

Toras Aish

Thoughts From Across the Torah Spectrum

RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS

Covenant & Conversation

The laws of sacrifices that dominate the early chapters of the book of Leviticus, are among the hardest in the Torah to relate to in the present. It has been almost 2,000 years since the Temple was destroyed and the sacrificial system came to an end. But Jewish thinkers, especially the more mystical among them, strove to understand the inner significance of the sacrifices and the statement they made about the relationship between humanity and G-d. They were thus able to rescue their spirit even if their physical enactment was no longer possible.

Among the simplest yet most profound was the comment made by R. Shneur Zalman of Ladi, the first Rebbe of Lubavitch. He noticed a grammatical oddity about the second line of today's parsha: Speak to the children of Israel and say to them: when one of you offers a sacrifice to the Lord, the sacrifice must be taken from the cattle, sheep or goats. (Lev. 1:2)

Or so the verse would read if it were

constructed according to the normal rules of grammar. However, in Hebrew the word order of the sentence is strange and unexpected. We would expect to read: adam mikem ki yakriv, "when one of you offers a sacrifice". Instead what it says is adam ki yakriv mikem, "when one offers a sacrifice of you". The essence of sacrifice, said R. Shneur Zalman, is that we offer ourselves. We bring to G-d our faculties, our energies, our thoughts and emotions. The physical form of sacrifice – an animal offered on the altar – is only an external manifestation of an inner act. The real sacrifice is mikem, "of you". We give G-d something of ourselves.¹

What exactly is it that we give G-d when we offer a sacrifice? The Jewish mystics, among them R. Shneur Zalman, spoke about two souls each of us has – the animal soul (nefesh ha-behamit) and the G-dly soul. On the one hand we are physical beings. We are part of nature. We have physical needs: food, drink, shelter. We are born, we live, we die. As Ecclesiastes puts it:

Man's fate is like that of the animals; the same fate awaits them both: As one dies, so dies the other. Both have the same breath; man has no advantage over the animal. Everything is a mere fleeting breath. (Ecclesiastes 3: 19)

Yet we are not simply animals. We have within us immortal longings. We can think, speak and communicate. We can, by acts of speaking and listening, reach out to others. We are the one life form known to us in the universe that can ask the question "Why?" We can formulate ideas and be moved by high ideals. We are not governed by biological drives alone. Psalm 8 is a hymn of wonder on this theme:

When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of him,
the son of man that you care for him?

Yet You made him a little lower than the angels
and crowned him with glory and honor.

You made him ruler over the works of your hands;
you put everything under his feet...(Psalm 8: 4-7)

Physically, we are almost nothing; spiritually, we are brushed by the wings of eternity. We have a

¹ R. Shneur Zalman of Ladi, Likkutei Torah, Brooklyn, N.Y., 1984, Vayikra 2aff.

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G-dly soul. The nature of sacrifice, understood psychologically, is thus clear. What we offer G-d is (not just an animal but) the nefesh ha-behamit, the animal soul within us.

How does this work out in detail? A hint is given by the three types of animal mentioned in the verse: behemah (animal), bakar (cattle) and tzon (flock). Each represents a separate animal-like feature of the human personality.

Behemah represents the animal instinct itself. The word refers to domesticated animals. It does not imply the savage instincts of the predator. What it means is something more tame. Animals spend their time searching for food. Their lives are bounded by the struggle to survive. To sacrifice the animal within us is to be moved by something more than mere survival.

Wittgenstein, when asked what was the task of philosophy, answered "To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle".² The fly, trapped in the bottle, bangs its head against the glass, trying to find a way out. The one thing it fails to do is to look up. The G-dly soul within us is the force that makes us look up, beyond the physical world, beyond mere survival, in search of meaning, purpose, goal.

The word bakar, cattle, in Hebrew reminds us of the word boker, "dawn", literally to "break through", as the first rays of sunlight break through the darkness of night. Cattle, stampeding, break through barriers. Unless constrained by fences, cattle are no respecters of boundaries. To sacrifice the bakar is to learn to recognize and respect boundaries – between holy and profane, pure and impure, permitted and forbidden. Barriers of the mind can sometimes be stronger than walls.

Finally tzon, flocks, represents the herd instinct – the powerful drive to move in a given direction because others are doing likewise.³ The great figures of

² Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, New York: Macmillan, 1953, 309.

³ The classic works on crowd behavior and the herd instinct are Charles Mackay, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, 1841; Gustav le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, 1897; Wilfred Trotter, *Instincts of the herd in peace and war*, 1914; and Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, New York, Viking Press, 1962.

Judaism – Abraham, Moses, the prophets – were distinguished precisely by their ability to stand apart from the herd; to be different, to challenge the idols of the age, to refuse to capitulate to the intellectual fashions of the moment. That ultimately is the meaning of holiness in Judaism. Kadosh, the holy, is something set apart, different, separate, distinctive. Jews were the only minority in history consistently to refuse to assimilate to the dominant culture or convert to the dominant faith.

The noun korban, "sacrifice", and the verb le-hakriv, "to offer something as a sacrifice" actually mean "that which is brought close" and "the act of bringing close". The key element is not so much giving something up (the usual meaning of sacrifice) but rather bringing something close to G-d. Le-hakriv is to bring the animal element within us to be transformed through the Divine fire that once burned on the altar, and still burns at the heart of prayer if we truly seek closeness to G-d.

By one of the ironies of history, this ancient idea has become suddenly contemporary. Darwinism, the decoding of the human genome, and scientific materialism (the idea that the material is all there is) have led to the widespread conclusion that we are animals, nothing more, nothing less. We share 98 per cent of our genes with the primates. We are, as Desmond Morris used to put it, "the naked ape".⁴ On this view, Homo sapiens exists by mere accident. We are the result of a random series of genetic mutations and just happened to be more adapted to survival than other species. The nefesh ha-behamit, the animal soul, is all there is.

The refutation of this idea – and it is surely among the most reductive ever to be held by intelligent minds – lies in the very act of sacrifice itself as the mystics understood it. We can redirect our animal instincts. We can rise above mere survival. We are capable of honouring boundaries. We can step outside our environment. As Harvard neuroscientist Steven Pinker put it: "Nature does not dictate what we should accept or how we should live," adding, "and if my genes don't like it they can go jump in the lake."⁵ Or as Katharine Hepburn majestically said to Humphrey Bogart in *The African Queen*, "Nature, Mr Allnut, is what we were put on earth to rise above."

We can transcend the behemah, the bakar and the tzon. No animal is capable of self-transformation, but we are. Poetry, music, love, wonder – the things that have no survival value but which speak to our deepest sense of being – all tell us that we are not mere animals, assemblages of selfish genes. By bringing that which is animal within us close to G-d, we

⁴ Desmond Morris, *The Naked Ape*. New York: Dell Pub., 1984.

⁵ Steven Pinker, *How the Mind Works*, New York, W.W. Norton, 1997, 54.

allow the material to be suffused with the spiritual and we become something else: no longer slaves of nature but servants of the living G-d. ©2015 Rabbi Lord J. Sacks and rabbisacks.org

RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

Shabbat Shalom

"**H**e [G-d] called to Moses, and the Lord spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting saying..." (Leviticus 1:1) So opens the third book of the Pentateuch, the book known as Torat Kohanim, the book of the priest-ministers of the Divine Sanctuary, the guardians of the rituals connecting Israel to G-d. Indeed, this book in Hebrew is, like the others, called by its opening word, Vayikra.

And herein lies a problem. Each of the other four books is called by its opening words, but in those instances the opening words have great significance.

Bereishit [Genesis] is the beginning, the moment in which G-d called the world-creation into being; Shemot [Exodus], the names of the family members who came down to Egypt, and the exile-slavery experience which transformed them into a nation with a national mission; Bamidbar [Numbers], the desert sojourn of a newly freed people who had to learn the responsibilities of managing a nation-state; and Devarim [Deuteronomy], the farewell words of Moses.

But what is the significance of Vayikra - G-d calling out to Moses, as the name for a biblical book? Did not G-d call out to Moses from the time that he came onto the scene of Jewish history? And why is it specifically this time that Moses chose to express his modesty, the word is spelled with a small alef, as if to record that G-d merely "chanced upon him" (vayiker), but had not specifically called out to him? I believe that the answer lies in the very strange final words of the last portion of the Book of Exodus, at the conclusion of Pekudei: "The cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.

Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud rested upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle..." (Exodus 40:34-35) We saw in last week's commentary the majestic words of the Ramban (Nahmanides), explaining how the Book of Exodus concludes the Jewish exile with the glory of the Lord resting upon - and filling - the Tabernacle. Was it not Moses who asked G-d to reveal His glory to him? Was Moses not the supreme individual in human history who came closer to the Divine than anyone else, who "spoke to G-d face to face," whose active intellect actually kissed the active intellect of the Shechina? Why is Moses forbidden from entering the Tent of Meeting? Moses should have entered straightaway, precisely because the glory of G-d was then filling the Tabernacle! Apparently, the Bible is teaching a crucial lesson about Divine Service: G-d wants human beings

to strive to come close to G-d, but not too close. G-d demands even from Moses a measured distance between G-d and human beings. We must serve Him, but not beyond that which He commands us to do. In Divine Service, we dare not go beyond the laws He ordains that we perform.

There is no "beyond the requirements of the law" in the realm of the laws between humans and G-d. G-d understands the thin line between kadosh and kadesh: Divine service and diabolical suicide bombers, fealty to the King of all Kings and fanatic sacrifice to Moloch. Hence not only does our Bible record the commands G-d gave to Moses regarding the construction of every aspect of the Divine Sanctuary (Truma and Tetzaveh) but it painstakingly informs us again and again in Vayakhel and Pekudei that those orders were carried out exactly as they had been commanded, no less and no more: "Moses did according to everything that the Lord had commanded, so did he do" (Ex. 40:16).

This is why, further on in the Book of Leviticus G-d metes out a stringent death penalty upon Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, when they bring before the Lord a "strange fire which they had not been commanded to bring" (Lev. 10:1) in the midst of national fervor of exultant song. Moses even explains this tragic occurrence by saying, "of this did the Lord speak, saying 'I will be sanctified by those who come [too] close to Me.'" Too close to G-d can be more dangerous than too distant from Him.

This is why both the Rambam (Maimonides) and the Ramban interpret the commandment par excellence in interpersonal human relationships, "You shall do what is right and good" (Deut. 6:18), to necessitate going beyond the legal requirements, to make certain that you not act like a "scoundrel within the confines of the law," whereas in the area of Divine-human relationships, you dare not take the law into your own hands; our legal authorities are concerned lest your motivation be yuhara, excessive pride before G-d, religious "one-upmanship."

Thus the sacred Book of Vayikra, the book which features our religious devotion to the Lord, opens with Moses's reluctance to enter the Tabernacle of the Lord unless he is actually summoned to do so by G-d.

His humility is even more in evidence when he records only in miniature the final letter alef in the word Vayikra, as if to say that perhaps the call he had received by G-d was more by accident than by design.

The Midrash (Tanhuma 37) teaches that the small amount of ink which should have been utilized on the regular-sized alef of the Torah (as it were), was placed by G-d on Moses's forehead; that ink of humility is what provided Moses's face with the translucent glow with which he descended from Mount Sinai (Ex. 34:33-35).

Fanatic zealots are completely devoid of

humility; they operate with the fire without rather than the radiant light from within! ©2015 Ohr Torah Institutions & Rabbi S. Riskin

RABBI BEREL WEIN

Wein Online

The word vayikra that begins this week's Torah reading, and is the name of the third book of the Chumash, is distinguished by having a miniature alef at the end of the word. I have written about this exceptional script/font in previous years. I concentrated then mainly on the traditional explanation that this small letter was inserted in the Torah to highlight the abject humility of our teacher Moshe, with this character trait of humility being the basis for his extraordinary relationship with the Creator. The focus of the explanation regarding this miniature letter was placed on Moshe. However, if I may, I would suggest another type of interpretation in which the focus is not on Moshe, the recipient of G-d's words, but rather is on G-d Himself, so to speak.

In the famous vision of the prophet Elijah as recorded for us in the book of Kings, the Lord illustrates to the prophet and through him to all of Israel and mankind that G-d is not to be found in thunder and earthquakes, tornadoes and hurricanes and the other majestic and awe-inspiring vagaries of natural sound. Rather He is to be found in the still small voice that constantly emanates from Heaven.

G-d calls out to us in that modulated whispered tone of voice. He calls out to us with a small alef, reduced in size and volume. But the loud voice cannot maintain itself for all times, whereas the small voice that Elijah heard still echoes in our ears thousands of years later.

If one wants to hear G-d's voice, so to speak, speaking to one's self, then one has to strain to hear the whispered utterances, the nuances of tone, the drama of almost silence itself.

The rabbis of the Talmud emphasized this message and cautioned us: "The words of the wise are heard and appreciated when they are said with calm and softness." In our world of constant sound, the cacophony of shouting and disagreements dominate the sound waves of the world. In such an environment it is difficult, if not almost well nigh impossible, to hear the whispered voice of Sinai, which is broadcast daily to the human race.

One of the basic tenets of Judaism is to somehow attempt to imitate the traits, so to speak, of our Creator. Therefore if G-d speaks to us in a soft and calm voice and manner, then that should be the voice and manner that we should constantly employ when communicating with others. King Solomon in Proverbs taught us that shouting is the weapon of fools. The greatness of Moshe is emphasized in his ability to hear the G-dly voice speaking to him, while others, outside

the holy precincts of the Mishkan/Tabernacle were unable to do so.

In an expansive way, one can say that those who cannot hear the still small voice of G-d, so to speak, are really deaf to the spiritual demands that the Torah places upon us – they are outside the precincts of the holy structure of Judaism. My revered teachers in my student years emphasized to us that high volume while praying does not always equal proper intent and concentration. G-d hears the silence of our hearts. We should all attempt to hear the softness of His communication, in His relationship to us. ©2015 Rabbi Berel Wein - Jewish historian, author and international lecturer offers a complete selection of CDs, audio tapes, video tapes, DVDs, and books on Jewish history at www.rabbiwein.com. For more information on these and other products visit www.rabbiwein.com

RABBI AVI WEISS

Shabbat Forshpeis

The Book of Leviticus opens with the word Va-yikra, "and He [the Lord] called." (Leviticus 1:1) Rashi points out that va-yikra is a term of endearment. The text tells us that G-d spoke to Moshe (Moses) from the Tent of Meeting. Rashi understands this to mean G-d's calling came from the two cherubs atop the Ark.

The Talmud explains that the cherubs were in the form of children embracing with wings at their sides lifting towards each other, heavenward. (Hagigah 13b) What is the significance of this image and what does it mean in light of the fact that it was the seat of G-d's endearing love?

The Hagaddah, which is read at the seder a few days after reading the portion of Va-yikra, may offer the answer. On that night, we relate to G-d through two different types of love. On the one hand, there is the love described in the book Shir Ha-Shirim, The Song of Songs, recited by many after the seder. It is the type of love of a lover for his beloved, reflective of G-d's intense love for the Jewish people. There is no love more powerful, there is no love more deep.

But even that intense love has its limits. Spousal relationships are humanly made and can also be terminated. In fact the Torah tells us that if a woman divorces and marries another, she can never return to her first husband. What would happen when the Jewish people rebel against G-d for other beliefs? If reconciliation is not possible, how can they reunite with the Lord?

Thus, in the Haggadah, another form of G-d's love emerges. It is the love of a parent to a child. This is the love accentuated at the outset of the seder through the presentation of the four children, the four questions and the telling of the Exodus story. Perhaps this love is not as passionate as spousal love, but it contains a quality that spousal love does not have, the element of eternity. It lasts forever. A parent child relationship

can never terminate. The love of parent to child expressed at the seder is a reflection of G-d interacting with his people as the parent par excellence.

This then can be the meaning of the cherubs, of the little children embracing. It is symbolic of two loves, the spousal love of embrace and the parent/child unbreakable love. Together, these two types of love lifts one heavenward, much like the wings of the cherubs pointing to the sky.

The seder actually balances these two loves. Before the meal we emphasize parental love, which moves us to remember our past, as father and mother share the Passover story. After the meal we emphasize spousal love, the love of Shir Ha-Shirim, with all its trappings of bride and groom under the chupah with a dream of a beautiful future. We will be praying for the time when we hear G-d's voice in the spirit of the cherubs, of va-yikra, the language of true, authentic endearment. ©2013 Hebrew Institute of Riverdale & CJC-AMCHA. Rabbi Avi Weiss is Founder and Dean of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, the Open Orthodox Rabbinical School, and Senior Rabbi of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale

RABBI KALMAN PACKOUZ

Shabbat Shalom Weekly

The Torah states: "And He (G-d) called to Moses, and G-d spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying..." (Lev. 1:1). The Talmud (Yoma 4b) teaches that from the word "saying" (which denotes "say to others") we learn that a person has no right to repeat what someone tells him unless that person gives him explicit permission to do so. Below are a few of the basic laws pertaining to secrets:

1) If someone tells you private information about his business or any personal matter, you are forbidden to disclose it to others. Your doing so could cause the person who confided in you financial loss, embarrassment, or other damage. Even if the speaker did not request that the matter remain secret, you are not allowed to repeat it. It is self-evident that the speaker does not want such information to be divulged.

However, if that person related information concerning himself in the presence of three or more people and did not request secrecy, you are permitted to relate it to others. We can assume that he does not mind if the information will be known. If, however, someone tells you about his wrongdoings in the presence of three, you are nevertheless forbidden to try to spread that information to belittle him. It is forbidden for anyone to deliberately publicize his actions to embarrass him. (Chofetz Chayim, ch. 2).

2) When someone reveals to you seemingly harmless information in a manner which shows that he would like it to be kept secret, you are forbidden to repeat it to others even if he did not explicitly tell you to keep it secret. (B'air Mayim Chayim 2:27)

3) You have no right to repeat someone's

secret just because you add the phrase, "Don't repeat this to anyone else." (Pele Yoatz, section sode)

4) Husbands and wives have no right to tell each other secrets that someone told him or her in confidence. (Pele Yoatz, section sode) *Based on Love Your Neighbor by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin ©2015 Rabbi K. Packouz & aish.com*

RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY

Soulful Offerings

Parshas Vayikra opens with the laws of the Korban Olah, a volunteered offering with a variety of options, depending on one's financial status. The wealthier individual could bring cattle, a less wealthy person, sheep, an even poorer individual could bring a turtledove. For the most destitute individual who would like to offer something but has no money for even a turtledove, the Torah commands: "When a nefesh, a soul, offers a meal-offering to Hashem, his offering shall be of fine flour; he shall pour oil upon it and place frankincense upon it" (Leviticus 2:1). Rashi adds a comment: "Nowhere is the word nefesh used in connection with free-will offerings except in connection with the meal-offering. For who is it that usually brings a meal-offering? The poor man! The Holy One, blessed be He, says, as it were, I will regard it for him as though he brought his very soul as an offering" (Menachos,104b).

The Chasam Sofer asks both a poignant and practical question. The price of fine flour is more expensive than that of a turtledove! So why is the fine flour offering the option meted for the poorest person, and why isn't the one who brings the turtledove considered as if he gave his soul?

It was only a few days before Passover when a man entered the home of Rabbi Yosef Dov HaLevi Soleveitchik of Brisk, known as the Bais Halevi. The man had a look of constant nation on his face.

"Rabbi he pleaded. I have a very difficult question. Is one allowed to fulfill his obligation of the four cups of wine with and other liquid? Would one would be able to fulfill his obligation with four cups of milk?"

The Bais Halevi looked up at the man and began to think. "My son," he said, "that is a very difficult question. I will look into the matter. But until then I have an idea. I would like to give you some money in order for you to purchase four cups of wine for you and your family." The Bais Halevi, then took out a large sum of money, far more than necessary for a few bottles of wine, and handed it to the man who took it with extreme gratitude and relief. One of the attendants who helped Rabbi Soleveitchik with his chores was quite shocked at the exorbitant amount of money that his rebbe gave the man.

He gathered the nerve to ask. "I, too, understood from the man's question that he needed to

buy wine for the seder and could not afford more than the milk he was able to get from his cow. But why did you give him so much money? You gave him not only enough for wine, but four an entire meal with meat!"

Rabbi Soleveitchik smiled. "That, my dear student is exactly the point! If a man asks if he can fulfill his obligation of the four cups of wine with milk, then obviously he cannot have meat at the seder. That in turn means that not only can he not afford wine, he cannot afford meat or fowl! So not only did I give him money for wine, I gave him money for a meat as well!"

The Chasam Sofer tells us that we have to ponder the circumstances and put the episode in perspective. The poorest man he who cannot even afford a lowly bird -- has a form of Torah welfare. It is called leket, shikcha and peah -- the poorest and most destitute are entitle to grain left behind in field. And from that grain, which was not even bought, the man can make fine flour. When that individual decides to remove the grain from his very own table and offer that grain to the Almighty, he is considered giving his soul. True, a bird may cost less, but to the poorest man, even the bird costs more than the grain he received gratis. However, when he takes those kernels and gives from them, he is offering his very soul!

Often we try to assess contributions and commitments based on monetary value. It is an inaccurate evaluation, for a wealthy man may give time which is harder for him to given than his money. A musician may give of his skill, despite aching fingers or a splitting headache. The Torah tells us that when we assess the needs of a poor man, or anyone who gives, don't look at the wallet. Look at the whole person. And the way to do that is to look at the soul person. ©2001 Rabbi M. Kamenetzky & torah.org

RABBI MEIR GOLDWICHT

YUTorah

Parashat VaYikra opens with Hashem commanding Moshe Rabbeinu to tell B'nei Yisrael, "A man, when he sacrifices from you (adam ki yakriv mikem) an offering to Hashem, from the animals, from the cattle and from the flock shall you bring your offering." This passuk could have been written more succinctly as follows: "When you bring a sacrifice to Hashem...", leaving out the superfluous words "adam, a man," and "mikem, from you." Why does the Torah add these words?

Rashi explains that the word "adam" teaches us that, like Adam HaRishon, who sacrificed animals belonging to him, we must not bring sacrifices from stolen animals. Rashi does not, however, address the superfluousness of "mikem." What is the reason behind the Torah's uncharacteristic verbosity here at the beginning of VaYikra?

Additionally, in next week's parasha, Tzav, the Torah discusses the daily service of the kohen,

beginning with the siluk hadeshen (removal of the ashes and leftovers of the korbanot), as it says, "And he shall separate the ash (deshen) of what the fire consumed" (VaYikra 6:3). The question that must be asked is why the daily service of the kohen doesn't begin in an active, positive way, such as sacrificing a korban or lighting the Menorah. Why does the daily service of the kohen begin with the removal of the deshen?

To answer these two questions, it is helpful to understand the following: After we eat a k'zayit of bread, we recite Birkat HaMazon, consisting of four brachot. After eating any one of the seven species for which Eretz Yisrael is praised (grapes, figs, pomegranates, etc.), we say only one bracha, the bracha achat me'ein shalosh. Why the difference? R' Soloveichik explains that bread represents a partnership with HaKadosh Baruch Hu. We actively participate in the "creation" of bread, planting, plowing, harvesting, etc. This enables us to recognize our Partner that much more, and our gratitude is therefore much greater. For fruit, on the other hand, our input is much less significant. We plant the tree and HaKadosh Baruch Hu basically does the rest. Our partnership is much less recognizable and therefore so is our gratitude.

If we develop the Rav's reasoning a bit further, it becomes clear that HaKadosh Baruch Hu wants us to be His partners in all acts of creation. This is perhaps the reason why the first mitzvah a Jew does is brit milah- through this act, HaKadosh Baruch Hu allows us to complete ourselves, so to speak, thereby completing our own creation.

But in order to truly be partnered with Hashem, we must make room for Him in our lives. This is why the first part of the daily service in the Beit HaMikdash was the siluk hadeshen, making room both literally and figuratively.

This may explain why the Torah says, "Adam ki yakriv mikem korban laShem, A person, when he sacrifices from you an offering to Hashem." Everyone must sacrifice of himself, a part of himself, to make more room for HaKadosh Baruch Hu in his life.

This is why the midrash homiletically derives from the word "mikem," which totals 100 in gematria, that one who recites 100 brachot per day is as if he offered a sacrifice. The Tur explains in Orach Chaim that in the time of David HaMelech there was a terrible plague during which 100 people died mysteriously on a daily basis. David didn't know how to end the plague, until it was revealed to him through ruach hakodesh that the plague would end if he instituted the practice of saying 100 brachot per day. The Tur's explanation poses some difficulty, however, because the gemara in Menachot (43b) suggests that this practice was already instituted in the time of Moshe Rabbeinu. What did David HaMelech add? The answer is that in the time of

Moshe Rabbeinu, every person would make 100 brachot of his choosing. David HaMelech instituted a specific set of 100 brachot to be recited over the course of the day, realizing that the brachot would then "escort" a person from the moment he woke up until he went back to sleep that night, protecting him from danger and granting him long life.

Chazal say on the words "lech lecha," again totaling 100 in gematria, that when a neshama descends to this world, HaKadosh Baruch Hu tells it to remember one thing: I give you 100 "keys of brachot," with which you must open doors for Me to make room for Me in the world. This is how our lives begin.

The first to harness the power of the 100 brachot was Avraham Avinu, who opened doors for the Creator in places His Name had never been. Therefore "Hashem blessed Avraham with everything (bakol)"-bet kol, twice kol, again totaling 100. The reason why the recitation of this passuk after Hallel on Rosh Chodesh is a segulah for longevity is now quite clear.

One who recites 100 brachot per day is as if he offered a sacrifice because through the 100 brachot, this person realizes that his task in this world is to increase the glory of Hashem and to make more room for Him, even if this requires sacrificing of himself. This is the very idea that lies behind bringing a korban in the Beit HaMikdash.

This is also the meaning of the gemara in Sanhedrin (7a): "When the love between my wife and I was strong, we were able to lie together on the blade of a sword." In other words, neither of us took up space, each of us giving space to the other. "But when our love was weak, there was not enough room for us to lie together even in a bed of 60 amot." The more we let HaKadosh Baruch Hu into our lives, into our world, the more room we will have with which to continue to sanctify His Name in all of our actions. ©2006 Rabbi M. Goldwicht and YUTorah.com

RABBI DOV KRAMER

Taking a Closer Look

"And [the Kohain] shall remove its crop with its feathers and toss it next to the altar on the eastern side, to the place of the ashes" (Vayikra 1:16). On one hand, mentioning "the place of the ashes" seems to indicate that the location where the ashes were put (referring to the ashes from the "t'rumas ha'deshen," see Rashi) was already discussed, and therefore already known. On the other hand, if it was already known, there should be no reason to specify that this place is "on the eastern side" of the altar. However, in the instructions for removing the ashes every morning (6:3), although we are told that the Kohain should put them "next to the altar," we are not told on what side of the altar to place them. Why is this detail taught here, where the "t'rumas ha'deshen" is not the focus, rather than later, when it

is? [It's possible that its given here because the ashes being put on the eastern side is more closely connected to the crop/feathers than to ashes (et al). Nevertheless, that it is given here and not where the "t'rumas ha'deshen" is taught is certainly noteworthy.]

Another issue with this verse's wording is raised by Rabbi Isaac S.D. Sassoon ("Destination Torah"); how can the context here indicate that we already know about the requirement to remove some of the ashes every morning (using the location where the ashes are put as a reference point) if that requirement isn't taught for another five chapters? A similar issue arises a few chapters later (4:12), when the location where the bulk of the ashes are brought (when the pile of ashes on top of the altar gets too big) is used as a reference point even though this isn't taught until a couple of chapters later either (6:4). Rabbi Sassoon attributes the locations of the ashes being used as reference points before they are taught in the text to the concept of the Torah being presented, at times, out of chronological order (see Rashi on Sh'mos 31:18), which is universally agreed upon (see Bamidbar 1:1 and 9:1), although not always applied universally (see Ramban on Sh'mos 35:1 and Bamidbar 16:1). He seems to present it as if this issue alone is enough of a reason to apply it here; let's take a closer look to see if this is really the case.

There is a well known dispute (Sotah 37b) about whether Moshe was taught every detail at Sinai, which were repeated to him in the Mishkan, or if only the categories were taught at Sinai, with the details being taught in the Mishkan. It would be fair to assume that if not every detail was taught at Sinai, where the ashes are to be put was not taught there. However, if every detail was taught at Sinai, and then repeated in the Mishkan (at which point Moshe shared it with everyone else), even if the first seven chapters of Vayikra were taught in chronological order, referencing something that does not appear until later would not be as much of an issue, as Moshe already knew it from Sinai. Nevertheless, since it was at this point that Moshe was told to share it with others (in this case, with Aharon and his sons), unless Moshe was supposed to digress from the commandment at hand to elaborate on the "t'rumas ha'deshen," using it as a reference point wouldn't work. As far as mentioning which side of the altar the crop/feathers are to be thrown, though, if Aharon and his sons were not yet taught where the ashes should be put, it makes sense for it to be taught to them here (if this was taught first).

That things are taught out of order chronologically in Sefer Vayikra is widely accepted (see Rashi on 8:2, although Ramban argues here as well). It opens with G-d calling to Moshe from the Mishkan, which is continuation of how Sefer Sh'mos ends, with the Mishkan fully built, G-d's presence having descended upon it, and Moshe unable to enter the

Mishkan because G-d's presence had filled it. Since G-d's presence didn't descend upon the Mishkan until the "eighth day" (Vayikra 9:1-24), and it was preceded by the instructions to Aharon telling him what needed to be done in order for G-d's presence to descend (8:1-36), obviously the beginning of Sefer Vayikra, where G-d's presence had already descended onto the Mishkan, occurred after the instructions were given and performed in order for it to descend. The question is where this chronological switch, from things taught in the Mishkan to things taught before the Mishkan was fully operational, took place (see tinyurl.com/ojht4vq). If the switch occurred after chapter 5 ends, with chapter 6 reverting to the earlier time, then the locations where the ashes were put, which are given in chapter 6, were in fact taught before they were referenced in chapters 1 and 4.

There are several indications that this is where this switch occurred, as some of the commandments included in chapters 6 and 7 (6:12-6:16 and 7:35-36) specifically address what Aharon and his sons must do before they start performing the service, i.e. during their seven-day training period (the seven days of "milu'im"), which was obviously before the "eighth day." These chapters contain the instructions that teach the Kohanim how to bring each type of offering, instructions they needed to know during their seven day training period. (Every "dibur" in these two chapters, except the last one, is directed to the Kohanim because it is their instructions.) Additionally, this two-chapter section concludes by telling us that these instructions were given at Sinai (as opposed to the Mishkan), which is where G-d communicated with Moshe before His presences descended upon the Mishkan. Therefore, rather than the mentions of the locations of the ashes being the main reason for placing chapters 6 and 7 before chapters 1-5 (chronologically), the context of the chapters themselves do so. And once chapter 6 occurred before chapters 1 and 4, there is no issue with the locations of the ashes being used a reference point. However, it makes the question of why the ashes being placed on the eastern side of the altar was taught in chapter 1 rather than chapter 6 stronger, as not only is chapter 6 the more appropriate context, but it was taught first too! Why wait until after the seven day training period was over to tell us exactly where these ashes should go?

[There is another issue with chapters 6 and 7 being taught earlier (chronologically) than chapters 1-5; two of the offerings are referenced in chapter 6 as if we already know about them, and if chapters 1-5 were taught afterwards, how would we? However, these references aren't really problematic. Even though the verse (6:2) indicates that we already know about burnt offerings, this knowledge could have come from the earlier instructions for the offerings brought during the "milu'im" (Sh'mos 29:38-42), do not need to come from

the details taught at the beginning of Sefer Vayikra. The reference to the "sh'lamim" in 6:5 isn't problematic either, even though this type of offering isn't introduced until later (7:11), as this offering was brought before the Mishkan was even commanded (see Sh'mos 24:5). All this verse is telling us is that the fats of any "sh'lamim" brought must be put on the altar after the daily morning burnt offering; the fact that the details regarding a "sh'lamim" aren't taught until later doesn't prevent an already-known category from being mentioned.]

The Yerushalmi (Yoma 2:2) says our verse (Vayikra 1:16) teaches us that not only are ashes from the outer altar placed on the eastern side of the (outer) altar, but so are ashes from the inner altar and the Menorah. The words "to the place of the ashes" are unnecessary, as once we are told that the crop/feathers are to be thrown "next to the altar on the eastern side," and that the ashes are also put in an area described as "next to the altar" (6:3), we know that the ashes are put on the eastern side of the altar. Therefore, the "ashes" mentioned in 1:16 must be referring to different ashes, i.e. those of the inner altar and of the Menorah. (See M'ilah 12a, where the "ashes" in 1:16 are also said to refer to the ashes of the inner altar and of the Menorah, even if something else is learned from these words.) Although on a p'shat level the "ashes" mentioned in 1:16 are from the "t'rumas ha'deshen" (thereby indicating that this commandment was already known), since on a "d'rash" level we are being taught about other ashes, and being told (separately) that the ashes are to be put on the eastern side of the altar contributes to the "d'rasha," this detail is taught here rather than with the (earlier) commandment about the "t'rumas ha'deshen." True, had the instructions for them to be on the eastern side been taught there, the words "next to the altar" alone should make the words "to the place of the ashes" superfluous. Nevertheless, having both locators ("on the eastern side of the altar" and "to the place of the ashes") together makes it more obvious that other ashes are being hinted to here.

This still leaves us with one issue; if 6:3 was taught before 1:16, how did they know which side of the altar to put the ashes from the "t'rumas ha'deshen" on during the seven days of "milu'im" (which were before 1:16 was taught)? Well, since Moshe was the acting Kohain Gadol during these seven days (Vayikra Rabbah 11:6, with Aharon taking over on the "eighth day"), he knew which side to put the ashes on; they observed him doing so and were able to follow his lead. Therefore, there was no reason for Moshe, when he gave over the instructions for the seven days of "milu'im," to tell them explicitly which side to put the ashes on. And when he gave over the instructions on the "eighth day," which included which side to throw the crop/feathers, referencing that it is the same side as the ashes from the "t'rumas ha'deshen" taught them that it must always be on that side. © 2015 Rabbi D. Kramer