual of this joyous celebration. The rich man would put his many fruits into a vessel plated in silver or gold, and adorn it with elegant accessories, including birds and other fruits. The poor man, who often had only one tree, thus only one first-grown fruit to offer, would sometimes not even have a basket in which to present his fruit. He would fashion a *אָטָן*, a basket made out of simple twigs, and bring his *bikkurim* to the *Beis Hamikdash* in this fashion.

The Mishnah says that the *Kohen* took the poor man's *bikkurim*, including his *אָטָן*, and did not return it to him. Conversely, after the rich man presented his *bikkurim*, his silver- or gold-plated basket was returned to him.

One may wonder why the *kohen* kept the crude basket brought by the pauper, but returned the exquisite vessel offered by the rich man. Rabbi Dovid of Tolna would highlight an important lesson here. Since the meager basket of the pauper was so precious to Hashem, the *Kohen* did not return it, accepting it as an offering alongside his *Bikkurim*. He explained that the poor man's *Bikkurim* did not provide him with the satisfaction the rich man felt presenting his exquisite fruits to the *Kohen*. His inability to give a significant offering, and the resultant lack of satisfaction, created a mitzvah done purely *lesheim Shamayim*, rather than fulfillment or self-glorification.

This pure Mitzvah was so beloved by Hashem that the *kohen* kept the basket as a long-lasting memento, which served to eternalize this

mitzvah. Again, it is apparent that the עֲבוּדָה שֶׁבִּלֵב, the heart with which a mitzvah is performed, is the most important component of the mitzvah.

Perhaps the most important lesson derived from the *korbanos* is בְּעֵי רַחֲמָנָא לְבָא בְּעֵי - *Hashem desires the heart*; intent is what matters most to Hashem. Indeed, this does not only apply to *korbanos*, but to every mitzvah. In every aspect of *avodas Hashem*, the primary element is the heart and desire driving it, the devotion and yearning to please our Father by doing His will, and to come closer to Him. The more thought and care invested, the more it is cherished by Hashem.

The Father of Greatness

Rabbi Chaim Vital was the chief disciple of the holy Arizal, the vehicle through which the Torah of the Ari Hakodosh was disseminated and passed on to all future generations. His father was an *ehrlche* Yid named R' Yosef, who worked as a *Sofer*. In what merit did he have a son who was such a קְדוֹשׁ וְעֵלְיוֹן, an elevated and holy individual?

The Beis Yosef said that half the world was sustained in the merit of the father of R' Chaim Vital. This was revealed to him by his Maggid. (It is known that the Beis Yosef merited to be instructed by a maggid - a private angelic teacher who revealed many sacred secrets to him, recorded in his *sefer* מְגִיד מִשְׁרִים). What were the great *zechusim* of R' Chaim Vital's father, that resulted in such amazing blessings?

The Maggid revealed that it was because R' Yosef invested such considerable effort into writing tefillin that he was considered so supremely righteous. He infused every single word he wrote with elevated *kavonos* and *Yiras Shamayim*.

Perhaps it was apparent that he was an *ehrlche yid*, but there were definitely many righteous Torah scholars in his generation that must have appeared to be holier than him. Perhaps it seemed as though he

was just fulfilling his job as a *sofer*, writing tefillin for young *bachurim* and others who needed it.

Here, once again, it becomes apparent that it is not only the substantive action one performs that is important; rather, it is the intent and desire involved. R' Yosef rose to unbelievable spiritual heights by living his life only for the sake of Hashem, and focusing on *Ratzon Hashem* in his every waking moment. His entire essence was that of an *Eved Hashem*. Therefore, his *סופרות*, his writing of *tefillin*, was an act of supreme holiness infused with the highest levels of *kedusha*.

(Partially brought down in the *ספר החזיונות*, by Reb Chaim Vital).

Each Person According to His Ability

Though we have expounded upon the notion that Hashem desires one's heart regardless of the physical manifestation of the mitzvah, it is important not to err by relying solely on this, thinking that it is therefore acceptable, or even preferable, to perform *mitzvos* in a simple way.

The Chofetz Chaim points out that in the Beis Hamikdash, every person would bring sacrifices according to his means and ability. With many obligatory *korbanos*, either one brought to atone for a sin, or in other situations where one would be required to bring a *korban*, the Torah obligates each individual according to his means.

Were one to be financially blessed, he would have had to bring a livestock *korban*. One who could not afford to, though, could bring two birds or a *קרבן מנחה*, an offering of a small amount of flour. However, if a man of means would bring a meager offering, it was considered a *חלין לעזרה* - an unsacred offering, a disgrace unto the holiness of the Beis Hamikdash. Such a *korban* was *possul*, unacceptable, and considered a Torah transgression. Hence, the means

of the person actually defined which *korban* was a kosher and acceptable *korban* for him individually.

(חפץ חיים עה"ת)

This is also true with other *mitzvos*, such as *tzedakah* and *chessed*. One who gives far below his means renders his 'offering' shameful. One must try to perform each *mitzvah* in the most ideal way, and attempt to achieve *מְצוּחָה* according to the Torah. A person must attempt to glorify each *mitzvah* according to *his* ability. He must give as much *tzedakah* as his financial situation allows, and he must learn Torah and do *chessed* according to the amount of *kochos* and ability Hashem has granted him.

However, he should always keep in mind that it is neither the number of hours he has dedicated to a *mitzvah*, nor the resources he has invested, that are the define the value of his *avodah*. Rather, it is his focus on doing *ratzon Hashem* and being a faithful *eved Hashem* that is most important.

The *Korban* of an *עֲגִי*, infused with *אֶהְבֵּת ה'*, beautified the *מְזִבְחָה* in the most elevated way. It may have been lacking in physical beauty and the smell may have been highly unpleasant, but since the man was offering according to his means, with his whole heart and an overriding desire to come close to his Father, the *קִרְבָּנוֹ* was *תְּמִימִים*, exceedingly perfect.

Best of the Breed

The Rambam says that with every *korban*, a person was obligated to bring the best of the breed. For example, if he had to bring a sheep, he would have had to search for the fattest, most beautiful sheep he could find. If he were to bring a bird, it should be the nicest bird he can acquire. The Rambam continues, explaining that this concept applies to every *mitzvah*. Should a person build a shul, he should ensure it is more ornate and better designed than his own home. If he feeds a pauper, he should offer the best food on his table. If he clothes

a poor man, he should provide him with the finest clothes he can offer. He quotes the *posuk* (וַיִּקְרָא ג טו) 'כָּל חֵלֶב לֵה' - *the 'fattest' of every breed should be for Hashem*, as a proof of the need to always seek to perform a mitzvah in the most ideal way possible.

This again indicates that though the *korban* of the poor man is supremely beloved as the intention is of primary importance, each person should seek to perform every mitzvah in the most ideal way possible for him.

Indeed, when the above-mentioned *posuk* talks about an עוֹלַת הָעוֹף, it concludes that this offering is (וַיִּקְרָא א ט) 'אִשָּׁה רִיחַ גִּיחַח לֵה' - *a sacrifice that brings a nachas ruach to Hashem*. Rashi points out that this expression is used both in relation to the *korban* of a bird and that of livestock. He explains that אָחַד הַמְרֻבָּה וְאָחַד הַמִּמְעִיט - *(Both) one who brings more, and one who brings less create a nachas ruach for Hashem*. בְּלִבְדּוֹ שֶׁיִּכְוֶן לְבוֹ לְשָׂמִים - *The most important factor is if he directs his heart to Hashem*. The impact of the *korban* is not contingent on the content, but rather entirely dependent on the intent of the one who sacrifices it.

May we merit to perform every *mitzvah* with a pure desire to do *ratzon Hashem*, and in that *zechus* may we finally be able to sacrifice *korbanos*, including the *Korban Pesach*, again, in the *Beis Hamikdash Hashlishi* אָמֵן בְּקִרְוֹב אָמֵן!

גוֹט שַׁבָּת



**קיצור הלכות לערב פסח שחל בשבת
חלק א'**

Shabbos Erev Pesach Guidelines - part 1

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYIKRA - 7TH NISSAN

- ❖ This year, when *Erev Pesach* falls on *Shabbos*, the accepted custom is for the *Shabbos Hagodol Droshe* to be delivered on the previous *Shabbos* (*Maharil*, quoted by *Elya Zuta*, *Pri Megadim* and *Mishna Beruro*. But *Chok Yaakov* quotes a *girsas* from the first edition of *Maharil* stating that the *droshe* is given on *Erev Pesach*).
- ❖ Some have the custom to say the *piyutim* for *Shabbos Hagodol* on this *Shabbos* (*Maharil* - as there is no point in teaching the *halochos* contained in the *piyutim* on *Erev Pesach* after all preparations have been done. See also *Likutei Maharich*), and some say them after *Kaddish Tiskabeil* (*Hagoddo Divrei Yoel* 104). But the reading of the *Hagodo* in the afternoon does not take place on this *Shabbos*.
- ❖ *Viyehi Noam* is recited on this *Motzei Shabbos* (*Shaarei Teshuva* 295:2).

SALE OF CHOMETZ

- ❖ According to the *halocho* one may sell *chometz* to a non-Jew all day Friday (as one may still benefit from *chometz*. In fact, *Maharam Shick Orach Chayim* 25 and 112, and *Imrei Yosher* 1:146 consider it better that the sale takes place later in the day), but the custom is to arrange the sale before the final time for sale of *chometz* as in other years (*Shoel U'Meishiv* 6:146). If one did not carry out the

sale earlier in the day, it can be done till just before Shabbos commences.

- ❖ Some make the sale agreement with a non-Jew before Shabbos, stipulating that it will take effect on Shabbos just before the time when *chometz* may no longer be owned, but others disagree and there are differing customs on this. Rav Akiva Eger (1:159) writes it is forbidden to arrange for a sale to be made on Shabbos, but *Igros Moshe (Orach Chayim 3:44)* writes that this does not apply in this case, and *Arugas Habosem (103)* arranged the sale for Shabbos. See also *Maharsham (Daas Torah 444)*. (Rav Yosef Chayim Sonnenfeld was particular to stipulate that the sale would take effect a few minutes before Shabbos (*Luach Eretz Yisroel 5670*).

If someone had forgotten to sell his *chometz* before Shabbos, the *Chok Yaakov* and *Elia Rabba (444)* allow this to be done on Shabbos - as it is not a normal business deal, but a way of avoiding the *issur* of owning *chometz* on Pesach, but the *Beis Meir (Even Ho'ezer 37:7)* and *Pri Megodim (444)* disagree, and their view is accepted in practice.

- ❖ Those who arrange for the sale to take effect on Shabbos have the benefit that any *chometz* left over on Shabbos can still be included in the sale. On the other hand they must be careful not to destroy *chometz* after the time set for the sale to take effect (see *Minchas Efrayim 102*, discussing whether someone who finds sold *chometz* on Pesach may destroy it).

THURSDAY 12TH NISSAN

- ❖ This year, when *Erev Pesach* is Shabbos, the firstborns fast on the Thursday before (*Shulchan Oruch* and *Remo 470:2*). Mogen Avrohom explains that one does not fast on Erev Shabbos. *Kaf Hachayim 23* quotes *Divrei Menachem* saying that a father does not have to fast for his firstborn son this year), although some fast on Friday (*Tshuvos Rav Moshe Provencialo 71*), and there are

communities who hold a siyum on both days (Beiso Noavo Kodesh p. 324, Rebbes of Belz and Skver) - but this is a chumra. There is more reason to be lenient about this Taanis this year. Rav Yosef Chayim Sonnenfeld - Erev Pesach Shechal BeShabbos, writes that if one is even slightly unwell one does not have to fast, and that when it is not on Erev Pesach one may redeem the fast with Tzedoko. Rabeinu Yechiel (quoted in Beis Yosef 470) allows firstborns to eat some refreshments on any Erev Pesach, and Bigdei Yesha (Mordechai, Perek Arvei Pesochim) explains that this is in order that there should not be a full fast day in the month of Nissan. Although the halocho is not in accordance with this view, in a year like this there is reason to rely on these opinions, depending on a person's strength and constitution.

- ❖ Those who normally bake matzos on Erev Pesach do this on Friday 12th Nissan this year (Remo 455:1). The Mayim Shelonu should be taken on Thursday evening, and one should say 'leshem matzos mitzva' when taking it (Mishna Beruro 455:23).

BEDIKAS CHOMETZ - THURSDAY EVENING 13TH NISSAN

- ❖ As mentioned above, this year Bedikas Chometz is carried out on Thursday evening 13th Nissan (Shulchon Oruch 444:1, Beis Yosef and Shulchon Oruch Horav. See also Sdei Chemed, Maareches Chometz uMatza 5:14, who discusses the reason that positive command of removing chometz does not override the issur of doing this on Shabbos), reciting the brocho 'Al biur chometz' as usual. One then nullifies all chometz in one's possession that one has not found and has not set aside for eating. One must be careful to ensure that the chometz found during the bedika and other chometz that one intends to eat before the zeman issur on Shabbos morning, are kept in a safe place (Shulchon Oruch 434:1).
- ❖ If one forgot to carry out Bedikas Chometz on Thursday evening, one may do so on Friday until Shabbos commences. It should really be done as early as possible, and preferably before midday

(by which time chometz not being eaten by Shabbos morning should ideally have been destroyed, Shulchon Oruch 444:2).

- ❖ If one realized on Shabbos that one has not yet carried out Bedikas Chometz, if one has a candle burning, bedika may be done on Friday night, with a non-Jew holding the candle. If there is sufficient electric light to be able to see all areas of the house, as there are no hidden cracks etc where chometz may be found, one should do the bedika oneself. (The Remoh 276:3 permits asking a non-Jew to move a candle that is already burning, see Mishna Beruro 31. Although one does not generally rely on this leniency, see Mogein Avrohom 10, it is allowed in this case in order to perform the mitzva of Bedikas Chometz. Mishna Beruro 444:21 writes that if one delayed and has not destroyed one's chometz until the sixth hour of the day, when it becomes osur behano'oh and may not be moved, one may ask a non-Jew to throw it into the river or toilet.)

**The rest of the halachos will be published in
next week's booklet be"H**

