



The Greater Washington Community Kollel
**SHABBOS
 DELIGHTS**
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TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Removing the “Se’or” Within

Presented by Rabbi Yitzchak Kaminetsky, Kollel Scholar

Among the many laws taught in our parsha regarding *korbanos* (offerings), the Torah instructs us (2:11) that a *Korban Mincha* (Meal Offering) may not contain *se’or* – leavening. This is a little bit surprising. We usually associate *chametz* with Pesach, but why should it be disqualified from the *Mizbe’ach* (altar)? What is inherently problematic about a thicker, leavened dough?

The Gemara in Berachos (17a) offers a powerful perspective. Rebbe Alexandri would add a personal tefillah after davening: “Master of the Universe... it is revealed and known before You that our will is to do Your will. And what prevents us? The *se’or* in the dough and the subjugation to the nations.” Rashi explains that the “*se’or* in the dough” refers to the *yetzer hara* – the internal force that “inflates” us, filling a person with ego and self-importance. Just as yeast causes dough to rise, the *yetzer hara* causes a person to rise in their own eyes, making it harder to submit to Hashem’s will.

This idea sheds light on why *se’or* has no place on the *Mizbe’ach*. A *korban*, serving Hashem, requires humility. When a person approaches the *Mizbe’ach*, there is no room for an inflated ego – only sincerity and submission.

This theme is embedded in the very opening of the parsha: “When a person brings an offering from you...” (1:2) The Sforno explains that the *korban* must come not only from one’s possessions, but from within oneself. It must be accompanied by “*viduy devarim* – confession,” and “*hachna’ah* – genuine humility.

In our own service of Hashem, we face the same challenge described by Rebbe Alexandri. Deep down, we want to do what is right. But the “*se’or*” – our ego, our self-centeredness – can get in the way. It convinces us that we are already fine as we are, that growth is unnecessary, or that we do not need to submit to something greater than ourselves.

Parshas Vayikra reminds us that true closeness to Hashem begins when we remove that “*se’or*.” When we approach our *mitzvos* with humility and honesty, we create space for real service of and connection to Hashem.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

...Hashem spoke to Moshe from the Ohel Moed, saying... (1, 1)

Relay to Bnei Yisroel My word, and answer Me if they will accept My word... (Rashi)

I am Hashem, your G-d... (Acharei Mos 18, 2)

I am the One who said at Har Sinai, "I am Hashem, your G-d" and you accepted My sovereignty. Now you must accept My decrees. (Rashi)

Why did Hashem want Bnei Yisrael to respond whether they were in favor of the korbanos (Parshas Vayikra), if they had already accepted Hashem's sovereignty?

Parsha Riddle

Why is the Korban Olah the first korban mentioned in the Torah?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What is the connection between cholent and our Parsha? Answer: We eat hot food, cholent, to refute those who interpret, "lo s'va-aru aish – you shall not kindle a fire" to mean that it is forbidden to have a fire in your home – even if it was lit before Shabbos, so they eat only cold food and sit in the dark.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vayikra* (5:1), the Torah declares the sinfulness of withholding testimony: "If a person sins, whereby he accepts an oath, and he is a witness [to some matter] by seeing or knowing [it], yet he does not testify, he shall bear his transgression."

A decade ago (*Vayikra* 5776), we noted that several *acharonim* (*Avkas Rochel* 195, *Yeshuos Yisrael* beginning of *siman* 28) rule that a witness is not obligated to testify if doing so will result in even financial harm to himself. Their position is based on the Ra'ah and the Ramban's characterization of the duty to testify as *gemilas chasadim*, and the Ramban's analogy between the duty to testify and *hashavas aveidah* (the *mitzvah* to return lost property); the aforementioned *acharonim* argue that just as one is not obligated to ignore his own interests and suffer harm in order to fulfill the precepts of *gemilas chasadim* and *hashavas aveidah* (e.g., if one's own item as well as that of another are both in danger and he can only save one, he is not obligated to save the other's item at the expense of his own), so, too, is a witness not obligated to testify if this will result in harm to himself.

While some contemporary authorities accept this view unequivocally (*Piskei-Din shel Batei ha-Din ha-Rabani'im b'Yisrael* volume 7 pp. 315-17; *Umka d'Dina* (Yerushalayim 5766) pp. 63-64), R. Shlomo Amar argues that the matter is not so clear cut. He notes that while the Ramban and the Ra'ah characterize the duty to testify as mere *gemilas chasadim*, analogous to *hashavas aveidah*, other *rishonim* seem to consider the failure to testify as a form of tort, engendering liability after the fact for any financial harm to the litigant that the testimony would have averted (Riaz, cited in *Shiltei ha-Giborim* to Rif *Bava Kama* 56a; Rabbeinu Yerucham, cited in *Birchei Yosef CM* 28:3). R. Amar argues that according to these latter *rishonim*, it is obvious that the concern for harm to one's own interests does not exempt a witness from the duty to testify, and based on this as well as other arguments, he concludes that we should not establish an absolute rule that any witness who will suffer any sort of loss by testifying is exempt from doing so, "since the issue is not that simple at all" (*Shema Shlomo* 4 CM 1).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am an aleph and a hey.
2. The daled is not like me.
3. I make it sound like happenstance.
4. Do not judge me by my size.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I introduce Shabbos.
2. Next week I'll be four.
3. I am used as a separator.
4. I get overused on Purim.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Chur (I came from the calmer, Hashem's shadow, G-d filled, Overseer.)

#2 Mizbeich (I was cornered, I was fiery, I am for atonement, Full of dirt.)

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SUNDAY, March 22 at 8:15pm on ZOOM | Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/3497542180> Password: Learn

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