



GROWTH

At The

SHABBAT TABLE

PARSHAT TZAV

One at a Time

As this week's Parsha continues the discussion of various sacrifices from Parshat Vayikra, it is noteworthy to mention a timeless message from last week's Torah reading. The Torah writes: "*They should skin the olah-offering, and cut it up into sections* – וְהַפְּשִׁיט אֶת הָעֵלָה וְנָתַח אֹתָהּ לִנְתֻחֶיהָ" (Vayikra 1:6).

R' Leeor Dahan shared a powerful insight in the name of R' Chaim Shmulevitz. How does a person eradicate his arrogance and work toward becoming a more humble person? Reading our aforementioned *pasuk* homiletically, the Torah gives a practical solution. Although in its literal context, the verse discusses the *korban olah* (the "elevation offering"), the word "*olah*" can also be understood as "*oleh*" – a spirit that has risen in haughtiness. "וְהַפְּשִׁיט אֶת הָעֵלָה," says the Torah – *how does a person "skin" his arrogance? How does one peel away at the layers of his ego?* The *pasuk* outlines: "וְנָתַח אֹתָהּ לִנְתֻחֶיהָ" – *Divide it all into different parts.* R' Shmulevitz explains that people tend to get cocky when looking at themselves as being good overall. "I may not be perfect," people generally admit. "But overall, I'm good." The Torah is teaching that while that may be true, if one wants to grow in life, as well as increase his humility, it is imperative to split up different areas of one's own life and analyze where he has room for improvement in each individual zone. Through dissecting every element of one's mitzvah-observance and practices, one will come to see that he is still a work-in-progress, and at that point, what is there to be so arrogant about? How can one feel better than everyone else if there are several improvements that he has yet to implement?

However, when taking this concept to heart, it may lead many to despair. "If there are so many details that I need to work on and several flaws that I have yet to fix," one may ask himself, "Where do I start? How do I finish? If I can't focus on everything, maybe it's not worth focusing on anything..."

For this, too, the Torah provides a solution. When talking about the *korban asham* (the "offering of guilt"), the *pasuk* writes (Vayikra 5:5): "וְהָיָה כִּי יֵאָשֵׁם לְאַחַת מֵאֵלֶּה וְהִתְוֹדָה אֲשֶׁר חָטָא עָלֶיהָ – *upon realizing guilt in any of these matters, he shall confess having sinned in that way.*" The Rambam elaborates that when one commits a specific sin, he only confesses for that alone when bringing the appropriate sacrifice. R' Yitzchak Zev Soloveitchik uncovers a powerful lesson from here: the Torah isn't saying that when doing *teshuvah*, one needs to confess and immediately solve everything. The process of repair isn't an all-or-nothing mission; if you merely take one step to improve in one specific area, you're doing an amazing job. When taking it slowly, one thing at a time, you're doing what you should be doing. That is why the Torah doesn't have a person confess for all his wrongdoings when bringing a *korban* – just focus on one element at a time, and that is the ultimate process of growing closer and closer to *Boreh Olam*.

Finding Meaning

The *pasuk* writes: וּפָשַׁט אֶת בְּגָדָיו וְלָבַשׁ בְּגָדִים אֲחֵרִים – *the kohen divests himself of his holy, priestly clothing, and puts on ordinary, simple clothing to dispose of the ashes* (Vayikra 6:4).

This begs for thought; why does the Torah have the kohen, who is involved with such elevated and noble tasks, carry out such a menial chore? Why not allow the ashes' disposal to be someone else's responsibility?

R' Yitzchak Fingerer cited an inspiring answer from R' Bunim of Pshischa: it is precisely the most holy person, who engages in the most exalted of services, who understands that it is not beneath his dignity to remove the ashes, because that, too, can be holy.

It's all about the mindset: if it revolves around one's own ego, then one can see it as a menial chore that it meant for others (everyone besides himself, of course). But if it's just about serving the Creator, and one is but a messenger in this world, then any task performed for the sake of Heaven can be one of extreme holiness, because it's all being done for the Boss. It doesn't matter if that means offering a sacrifice or cleaning up the mess – if it's done purely *l'shem Shamayim*, he fulfills G-d's will and his actions are sacred.

We can apply this to our personal lives, as well. Sometimes, we find ourselves being asked to take out the garbage, change a diaper, or help someone change a flat tire. If we understand that we can sanctify even a mundane task through the awareness that we are indeed serving G-d and servicing His children, that, too, is holy and meaningful.

Refuah Sheleimah, b'toch she'ar cholei Yisrael:

Ariel Ben Frida	Rahamim Ben Shifra	Chaim Avraham Ben Shifra Zisel
Frida Bat Yaffa	Chana Bat Malka	Shalom Ben Roza Mazal
Miriam Bat Bakol	Yitzchak Ben Naama	Meir Tzvi Ben Sara

"The fact that we exist means we are always on Hashem's mind. He is always thinking about us; all He asks in return is that He should be on our minds and that we should think about Him." (R' Noach Weinberg)