

פרשת ויקרא

It stands to reason that the words of Dovid HaMelech should come to mind annually when we begin the study of Parshas Vayikro.

He said (Tehillim Perek 122/Posuk 1):

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד שְׂמֵחָתִי בְּאִמְרֵי לִי בֵּית ה' גִּלְגָּה:

A song of ascent of Dovid; I was happy when they said to me, 'Let us go to the House of Hashem'.

Sefer Vayikro introduces us to the Halachos of Korbonos, their various types and the purposes that they serve. We learn that we can voluntarily bring an offering to the Beis HaMikdosh and we learn that there are times when we are required to bring a Korban. Some of those times, those mentioned in our Parsha, are for certain sins that were committed, almost always unintentionally.

Later on in Sefer Vayikro we will learn about the special offerings on the Yomim Tovim, with an additional list in Parshas Pinchos that we will come to in a number of months' time.

During the weekday, if we say the section of 'Korbonos' that is found in our Siddurim before Shacharis and Minchah, we remind ourselves of the Mitzvos that are denied to us because we have no Beis HaMikdosh.

Three times daily, in every *Amida*, we recite the 17th *Bracha* of the weekday *Amida*, which is the fifth blessing on Shabbos and Yom Tov, and we turn to the Ribbono Shel Olom and say:

והשב את העבודה לדביר ביתך

Hashem, return the service of Korbonos to the Beis HaMikdosh.

And that Bracha concludes:

ותחזינה עינינו בשובך לציון ברחמים. ברוך אתה ה' המחזיר שכינתו לציון:

May our eyes see Your return to Zion in mercy. Blessed are You Hashem, He Who returns His Presence to Zion.

Of course, the return of the Shechinah to Zion is predicated on the building of the Beis HaMikdosh as we read in Parshas Teruma (Sh'mos Perek 25/Posuk 8):

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם:

They shall make for Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell among them.

The words of Dovid HaMelech, with which we began are most powerful when we learn the Midrash that Rashi brings in his commentary there.

Rashi writes:

שמחתי באומרים לי - שמעתי בני אדם שאומרים מתי ימות אותו זקן וימלוך שלמה בנו ויבנה בית המקדש ונעלה לרגל ואני שמח:

I was happy when they said to me – I Dovid heard people saying, 'When will that old man die and his son Shlomo will become king and he will build the Beis HaMikdosh and we can make the pilgrimage of the Shlosh Regolim?' I, Dovid, was happy.

With extraordinary kindness and largesse, Dovid HaMelech overlooked the personal insult and affront and attributed only good to such a clearly boorish statement. Dovid HaMelech put aside his personal feelings and attributed longing to serve G-d as the motivation for such expressions.

The Beis HaMikdosh was just a dream at that time and then again in future generations it was a dream of a memory as we read additional words of Dovid HaMelech (ibid. Perek 126/Posuk 1):

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת בְּשׁוּב ה' אֶת שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הָיִינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים:

A song of ascent: when Hashem returned us to Zion we were like dreamers.

The dream of those who lived at the time of *Shivas Tziyon*, returning to Eretz Yisroel following the destruction of the first Beis HaMikdosh and the exile that accompanied it, was in touch with a reality that they or their immediate forebears experienced. They had seen the Beis HaMikdosh in its glory, or, at least, heard about it first-hand.

At the time of Dovid HaMelech the dream had no concrete association whatsoever. It was a promise yet to be fulfilled.

What are we to say, two thousand years after *Churban Bayis Sheini*?

On the one hand, we have an extraordinary amount of information to learn. Rambam dedicated two of his 14 Books of Mishneh Torah to this study: Sefer Avoda and Sefer Korbonos. One who studies these books of Rambam in depth will have an organized approach to the requirements of the Beis HaMikdosh and of the *Korbonos* that are to be brought there and an entrée to the study of the earlier sources of Masseches Zevachim¹, Masseches Menochos, Masseches Tomid and Masseches Middos where the vast majority of this information is found. That is in addition to the Midrashei Halacha of Mechilta and Toras Kohanim on Sh'mos and Vayikro, respectively.

Thus, certainly, the words of Dovid HaMelech must have resounded within us when he said:

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד שְׂמַחְתִּי בְּאֵמְרִים לִי בֵּית ה' נִלְךְ:

A song of ascent of Dovid; I was happy when they said to me, 'Let us go to the House of Hashem'.

Of course, throughout the years, we have had a somewhat substitute for the Beis HaMikdosh as promised by the Novi Yechezkel at the time of *Churban Bayis Rishon*.

We read in his Sefer (Perek 11/Posuk 16):

לֵכֵן אָמַר כֹּה אָמַר אֱ-לֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל...כִּי הִרְחַקְתִּים בְּגוֹיִם וְכִי הִפְצַלְתִּים בְּאֶרְצוֹת וְאֶהְיֶה לָהֶם לְמִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט בְּאֶרְצוֹת אֲשֶׁר בָּאוּ שָׁמָּה:

Therefore, say, 'So said Hashem G-d, "because I have distanced them in the nations and I have dispersed them in the lands, I will be for them a small sanctuary in the lands that they came to there.

In Masseches Megilla (29 a) we learn the explanation of G-d's promise that:

וְאֶהְיֶה לָהֶם לְמִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט בְּאֶרְצוֹת אֲשֶׁר בָּאוּ שָׁמָּה:

¹ In his Commentary on Mishna, in his introduction to *Seder Kodshim* that is found at the beginning of Masseches Zevachim, Ramban presents us with a remarkable synopsis of all of the Korbonos and a basic guide to their laws.

² This Name of Hashem is pronounced *E...Iokim*.

I will be for them a small sanctuary in the lands that they came to there.

The Gemara writes:

ואהי להם למקדש מעט, אמר רבי יצחק: אלו בתי כנסיות ובתי מדרשות שבבבל.

I will be for them a small sanctuary – these are the synagogues and the Botei Midrash in Bavel.

Hashem's Shechinah is not lost from us completely. It can be found in our houses of prayer and in our houses of Torah study.

This week, in the year 5780, the P'sukim from Tehillim and Yechezkel are particularly poignant.

When Dovid HaMelech says

לְדוֹד שְׂמַחְתִּי בְּאִמְרֵים לִי בֵּית ה' גִּלְגֵּי:

I was happy when they said to me, 'Let us go to the House of Hashem'.

we can apply it to ourselves because we wish that we could say, 'Let us go to our shul and daven. Let us go to our Beis Midrash and hear a shiur and learn with our chavrusa. Let us have a Beis HaMikdosh where we can serve G-d fully.'

We would like to say it, but we can't because for the time being, which may turn out to be a most prolonged period, we are not permitted to attend those places, and even where such is permitted, the numbers are limited to a *minyan*.

Of course, our discussion here is not to analyze the Corona Virus or to offer health tips. The instructions issued by the medical authorities have the full force of Halachah.

Our task is, though, to analyze what Hashem is seeking when He offers us the opportunity to have His Shechinah among us and to enter His Sanctuary and offer the Korbonos about which we profess a desire to fulfill.

Let us take the initial verse of Korbonos at the very beginning of Sefer Vayikro and see what it can teach us in this regard.

We read (Perek 1/Posuk 2):

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אָדָם כִּי יִקְרִיב מִכֶּם קֶרְבָּן לַיהוָה מִן הַבְּהֵמָה
מִן הַבֶּקָר וּמִן הַצֹּאן תִּקְרִיבוּ אֶת קֶרְבַּנְכֶם:

Speak to B'nei Yisroel and you shall say to them, Odom – a person
-when he will offer from you a korban to Hashem, from the cattle
and from the sheep you shall offer your Korban.

Why does the Torah use the term אָדָם here?

The Netziv points out that in the entirety of Sefer Vayikro the term *odom* is used in two contexts only. Here, in reference to *Korbonos* and in Parshas Tazria in reference to נגעים, episodes of Halachic leprosy.

Chazal did teach us many things from the Torah's choice of using the term אָדָם here.

Rashi writes here:

אָדָם - למה נאמר, מה אדם הראשון לא הקריב מן הגזל, שהכל היה שלו,
אף אתם לא תקריבו מן הגזל:

Odom – why does it say *odom*? It is to teach that just like *Odom HoRishon* did not bring offerings from items that were stolen, because everything belonged to him, you, too, do not bring stolen articles as a *Korbon*.

Chizkuni adds:

דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם. אדם לרבות גרים, שהם מקבלים ברית
כישראל ולרבות אפילו אינו יהודי:

Speak to B'nei Yisroel and you shall say to them – The Torah writes *odom* here to include converts because they accept the Divine covenant just like someone who is born Jewish. It also includes non-Jews³.

³ Chizkuni there continues and analyzes this particular *drasha* and writes:
ואף על גב דאדם משמע כאן ישראל מיהו מדכתיב אבתריה מכם דמשמע מכם ולא
מאומות אחרות והוי מעוט אחר מעוט ואין מיעוט אחר מיעוט אלא לרבות:

[How can we learn from here that *Odom* refers to converts and even non-Jews] since the context here is certainly Jews [because Hashem tells Moshe to teach this Parsha to *B'nei Yisroel*]? [The explanation is] that since it says *mi'kem* -from you [which is a מיעוט, eliminating non-Jews] we have a rule that consecutive מיעוטים

That is, Chizkuni teaches, I might have thought that in regard to the Halachos governing the Korbonos that converts, גרי צדק, bring may be different than of those born Jewish. The inclusive term, *odom*, tells us that the offerings of a convert are exactly like those who are born Jewish.

Furthermore, the inclusivity of *odom* comes to allow non-pagan non-Jews who wish to offer *Korbonos* to make such offerings. The Halachos of the non-Jew who wishes to offer *Korbonos* limit them to a *Korbon Olah* alone⁴.

However, there is an additional approach to the usage of the term *odom* and what it comes to teach us in the context of Sefer Vayikro, the offering of *Korbonos* and the lessons for ourselves since we are אדם as well.

And, as an introduction to this additional approach, I would suggest that we offer a somewhat different translation of the word in question, a translation that will resonate well with many of the *meforshim* that we will soon encounter.

אָדָם כִּי יִקְרִיב מִכֶּם קֶרְבָּן לַיהוָה

Odom – a *mentsch* -when he will offer from you a korban to Hashem.

indicate a ריבוי, an addition to the Halachah and thus non-Jews are included.

⁴ We read at the end of the first Perek of Sefer Yona (Posuk 16):

וַיִּירָאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים יְרָאָה גְדוֹלָה אֶת ה' וַיִּזְבְּחוּ זֶבַח לַיהוָה וַיִּדְרוּ נְדָרִים:

The men [sailors on the ship on which Yona travelled) feared Hashem greatly and they offered an offering to Hashem and they vowed vows.

Alshich HaKodosh writes here:

וייראו כו' את ה'. וכמו שאמרו ז"ל שנתגיירו ומלו בשר ערלתם, הא הוא דתימא ויזבחו זבח לה' וכי זבח זבחו אלא ברית מילה שהיא כדם זבח, ונדרו איש אשתו ובניו לאלקי יונה ונדרו ושלמו, ועליהם הוא אומר ועל גרי הצדק:

They feared Hashem – the explanation is like that which Chazal said, 'They converted and circumcised their flesh' and that is what is written in our verse, 'They brought offerings to Hashem' – did they make offerings, literally? Rather they were circumcised and that was equivalent to the blood of a Korban. They, their wives and their children make offerings to the G-d of Yona. They vowed and they fulfilled their vow and it is for them that we say in our Sh'moneh Esrei: 'for the righteous converts'."

That is, Hashem demands from us to be and act like a *mentsch* – a person who is of good character and refined. That is part of which that is implied by the term *Odom*.

And thus, it is easy to connect the term *odom* here with *Odom HoRishon* who had an unlimited future before him but ruined it because his lack of fealty to the G-d Who created him.

The loss of status for that particular *Odom* did not mean that the heights that he could reach were taken from humanity for all of eternity.

That is not the case at all.

Thus, in Sefer Yechezkel we find Israel referred to as *Odom* many times with the implication that the ability to merit *Gan Eden* still exists. And thus, we read there (Perek 34/Posuk 31):

וְאַתֶּן צֹאֲנֵי צֹאן מִרְעִיתִי אָדָם אַתֶּם אֲנִי אֶל לִקְיָכֶם נֹאֵם אֲדָ...ד...נְ...י ה':

You are My sheep, the sheep of My shepherding; you are *Odom*; I am your G-d said, the Master Hashem E...lokim.

And based on this pronouncement, Chazal teach (Masseches Bava Metzia 114 b):

אָדָם אַתֶּם - אַתֶּם קְרוּיִן אָדָם, וְאִין נִכְרִים קְרוּיִן אָדָם.

You are Odom – You, Israel, are called *Odom*; non-Jews⁵ are not called *Odom*.

⁵ In Masseches Yevamos there is the same *derasha* – but with one difference. We read there (61 a):

אַתֶּם קְרוּיִן אָדָם, וְאִין הָעוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים קְרוּיִן אָדָם.

You are called *Odom* but the idolaters are not called *Odom*.

It stands to reason that the interpretation is more exact in the text that is found in Masseches Bava Metzia than that in the text that is found in Masseches Yevamos.

It is likely that the censor, as happened multiple, multiple times, changed *nochri* to idolaters to imply that only the old and primitive religions are denigrated by this *derasha*, not the major religion of Europe that censored and burned Torah texts for centuries.

Let us examine the profile of this *Mentsch* who is the first to offer a Korban to Hashem – a *Korban Oloh* – a burnt-offering in which he does not share; a burnt-offering which is non-obligatory. It is given as a gift.

Seforno comments on our Posuk:

אדם כי יקריב מכם. כי יקריב מעצמכם בידיו דברים והכנעה על דרך
ונשלמה פרים שפתינו (הושע יד/ג⁶) וכאמרו זבחי א...ל'קים רוח נשברה
(תהלים נא/יט⁷), כי אין חפץ בכסילים המקריבים בלתי הכנעה קודמת,
וכבר אמרו ז"ל מכם ולא כלכם, להוציא את המומר (ספרא, ירושלמי
שקלים א/ד):

Odom when he will offer from you – [From you-] from yourselves with confession of sins and humility. This is in consonance with the verse, 'we will offer our bullocks with our lips' and as it says, 'the offerings to Hashem are a broken spirit'.

This is because G-d does not want fools who bring offerings with initial humility.

And that is what Chazal said, 'from you' – but 'not all of you'. The apostate is excluded from bringing Korbonos as it says in the Yerushalmi in Masseches Shekolim.

The *Odom* here is a person who knows his imperfections and in spite of all that he is permitted to be standing before G-d.

Let us see how the Netziv describes the implication of the word *Odom*. He writes

אכן ברבה פרשה זו איתא אדם הדא הוא דתימא (קוהלת ז/כח⁸) אדם

⁶ The entire verse reads:

קחו עמכם דברים ושובו אל ה' אמרו אליו כל תשא עון וקה טוב ונשלמה פרים
שפתינו:

Take with you words and return to Hashem; say to Him, 'All that you will forgive sin and take good and our lips will pay our bullocks.

⁷ The entire verse reads:

זבחי א...ל'קים רוח נשברה לב נשבר ונדפה א...ל'קים לא תבזה:
The offering to G-d is a broken spirit; G-d will not despise a broken and depressed heart.

⁸ The entire verse reads:

אחד מאלף מצאתי, כתיב הבן יקיר לי אפרים, (ירמיה לא/9) ביוקר אדם עומד לי, אלף נכנסין למקרא כו' עד אחד יוצא להוראה. מבואר שדרשו הוראת שם אדם שהוא האדם המעלה המבואר בפרשה בראשית, והוא פלא, וכי הדיוט אינו מביא נדבה. והנה בפרשת אמור כתיב (ויקרא

אֲשֶׁר עוֹד בְּקִשָּׁה נִפְשִׁי וְלֹא מִצְאֵתִי אָדָם אֶחָד מֵאֶלֶף מְצָאתִי וְאִשָּׁה בְּכָל אֵלֶּה לֹא מְצָאתִי:
That which my soul sought additionally and I did not find – one man from a thousand I found and a woman in all of these I did not find.

Rashi writes:

אדם אחד מאלף מצאתי - בנוהג שבעולם אלף נכנסים למקרא אין יוצאים מהם להצליח שראויים למשנה אלא מאה ואותם מאה שנכנסו למשנה אין יוצאים מהם לגמרא אלא עשרה ואותן עשרה שנכנסין לגמרא אין מצליח מהם אלא אחד להוראה הרי אחד מאלף:

One man from a thousand I did not find – As the way the world goes, one thousand enter to learn Chumash and those who are successful go to learn Mishnah from them are only one hundred.

And from the one hundred who enter to learn Mishnah, only ten go out from them to learn Gemara. And from those ten who enter to learn Gemara, only one is successful to learn how to *pasken*. Thus, you have one from one thousand.

The Midrash Koheles Rabba writes there:

אדם אחד וגו' - אדם מאלף מצאתי זה משה שבא לאלף דור ואשה זו התורה שנתנה לאלף דור, כמו שנאמר (תהלים קה/ח) דבר צוה לאלף דור - מלמד שצפה הקדוש ברוך הוא בכל הקנקנים ולא מצא קנקן מזופת מקנקנו של משה שפשט ידו וקבל את התורה:

One man – One man among one thousand I found – that refers to Moshe who came in the one-thousandth generation [Because the Midrash says that there were 974 generations prior to Creation and Moshe was born in the twenty-sixth generation after Creation.]

and the *woman* refers to Torah that was given in the one-thousandth generation as it says, 'He commanded His Word at the one-thousandth generation.

This teaches that Hashem foresaw all the containers that would ever be and none of them that was as tarred and as insulated as was the 'container' of Moshe who extended his hand and received the Torah.

⁹ The entire verse reads:

הֲבֵן יִקְרֵי לִי אֶפְרַיִם אִם יֶלֶד שְׁעֻשְׁעִים כִּי מֵדִי דִבְרֵי בּוֹ זָכַר אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ עוֹד עַל כֵּן הָמוּ מֵעִי לִו רַחֵם אֲרַחֲמֶנּוּ נָא ה':

'Is this My dear son Efraim, is this the child with whom I am playful? Whenever I speak about him, when I remember him again, my insides are in turmoil about him; I will have mercy upon him', says G-d.

כב/יח¹⁰) איש איש מבית ישראל ומן הגר בישראל אשר יקריב קרבנו וגו', גם שם מדייק הכתוב מבית ישראל ומן הגר בישראל, דמשמעו שהם חשובים וראויים להמנות בישראל, וביארנו שם טעמו של דבר דתכלית הבאת העולה בנדבה הוא שיהא מוכשר להשיג דעת א...ל'קים, ואם אינו ראוי לכך הרי זה כמו שמתפלל תפלת נדבה ואינו ראוי לכך. אבל שם אדם לפי המדרש משמעו מצוין ביותר...

In the Midrash to this Parsha it says, “‘*Odom*’ and that is what it says, ‘One man out of one thousand I found’ and it is written, ‘Is this My dear son Efraim?’ [Hashem said] ‘Man stands before Me with great dearness. One thousand enter to learn Chumash etc. one goes out and is able to decide *Halachah*, ‘i.e.’ pasken.”

It is understood from this Midrash that Chazal saw the usage of the word *Odom* here as the superior *Odom* as is explained in Parshas B'reishis. And this understanding is wondrous [because it is in the context of Korbonos and it says ‘*Odom* brings an offering’]. Isn't a simple person also eligible to donate a Korban?

And see in Parshas Emor where it is written, ‘any person from the House of Israel and from the convert of Israel who will bring his offering, etc.’ There, too, the Torah is particular to write ‘from the House of Israel and from the convert in Israel’ that implies that they are important and fit to be numbered in Israel. There we explained the reason is due to the purpose of bringing a burnt-offering as a voluntary donation – so that a person will be fit and prepared to receive Divine knowledge. One who is unworthy for that type of offering is just like one who davens an extra *Amida* voluntarily but who is unworthy of such an undertaking¹¹.

¹⁰ The entire verse reads:

דַּבֵּר אֶל אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל בָּנָיו וְאֶל כָּל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִמְרַתְּ אֲלֵהֶם אִישׁ אִישׁ מִבֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן הַגֵּר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיב קָרְבָּנוּ לְכָל נִדְרֵיהֶם וְלְכָל נְדָבוֹתָם אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיבוּ לָהּ לְעֹלָה:
Speak to Aharon and to his sons and to all of B'nei Yisroel and say to them, ‘Every person from the House of Israel and from the convert in Israel who will offer his Korban for any of their neder-vows or any of their *nedava*-vows that they will offer to G-d as a burnt-offering.

¹¹We learn in Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim Siman 17/s'if 4):

הרוצה להתפלל תפלת נדבה, צריך שיהא מכיר את עצמו זריז וזהיר ואמיד בדעתו שיוכל לכוין בתפלתו מראש ועד סוף; אבל אם אינו יכול לכוין יפה, קרינן ביה: למה לי רוב זבחיכם (ישעיה א/יא); והלואי שיוכל לכוין בשלוש תפלות הקבועות ליום.

The name *Odom* according to the Midrash implies even greater excellence¹².

Netziv, too, sees the usage of the term *Odom* as expressing a particular evaluation and assessment of the person, not just a term describing a creature that we call a 'human being'.

Odom, explains the *Netziv*, implies excellence, the *madreiga* upon which Man was created and within whom was imbued the propensity to ascend even higher as he accrues an even higher of excellence through his own actions.

Alas, such did not occur in the *Odom* of old. Instead of an ascent to excellence, he caused himself to be banished from *Gan Eden*, the residence that was limited to personages of excellence.

As I was learning in preparation for these words, I encountered a wonderful essay that incorporates the points that we have seen above from Seforno and Netziv, and others that I wished to add, and presents us with an approach that is most encompassing.

The large section that follows is from a commentary on Chumash called *Beis Yosef Lahava*. The author, Rabi Yosef Duchas was a Rav in Pressburg

One who wishes to offer a voluntary Amida, must know himself well and that he is a person who does things speedily and carefully and has a correct assessment of his mind that he is capable of having *kavanah* in this voluntary *Amida*, from the beginning to the end.

But if he is incapable of having the proper *kavanah* we apply the verse to him of: 'Why do I Hashem have an abundance of your offerings?'

Would it be that a person would have the proper *kavanah* for the three obligatory daily prayers.

¹² Netziv continues:

זזה ודאי תמוה, ועיין בזוהר פרשת תזריע מה שדרשו בדיוק זה השם בפרשה זו....:

It is certainly questionable to understand the need for even greater excellence as implied by the term *Odom* in the context of the section dealing with the plague of *Tzora'as*-Halachic leprosy. See the Zohar to Parshas Tazria and what they interpreted there regarding the specific use of the term *Odom* in that section...

in the first half of the 19th century and wrote extensively but only this work, published by Machon Yerushalayim, survived.

He writes on our Posuk:

אדם כי יקריב מכם קרבן לה'. במסכת סוטה (דף ה ב) אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי בא וראה כמה גדולים נמוכי רוח, בזמן שבית המקדש קיים אדם הקריב עולה שכר עולה בידו מנחה שכר מנחה בידו, אבל מי שדעתו שפלה עליו מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו הקריב כל הקרבנות שנאמר זבחי אלקים רוח נשברה, ולא עוד אלא שאין תפילתו נמאסת שנאמר לב נשבר ונדכה אלקים לא תבזה. והנה מתחילה משמע רוח נשבר הוא השלימות גמור, ואחר כך אמר לא תבזה, משמע שאינו אלא שלא יבוש. ועוד תחילה אמר נשבר גרידא ואחר כך נשבר ונדכה.

Odom – when he offers a Korban from you to Hashem. In Masseches Sota we learn:

Rabi Yehoshua said: Come and see how great are those of 'lowly spirit'. When the Beis HaMikdosh was existing, a person brought an *Oloh*-burnt offering and he received the reward for bringing a burnt-offering. He brought a *Mincha*-meal offering, he receives a reward for bringing a *Mincha*. However, one whose mind is lowly to him, about him the Posuk says that it is as if he brought all of the Korbonos as it says, 'the offerings of Hashem are a broken spirit'.

And not only that, but also is prayer is not rejected as it says, 'a heart that is broken and shattered, G-d will not despise'.

Now, from the beginning, the implication was that a 'broken spirit' was the heights of *shleimus*-completion and about it, it says 'Hashem will not despise' implying that the person will not be shamed. And at first it says 'broken' alone and then 'broken and shattered'.

Is there a difference between 'broken' alone and 'broken and shattered'? We continue our study of this passage.

הקדוש ברוך הוא ציוה על הקרבן, אבל צריך עם הקרבן כוונתו טובה לאלקים, ולהתקרב אליו לעשות רצונו יתברך כמו שכתוב (שמואל א טו/כב¹³) הנה שמוע מזבח טוב, שלא יהיה חס ושלום זבח כסילים. ועל זה

¹³ The entire verse reads:

אמרו (קהלת ד/יז¹⁴) שמור רגליך כאשר תלך אל בית האלקים וקרוב לשמוע מתת הכסילים זבח, כי עיקר הקרבן להכניע עצמו אל ה' שלא יבא מידת הדין לקטרג עליו, והכסיל אם פגע בו מידת הדין יפול במחשבתו להביא אל ה' קרבן, אמנם אינו מעלה על לבו חטאיו, כי רוח הגבוה אינו מניח לו לשוב, ויהיה יותר רחוק מה'.

Hashem commanded regarding the Korban, but with the Korban there has to be the proper intent towards Hashem and to draw near to Him to do His Will as it says, 'Behold listening is better than an offering'. This is in order that the offering should not be, G-d forbid, an 'offering that is a gift of fools'. That is what it says, 'Guard your feet when you go to the House of G-d; it is better to be heard than an offering that is the gift of fools.' That is because the fundamental part of a Korban is for a person to make himself submissive to Hashem and that way, he will not have the *middas ha'din*, the attribute of justice that pursues the sinner, accuse him.

The fool, however, if he is faced with *middas ha'din*, will just decide to bring a Korban to G-d and not consider or think about the sins that he did that caused the *middas ha'din* to accuse him. This is because his haughtiness does not allow him to repent and the result will be since he ignored his sins, he will be even further distanced from G-d.

על כן אמר שמור רגליך כאשר תלך אל בית אלקים, רצונו לומר אם תלך לפייס מידת הדין מעליך, תהיה קרוב לשמוע ותתודה על עוונותיך, ולא תהיה ככסילים ואינן רוצים לידע כי אין רצונו לעשות טוב כי אם לעשות רע, אבל עיקר קרבן הוא תשובה וידוי תחילה ואחר כך הקרבן הוא דורון.

וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל הַחֹפֵץ לֵה' בְּעֹלוֹת וּזְבָחִים כְּשֹׁמֵעַ בְּקוֹל ה' הֲנֵה שֹׁמֵעַ מִזְבַּח טוֹב לְהִקְשִׁיב מִחֲלֵב אֵילִים:

Sh'muel said, 'Does G-d desire burnt-offerings and Korbonos as much as listening to the Voice of G-d? Behold, listening is more than a good offering; attending is more than the choice rams.

¹⁴ The entire verse reads:

שְׁמֹר רַגְלֶיךָ רַגְלֶיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ אֶל בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים... לְשֹׁמֵעַ מִתַּת הַכֹּסִילִים זָבַח כִּי אֵינָם יוֹדְעִים לַעֲשׂוֹת רָע:

Guard your feet when you go to the House of G-d; it is preferable to listen than the fool's gift of an offering; because they do not know that they are doing evil to themselves [Rashi].

Therefore, it says, 'Guard your feet when you go to the House of G-d'. This means to say that if you go to appease the *middas ha'din* to remove it from yourself, you should be close and ready to listen and to confess your sins. Do not be like the fools who wish not to know because their desire is not to do good, but to do bad.

Rather the fundamental part of bringing a Korban is repentance and confession and afterwards the Korban is a gift¹⁵.

הנה יש שני מיני צדיקים. מי שלא חטא כלל אינן צריכין להביא קרבן. וכיצד לא יבא לידי חטא, אם יש לו רוח נשבר מיד שבא לשכל ודאי לא יבא לחטא. והנה איוב אמר (טז/ז) על אשר לא חמס בכפי על כן תפלתי זכה, אם כן מי שלא חטא דהיינו לא עשה חמס לפני זה, שערי תפילה פתוחים תמיד, אבל אם חטא אינו בטוח שתקובל תפילתו אף על פי שעשה תשובה.

Behold, there are two types of Tzaddikim. One who never sinned has no obligation to bring any Korban. How does a person avoid sin [and enter into this category of Tzaddim]? If he has a broken spirit that is in his mind he certainly won't come to sin. Behold, Iyov said, 'Because there is no violence in my hand, therefore my prayer is pure'. If so, one who has not sinned, that is, he has not committed any 'violence' prior to this time, the Gates of Prayer are open for him always.

But, if he sinned, he cannot be certain that his prayer will be accepted even if he repented.

והנה אמר תחילה (תהלים נא/ז) א...ד...נ...י שפתי תפתח ופי יגיד תהלתיך, אף על פי שלא תחפוץ זבח ואתנה (פסוק יח¹⁶) אף על פי כן ופי

¹⁵ Certainly, if one committed a sin that requiring a *Korban Chattos* or a *Korban Oshom*, such an offering is not a 'gift'. It is a requirement.

The point that the *Bais Yosef Lahava* is making is related to the context of our verse – a *Korban Oloh* which may very well be a 'gift', brought as a donation to the Beis HaMikdosh, and without any *chiyuv*.

And since this idea of *Odom* teaches us about our attitude and approach to all Korbonos, the *mechaber* is teaching us that when one does *Teshuva* and recites the *Viduy*, the main task of the penitent has been accomplished and his offering, even if required, can be seen as a gift – meaning that Hashem will be pleased with it and 'appeased' by our actions.

¹⁶The entire verse reads:

יגיד תהלתיך, וכיצד, זבחי אלקים רוח נשברה, כי מי שיש לו רוח נשבר הקריב כל הקרבנות כולם, וליכא מידת הדין לפניו, ודאי יקובל תפילתו.

Behold the order that Dovid HaMelech used in his writing. First, he wrote, “Hashem, open my lips and my mouth will tell Your praises’ and he wrote that *even though* ‘Because You will not desire an offering that I will give; a burnt-offering will not be wanted.’

How is this sequence to be understood? Because ‘the offerings to G-d are a broken spirit. Because one who has a broken spirit has offered all of the Korbonos – all of them and there is no *middas ha’din* that faces him and certainly his prayers will be accepted.

Until now, *Bais Yosef Lahava* has been discussing the *Tzaddik* who has a broken heart. His submissiveness before G-d was his own choice, his own doing.

However there is a second type to *Tzaddik*, a righteous person, whose journey to righteousness was because of the punishment that he received for past transgressions. His ‘broken spirit’ came about because he was ‘crushed’ by the punishments he received. He is a *Tzaddik* because he took those punishments to heart and mended his ways. However, since his ‘broken spirit’ was not self-motivated, but rather required an external impetus to bring him to that point, his level is not the same as the first type of *Tzaddik* whose righteousness came about due to self-motivation and regulation.

אמנם המין השני הוא מי ששב על ידי יסורים והיינו לב נשבר ונדכה רומז על יסורים גם כן אלקים לא תבזה. אמנם אינו בטוח שיקובל תפילתו עד שיהיה רצון מאת ה' להטיב ציון ובנין ירושלים, ויהיו הכל זבחי צדק ומביאים שלמים תחילה, כי אינו צריך להביא אפילו עולה כי ליכא אפילו הרהור כי כבר כלה מידת הדין.

But in truth, the second type of *Tzaddik* is one whose repentance came about through *yisurim*-suffering. That is the person with the heart that is broken and crushed. ‘Crushed’ implies the suffering. And in such a case all it says is that ‘G-d will not reject’ him. And, in fact, he cannot be assured that his prayers will be accepted until

כי לא תחפץ זבח ואתנה עולה לא תרצה:

Because You will not desire an offering that I will give; a burnt-offering will not be wanted.

there is a special Will and desire before HaKodosh Boruch Hu to be good to Tziyon and for the building of Yerushalayim. At that time, all will be *zivchei tzedek* – righteous offerings and at that time the first *Korbonos* that will be brought will be *Shlomim*, from which the owners will share a portion along with the portion for the *Mizbeach* and that of which the *Kohanim* will partake. It will not even be necessary to donate a *Korban Oloh* -burnt offering from which neither the *Kohanim* or the owner partake – that would come to bring expiation for the thought to sin because at that time at the End of Days, *middas ha'din* will be voided.

וזה שאמר רבי יהושע בן לוי גדולים נמוכי רוח, והנה אמר משניהם, על זה שלא חטא אמר שהקריב כל הקרבנות כולם, ומכל שכן שתפילתו נשמעת, ועל השני אמר שאין תפילתו נמאסת מאחר שחטא ועשה תשובה, על כן אמר אין תפילתו נמאסת. ואתי שפיר דאמר רבי יהושע בן לוי נמוכי רוח בלשון רבים, כיון דמיירי משני מינים.

And this is exactly what Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi meant when he said 'Great are those of a lowly spirit'. He was referring to the two types of *Tzaddikim*: the *Tzaddik* who did not sin at all and it as if he brought all the *Korbonos* and certainly his prayer is heard.

Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi was also referring to the second type of *Tzaddik*, about whom he said, 'His prayer isn't rejected' since although he sinned, he repented. That is why he phrased it as 'his prayer isn't rejected'.

And thus, it is proper that that Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi spoke about 'those who are of lowly spirit' – in the plural -since he was discussing two types of *Tzaddikim*.

Particularly in a time when we feel that the world is coming down upon us, crushing us, we must not see ourselves as being victims of outside forces.

Of course, it is the Hand of G-d that directs all events. But as we believe that it is He Who brings those events upon us, so must we believe that we are not victims.

If we envision ourselves as victims that is tantamount to saying that we have no control, everything is *hefker* and chaotic.

That is a patently false attitude.

We know that Chazal teach (Masseches B'rachos 33 b):

הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים

All is in the hand of heaven except for the fear of heaven.

We are not victims. We are not helpless. We are not abandoned; Hashem did not desert us.

And that is the message of the term *Odom* that the Torah uses to describe us, *Am Yisroel*, when the Ribbono Shel Olom invites to serve Him in His Abode, the Beis HaMikdosh.

We are not invited because we are worthless. We are invited because we are worthy. We are invited because we are *Odom* and as *Odom*, Hashem will view the *Korbonos* that we offer as a *gift* to Him, not as a debt.

Hashem will view the *Korbonos* that He commanded us as an expression of our free-will, not as an obligation that was foisted upon us.

We can now have a deeper understanding of the words of Dovid HaMelech Olov HaShalom when we read:

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד שְׂמַחְתִּי בְּאִמְרֵים לִי בֵּית ה' גִּלְגָּה:

A song of ascent of Dovid; I was happy when they said to me, 'Let us go to the House of Hashem'.

When I am invited to the House of G-d and the invitation comes from the Ribbono Shel Olom, I am happy.

I am happy because Hashem turns to me as *Odom*. He Yisborach reminds me of my goal; He reminds me of the control that I have over my own life and how I can shape my personal destiny – to be the *Odom* for whom Gan Eden was created.

When Hashem addresses me as *Odom*, I experience Divine encouragement to raise myself upon high. I experience Divine inspiration to not be satisfied with my present state.

Hashem commands me, 'Be an *Odom*'!

When I heed this Word of G-d and I extricate myself from being lowly, I bring about a redemption for my very being. I can do that because I am *Odom*.

And when I seek to redeem myself, and I am not alone because others are drawn to this very same goal, the amalgamation of the individual redemptions that we experience will bring about a unification of the spirit of Am Yisroel and make us worthy of the collective Geula Shleima, the full and complete Redemption about which we were promised (Yalkut Shimoni Parshas Bo (Siman 210):

בניסן נגאלו ובניסן עתידין ליגאל

The Redemption from Egypt occurred in the month of Nissan and the Final Redemption will take place in the month of Nissan.

Shabbat Shalom

Chag Kosher *u'Bori v'Sameach!*

Rabbi Pollock