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on the occasion of her birthday,  
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in health, happiness, Torah and *mitzvot*.

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# LIKKUTEI SICHOS

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the  
**Lubavitcher Rebbe**  
**Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson**

**Reprinted for Parshat Vayikra, 5783**  
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**"5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL"**

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 ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** הי"ד  
**Shagalov**  
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 Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765  
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# LIKKUTEI SICHOT

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

RELATING TO THE WEEKLY SECTIONS OF THE TORAH AND  
SPECIAL OCCASIONS IN THE JEWISH CALENDAR

by the

**Lubavitcher Rebbe**  
**Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson**

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Volume VIII: *Vayikra*

•

In English rendition  
by  
**Rabbi Eliyahu Touger**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF A DEAR FRIEND

Reb **Yosef Yisroel** ben Reb **Sholom** ע"ה **Rosner**

Passed away on 7 Menachem-Av, 5777

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

\*

DEDICATED BY HIS FRIENDS

Mr. & Mrs. **Gershon** and **Leah** שיחיו **Wolf**

Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחיו **Shagalov**

## VAYIKRA

### THE ETERNAL RELEVANCE OF THE *BEIS HAMIKDASH*

The Book of *Vayikra* concerns itself primarily with the sacrificial offerings<sup>1</sup> which were one of the central services carried out in both the Sanctuary and the *Beis HaMikdash*.<sup>2</sup>

The Torah is eternal.<sup>3</sup> Its laws and even its stories can provide Jewish men and women of every generation with guidance relevant to their everyday life. This also applies to the laws regarding the sacrifices and the other aspects of the *Beis HaMikdash*.

The command<sup>4</sup> “And they shall make Me a Sanctuary,” requiring the Jews to construct the *Beis HaMikdash* has a specific goal, as the verse continues: “I, (G-d), will dwell within.” Moreover, the verse does not use the singular form of the word “within,” which would imply that the indwelling is merely within the physical structure of the Sanctuary and the *Beis HaMikdash*, but rather the plural form, indicating that G-d dwells within each and every Jew.

Therefore even when the physical *Beis HaMikdash* is destroyed because of our sins, every Jew should conduct his home as “a Sanctuary in microcosm.”<sup>5</sup> By infusing holiness into his conduct in this manner, he brings about atonement

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1. See the Ramban's preface to the Book of *Vayikra*.
  2. See *Basi LeGani*, 5710, the beginning of sec. 2.
  3. See *Tanya*, ch. 17, *Kuntres Acharon*, Epistle 5.
  4. *Shmos* 25:8.
  5. Cf. *Megillah* 29a.

kings? the rabbis,"<sup>33</sup> and specifically the leader (king) of the generation). [The increase] has made it necessary to enlarge and expand "Beis Rabbeinu" further. The enlargement and expansion must be in a way that breaks through barriers, "Paratzta" (770 in Gematria), as if constructing a **new building**.<sup>34</sup>

According to what was said previously concerning the pre-eminence of "Beis Rabbeinu Sh'b'Bavel" - that "the Temple traveled and settled there," and "this is the place of the actual Temple in the future," so that there the future Temple will be revealed and from there return to Yerushalayim - the great merit each and every Jew has in becoming a partner, physically and monetarily<sup>35</sup> (and all who increase are praiseworthy) in building "Beis Rabbeinu Sh'b'Bavel" is obvious. And this is like a preparation for the actual descent and revelation of the future Temple, imminently and immediately.

*(Pamphlet concerning "Mikdash M'at Zeh Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel" - Sefer HaSichos 5752, p. 465)*

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33. See *Gittin* 62, end of first side. *Zohar*, vol. 3, 253b in *Raya Mehemna*.

34. Including the laying of the corner stone. [*On the eve of 18 Elul 5748 was arranged the laying of the cornerstone for (increasing and expanding) the synagogue and study hall of Lubavitch in Lubavitch. The Rebbe placed the cornerstone with his holy hands. Publisher's note.*]

35. Following the example of the *Beis HaMikdash*, that "everyone is obligated to build and support it themselves and with their money, etc." (*Rambam, Hilchos Beis HaBechirah*, chapter 1, halacha 12).

"all sevenths are beloved."<sup>27</sup> Through this [extension] is accomplished the completion of our actions and Divine service during the time of exile in all seven continents of the world. Immediately and imminently "the L-rd shall **continue to apply [yoseef]** His hand a second time, etc., and He shall **gather [Asaf]** the lost of Israel, etc." In this way, "**You have broken** (in Gematria, seven hundred and seventy<sup>28</sup>) barriers for yourself," "The breaker is come up before them."

All this receives added emphasis in this last period:

The Divine service of spreading Torah and Judaism and the wellsprings outward from "Beis Rabbeinu" ("770") has continued and expanded with greater vigor and greater strength, even after (the last ten years of) his life in this world, for more than forty years (5710-5750). It has done so in a way that "G-d has given you a heart to know and eyes to see and ears to hear."<sup>29</sup> Thus we find that "Beis Rabbeinu" ("770") is a "fortress," "the mount that all mouths turn to,"<sup>30</sup> for more than a Yovel of years (5700-5750) - "Forever."<sup>31</sup>

[That Beis Rabbeinu is a "fortress"] receives further emphasis when we see with our own eyes the many Jewish people, and the increasing numbers of them, that come to "Beis Rabbeinu," with greater vigor and greater strength, - "in the multitude of people is the splendor of the king"<sup>32</sup> (which includes also "Who are the

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27. *Vayikra Rabba*, ch. 29:11. See the discourse *Basi L'Gani* of the year 5750 at the beginning. Also at length, the same-named discourse of 5751.

28. [The letters of the word "Paratzta" have the numerical value of 770: Peh=80; Reish=200; Tzadik=90; Tuv=400. Translator's note.]

29. *Tavo* 29:3.

30. *Brochos* 30a.

31. *Shmuel I* 1:22 and Rashi's commentary. *Yerushalmi Brochos*, chapter 4, halacha 1. See *Kiddushin* 15a. *Mechilta* and Rashi's commentary on *Mishpatim* 21:6.

32. *Mishlei* 14:28.

for all the sins he committed in the past, and makes his home fit for G-d's Presence. This in turn will bring Divine blessings wherever necessary.

### "G-D DESIRES THE HEART"<sup>6</sup>

As mentioned above, one of the central aspects of the service in the *Beis HaMikdash* were the sacrificial offerings. Every day began and ended with the daily offering, which was brought before all other sacrifices in the morning, and after all the sacrifices before nightfall.<sup>7</sup>

Among the lessons taught by the daily offering is that G-d does not necessarily ask a Jew to give all his resources to Him. For the daily offering consisted of only one sheep and a small amount of oil, wine, and salt. Moreover, this was a communal offering purchased with funds to which every individual contributed a tiny amount once a year. And yet this minimal amount was able to bring G-d's blessings for everything the Jewish people needed.

For G-d does not demand that a Jew give away everything he owns. What G-d *does* demand, however, is that gifts be made *with all one's heart*.<sup>8</sup> What is most important is not the

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6. See *Sanhedrin* 106b.

7. *Pesachim* 58b.

8. See *Zevachim* 13a, which explains that there is no difference whether a sacrifice is brought entirely with the wrong intent or with a combination of wrong and right intent. They are equally undesirable. The *Mishnah* (*Zevachim*, the conclusion of ch. 4) states what is meant by the desired intent — that sacrifices be offered to create "a sweet fragrance for G-d" [*Vayikra* 1:9].

Even according to the opinions of *Tosafos* and the *Mishneh LaMelech* (gloss to *Hilchos Maasei HaKorbonos* 4:11), it is a *mitzvah* to offer a sacrifice with this intent. Moreover, the *Lechem Mishneh* (gloss to *Hilchos Maasei HaKorbonos*) states that according to the *Rambam*, a sacrifice that is not offered with this intent is unacceptable.

amount which one gives<sup>9</sup> — how much energy, money, or other good things — but *how* one gives.

If a gift is made with all one's heart, even if (for whatever reason) the sum is not great — as the daily offering involved only a small portion from each category:<sup>10</sup> from the animal kingdom, a sheep; from the plant kingdom, a small amount of wine and oil; and from inanimate matter, salt — since one gives with all one's heart, with vitality and joy, this fulfills G-d's intent and draws down His positive influence.

### SETTING THE TONE

The daily sacrifice was brought twice a day, once in the early morning and once before nightfall, and yet it was referred to as the *korban tamid*, “the continuous offering.” This implies<sup>11</sup> that the sacrifices brought throughout the day were influenced by the daily offering. Indeed, for that reason, it was offered before all the other sacrifices.

This also teaches a lesson in regard to the conduct of a Jewish home. As the day proceeds, various factors — some concerning the soul and others concerning the body — pervade the home environment. The common trait shared by all these concerns is that G-dly light is not directly obvious in them. For even matters that concern the soul must be carried in a manner that conforms with mortal intellect. This can at times lead a person away from the correct path and bring him to do the opposite of G-d's will.

For this reason, at the very beginning of the day, a person makes a total and all-encompassing commitment to G-d, saying: *Modeh Ani*... “I thankfully acknowledge You, living and

"770."<sup>21</sup> This number in Gematria is "**Paratzta**," derived from "You shall spread out [U'Faratzta] west and east and north and south."<sup>22</sup> This indicates that from this house light will go forth to all four corners of the world, in a manner of **breaking through barriers**, so that all four corners of the world will be elevated to the status of the land of Israel. (In the future the land of Israel will extend to all the lands.) This means in particular that all the synagogues and study halls throughout the world will be established in the land of Israel and connected to the Beis HaMikdash in the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach. For about him it says,<sup>23</sup> "**You have broken barriers for yourself**," which our Sages of blessed memory explain<sup>24</sup> as follows: "This is Moshiach, about whom it is said,<sup>25</sup> "**The breaker** is come up before them."<sup>26</sup>

...In the completeness of the number seven (seven hundred and seventy) can also be found an allusion to the completeness of the Divine service of our Rebbe during his complete lifetime of **seven** decades, **seventy** years (5640-5710). His Divine service was concluded and completed in the lower hemisphere in the **seventh** decade (from the house whose number is seven hundred seventy). [This completeness] includes as well the extension of his Divine service in the years afterwards, through the **seventh** generation -

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so in regard to an established dwelling). This is particularly true in our case, when the number becomes **the name of** the house, as discussed below.

21. Whether in Hebrew, Yiddish or English - "Seven Seventy."

22. *VaYeitze* 28:14.

23. *VaYeshev* 38:29.

24. *Aggados Bereishis*, end of chapter 63. See *Bereishis Rabba*, end of chapter 85 and Rashi's commentary on it.

25. *Micha* 2:13.

26. One should note that "Beis Moshiach" in gematria is "Paratzta" (770). Consider this carefully. [*Gematria is the numerical analysis of words. Translator's note.*]

9. See the *Mishnah*, the conclusion of tractate *Menachos*, and *Vayikra Rabbah* 3:5.

10. See *Taamei HaMitzvos* by the AriZal, *Parshas Vayikra*. See also *Tanya*, ch. 34.

11. See the commentary of the *Rishonim* to *Chagigah* 26b, and the difference of opinion between *Rashi* and the *Ramban* in their commentary to *Shmos* 27:20.

mentioned above).

It may be added, that this concept is also alluded to in the name<sup>15</sup> of "Beis Rabbeinu" in our generation:

**"Rabbeinu"** [our Rebbe] - His two names alluded to the Redemption: His first name - Yosef - "And it shall come to pass that on that day, the L-rd shall **continue to apply** [yoseef] His hand a second time to acquire the rest of His people that will remain from Assyria and Egypt, etc. and from the islands of the sea, etc, and He shall **gather** [Asaf] the lost of Israel and the scattered ones of Judah He shall gather from the four corners of the earth."<sup>16</sup> His second name - Yitzchak - refers to the laughter and rejoicing that will be complete in the future Redemption, and which will be completed through our righteous Moshiach. Thus it is written,<sup>17</sup> "Then our mouths will be filled with laughter [S'chok]. It specifies "then," in the future,<sup>18</sup> when they will say to Yitzchak (specifically), "Because you are our father."<sup>19</sup>

And **Beis** (Rabbeinu) [**The House** of our Rebbe] - its number is seven hundred seventy.<sup>20</sup> The name by which "Beis Rabbeinu" is called by all Jews has been universally accepted to be this number,

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15. As is well-known, the name indicates the content and nature of the thing called with that name (*Tanya*, "*Shaar HaYichud v'HaEmunah*," end of chapter 1. See at length *Teshuvos u'Be'urim* (Kehos, 5734), section 1 and the cross references there).

16. *Yeshayahu* 11:11-12.

17. *Tehillim* 126:2.

18. Which is not the case during the time of exile, when "it is forbidden for an individual to be completely joyful [literally, fill his mouth with laughter] in this world, since it is written that "Then our mouths will be filled with laughter [we will be completely joyful]" (*Brochos* 31a).

19. *Yeshayahu* 63:16. Shabbos 89b.

20. One should note the customs of the leaders of the Jewish people, who learned allusions and lessons in Divine service from secular matters as well (for example, the number of wagons in the train, which is incidental, and all the more

eternal King...." As soon as he arises in the morning, he thanks G-d for returning his soul. He refers to G-d as "King," implying that, as befits a commitment made to even a mortal king, he is willing to devote himself with all his heart, even to the extent of giving up his life.

Making this commitment at the beginning of the day has an effect on the hours that follow which the individual uses for his personal affairs. They become permeated with the thanks and commitment expressed in *Modeh Ani*. Accordingly, the person's efforts are accompanied by G-d's blessings.

This lesson is also communicated by the daily offering. When we start the day with a sacrifice, which in the personal sense means giving oneself over to G-d, the act becomes *tamid*, "continuous." It is not confined to the moment when the commitment is made, but continues throughout the entire day.

Bringing the daily sacrifice involved sprinkling its blood on the altar and offering its fats on the fire burning there. Blood serves as an analogy for vitality, warmth, and energy, while fat serves as an analogy for satisfaction (for indeed satisfaction leads to an increase in the body's size).<sup>12</sup> The implication is that a Jew's day must begin with a firm commitment to devote his energy to the altar, i.e., to holy matters, and they will be his source of satisfaction. G-d will then help him carry out this resolution, and this will cause the entire day to be filled with His blessings.

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12. See *Gittin* 56b.

### TURNING IN *TESHUVAH*

The *Midrash* says<sup>13</sup> that the daily sacrifice atones for certain sins which a person committed before the sacrifice is offered. For G-d gives a person who transgresses an opportunity to rectify his conduct. Throughout a person's life, he will face difficulties and challenges, and it is possible that he will not overcome a particular challenge. But when he renews his commitment to G-d, proclaiming with his whole heart: "I thankfully acknowledge You, living and eternal King..." — which as mentioned above parallels the daily sacrifice — this atones for his earlier conduct.

From the Alter Rebbe onward, *Chassidus* provides us with profound explanations regarding *teshuvah*. When a Jew stumbles in his Divine service, heaven forbid, he should not despair or become depressed. On the contrary, he should strengthen his commitment, try to correct his blunder, and compensate for what he failed to accomplish, hoping that G-d will accept his *teshuvah*.<sup>14</sup>

The expression "I thankfully acknowledge You, living and eternal King..." embodies this pledge of *teshuvah*. It involves the engraving in one's mind and heart of one's thanks and commitment to G-d — a firm resolution that one's "blood and fat," one's energy and satisfaction, will be directed to holiness alone.

When this commitment is made, G-d forgives one's previous trespasses and grants the person His blessings, satisfying his — and his family's — needs in material and spiritual matters.

This spiritual parallel to the daily offering will lead to the ultimate and most essential blessing: that *Mashiach* will come

13. *Bamidbar Rabbah* 21:21; *Tanchuma*, (Buber edition) *Pinchus* sec. 12.

14. See *Tanya*, *Iggeres HaTeshuvah*, ch. 11.

and completed. Through the elevation of the lowest possible place all the other lands of the nations are also elevated.<sup>11</sup> This [objective] is achieved through "**Beis Rabbeinu**" [Our Rebbe's House] in the lower hemisphere, from which light goes out to all the world, to make the whole world (until the furthest corner of the world) into the land of Israel. This is the concept that "In the future the land of Israel will extend into all the lands,"<sup>12</sup> and "In the future, Yerushalayim will extend over all the land of Israel."<sup>12</sup> For then there will be established a connection between all the synagogues and study halls throughout the entire world and the Beis HaMikdash. [This will occur] in the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach, the leader of the generation, who is the Moshiach (the Redeemer of Israel) of the generation. Further, and this is also essential, he is the leader of the Torah of Chassidus,<sup>13</sup> since through the spreading outward ("when your wellsprings spread forth," until there is nothing beyond, to all corners of the world) is achieved the coming of the king Moshiach.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore the greatness of "Beis Rabbeinu" can be understood. It is the essential "Temple in microcosm" of the final exile, "that the Temple traveled and settled there." Therefore, it is the actual place of the Temple of the future; not only that, but the future Temple will be revealed there, and from there return to Yerushalayim (as

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cross-references.

11. "As in raising the walls of a house, it is necessary to raise the lower beam and then the upper beams will be raised automatically; this is not the case if one begins in the middle of the wall, one does not raise the lower beams" (*Torah Or Bereishis* 4, beginning of side a).

12. See *Sifrei Devarim* at the beginning, *Pesikta Rabbasi*, *Parshas Shabbos v'Rosh Chodesh*. *Yalkus Shimoni*, *Yeshayahu*, *remez* 503.

13. One should note that the Torah of Chassidus is the aspect of the Yechida in Torah (See the pamphlet concerning "On the essence of Chassidus), which is connected with the aspect of Yechida in Israel - the soul of our righteous Moshiach (*RaMaZ on Zohar* vol. 2, 40b and other sources).

14. *Igros Kodesh* of the *Baal Shem Tov - Kesser Shem Tov* at the beginning.



settling serves] as a preparation for the future Temple, which will be revealed there first, and from there return (with G-d and the Jewish people) to Yerushalayim.

...Perhaps it can be said that the statement in the Midrash,<sup>7</sup> that "at the time when the king Moshiach comes, **he will stand on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash** [Temple] and announce to the Jewish people, saying, Humble ones, the time for your Redemption has arrived," refers to the roof of the Beis HaMikdash which is **the Temple in microcosm** outside the land,<sup>8</sup> which takes the place of the Temple in Yerushalayim ("The Temple traveled and settled there"). [This may be said] because after the future Temple is revealed and descends to the earth below, there is no need to **announce** to the Jewish people that "the time for your Redemption has arrived."

...The above can be applied to "The House of our Rebbe in Bavel" **of our generation**, the house (the synagogue and study hall) of my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation:

...In this generation, the last generation of exile and the first generation of Redemption, "our actions and Divine service during the time of exile"<sup>9</sup> to make the lands of the nations into the land of Israel even in **the lowest possible place**, that is, **the lower hemisphere** (where the Torah was not given<sup>10</sup>) has been concluded

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*settled in Bavel. Translator's note.]*

7. *Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayahu, remez 499.*

8. Accordingly, the expression "He stands on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash" becomes clarified; that "roofs... do not become sanctified" (Rambam, *Hilchos Beis HaBechirah*, chapter 6, halacha 7). Hence this alludes to the lands outside of Israel in comparison to the holiness of the land of Israel.

9. *Tanya*, beginning of chapter 37.

10. See *Igros Kodesh of the Rebbe RaYaTZ*, vol. 2, p. 492 ff. See there for

and rebuild the *Beis HaMikdash*. He will take us out of our inner, personal exile and out of exile in the world at large, leading us to our Holy Land.<sup>15</sup> Then we will actually see the daily sacrifice being offered in the *Beis HaMikdash*. May this take place speedily, in our days.

(Adapted from *Sichos 28 Iyar*, 5722)

### THE CONDITIONAL GUILT OFFERING

The conclusion of *Parshas Vayikra* mentions the conditional guilt offering which a person would bring when he was unsure if he had committed a sin. (To give an example, a person had two pieces of fat before him, and ate one of them. On being informed that one of the pieces wasn't kosher, the person is obligated to bring an animal sacrifice referred to as an *ashelem tolei*, a conditional guilt offering.)

There is a difference of opinion among our Sages as to whether or not a person who slaughters an animal designated for this offering outside the *Beis HaMikdash* is liable for *kareis* [if he slaughters it intentionally] or is required to bring a sin offering [if he slaughters it unintentionally], as one is liable for slaughtering an animal designated for other sacrifices outside the *Beis HaMikdash* (*shechutei chutz*, in *Talmudic* terminology).

Rabbi Meir holds the person liable, while the Sages do not. Their rationale is that since the conditional guilt offering is brought because of a doubt, it is possible that the person never sinned at all. Accordingly, it is not appropriate to hold him liable for slaughtering the animal outside the *Beis HaMikdash*, because it is possible that there was no obligation

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15. For a description of the sequence in which these events will take place see the *Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Melachim* 11:4; *Igros Kodesh* of the Rebbe Rashab, Vol. I, p. 309ff.

## BESURAS HAGEULO

### The Announcement Of The Redemption

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to bring the sacrifice in the first place. In his *Mishneh Torah*,<sup>16</sup> the *Rambam* rules according to the Sages' opinion.

There is another difference of opinion among our Sages concerning a conditional guilt offering.<sup>17</sup> This involves a person who prepares a conditional guilt offering, but resolves the doubt — discovering whether he sinned or not — before the sacrifice is slaughtered.

In this instance, the offering is not sacrificed. Rabbi Meir maintains that the designated animal should “go out to pasture with the herd,” i.e., the animal loses its sanctified status. The Sages maintain that the animal should “pasture until it contracts a blemish;” that the animal retains its sacred nature. As such, it cannot be redeemed until it contracts a blemish which disqualifies it for use as a sacrifice.

In this instance as well, the *Rambam* rules<sup>18</sup> according to the Sages, giving the rationale that “A person's heart is contrite because of his sins. Because he designated the animal as a sacrifice because of a doubt, he decided in his heart to consecrate it.”

The question arises:<sup>19</sup> According to the Sages' opinion (and the *Rambam*'s ruling) that even when a person discovers that he definitely did not sin, the animal involved remains consecrated because of the decision he made in his heart, it appears that when a person is in doubt, the animal designated for the sacrifice should be considered consecrated. As such, it is difficult to understand the first ruling of the Sages (and the *Rambam*) mentioned previously, that even if the designated

It may be suggested that the Temple of the future ("it will be revealed and come from heaven already built and perfected"<sup>1</sup>) will first be revealed in the place "That the Temple traveled and settled there"<sup>2</sup> in the time of exile ("The House of our Rebbe in Bavel"<sup>3</sup>); from there it will be transported to its place in Yerushalayim.

...Perhaps it can be said that this is alluded to in the *Rambam*'s choice of words (in *Hilchos Melech HaMoshiach*<sup>4</sup>) "And build the Temple **in its place**." For apparently [there is a question]: what is the need to inform us here that the building of the Temple will be **in its place**? On the other hand, why isn't the place specified: "And build the Temple in **Yerushalayim**?" [It must be] that "in its place" alludes as well to the place of the king Moshiach in the time of exile (**before** [the status of] "behold he is certainly Moshiach"). Therefore, while he is still **in exile** (for there he sits<sup>5</sup> and waits and anxiously looks forward to redeeming the Jewish people, and the Divine Presence with them in exile) the king Moshiach builds a Temple (in microcosm). This is an illustration and example of the Temple in Yerushalayim (like "the synagogue of He slipped and settled,"<sup>6</sup> "that the Temple traveled and settled there."). [This

16. *Hilchos Maaseh HaKorbonos* 18:10.

17. *Kerisus* 23b.

18. *Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Pesulei HaMukdashim* 4:19.

19. See the gloss of the *Lechem Mishneh* to *Hilchos Maasei HaKorbonos* (loc. cit.), where this question is raised.

1. Rashi's commentary and Tosfos on Sukkah 41, end of side a and in other sources.

2. *Aruch*, entry Shaf (brought in the *Chiddushei Aggada MaHaRaSHA*, on *Megillah* 29a).

3. *Megillah* 29a. [In Hebrew, "Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel". Translator's note.]

4. End of chapter 11.

5. See *Sanhedrin* 98a: "He is dwelling at the gate of Rome." [In the referenced passage, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi asks Eliyahu HaNavi where Moshiach can be found. The quotation actually combines the end of the question ("Where is Moshiach dwelling?") and the answer ("At the gate of Rome"). Translator's note.]

6. *Megillah* 29a. [The phrase is a reference to the Divine Presence going into exile with the Jewish people: G-d's Presence slipped away from Jerusalem and

definitely *did* — we can be assured that he “decided within his heart to consecrate [the animal].” And therefore it remains consecrated until it incurs a disqualifying blemish.

This applies, however, only with regard to his personal efforts to rectify his spiritual failings. With regard to the Torah’s abstract criteria, “deed is most essential.”<sup>35</sup> Punishment is meted out only for actual transgression of the Torah’s commandments.<sup>36</sup> Therefore if in fact a person did not violate a transgression (even though he may have a spiritual connection with the sin involved), he is not liable for punishment.

This is what motivated our Sages (and the *Rambam*) to rule that one is not liable for sacrificing a conditional guilt offering outside the *Beis HaMikdash*. Since it is possible that the person did not actually sin, according to the Torah’s abstract criteria, a sin offering is not required. For this reason, he is not held liable for sacrificing it outside the *Beis HaMikdash*.

(Adapted from *Sichos Simchas Torah*, 5712)



35. Cf. *Pirkei Avos* 1:17.

36. See the *maamar* entitled *Lehavin* (*Kizurim ViHaaros leTanya*, p. 41ff.)<sup>3</sup>.

animal was slaughtered outside the *Beis HaMikdash*, the usual prohibitions do not apply.

This difficulty can be resolved as follows. There are two dimensions to the sanctification of sacrifices:

The first is relevant to man — how the person must conduct himself with regard to the animal he consecrated. In this regard, it is sufficient to know that he made a decision in his heart to consecrate it. This applies even if the person later resolves the doubt as to whether or not he had sinned.

The second is relevant to the Torah’s abstract criteria. In this context, an animal designated as a conditional guilt offering is consecrated only when a person indeed sinned, although he himself is in doubt about the matter. When he is unsure as to whether or not he sinned, he can gain atonement via a conditional guilt offering. (When, by contrast, a person *knows* he has sinned, atonement comes through a sin offering.)

Accordingly, the rationale that “A person’s heart is contrite because of his sins, [and] he decided within his heart to consecrate [the animal],” is significant only with regard to the aspect of the consecration that affects man.<sup>20</sup> With regard to the Torah’s abstract criteria, however, the animal is considered a sacrifice only when the person actually sinned.<sup>21</sup>

20. Note the *Lechem Mishneh* (*ibid.*), which explains that the Sages’ ruling is based on the rationale that “since the person would not have consecrated it if there had been no doubt regarding whether or not he had sinned, the consecration is not binding in its totality.”

21. When a person makes a decision within his heart to consecrate an animal regardless of the doubt, the animal becomes consecrated even with regard to the Torah’s abstract perspective (even when he did not sin). This, however, is the result of the person’s initiative.

According to the letter of the law, when an animal is consecrated as a conditional guilt offering because of a doubt, the consecration is effective according to the Torah’s abstract perspective only when the person actually

Since it is possible that he did not sin, and thus according to the Torah's abstract criteria, the animal is not considered consecrated, he would not be liable for *kareis* for willfully slaughtering it outside the *Beis HaMikdash*. Therefore he is not required to bring a sin offering if he slaughtered it outside the *Beis HaMikdash* without knowing of the prohibition, because only "when the penalty for willfully transgressing [a prohibition] is *kareis*, is one required to bring a sin offering for [its] unwitting transgression."<sup>22</sup>

### THE VALUE OF MONEY

There is another concept associated with the conditional guilt offering. Although a sin offering is brought when one knows that one has sinned, and a conditional guilt offering is brought when one is in doubt about the matter, the conditional offering is more expensive than the sin offering. Ordinarily, the minimal value for a sin offering was a *danka*, while the minimal value for a conditional guilt offering was two *selaim*, worth 48 *danka*.<sup>23</sup>

Rabbi Yonah explained<sup>24</sup> this as follows: Fundamentally, the atonement brought about by a sacrifice comes from the person's feelings of *teshuvah*. When a person knows he has sinned, he is naturally aroused to sincere feelings of regret. But when a person is unsure, we have to seek means to inspire such feelings. For this reason, the conditional guilt offering cost more than a sin offering.

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sinned. For it is only when one *has* transgressed, and yet is in doubt, that one is obligated to bring a conditional guilt offering.

22. *Kerisus* 25a.

23. *Zevachim* 48a, as interpreted by *Tosafos* (*Kerisus* 10b). In *Zevachim* (*loc. cit.*) itself, however, *Rashi* and *Tosafos* offer different interpretations. This is not the place for a detailed discussion of the matter.

24. In his commentary to the *Rif* on *Berachos* 1b. This concept is also cited by *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, *Orach Chaim*, sec. 603.

a sacrifice which is much more expensive than a sin offering. For the conditional guilt offering must remove a more serious blemish.

### MAN'S CONCEPTION, AND G-D'S

Based on the above, we can understand that when a person is in doubt as to whether or not he violated a commandment, this uncertainty is an indication of a serious spiritual lack. This applies even if he did not actually sin (and therefore is not liable for retribution). The very fact that he has a doubt indicates that he shares a connection with evil. For if he did not share such a connection, he would not have any doubt about whether he had sinned.<sup>33</sup> If he is not bothered by the doubt, and remains happy with his spiritual state, believing that his desire for pleasure is centered only on permitted matters, this indicates that his spiritual state is in some ways worse than that of a person who definitely committed a sin, either willingly or unknowingly.

Based on the above, we can resolve the apparent contradiction between the decisions of our Sages mentioned above. When speaking about an individual's spiritual state, a conditional guilt offering is required from a person who is in doubt as to whether he committed a sin, even when in fact he did not.<sup>34</sup> For this reason, our Sages maintain that even if it later becomes clear that a person did *not* sin — or that he

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33. See *Mo'ed Kattan* 18b.

34. On this basis, we can understand the narrative in *Kerisus* 25a, which states that Bava ben Buta would bring a conditional guilt offering every day with the exception of the day after Yom Kippur. The Sage did not fear that he had actually committed a sin every day; his doubt concerned the essence of his soul. (Note a similar explanation in *Likkutei Torah*, *Vayikra* [*Hosafos*] 50d, and in the *maamar* entitled *Ashreinu*, 5696, with regard to Reb Yochanan ben Zakai [*Berachos* 28b].) He did not harbor such fears with regard to Yom Kippur, because on Yom Kippur the essence of the soul is revealed — a level which transcends the spiritual power of the name *Havayah*.

What are his sources of satisfaction? Is it permitted things which bring him pleasure, or does his inner self find satisfaction in forbidden things?

To underscore this concept, when the *Talmud* seeks to illustrate a situation in which a conditional guilt offering is required, it uses an example involving fat, for fat serves as an analogy for satisfaction.

From a certain perspective, the blemish created by an unknowing transgression is greater than that generated by a voluntary sin. Similarly, being in doubt as to whether one committed a transgression can be worse than *knowing* one has transgressed. When a person knows he has committed a sin unwittingly, he realizes that he is in need of spiritual improvement; the transgression makes him aware of an inner involvement with evil. But when a person is not definitely aware that he has sinned, his positive self-image can remain intact and he may not appreciate the need for change.<sup>32</sup> This shows an even deeper connection with evil, for the person does not even realize something is amiss.

When a person knows he has unwittingly committed a transgression, his fundamental nature remains good; the deed runs contrary to his true self. For this reason, he is conscious that he has transgressed G-d's will. He senses the evil within his act, and realizes that this is not who he really is; it is merely the animal soul which drew him after evil. When, however, a person does not realize that he has committed a transgression, this is a sign that the sin does not disturb him; it does not run contrary to his being. For this reason, he does not even notice the sin.

So when a person does not know whether or not he has committed a sin, he must bring a conditional guilt offering —

32. See *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, the conclusion of sec. 603.

This rationale is, however, insufficient. For although *teshuvah* is necessary, it is not the only element involved. The actual offering of the sacrifice has the power to bring atonement and remove the blemishes created by sin. Thus the different kinds of sacrifices were ordained according to the nature of the blemish created.

This leads to the conclusion that the reason a conditional guilt offering cost more than a sin offering was not merely to inspire sincere *teshuvah*, but also because a conditional guilt offering must atone for a greater blemish. This raises a question: How is it that the blemish created when one is unsure is greater than that created when one is certain of having sinned?

### SUBCONSCIOUS MOTIVATION

This question can be resolved as follows: In general, sacrifices atone for sins committed unintentionally,<sup>25</sup> for even a commandment violated unknowingly requires atonement.<sup>26</sup> Although the person did not intentionally sin, the fact that his unconscious thoughts led to such behavior is an indication that he is spiritually lacking. For if he was not lacking, he would not have sinned, even unintentionally, as it is written:<sup>27</sup> “No evil shall befall the righteous.”

A person is held responsible — and therefore must bring a sacrifice — for a sin committed unintentionally because it is his fault that he sinned. Before committing the sin, he conducted himself in a beast-like manner. This strengthened his animal soul, leading to his unintentional commission of a sin.

25. See *Tanya, Iggeres HaKodesh*, the conclusion of Epistle 28, the *maamar* entitled *Vichol Adam Lo Yihiyeh* delivered by the *Tzemach Tzedek (Or HaTorah, Yom Kippur*, p. 1598); *maamar* with same heading 5723 [*Sefer HaMaamarim Meluket*, Vol. V, p. 18].

26. *Rashi, Shavuos 2a*, entry *toleh*.

27. *Mishlei 12:21*.

This reflects a further point. A person's unconscious behavior — what he does without thinking — is often a powerful indicator of his nature, reflecting his fundamental concerns and sources of pleasure. A *tzaddik* derives pleasure from G-dliness, therefore his deeds involve good and holiness. When, by contrast, a person unknowingly commits a sin, this indicates that undesirable factors are his source of pleasure.

Indeed, from a certain perspective, the blemish generated by committing a sin unknowingly can be considered more severe than that resulting from the conscious commission of a sin. The fact that a person consciously performs a deed says nothing about the extent of his involvement. There are times when he does something willingly, but his heart and mind are elsewhere. But when an act is performed without conscious volition, it reveals something about a person's true nature, telling us about the inner "I" that lies deeper than his conscious self. Instinctively, this inner "I" directs his conduct, leading him to perform certain deeds unconsciously.

### FOOD FOR THE SOUL

The above also enables us to understand a statement of the *AriZal*<sup>28</sup> that a person who is careful not to eat even the slightest amount of *chametz* on Pesach can be confident that he will not sin throughout the year to come.

On the surface, this statement is problematic. Man has been given free choice, and thus has the ability to determine his own conduct. How is it possible to say that his taking care not to eat *chametz* for eight days will cause free choice to be taken away from him?

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28. Cited by the *Baer Heitev*, *Orach Chayim* 447:1; see also *Zohar*, Vol. III, p. 282b.

The resolution is that the *AriZal* is speaking about sins committed unknowingly. Although a person did not partake of *chametz* on Pesach, it is possible that he will willfully perform a transgression, because he retains his free will. But his care in not eating *chametz* will affect his inner nature, endowing it with a tendency toward holiness.<sup>29</sup> As a result, he will not be subconsciously drawn to sin.<sup>30</sup>

### WHAT BRINGS A PERSON PLEASURE?

The above also helps us understand why the *Talmud*<sup>31</sup> chooses to discuss the conditional guilt offering by using the example of a person in doubt as to whether he ate a piece of non-kosher fat. There are other situations which could have been used to illustrate this concept. Why does the *Talmud* choose this particular example?

As explained above, a person is obliged to bring a conditional guilt offering when he is in doubt as to whether or not he unknowingly committed a sin. As stated, the unknowing violation of a prohibition can be interpreted as a subconscious expression of the satisfaction a person feels in undesirable matters. In other words, whenever a person is in doubt as to whether or not he has committed a transgression, his doubt is an external manifestation of an inner dilemma:

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29. This applies to a *benoni* as well as a *tzaddik*. Although as *Tanya* (ch. 29) states, in the *benoni* "the vital soul (the animal soul) is the person himself," nevertheless, by nature the animal soul enclined within Jews is from *kelipas nogah*, the level of *kelipah* that shares a connection with good. Thus it desires only material entities which are permitted (*Tanya* ch. 8). (The indulging of one's desires for permitted things, however, establishes a connection between one's animal soul and the three impure *kelipos*, which are the source of evil.)

30. On this basis, we can understand the promise that a person will not sin if he takes strict precautions against partaking of *chametz*. *Matzah* reflects *bittul* and faith, and thus leads to the observance of all the 613 commandments (see *Tanya*, ch. 33). *Chametz*, the opposite of *matzah*, reflects the self-concern and pride which lead to all forms of evil.

31. *Kerisus* 17b.