

The
CHASSIDUS
PERSPECTIVE
with Reb Yoel Kahn



To view the video with subtitles, visit:
MerkazAnash.com/vayikra5774



To listen on the phone, call:
CONNECTION 347-498-0008, option 7

MAKING THE INSPIRATION LAST

We are beginning *Sefer Vayikra*, the book of *korbonos*. Right at the beginning, *vayikra*, Hashem calls Moshe, and He instructs him to tell the Yidden, that "if a person should offer from you a *korbon* to Hashem, you (plural) should offer your *korbon* from the animals, from the oxen, from the sheep." Hashem begins in the third person, referring to "a person," not "if you should offer" in the singular, or the royal plural. But then the conclusion should have been "He should offer his *korbon* from the animals," both in the third person, and in the singular, it should read: "if a person should offer . . . He should offer his *korbon*." Why is it in the plural, "You should offer your *korbon*," and in the second person?

Furthermore, what does "if a person should offer from you a *korbon*" mean? What is "from you" in reference to? Is it meant to be read "a person (from you)," or "offer (from you)"? It seems to be referring to "a person," "if a person from you should offer." But then that should have been the actual word order! Since it actually says "should offer from you," "from you" must refer to "offer." But do we "offer from you"? We bring an animal, not a person! What does "offer from you" mean?

WHY THE SUDDEN INSPIRATION?

There's a *maamar* from the *Alter Rebbe* in *Likutei Torah* which explains, that as a rule, all physical *mitzvos* which we observe, originate in spirituality. There is a spiritual concept of *korbonos*. And that's where the physical phenomenon originates. What are spiritual *korbonos*? "*Korbon*" comes from the root of '*kiruv*', the desire to come closer to Hashem.

Where does this urge to approach Hashem come from? It often comes from Heaven. The Gemara speaks of various proclamations that are made from Above; there's an announcement of "return, mischievous children," there's a *bas kol* every day "woe onto the people for the disgrace of Torah," and other proclamations. But if a *bas kol* is announced, and no one hears it, then there's no sense in making these declarations, and so what's the point?

The *Baal Shem Tov* explains, that we often experience sudden feelings of remorse. Sometimes, we just want to do *teshuva*, to just sit down and study, learn some works of *Musar* or *Chassidus*, and it works. This urge somehow just appears suddenly. Where is it really from? The *Baal Shem Tov* explains that this is the result of that phenomenon; our *neshama* hears that *bas kol*, And as a result, we become consciously inspired as well.

However, in cases like these, it's very possible that the inspiration will last a few days, perhaps even a few weeks, but will then disappear. Why is that? Because we ourselves have done nothing,

we didn't work at all, and therefore we aren't a vessel capable of containing the inspiration which came from the *bas kol*. We need to do something ourselves, and when we do, we become a vessel. In Chassidic terminology, it penetrates the *primiyus*, and doesn't remain *makif*. When we become a vessel, then it has an effect, but if we feel inspired yet do nothing ourselves, then it just peters out.

The *Alter Rebbe* explains it this way: "If a person should offer from you," "a person," *Adam*, refers to the *Adam Ha'elyon*. – Hashem is referred to as *Adam*, like in the *pesukim* about the *merkava*, "Upon the image of the seat, there was an image in the appearance of a man," *Adam*, and that *Adam* on the *kisei ha'kavod* is Hashem. –

And "*Adam*" inspires us to "offer from you." So it isn't in fact an "*Adam* from you," (since *Adam* here refers to Hashem), it's really "offer from you," (since we are the ones being offered), He inspires us to sacrifice something from ourselves.

CHANGING OUR PERCEPTION

What exactly gets aroused? We have two souls, the *nefesh ha'elokis* and the *nefesh ha'bahamis*. All the announcements and inspiration that comes from Heaven, affect the *nefesh ha'elokis*, not the *nefesh ha'bahamis*. In order to affect the *nefesh ha'bahamis*, we need to do something ourselves, it doesn't come from Heaven. All

Heaven can do is rouse us. For example: We get inspired to do *teshuva*, but then do nothing; something bothers us a bit, but it doesn't transform us.

Specifically, if we really want it to affect us, our individual traits, if we'd like to eliminate *ga'avah* (conceit), for example, how would we go about doing that? There's only one way. There's something which is causing that sense of self-importance, and we must teach and explain to ourselves, that there's no real reason to feel self-important. If we have a lot of money, then we must know that Hashem gave it to us, and it's for a specific purpose, for giving *tzedaka*. If the self-importance originates in possessing a good mind, then think about how Hashem created that, and even if we use it right, "If you learn a lot of Torah, don't give yourself credit, because you were created for the purpose." And when we absorb this, it can contribute to preventing self-importance.

As long as we're convinced of our self-importance, then no closeness to Hashem will occur. And even if we hear a *bas kol*, like the one that announces that "Hashem despises every prideful heart," that *ga'avah* is disgusting, we'll be aware that it's disgusting and that it's something to get rid of, but we'll never actually change. A person's traits follow the mind's lead, and as long as we're persuaded that there's something worth being proud of, we'll remain a *baal ga'avah*.

We need to do something ourselves, and when we do, we become a vessel. When we become a vessel, then it has an effect, but if we feel inspired yet do nothing ourselves, then it just peters out.

The strength of this feeling will never be weakened.

What this means is that things of a Heavenly origin are of a general nature, and they affect our *neshama*, which is connected to Hashem, our *nefesh ha'elokis* which is a "*chelek Elokah mi'maal mamash*." But we're also capable of forgetting about our *neshama*. Even when we're inspired and our *neshama* is drawn to Hashem, the Heavenly inspiration still has no effect on the *nefesh ha'bahamis*.

HARNESSING THE INSPIRATION

So the Alter Rebbe explains it this way: "If a person," *Adam Ha'elyon*, "should offer," "from you," we will be the offering, the main part of us is the *nefesh ha'elokis*, the "*korbon* to Hashem" is "from you." and when the *neshama* is inspired, through the "*Adam*" offering "from you," It can just remain an inspiration, which will result in nothing. So the *passuk* gives us good advice: When we feel something, when we're inspired, originating with *Adam*, the *Adam Ha'elyon*, which will "offer from you a *korbon* to Hashem," what we must do is "you should offer your *korbon* from the animals, from the oxen, from the sheep," we must bring the animal within us closer as well, through learning, through thinking.

Without getting into the details, there's Pesach first, and *sefiras ha'omer* afterwards. Pesach involved leaving *Mitzrayim*, following Hashem, "following me in the desert, in an unsown land," tremendous inspiration. Still, the Gemara states that "their contamination didn't depart until *Matan Torah*." We may have been greatly inspired, to the extent that we left "*mitzrayim*," but we were just tearing ourselves out of "*mitzrayim*," not transforming "*mitzrayim*"; the *nefesh ha'bahamis* wasn't transformed, our traits weren't changed. And that's why there are seven weeks right after Pesach, *sefiras ha'omer*, "count for yourselves," we need to do the counting, to change ourselves, all seven of our *middos*, from *chesed she'b'chesed* to *malchus she'b'malchus*.

And this answers all the questions about the *pasuk*: It begins in the singular, because it's referring to Hashem, and then it switches to the plural in reference to us; it starts off in the third person, referring to Hashem, and then reverts to the second person, instructing us what to do. The reason it says "your *korbon*" in the plural, is because we each have our own *nefesh ha'bahamis*, there aren't any conventions, we have our own bad traits which we have to transform.

The *passuk* begins, generally, "from the animals": if Hashem brings the *nefesh ha'elokis* closer, then we must then offer from the animal within us, the *nefesh ha'bahamis*. Specifically, there are two types of *nefesh ha'bahamis*: There's one that's worked up, an ox, and there's a sheep, who's well-behaved, but a *baal taavah*; those are "the oxen" and "the sheep," two general categories of animals. "You should offer your *korbon*," we all have to bring ourselves closer, and when we do that, that's the best advice on how to get the Heavenly inspiration to last.

CHALLENGING THE TEACHER

The Rebbe adds another point: The *passuk* states "If a person should offer from you a *korbon* to Hashem, you should offer your *korbon* from the animals etc." And the next *pasuk* says "he should sacrifice it willingly **before** Hashem." First it says "to Hashem," but then it says "*before* Hashem"

Hashem prefers it much more when a person works than when the inspiration originates from Above. Why is this? There's a deeper reason for why what Hashem gives us doesn't last and is subject to expiration, while when we work, it endures. The simple reason is that if we don't work, we're not a vessel for the inspiration. But there's a deeper reason: When we work on it, we actually receive qualitatively different energy from Above.

Let's use the example of a teacher and a student: The teacher gives lectures to the students at a reasonable pace, and all is well, yet when he witnesses the students investing effort, he appreciates what his students are doing, and it summons a completely different level of teaching out of him. What happened here? The students gain doubly from their efforts: First of all, if he had lectured and they hadn't reviewed, or had done so superficially, then they wouldn't be proper vessels, the more they learn, the more they ponder it, the deeper they internalize it. But it's more than just becoming a vessel, there's something else: It arouses a deeper degree of teaching from the teacher. When he sees how involved they are, he teaches completely differently. The same principle

applies Above: First, "if *Adam* should offer from you" then the *korbon* is "to Hashem" But, in the next *passuk*, when you "sacrifice it," then it isn't merely "to Hashem," it reaches "*before* Hashem,"

The Rebbe interestingly reads this into *Likutei Torah*. *Likutei Torah* comments that after we labor on working with our *nefesh ha'bahamis*, We attain the level of "*Lo Adam*," "not a person," not just "*Adam*." The earlier inspiration came from "*Adam*," Hashem as He is like a person. This is of course a spiritual "*Adam*," not a physical person Heaven forbid, for "Hashem does not have a body or the semblance of a body." What does "*Adam Ha'elyon*" mean? Hashem as he constricts Himself into the template of a person, so to speak. A person's ten *kochos*, "let us make a man in our outline and image," correspond to the ten *sefiros* above, but that's already a definition, a contraction. Then there is "*Lo Adam*," Hashem on His own, beyond all these definitions. At first it's "*Adam*" which brings us closer to Him, and the *korbon* then is "to Hashem," *Havaya*. Then when we "sacrifice it willingly," when we work and invest, we reach "*Lo Adam*," "*before* Hashem," higher than *Havaya*, and then it lasts longer, because it's energy of a completely different nature.

"You should offer your *korbon*," we all have to bring ourselves closer, and when we do that, that's the best advice on how to get the Heavenly inspiration to last.



merkazanash.com
info@merkazanash.com
347.471.1770

Dedicated by

Reb Arkeh Tzivin

of House of Glatt

May the merit of spreading Chassidus
bring him much *hatzlacha* in all matters