

פ' צו תשפ"ד

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STATE OF ELEVATION

This (zos) is the law of the burnt offering (toras olah). (6:2)

Rashi says that this *possuk* teaches us, amongst other things, about the laws of sacrifices, which have been offered up despite a certain flaw. The *gemoro* in *Zevachim* (68b) says that if the flaw is one which arose after *shechito*, if such a sacrifice has already been placed on the *mizbeach*, it need not be removed, because the deficiency arose after the animal had already acquired a certain degree of sanctity, but if the flaw derives from a fundamental blemish, such as the fact that it was a *treifo* from the outset, such a deficiency predates the attainment of sanctity, and the animal must be removed from the *mizbeach* even if it had already been placed on it.

This *halocho* teaches us an important lesson. If someone “sanctifies” himself properly by adopting an appropriate lifestyle and educating his children in Torah and *mitzvos*, then even if he stumbles more than once, he must not lose heart, because he does not lose his basic state of elevation. However, if someone does not have the strength to completely accept upon himself the yoke of Torah and *mitzvos*, his level of sanctity is flawed from the outset, and if he stumbles, his only remedy is to resolve wholeheartedly to "sanctify" himself by adopting a proper attitude and way of life.

IMMUNITY TO SOCIETY

“And the kohen shall put on his linen (bad) garment” (6:3)

The word *bad* can be read as *levad*, alone. In our times *talmidei chachomim* are the equivalent of *kohanim*, and they too must consider only what the Torah expects of them, and not be affected in any way whatsoever by the opinion of others. They must consider themselves to be answerable only to Hashem and act as if they were standing alone before Him.

“And he shall take out the ashes... outside the camp” (ibid) The *Chovos Halevovos* (6:6) says that Hashem imposed the duty of removing the ashes every day on the *kohen*, who has greater inborn sanctity, in order to induce humility in him, and remove haughtiness from his heart. Through this seemingly undignified daily act, the *kohen* internalizes the lesson that true honor is not derived from wealth, social position or even wisdom, but from being ready at any time to joyfully fulfill the will of the Creator with love.

In a similar vein, the Torah accords Moshe Rabbeinu the title of "servant of Hashem", and not “*Hayachsán*” (a person with a distinguished lineage), “*Hagaon*” or “*Hatzaddik*”. This demonstrates that, more than anything, our ultimate goal is to fulfill the will of Hashem faithfully, and without taking into account what others think of us.

WAKING UP WITH ALACRITY

He shall arrange the burnt offering and cause the fats of the peace offerings to go up in smoke upon it (6:5)

The first *korbon* sacrificed every day was the *tomid*, which is a *korbon olo*. Only after that were the fats of the peace offerings and the other *korbonos* offered. This teaches us that one should start every day by dedicating himself entirely to Hashem like a *korbon olo*, which was consumed entirely by the *mizbeach*. One's *avodas Hashem* starts every day by overcoming one's inclinations and waking up with alacrity. This sets the foundation for the whole day, and if one gets up in a lazy manner that is likely to have a detrimental effect on the entire day.

EVERYDAY EXCITEMENT

This is the offering of Aharon and his sons (6:13)

Every *Kohen* had to offer this *minchas chinuch* on the day of his inauguration, but the *Kohen Godol* had to offer in addition a *minchas chavitin* every day.

When a person is appointed to an important position, he initially feels great excitement and a sense of responsibility, but these feelings usually dissipate with time, as he becomes used to the new situation, and it becomes routine. The *Kohen Godol* has to bring an offering every day in order to counteract this aspect of human nature. Each day, he must consider himself as if he has just been reappointed to his position, and strengthen and dedicate himself completely to *avodas Hashem*.

Similarly, a newly married *chossan* is compared to a king, and the new couple's challenge lies in finding ways to maintain their initial excitement and mutual dedication for the duration of their marriage.

We tend to become more enthusiastic about *mitzvos* that occur at irregular intervals, such as blowing shofar or taking *arba minim*, than we do about those that occur on a daily basis, such as *tefillah*, *tzitzis* and *tefillin*. We would do well to find techniques to preserve the same level of enthusiasm that we feel when first performing these *mitzvos*.

MARRIAGES ARE SUPERNATURAL

If he is bringing it as a thanksgiving offering (7:12)

Rabbenu Bachaye (on 6:2) says that in addition to the four mandatory cases, a *korbon todo* is also offered by those who have a *simcha*, such as a *simchas choson* and *kallo*. However, as he himself notes, one only offers this *korbon* after having witnessed a miracle. What miracle is involved in marriage?

The fact is that the whole area of *zivugim* is accompanied by supernatural events. As much as people put in all their efforts into *shidduchim*, in the end, one's *zivug* may be at the other end of the world, or perhaps living next door. Each *zivug* is a supernatural occurrence, and Rabbenu Bachaye is therefore saying that one must bring a *korban todo* after experiencing a miraculous *simcha*, such as that experienced by a newly married couple.

The area of *shidduchim* is the most obvious manifestation of *hashgocho* nowadays. In fact, the Chazon Ish said that this was one of the last remaining areas in which ordinary people experience revealed and tangible Divine providence.

For example, a *shidduch* that seems perfect does not materialize, or someone with all the right qualities for marriage finds it difficult to find his or her partner, in contrast to others lacking such qualities who have a much easier time.

The Brisker Rov once noted that our human efforts that we put into finding a partner do not always seem to bear fruit, and the real *zivug* appears like a lost object at the appropriate time.

THEN AND NOW

And the flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten. (7:19)

We see from the *gemoro* in *Zevachim* (97a) that *tumah* is transmitted by mere touch, whereas the holiness of *kodshim* has to be actually absorbed before it can be conveyed.

In the days of the Baal HaTanya, rumors started spreading that someone he knew was becoming friendly with *Maskilim* and heretics, and that he wanted to attend a university. When the Baal HaTanya warned this person about the pernicious influence of wicked people, he defended himself with the argument that his connections with people had no influence on him. As proof of this, he cited the fact that he had been frequenting the company of Chassidim and of the Baal HaTanya for several years, and had not been influenced by them at all. The Baal HaTanya responded that this was hardly surprising, since in order to cleave to *kedushah* and become holy, mere contact is not enough, and one has to actually absorb *kedushah*, whereas to become *tomei*, mere contact is indeed enough. “This applies all the more so to you,” concluded the Baal HaTanya, “since instead of absorbing *kedushah*, you have made do with superficial contact, whereas you have absorbed the *tumah* of your friends wholeheartedly!”

He added that it is very easy to lose *kedushah*. *Terumah* becomes *tomei* from a distant level of *tumah* (*shelishi b'tumah*) but *kodesh* even from a further removed level of *tumah* (*revi'i b'tumah*), because the holier something is, the more the *yetzer horo* invests its efforts to undermine the *kedushah*, and, once the *yetzer horo* has succeeded in opening the gates of *tumah*, a person is likely to become even more enmeshed in *tumah*. “You must therefore be very careful,” concluded the Baal HaTanya, “because if you go to university, you can become *tomei* very easily.”

Nowadays, exposure to *tumah* is not limited to friendships with undesirable people. If *tumah* spreads even through superficial contact with it, what are we to say of those who are in frequent or even constant contact with printed, electronic and digital media and devices purveying all the cardinal sins?