

LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

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 ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** הי"ד
Shagalov
 Passed away on 21 Tamuz, 5766

Reb **Dovid Asniel** ben Reb **Eliyahu** עי"ה
Ekman
 Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765

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 Passed away on the second day
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AND IN HONOR OF
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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*

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In English rendition
by
Rabbi Eliyahu Touger

VAYIKRA

THE ETERNAL RELEVANCE OF THE *BEIS HAMIKDASH*

The Book of *Vayikra* concerns itself primarily with the sacrificial offerings¹ which were one of the central services carried out in both the Sanctuary and the *Beis HaMikdash*.²

The Torah is eternal.³ 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 command⁴ “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.”⁵ 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.

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”⁶

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.⁷

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*.⁸ What is most important is not the

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 gives⁹ — 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:¹⁰ 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 implies¹¹ 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

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.

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).¹² 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.

12. See *Gittin* 56b.

TURNING IN *TESHUVAH*

The *Midrash* says¹³ 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*.¹⁴

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.

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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.¹⁵ 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)



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.

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The Announcement Of The Redemption

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With respect to Gideon, we find that: "In his days¹ the Jewish people were in distress. The Holy One, Blessed be He, sought a person who would find merit in them. When He found Gideon to be meritorious, because he found merit in them, an angel immediately appeared to him, as it says: "And the angel of G-d appeared to him and said to him, 'Go with this power, with **the power of the merit you have found in my children.**'" "Said the Holy One, Blessed be He, it is within your capacity to find a defense for Israel. **In your merit they shall be redeemed.**"²

...The merit which will hasten the Redemption is the following:

Even in the Talmudic era it has been said that "all the deadlines have passed."³ Certainly now that we have endured a lengthy and arduous exile, the duration of which has exceeded 1,900 years, **and he has still not arrived...** And in regard to Teshuvah ("It depends only on Teshuvah³) [repentance, return, a prerequisite for Redemption], they have already done Teshuvah. Indeed, there is no Jewish person who has not entertained a thought of Teshuvah, (not just once, but) several times in the course of his lifetime. This [thought of Teshuvah] can transform "instantaneously"⁴ a perfectly wicked person into a perfectly righteous individual, in accordance with the Talmudic ruling⁵ that one who would betroth a woman "stipulating that I am a (perfectly⁶) righteous individual, even if he

1. *Tanchuma, Shoftim 4.*

2. *Yalkut Shimoni, Shoftim 62.*

3. *Sanhedrin 97b.*

4. *Zohar I, 129, end side a.*

5. *Kiddushin 49b. Rambam, Hilchos Ishus, 8:5. Tur, Shulchan Aruch, Even HoEzer, 38:31.*

6. Based on the version cited on *Or Zarua 112.*

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE REDEMPTION

were previously a perfectly wicked person, she is betrothed, for perhaps he had a thought of teshuvah."

Considering the above, it is with utmost certainty that our righteous Moshiach must arrive **here and now, immediately, [mamosh] in the most literal sense.**

Now, this exercise of finding merit⁷ in and of itself should suffice to bring about the Redemption. Moreover, in addition to the finding of merit, the imminence of Moshiach's arrival constitutes a **definitive ruling issued by many rabbis and halachic authorities.** Further, since Torah "is not in heaven,"⁸ this ruling issued by the earthly courts "obligates," so to speak, and affords a unique privilege to, the heavenly courts. **And so it will be confirmed!**

* * *

In our day and age, after G-d has vented His rage with the destruction of the Holy Temple, and after all of "our deeds and actions throughout the duration of exile,"⁹ and after all the decrees of oppression and persecution - may Hashem, indeed, shield us and protect us from them - the Jewish people have endured throughout the protracted and arduous final exile, particularly the Holocaust of the very last generation, the process of refinement and purification has, without any doubt, been achieved in full, "enough and even too much." Consequently, the [current¹⁰] "siege of the Babylonian

7. [i.e., that we have already passed all the deadlines as well as satisfying the condition of Teshuvah. Translator's note.]

8. Netzavim, 30:12. See Bava Metzia 59b.

9. Tanya, beginning of chapter 37.

10. [The Hebrew term Samach, which means "besieged," can also be rendered "supported." This talk was delivered on the fast day Asara b'Teves (the Tenth of the month of Teves), the anniversary of the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonian king. The Rebbe here is alluding to the threats of the modern day Babylonian dictator, which are actually the events which serve as preludes to the Redemption. Translator's note.]

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king"¹¹ has acquired an exclusively **positive** connotation, one that is **visibly and manifestly good, even to eyes of flesh**. In the words of our sages:¹² The Holy One Blessed be He says to Israel, "My children have no fear. All that I have done¹³ I have done exclusively for you... the time of your Redemption has arrived."

The emphasis of this generation - particularly this year, the year designated as "It shall be a year of wonders I will show him" - should be placed on the concept of G-d's support of those who have fallen,¹⁴ to strengthen and encourage the Jewish people, emphasizing particularly the support and encouragement acquired through faith in the coming of Moshiach and the implicit trust that "behold he (our righteous Moshiach) is coming."¹⁵ This should be accompanied with enhanced preparation for his arrival by way of teshuvah [repentance, return] and observance of Torah and mitzvos. In the words of the pronouncement of my sainted father-in-law - the leader of our generation: "immediate Teshuvah, immediate Redemption."¹⁶ "Return, O, Israel, unto G-d your G-d; prepare yourselves and your family to greet our righteous Moshiach, who shall arrive soon, in the most literal sense."¹⁷

*(From the talks of Shabbos Parshas Vayechi
(and Asara b'Teves, may it be transformed into joy) 5751)*

11. *Yechezkal* 24:2.

12. *Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayahu* 499.

13. This includes the efforts of the Babylonian King, who is merely an ax in the hands of the one who chops with it. [i.e. He is G-d's instrument.]

14. [The phrase *סומך נופלים* - "supports the falling" - is similar to the expression mentioned before - *בבל מלך בסך* - the Babylonian King besieged," which the Rebbe interpreted in a positive vein to mean that "he supported." Translator's note.]

15. *Shir HaShirim* 2:8. See *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* on this verse (2:8(b)).

16. In his *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 5, end of p. 361 ff., 377 ff., 408 ff. and in other places.

17. *Hayom Yom* - 15 Teves.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE REDEMPTION

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All of the signs mentioned by our sages indicate that we are currently situated **at the very end of the period of exile**. We have "passed all the deadlines."¹ We have also performed Teshuvah [repentance, return, a prerequisite for Redemption]. Indeed, my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, declared (several decades ago) that we have already concluded all the service [necessary for Redemption], including the "polishing of the buttons,"² and we now stand ready ("All of you stand ready") to greet our righteous Moshiach.³

* * *

Despite the difficult and protracted final exile, which has lasted more than 1,900 years (in stark contrast to the duration of the Egyptian bondage which lasted 210 years), the nature of "the Children of **Israel**" has essentially **transcended exile**. Thus, every additional moment we remain in exile is a form "having **now come** into Egypt,"⁴ "as if they had that very day entered into Egypt."⁵

The Jewish people, therefore, stand with firm faith and conviction that G-d will immediately fulfill his promise that "I have indeed remembered you"⁶ by bringing the genuine and complete Redemption, especially when hearing from the Moses of our generation,⁷ my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, that we have already concluded all matters of Divine service and

1. *Sanhedrin* 97b.

2. Talk of Simchas Torah, 5689.

3. Cf. *Hayom Yom*, among others, 15 Teves.

4. *Shemos* 1:1.

5. *Shemos Rabbah*, beginning of our Parsha (8:14), *Tanchuma*, loc. cit. 3.

6. *Shemos* 3:16.

7. See *Bereishis Rabbah* 56:7: "There is no generation in which there is none like Moses." See also *Zohar* 3:273a. *Tikkunei Zohar* 69 (112, beginning of side a. 114, beginning of side a). *Tanya* chapter 44. Ibid. *Iggeres HaKodesh*, elucidation of sec. 27, end.

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are presently standing ready to greet our righteous Redeemer [Moshiach]. This is particularly true now that we have reached the milestone of forty years⁸ concerning which the Torah says, "G-d gave you a heart to know and eyes to see and ears to hear."⁹ Additionally, we are now situated in the fifty first year [5751], which in Hebrew forms the acrostic (It shall be a year of) wonders which I will show him [נפלאות אראנני - Niflaos Avenu].

The Jewish people should, therefore, be encouraged and their spirits uplifted by declaring that G-d says daily, and literally, anew, that, **"I have indeed remembered you,"** and that your righteous Moshiach "stands behind the wall"¹⁰ and that "this one is coming."¹¹ Accordingly we should prepare ourselves to greet him by increasing our observance of Torah and Mitzvos, **in consonance with the ruling of the Rambam**¹² (whose anniversary of passing is the 20th of Teves, the night after this Sabbath), that through "one Mitzvah, one can favorably alter the balance for oneself and for the entire world, causing oneself and them salvation and deliverance."

(From the talks of Shabbos Parshas Shemos, 19 Teves 5751)

8. [I.e., forty years since the passing of the Previous Rebbe, a milestone which enables us to fully realize the intention and depth of the teachings that were said forty years earlier. - Translator's note.]

9. Tavo 29:3 [Moses said this to the Jewish people who were about to enter into the Promised Land, explaining that they were now capable of realizing that which they were taught by G-d forty years earlier. Translator's note.]

10. Shir HaShirim 2:9.

11. Ibid 8. See Shir HaShirim Rabbah on this verse (ch. 2:8(b)).

12. Hilchos Teshuvah 3:4.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF A DEAR FREIND
Reb Yosef Yisroel ben Reb Sholom ע"ה Rosner
Passed away on 7 Menachem-Av, 5777

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

*

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Reb **Reuvein** ben Reb **Mordechai Yaakov HaKohen** ע"ה **Caplan**
Passed away on 11 Tishrei, 5778
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

AND IN HONOR OF HIS WIFE - שתבלחט"א -
Mrs. **Elka** bas **Raizel** שתחי' **Caplan**
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in health, happiness, Torah and *mitzvot*.

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