

This week's *Parashah* continues to discuss the laws of the *Korbanot* / sacrificial offerings. We read (7:37), "This is the *Torah* / law of the *Olah* / burnt-offering, the *Mincha* / meal-offering, the *Chatat* / sin-offering, and the *Asham* / guilt-offering . . ." R' Yissachar Dov Rokeach z"l (1851-1926; *Belzer Rebbe*) asks: If a person were to bring an *Olah* and a *Chatat* together, the *Chatat* would be offered first! (An *Olah* is a voluntary offering--a gift to *Hashem*, so-to-speak. Before one can give a gift to the King, he must appease the King, which is the function of a *Chatat*.) Why, then, is the *Olah* listed first in our verse?

The *Belzer Rebbe* answers: The *Zohar* teaches that, if a person toils in Torah study at night, the Torah will reveal to him the areas in which he needs to improve. Otherwise, say our Sages, "A person cannot see his own blemishes." [The original context of this expression is the *Mishnah* (*Nega'im* 2:5) teaching that a *Kohen* who has signs of *Tzara'at* must go to a different *Kohen* for "diagnosis." Later Sages apply this expression to the difficulty a person has seeing his own faults.]

The *Gemara* (*Menachot* 110a) derives from our verse, "This is the *Torah* . . ." that, in the absence of the *Bet Hamikdash*, our studying about the *Korbanot* takes the place of offering them. Says the *Belzer Rebbe*: When a person sits down to learn the laws of the *Korbanot*, he will not choose to learn about the *Chatat* / sin offering, since he does not see his own blemishes. Rather, he will learn about the *Olah*, which is a voluntary "gift." That is why the *Olah* is mentioned first in our verse. Once he toils in the *Torah* of the *Olah*, he will become aware of his obligation to bring a *Chatat* as well--as hinted to by the *Zohar* quoted above. Therefore, the *Chatat* is mentioned later. (*Lekket Imrei Kodesh*)

Bitachon

This year--a *Shemittah* year--we will *iy"H* devote this space to discussing the related subject of *Bitachon* / placing one's trust in *Hashem*.

Rabbeinu Bachya ibn Pekudah z"l (*Saragossa, Spain; early 11th century*) lists ten benefits of *Bitachon*. The sixth of these benefits is as follows:

The benefit of *Bitachon* in this world is that a person who has *Bitachon* has peace of mind and is free from worries. He lives tranquilly, undisturbed and untroubled about whether his desires are being fulfilled. Thus it is written (*Yirmiyahu* 17:7-8), "Blessed is the man who trusts in *Hashem*, then *Hashem* will be his security. He will be like a tree that is planted near water, which will spread its roots alongside brooks [and will not see when heat comes, whose foliage will be ever fresh, who will not worry in years of drought and will never stop producing fruit]."

(*Chovot Ha'levavot: Sha'ar Ha'Bitachon*, Introduction)

The first benefit of *Bitachon* that R' Bachya identified also related to having peace of mind. R' Chaim Avraham Katz z"l (*Mogilev, Belarus; died 1804*) explains: Until now, R' Bachya was discussing how *Bitachon* can improve a person's spiritual life--for example, by giving him peace of mind so he can focus on studying Torah and performing *Mitzvot*. Here, R' Bachya is showing how *Bitachon* benefits a person in this world--aiding his physical and mental health.

(*Pat Lechem*)

R' Mattisyahu Solomon *shlita* (*Mashgiach Ruchani* of the Lakewood Yeshiva) observes: People spend a lot of money on vacations to distant places in search of peace of mind. In reality, the way to acquire peace of mind is by developing *Bitachon*.

(*Matnat Chelko*)

R' Shlomo Moshe Amar *shlita* (former *Sefardi* Chief Rabbi of Israel, now *Sefardi* Chief Rabbi of Yerushalayim) writes: When you rely on another human, you can never be sure he will keep his word. He may trick you or lie to you, and even if he does not, he himself is dependent on other people. Only *Hashem* is free from these obstacles and, therefore, can be relied on without reservations.

(*Be'chasdecha Batachti*)

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Thirty Days Before Pesach . . .

The Book of *Shmot*, which describes our exile in Egypt and the Exodus from there, begins, “And these are the names of *Bnei Yisrael* who were coming to Egypt . . .” Why, asks R’ Reuven Sasson *shlita* (rabbi and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Ramat Ha’sharon, Israel), is this repeated, after we already read (*Bereishit* 46:8), “And these are the names of *Bnei Yisrael* who were coming to Egypt”?

R’ Sasson explains: The opening verse of *Shmot* is not simply cataloging the names of Yaakov’s sons. Rather, the Torah is revealing the purpose of the exile in Egypt. Our Sages teach that a person’s name represents the essence of his soul. [Our Sages say that parents experience *Ruach Ha’kodesh* / Divine Inspiration when naming their children.] The names of Yaakov’s sons, which became the names of the Twelve Tribes, represent the souls of all the Jewish People--the essence of what we are supposed to be. (That those names carry great meaning is evident, writes R’ Sasson, from the fact that they were engraved on the stones of the *Kohen Gadol*’s Breastplate.)

R’ Sasson continues: The purpose of descending to Egypt was to uncover the essence that the Tribes’ names represent. Ever since the sin of Adam Ha’rishon, mankind’s souls increasingly became sullied by pre-occupation with the physical world. R’ Yitzchak Luria *z”l* (“*The Arizal*”; 1534-1572) teaches: Just as gold and silver must pass through fire time-after-time until all their impurities are removed, so the souls of *Bnei Yisrael* had to pass through the harsh enslavement in Egypt to be purified. (*See Devarim* 20:4--“But *Hashem* has taken you and withdrawn you from the iron crucible, from Egypt . . .”) Little by little, the harsh physical enslavement stripped away *Bnei Yisrael*’s attachment to this world until their essence shone like highly polished gold, just as one beats a kernel of wheat to uncover the edible part inside.

Thus, concludes R’ Sasson, The Torah lists the names of Yaakov’s sons again to emphasize that they came to Egypt to reveal what those names represent--the true essence of what man is meant to be.

(*Haggadah Shel Pesach B’ohr Panecha* p.17)

“This is the law of the *Olah* / burnt-offering--it is the *Olah* on *Mokdah* / its pyre . . .” (6:2)

Rabbeinu Yoel *z”l* (Germany; approx. 13th century) writes: We learn from here that the *Korban Tamid*, the daily *Olah* offering, should be the first offering of the day, for the word “*Mokdah*” has the same letters as “*Kedumah*” / “earliest.”

(*Rimzei Rabbeinu Yoel*)

“He shall remove the ash to the outside of the camp, to a pure place.” (6:4)

R’ Yosef Tendler *z”l* (1932-2012; *Menahel* of Mechinas Ner Israel in Baltimore, Maryland) observes: Perhaps the Torah commanded that Aharon and his sons be the ones who take the ashes from the *Mizbei’ach* / Altar to the “dump” to teach us that no act is dirty or degrading if it is part of a *Mitzvah*. Just as parents clean their soiled children and do not think it is beneath them--rather, they do it lovingly--so we should approach every *Mitzvah* of *Hashem*.
(*Od Yosef Chai*)

“And from the basket of *Matzot* that was before *Hashem* he took one *Matzah* loaf, one oily bread loaf, and one wafer, and placed them on the fats and on the right thigh [of the ram offering]. He put it all on Aharon’s palms and on the palms of his sons . . . Then Moshe took them from their palms and caused them to go up in smoke on the *Mizbei’ach* . . .” (8:26-28)

Rashi z”l comments on the last of these verses: Moshe was officiating during the seven days of installation in a white garment.

R’ David Cohen *shlita* (*Rosh Yeshiva* of the Chevron Yeshiva in Yerushalayim) asks: The entire chapter has been describing, step-by-step, how Moshe officiated during the installation of Aharon and his sons as *Kohanim*. Why did *Rashi* wait until now to inform us that Moshe was officiating at that time? Also, what is the significance of Moshe’s officiating in a white garment?

R’ Cohen explains: One might have thought that Moshe officiated during the installation of the *Kohanim* only because there were not yet any *Kohanim* to officiate. If that were the reason, however, Moshe would not have placed the sacrificial limbs on the Altar; he would have let that part of the service wait until there were *Kohanim* able to perform it. That would have been consistent with the general practice in the Temple, that placing sacrificial limbs on top of the altar is not a priority and can wait for a convenient time--even nighttime. (In contrast, priority portions of the sacrificial service, such as placing the blood on the altar, can never be postponed until nighttime.)

Because our verse relates that Moshe did place the offering on the altar, and did not wait, *Rashi* is forced to explain that Moshe was officiating by design during the seven days of installation. Moshe was not doing so because there were no *Kohanim*, but rather because that was *Hashem*’s Will [for whatever reason]. The proof that Moshe was not serving in the capacity of a substitute *Kohen* is the fact that he did so wearing one white garment, not the four priestly garments.
(*Lekach David*)