

ACTIVATING SPIRITUAL SYSTEMS THROUGH THE ANOINTING OIL

Original Painting by: JudaicaMasterpieces.com

 YADAV
YadAvNow.com



YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Ki Sisa

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

Weely Video: An Attachment Of The Limb To The Source

CLICK TO VIEW!



Anointed To Officiate & Galvanized To Activate The Forces

CLICK TO VIEW!



Individuality Not Subsumed by Quantity

CLICK TO VIEW!



The Intent Of Creation Realized Through The Worthiest Antecedent

CLICK TO VIEW!



The Tension Between Ego & Reality

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. Betzalel was chosen by G-d to oversee the building of the Mishkan.
2. He was endowed by G-d with knowledge, understanding, and Divine inspiration.
3. He was adept in conjugating the letters of the alphabet that brought about creation.
4. Mishkan: A microcosm of Creation that needed to be infused with energies that parallel existence.
5. Betzalel: Miriam's grandson, nephew of Moshe.
6. When Moshe announced Betzalel would oversee building of the Mishkan there were murmurings – claiming nepotism.
7. He chose Aaron, his brother as High Priest, his sons, assistants – and now his nephew for the Mishkan.
8. Midrash: Moshe explains why Betzalel is specially endowed and uniquely qualified.
9. They understood their own inadequacies and accepted Moshe's word.
10. After Sinai where G-d had said, "In you they will believe forever," how could they question the word of Moshe?
11. Korach and his community were at Sinai and attempted to usurp his leadership.
12. Although one accepts something as fact, internalizing it is another level.
13. One's ego whispers, "Why Not Me?"
14. Only when one understands a task is beyond his ability can one internalize what he believes

Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Ki Sisa

ACTIVATING SPIRITUAL SYSTEMS THROUGH THE ANOINTING OIL

Original Painting by: JudaicaMasterpieces.com



G-d's Special Love for the Jew

Torah: "G-d spoke to Moshe saying, When you take a census (*ki sisa*) of the Children of Israel ...this shall they give...a half *shekel* of the sacred *shekel*..." The term "*ki sisa* (census)" literally means, "to elevate." The counting of the Jewish people in this manner was an indication of their special value to G-d.

Midrash: "This is similar to a king who had many regal garments. The king commanded one of his subjects saying, 'Please take extra care of this particular silk garment because it is the most dear to me. It is the garment that I wore on the day of my coronation. It is attached to my loins and I pride myself with it.' Identically G-d had spoken to Moshe regarding the preciousness of the Jewish people. He had said, 'Take special care of the Jewish people because they are attached to My loins. Just as one's belt is attached to his loins, identically the House of Israel is attached to Me.' Why are the Jewish people compared to a king's

special regal garment? G-d said, 'The Jewish people had accepted My Kingship upon themselves after the splitting of the Sea. They had said, 'G-d shall reign for all eternity.' Therefore, they are the equivalent of the special garment worn by Me on the day of My coronation. Because of My enormous love for them I descended from above to the terrestrial level with My Divine Presence to dwell amongst them. "

Midrash: "Moshe said to G-d, 'My Master, You have only commanded me to instruct the Jewish people with Your numerous commandments. Why have You not given Your commandments to the 70 nations of the world?' G-d responded, 'It is because the Jewish people are more beloved to Me than all the other nations of the world. They are My treasure. I desire them and I have chosen them...' ...It is similar to a king who gave his son over to be mentored. The king continuously inquired about his son through the mentor. He would ask the teacher, 'Did my son eat? Did he drink? Was he taken to the barber?...' "

Similarly, G-d is preoccupied with the welfare of the Jewish people. *Reb Yehudah Bar Simin* explains that G-d's love for the Jewish people is similar to one who is making a crown. Since the king will ultimately wear the crown, he wishes to have it adorned and studded with the most precious stones and pearls. So too, G-d says about the Jewish people, "Whatever expressions of praise you can say about them you should, because I will glorify Myself through the Jewish people."

It is because the Jewish people coronated and glorified G-d that they are desired by Him. Since it is only through them that G-d is glorified, the Jewish people need to be spiritualized more than any other nation. This spiritualization, which addresses every aspect of their being is brought about through the performance of the *mitzvos* of the *Torah*. Since the other nations of the world do not bring glory to G-d, they do not need to be given the commandments of the *Torah*.

Chofetz Chaim: If one speaks negatively about his fellows, even if he does not identify them by name, it is considered to be evil speech (*lashon hara*). Since the entire Jewish people are the beloved of G-d and are the basis for His glorification, any slander against them is an affront to G-d Himself. This is the meaning of the term "*ki sisa*." One should take every opportunity to "elevate" and esteem the Jewish people.

There is a positive commandment to rebuke one's fellow if he is not adhering to the precepts of the *Torah*. The objective of this rebuke and admonishment is to prevent him from bringing spiritual damage and havoc upon himself. This is similar to the positive commandment to rescue one's fellow from a life-threatening situation, such as drowning. Since G-d glorifies Himself through every Jew, one must do the utmost to preserve the spiritual integrity of his fellow and elevate him, so that G-d may be glorified to an even greater degree.

The Cause of the Golden Calf

Torah: Forty days after the Jewish people had experienced the Sinai event during which they had heard the first two commandments, "I am *Hashem* your G-d who has taken you out of the land of Egypt... and You shall not have gods of others in My Presence" and they sinned with the golden calf. They had transgressed the second commandment by acknowledging another power other than G-d Himself.

How is it possible that after G-d had communicated to them openly face to face, that they could give any credence? Even if one were to say that it was due to the rabble (*erev rav*) that had left Egypt together with them who had instigated the golden calf, how could they be susceptible to this falsehood after experiencing the ultimate truth at Sinai?

Midrash: The reason the Jewish people were vulnerable to the golden calf after the Sinai event was due to the evil eye that they had received from the nations of the world. Since the Sinai event had taken place in a public setting, in which the nations of the world were privy to G-d's revelation, their envy had caused the Jewish people to be affected by the evil eye.

Gemara in Tractate *Zevachim*: When G-d was giving the *Torah* at Sinai to the Jewish people, the world quaked so violently that the nations of the world believed that existence was coming to an end. They came to *Bilaam*, their prophet, with their concern. They said to him, "G-d is destroying the world!" *Bilaam* responded, "You fools! Do you not realize that G-d is giving His strength/power (His *Torah*) to the Jewish people. It is because of this monumental moment that G-d has brought heaven to earth with His Presence, thus causing the world to quake." To this the nations of the world responded, "G-d should bless His people with peace" and returned to their evil ways.

It is after the tragedy of the golden calf that G-d commanded the Jewish people to build the *Mishkan* to be the medium through which G-d would dwell in their midst. Initially, His relationship with the Jewish people was to be in a revealed context; however, after the sin of the golden calf, G-d's Presence in their midst became concealed through the *Mishkan*.

Torah: "...Make for Me a Sanctuary – so that I may dwell in your midst."

Midrash: There is a change of G-d's level of revelation from a public to a concealed setting. "It is analogous to a king who had a young daughter who he had loved. When he walked with her even in a public setting (markets, alleyways, etc.) he would continually speak to her and display his affection for her regardless of who was watching. However, when his daughter matured the king said, 'It is no longer appropriate to interact with you in public view. I will only show my affections to you when we are alone in a private setting.'"

Similarly, when the Jewish people came to Sinai, which was the time they were taken as G-d's people, He openly communicated with them in order to establish and convey His special love for them. He had established them as His holy, priestly and kingly people; however, after they understood to what degree they were valued by G-d it was no longer appropriate for Him to communicate with them in public. The world was not worthy of witnessing this level of revelation. G-d therefore said to the Jewish people, "...Make for Me a Sanctuary – so that I may dwell in your midst."

Torah: "Hashem spoke to Moshe saying, 'When you take a census of the Children of Israel according to their numbers...so that there will not be a plague among them when counting them. This shall they give...a half shekel (*Machtzis HaShekel*)..."

Chazal: The reason the census of the Jewish people was conducted through the medium of the halfsilver coin rather than simply counting each individual was to prevent "a plague." Whenever one is singled-out as an individual, one's worthiness and standing is brought into question, thus causing his spiritual record to be scrutinized. Since there is no individual who is totally free of sin, as King Solomon states in Ecclesiastes, "There is no *tzaddik* in the land who does good and is free of sin..." This level of scrutiny results in plague.

Gemara: If one recites the *Amidah* and feels that because of the intensity of his supplication he deserves to be answered, it will bring prosecution upon him.

Avraham, our Patriarch, was the one who introduced G-d as the Omnipotent being to the members of his generation. He dedicated his life selflessly to the espousal of monotheism. Despite his uniqueness and special relationship with G-d, *satan* brought prosecution upon him. The basis for the prosecution was *Avraham's* individualism. *Satan* had said to G-d, "If *Avraham* were truly special, why did he not bring any sacrifices to You as others before him had done." G-d's response was, "I will prove to you that *Avraham* is truly unique and special. I will command him to bring his beloved son *Yitzchak* as a sacrifice." Thus, the *Akeidah* (binding of *Yitzchak*), the most difficult of the tests that were presented to *Avraham*, was precipitated by prosecution that was brought upon *Avraham* because of his unique spiritual status.

Since the Jewish people were seen as special and worthy of having a relationship with G-d, they were

subject to the envy of the nations, thus causing the evil eye. This precipitated and activated the Attribute of Justice which caused their clarity to be obscured. Consequently, they became vulnerable to the sin of the golden calf. Despite the fact that the Jewish people would ultimately need to be subjected to the test of idolatry because of His public revelation to them, G-d nevertheless needed openly to demonstrate His love for them so that they should understand their importance in His Eyes.

Aaron's Qualification as High Priest

Midrash citing Psalms: "'You (G-d) are exalted forever...' King David is saying, 'Master of the universe, when You exalt a human being, it will never be taken from him. You have given to the house of David, royalty/kingship. This will be so until the end of time. As it states, 'I have given to David, My servant kingship until the end of time.' To Aaron and his sons, You have given the Priesthood (*Kehuna*). As it states, 'It shall be his and to his progeny forever...' Therefore, G-d told *Moshe* to exalt Aaron as the High Priest.... Why did G-d insist that Aaron be installed as the High Priest in an such a revealed setting?

"*Chazal:* Aaron had only participated in the sin of the golden calf because he had seen that the Jewish people had killed *Chur*, his nephew (the son of *Miriam*), for rebuking them and protesting against the building of the golden calf. Aaron was afraid that he too would be killed if he tried to stop their initiative. He thus allowed himself to participate in their endeavor of idolatry."

Midrash: "Aaron had fear in his heart because he had participated in the golden calf, although he did not truly desire to do so. G-d saw what was in Aaron's heart and thus told *Moshe* to exalt him and his sons with the Priesthood. The fact that Aaron participated in the golden calf was only because he was compelled to do so out of fear of being killed. G-d wanted it to be known that there was no serious claim against him. Therefore, G-d said to *Moshe*, 'Take one bull and sacrifice it so that it should atone for the golden calf. Take two rams so that it should atone for his two sons.' Aaron initially had four sons; however, two of them were killed. Because *Moshe* had supplicated G-d, half of the decree was annulled. Thus, G-d spared two of Aaron's sons. The death of one's children is the equivalent of destroying the individual."

Gemara in Tractate *Sanhedrin*: Aaron did not attempt to interfere with the making of the golden calf because he did not want the Jewish people to be culpable for killing him. *Aaron* was classified as a prophet and a *Kohen*. If they were to kill him, the Jewish people would not have been atoned until the end of Time. In order to avert this possibility, *Aaron* participated in the making of the golden calf. Since his participation was only as a result of coercion, *Aaron* was not disqualified from becoming the High Priest.

Aaron fully recognized that he had failed regarding his participation in the golden calf and thus believed that he was no longer qualified to be the High Priest. However, it was precisely because of *Aaron's* sense of unworthiness and inadequacy that G-d wanted to demonstrate to him that he was in fact qualified. Seemingly, it is inferred from the *Midrash* that had *Aaron* not internalized his spiritual failing, he would not have been worthy and qualified to be installed as the High Priest.

Rabbeinu Yonah in *The Gates of Repentance*: that a prerequisite for repentance (*teshuvah*) is the recognition and understanding that one had sinned. If one does not understand and appreciate the nature and gravity of one's transgressions, he will not be motivated to repent. Although *Aaron* had justified what he had done, he nevertheless experienced a deep sense of remorse. This sense of unworthiness was the basis for him to be qualified to be the High Priest.

The Characteristic that is Needed for Atonement

Torah: Regarding the half a silver coin (*machtzis ha'shekel*), "This shall they give...a half shekel of the sacred *shekel*, the *shekel* is twenty *geras* (in weight), half a *shekel* as a portion to *Hashem*... The wealthy shall not increase and the destitute shall not decrease from half a *shekel*... to atone for their souls." Every Jewish male of the age of twenty and above was required to give a half a silver coin, which was used to purchase communal offerings (*korbanei tzibur*) that brought about atonement. Regardless of one's financial status, one needed to give the half a silver coin – not more and not less. What is the significance of a "half (*machtzis*)" a silver coin? Why were they not required to give a whole silver coin?

Torah: Regarding the specifications of the Holy Ark that contained the Testament (*Torah*), "They shall make an

Ark...two and a half cubits in length; a cubit and a half its width; and a cubit and a half its height."

Baal Haturim: The reason the specifications of the Ark had half measures was to indicate that in order for one to have the capacity to acquire and retain *Torah*, one needs to break his character traits. It is only when one is humbled that one becomes worthy of being a receptacle for *Torah*. Therefore, the concept of "half (*machtzis*)" connotes humility.

The basis for sin is when one feels a sense of entitlement and empowerment. If one were to give more than the half a coin because of his financial capability, it would not qualify because it would be considered as if he was flaunting his wealth. This lack of humility is an impediment for atonement, thus undermining the purpose of the *machtzis ha'shekel*. A uniformity and anonymity must be maintained among the Jewish people to demonstrate the characteristic trait of humility.

It is interesting to note that *Baal Haturim* explains that the numerical value (*gematria*) of the word "*esrim* (twenty)", which was the weight of the half silver coin, is the same numerical value of the words "*asher v'daal* – the wealthy and the poor man." The weight of this coin indicates that there is no differentiation between the wealthy and the poor. All Jews must see themselves as being of equal value in order to be eligible for atonement.

In addition, the obligation of the *machtzis ha'shekel* begins at the age of twenty (*esrim*) and above – once again emphasizing the necessity of Jews seeing themselves in a humble context. The *Torah* tells us that in order for an offering to be qualified as a sacrifice it must be unblemished (*tamim*). This level of perfection is required because the sacrifice is brought to G-d, Who is perfect. In order for the sacrifice to be valid, it must reflect G-d's characteristic of perfection.

A Jew has an obligation of declaring his belief in the Unity of G-d (*Echad/One*). *Maharal* of *Prague* explains that the numerical value of the word "*echad* (one) is thirteen. The Jewish people are comprised of thirteen tribes– twelve who were given a share in the Land of Israel and one (*Levy*), who did not. The fact that the Jewish people are comprised of thirteen tribes, reflects the characteristic of G-d, which is *echad/Unity*. *Maharal* explains further that not only do the Jewish people reflect G-d's Unity in number, but also within the infrastructure of the Tribes themselves.

The most spiritual of the thirteen tribes was the tribe of *Levy*, who did not sin with the Golden Calf. They were thus chosen to be the officiants of G-d. In order to indicate the unique status of the Tribe of *Levy*, they are classified with the letter “*aleph*” (one). Of the four wives of *Yaakov* two of them were Matriarchs (*Rachel* and *Leah*) of the Jewish people and the other two were considered concubines/maidservants (*Bilhah* and *Zilpah*).

The Matriarchs, who were of special spiritual status, bore for *Yaakov* eight sons– *Leah* mothered six and *Rachel* mothered two. The number eight is connoted with the letter “*ches*”. The wives of *Yaakov* who were maidservants, bore him four sons, which is connoted in Hebrew with the letter “*dahled*.” Identifying the various levels of spirituality contained within the infrastructure of the tribes of Israel: there is the tribe of *Levy* which is represented through the “*aleph*”, there are the children of the Matriarchs which are represented through the letter “*ches*”, and there are the children of the maidservants represented through the letter “*dahled*.” Combined, they equal/spell the word “*echad* (one).” Therefore, the Unity of G-d is reflected within the infrastructure of the Jewish people.

If the wealthy person were to give more than the half silver coin or the needy person were to give less, it would be a breach in the characteristic of “*echad*”/unity of the Jewish people. Just as the sacrifice needed to be unblemished/perfect in its physicality in order to reflect the perfection of G-d, so too did the *machtzis ha’shekel* need to be given within the context of unity among the Jewish people to reflect the unity of G-d.

The Fruits of One’s Choice

Midrash citing Ecclesiastes: “Sweet is the sleep of the laborer– whether he eats a small or a large amount. The fullness of the wealthy man does not allow him to sleep.’ King Solomon is addressing the various predicaments of the devoutly righteous who invest the years of their lives in *Torah* study... In one situation, an individual engages in *Torah* study and *mitzvos* from the age of ten until he passes away at the age of *thirty*. Another individual toils in *Torah* study and *mitzvos* from the age of ten until he passes away at the age of *eighty*.

Perhaps one would say that the one who toiled in *Torah* and *mitzvos* for seventy years is more deserving of

reward than the one who only toiled for twenty years. To this, King Solomon responds, ‘whether he eats a small or large amount ...’ Meaning, the one who lived for thirty years could come before G-d and say, ‘If You had not taken me in the middle of my days, I would have lived longer and would toiled for additional years in *Torah* and *mitzvos*.’ Therefore, the level of reward for the one who lived less years is no less than the one who had toiled during his lengthy life.”

Midrash: “Where do we see a proof of this? The *Torah* tells us that *Moshe* served the Jewish people for forty years and lived until the age of one hundred and twenty. *Shmuel* the Prophet had only lived for fifty-two years during which he carried the burden of the Jewish people. Although, *Moshe* and *Shmuel* served the Jewish people for different lengths of time (*Shmuel* had passed away at a younger age) they are as deserving as one another. As the verse in Psalms equates them. It states, ‘*Moshe* and *Aaron* were among His priests and *Shmuel* was among those who invoke His Name...”

Torah: There was a particular sin offering that was brought in the Temple, whose species was determined by one’s financial status. The wealthy individual was obligated to bring an animal as his sin offering. The needy person brought a bird for his sin offering.

Gemara in Tractate *Menachos*: Although the wealthy man brought a meat offering of significant value that exuded a pleasant fragrance when roasted and the poor man brought a bird offering of minor value which exuded a foul odor because of the burning of its feathers, the *Torah* states regarding both of these offerings, “*Hashem* smelled the pleasing aroma.”

Gemara: “From this we learn that “Regardless of how much or how little one does, as long as it is done with the proper intent for the sake of G-d, they are valued identically.”

One can only succeed to the degree of his potential, which is endowed to him by G-d. If one is given a short lifespan or is allocated limited finances, he must make due and address his potential within that context. He is required to invest his life in spirituality with a proper intent. G-d does not expect one to be more than he is meant to be.

Mishna in Tractate *Makkos*: If the court sentenced an individual to death and subsequently it was revealed that the witnesses that gave testimony to bring about

the verdict were conspiring, if the death penalty was not yet carried out, the witnesses are put to death.

Rebbe Akiva: If the conspiring witnesses are held fully culpable for their evil intent although it did not come to fruition, how much more so should the one who intended to do a *mitzvah* and was not able to bring it to fruition be fully deserving of its reward. Thus, if one lived a life of *Torah* and *mitzvos* and was taken by G-d before he was able to carry out his spiritual aspirations, he is fully accredited for what he had intend to accomplish.

Torah in Chayei Sarah: “Sarah’s lifetime was one hundred years, twenty years, and seven years these were the years of Sarah’s life.” If Sarah had lived 127 years, it is obvious that these were the years of her life. Why does the verse conclude with the words “these were the years of Sarah’s life” – seemingly it is superfluous?

Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh: Although Sarah passed away at the age of 127, which was before her intended time, she was fully accredited for all the years she would have lived as a devoutly righteous woman. The reason

Sarah passed away prematurely was because satan had informed her that Avraham had bound her only child Yitzchak to be slaughtered as a sacrifice.

Sarah’s life was fully invested in doing the Will of G-d. Every moment of her existence she yearned to bring about more. She was only denied her spiritual aspirations because of the circumstances that came upon her. Therefore, she is fully accredited for all of the years she would have lived. This is the meaning of the conclusion of the verse, “these were the years of Sarah’s life.”

Rambam in The Laws of Repentance: Every Jew can be as great as *Moshe Rabbeinu*. *Moshe*, the “*Ishe Elokim*,” had a direct relationship with G-d that was at the level of “face to face” (within the context of prophecy) and was chosen to be the conduit of *Torah* to the Jewish people. How is it possible that every Jew could ascend to that level? *Moshe’s* accomplishment was that he had actualized his potential. This reality is within the ability of every Jew. If a Jew meets his potential with which he was endowed, his accomplishment is no less valued than that of *Moshe*.



Yad Avraham Institute

📍 810 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019 📧 ravkalatsky@gmail.com ☎ (212) 259-0300 YadAvNow.com