

G-d's Relevance TO EXISTENCE



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YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Emor

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

The Kohen As Reinstatement of Adam

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Superseding The Status Of The High Priest

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Acknowledgment Of Liability & Imperfection Record

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Review, Retain, Then Extrapolate

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The High Priest as Model of Original Man

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1. A Kohen is not permitted to contaminate to the dead unless it is one of the 7 closest relatives: father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, wife.
2. The High Priest (Kohen Gadol) is not permitted to contaminate – even to the 7 closest relatives.
3. Seforno: The function of the Priest in addition to officiating is to be the disseminator of Torah.
4. Prophet Malachi: The lips of the Kohen are the keepers of the faith. Torah should be sought from his mouth.
5. If the Kohen would contaminate to others besides his family, his reverence & esteem would be diminished.
6. G-d's Presence in the Mishkan was the original intent of creation that G-d should be on the terrestrial with man.
7. Before the sin of Adam there was no death – a derivative of the evil contained within the fruit.
8. The sin of the fruit putrified existence, causing the terrestrial to no longer be the location for G-d's Presence.
9. The Mishkan was the location for G-d's presence to dwell.
10. The High Priest was a reinstatement of Adam before the sin – he had no context of spiritual impurity.

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Why Choose The Domesticated Species For Sacrifice?

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1. The only species that qualify for sacrifices are the ox, sheep, and goat.
2. Although there are ten kosher species only the domesticated qualify.
3. Midrash: G-d said, "I don't want to burden you to scale mountains and search out fields to seek out these species."
4. Only the species raised on your feed bag and under your jurisdiction qualify.
5. Chazal: One's pain for a mitzvah (sacrifice) determines the degree of one's reward.
6. Psalms: Mitzvos were given to sanctify and purify the Jew.
7. The positive and negative Commandments correspond and parallel the spiritual component of the Jew.
8. Pain, as determinant of reward, is only true within the context of the prescribed Mitzvos.
9. Applied elsewhere it is only an exercise in futility.

The Significance Of The Juxtaposition Of The Festivals To Shabbos

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1. The Festivals & holidays are juxtaposed to the Shabbos.
2. Rashi: One who desecrates the holiday is considered as he desecrated the Shabbos.
3. One who observes the holiday is valued as though he observed the Shabbos.
4. Observing the Shabbos is a testament that G-d created the world.
5. Gemara: The Sanctity of the Shabbos has been in place since the beginning of creation.
6. The Festivals & holidays are sanctified by the Sanhedrin.
7. The blessing of the Festivals and holidays: G-d sanctifies the Jewish people who sanctify time.
8. The sanctity of time is derived from the sanctity of the Jew.
9. The basis for all sanctity is G-d's association with the location or people.
10. The sanctity of Shabbos: G-d's entering into existence every 7th day.
11. The Jew's sanctity: G-d taking them as His holy people.
12. The basis for all sanctity: G-d's level of association in each context.
13. The sanctity of the Festivals and Shabbos are same sourced; one who desecrates the holiday is considered as desecrating the Shabbos.

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The Proprietary Imprint of One's Life

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1. Midrash: A heavenly voice will sprout from the mountain top saying "Who has done for G-d should come and take his rightful reward."
2. "Who has praised G-d before he was endowed with a soul, who has circumcised his child before he was given a son."
3. "Who has brought to me a sacrifice before I gave him an animal, the ox, sheep and goat."
4. A Positive Commandment: Install a court comprised of ordained judges and law enforcers in every community.
5. Man was endowed with the power of choice to be deserving or culpable for his choices.
6. Exercising one's full choice takes place in concealment – understanding the consequence of transgression.
7. The Torah does not want the range of choice for the Jew to be either devoutly righteous or to be a predator animal.
8. The extent of one's choice is to infuse one's action with a special intent for the sake of the mitzvah.
9. When we serve G-d at whatever level, one must be cognizant that it is all G-d given to be utilized for a specific purpose.

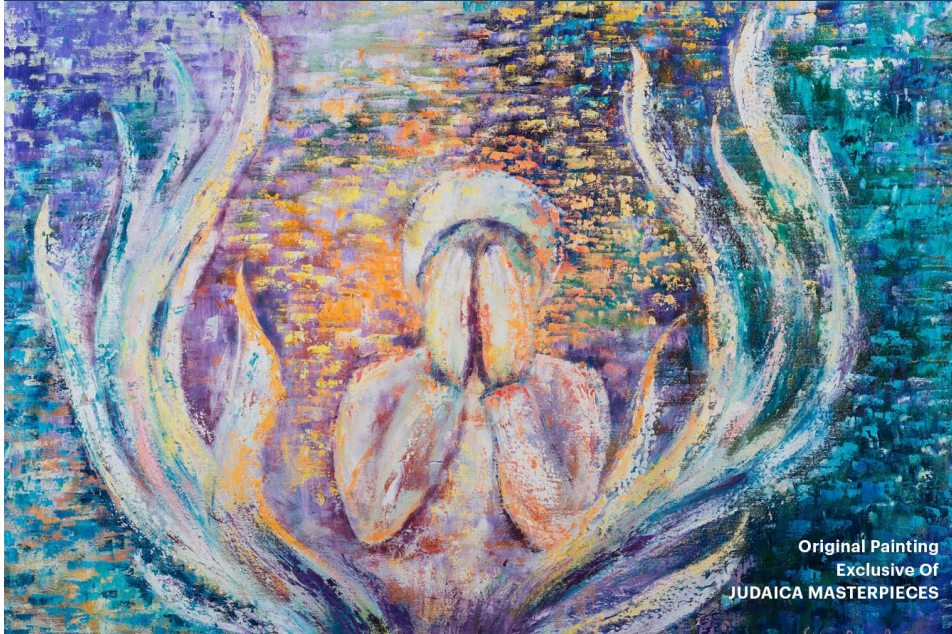
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G-d's Relevance TO EXISTENCE

The Species of the Ox, A Vindication of the Jewish people

Torah: The ox, sheep, and goat are the species that qualify for sacrifices.

Midrash citing a verse from *Yeshaya*: “It is through the abomination, I (G-d) will choose you.’ From the abomination from which you made a cast of gold I will choose from that same species an offering that you will bring before Me. Which species is it? The ox, sheep, and the goat (are the species that qualify for an offering)... Why did G-d mention the ox (calf) to be the first species that qualifies as a sacrifice?”

“*Reb Levi* explains this with an allegory. A rumor had spread throughout the kingdom that a certain matronly woman had committed adultery with one of the ministers of the king. The king investigated the claim and discovered that it was unfounded. He wished to publicly vindicate his minister. In order to do this, the king hosted a banquet for all of his subjects to attend,

and placed the minister (the accused adulterer) at the head of the table next to himself. Those who attended the banquet, witnessing the honor accorded to the minister by the king, understood that the accusation was baseless and the minister was truly innocent. Similarly, the nations of the world claim, ‘the Jewish people are idolaters (as themselves) because they worshiped the golden calf.’ G-d investigated the matter and discovered that the Jewish people were innocent. He therefore chose the ox (calf) to be the first of the species that qualifies to be a sacrifice.”

Midrash: “The *Torah* proves that the Jewish people were not actually the ones who initiated the sin of the golden calf, as it states, ‘They had said, ‘This is your god - Israel.’ If the Jewish people had initiated the golden calf and accepted it as their deity the verse should have stated, ‘This is our god- Israel.’ It is thus indicated that the golden calf was initiated by the rabble (that had left Egypt along with the Jewish people).

The Jewish people themselves had no relevance to idolatry, but rather, they were encouraged and influenced by the rabble. Therefore the ox is listed as the first species to qualify as a sacrifice in order to proclaim that the Jewish people are vindicated from the sin of idolatry.”

Torah: Regarding the Splitting of the Sea, “...The Children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the Sea; the water was a wall (*choma*) for them, on their right and on their left.”

Chazal: The word “*choma* (wall),” which refers to the water of the Sea surrounding the Jewish people is written with the letter “*vav*” deleted. The word without its vowels can be read as “*cheima* (wrath).”

Midrash: The spelling of the word alludes to the fact that when the Jewish people walked through the Sea, surrounded on each side by walls of water, the angels in heaven began an intense prosecution them before G-d. The angels said to G-d, “Why are you sparing the Jewish people and destroying the Egyptians? These are idolaters and these are idolaters.” The angels were saying, since the Jewish people are idolaters no less than the Egyptians, why are the Egyptians considered to be more culpable? The Jewish people deserve to perish in the Sea as the Egyptians do.

G-d responded to the angels by telling them that there is no comparison between the two of them. The Egyptian masters worshiped idols willingly. However, the Jewish people, who were their slaves and under their control were vulnerable to the influences of their masters. They thus only became pagans under duress and coercion. They thus cannot be held culpable to the same degree as the Egyptians. This is the reason the Egyptians deserve to be destroyed and the Jewish people should be spared.

Seemingly, a parallel can be drawn regarding the sin of the golden calf. G-d wanted to destroy the Jewish people because of their involvement in idolatry. However, due to the supplications of *Moshe*, the Attribute of Mercy interceded and they were not destroyed. G-d forgave them because they did not initiate the idolatry, but rather they were influenced by the rabble, who left Egypt with them. The Jewish people’s involvement with the golden calf was the equivalent of them being under duress.

Torah: Pharaoh sent out the Jewish people after the ten plagues had come upon Egypt.

Midrash: “G-d said, ‘Woe that he (Pharaoh) sent the Jewish people out of Egypt after only ten plagues. Had I been able to bring upon Egypt more plagues, I would have done so...’”

Bais HaLevy: The Jewish people in Egypt were initially idolaters due to the bondage. However, when they had witnessed the Hand of G-d through the plagues in Egypt, which were revealed miracles, they were gradually purged from their idolatrous beliefs. Each plague that they had witnessed brought about another level of purging. However, since it was essential that they leave Egypt after ten plagues, there remained a trace of idolatry within them that was not purged. It was because of this minute trace of idolatry that the rabble was able to influence them to revert to idolatry.

Since the source of the idolatry of the golden calf came about under duress and was directly linked to the idolatry of Egypt, which was considered to be under duress, they were not considered to be fully culpable. Ultimately, their participation in the golden calf is the equivalent of the slander against the minister. G-d therefore openly proclaimed the innocence of the Jewish people to the world by mentioning the ox (calf) as the first species that qualifies as a sacrifice.

The Impediment to Internalization

Torah: “...When you bring the Thanks Offering (*Korban Todah*)...”

Midrash: “...At the end of time all sacrifices will cease to be, except for the Thanks Offering, which will remain in effect forever. All other thanks will come to an end but the Thanks Offering will never come to an end...It is because the giving of thanks to G-d will not come to an end.”

Yirmiyah: ‘...All will exclaim, ‘G-d is good in His Kindness forever’ and bring offerings of thanks in the House of G-d...’

Mishna in Tractate *Berachos:* “Just as one blesses G-d for the good, so too must he bless G-d for the bad.” Even when one experiences tragedy one blesses G-d, because it is innately beneficial to him. This is acknowledged through a blessing as when one acknowledges good fortune. Although the text of the blessing for good fortune is not the same as that for tragedy, nevertheless in essence there is no difference between the two. One only expresses each experience

differently (good fortune with '*Shechyanu*' (we thank G-d Who has kept us alive to experience this event, which is joyous) and tragedy with '*Dayan haEmmes*' (G-d is the True Judge)).

Shulchan Aruch: Just as one recites the blessing of "*Shechyanu*" with joy, so too must one express the blessing "*Dayan haEmmes*" with the same level of joy. It is because one must understand and internalize that since G-d is the True Judge (*Dayan haEmmes*-there is no iniquity in His Judgment). Thus, anything that He brings upon a person is for his ultimate good. Therefore, even tragedy and suffering that comes upon an individual must be internalized with the same level of joy because it is truly in his best interest.

If so, why does one not make this acknowledgment with the same blessing of "*Shechyanu*" that one recites when he experiences good fortune? When one experiences good fortune, one is naturally able to sense and internalize its beneficial value. The text is an expression of elation; however, when one experiences pain and suffering, one is not able to sense the significance of its value. Thus, it is not expressed with the same words. (But rather, only as "G-d is the True Judge.") It is only because one does not have sufficient clarity to see the tragic event within the context of being good. The basis for one's lack of clarity is rooted in one's self-interest and human inclinations.

Chazal based on a verse in Ecclesiastes: At the end of time G-d will vanquish all evil. At that time, man will no longer be subject to the evil inclination nor will one be conflicted with self-interest. Man will no longer have free choice to do what he wishes because of the degree of clarity that will exist at that time. All mankind will be recognized with absolute clarity that all that G-d does is only in the best interest of mankind. The continuous recognition of G-d's goodness will evoke an ongoing declaration of thanks which will be expressed through the Thanks Offering. All of the other offerings will cease to be because they only have relevance to spiritual deficiency and reinstatement from sin.

Torah: When one survives an extraordinary event, one must bring a Thanks Offering to acknowledge that it was only because of G-d's Kindness that he was able to survive. G-d's Kindness however is not limited to saving one from tragedy. We recite in the blessing of the *Torah*, "Blessed are You *Hashem*...Who selected us from all the peoples and gave us His *Torah*..."

In the blessing of thanks (*modim*) in the *Amidah* (Silent Prayer) we say, "We gratefully thank You for it is You Who are *Hashem*, our G-d...Rock of our lives, Shield of our salvation..." At the conclusion of the service we say in the *Aleinu* prayer, "It is our duty to praise the Master...for He has not made us like the nations..." If in fact we are continuous beneficiaries of G-d's Kindness and we do not deny this, why do we not feel the good fortune that G-d continuously bestows upon us? We do not internalize what we believe to be the truth.

When one receives a gift that is of extraordinary value, he will be overwhelmed with joy and have great appreciation to his benefactor, thus evoking thanks and praise. However, if that same benefactor would continuously bestow upon the recipient the same gift, over time the beneficiary of the gift would no longer have the same degree of appreciation and thanks as he initially had.

It is because initially the beneficiary did not feel worthy to receive such a gift of extraordinary value. He thus felt a great sense of appreciation and thanks when he initially received it. However, if he continues to receive the same gift, he will come to believe that the reason he was chosen to be a beneficiary is because he is entitled and worthy of the gift. The moment he experiences the sense of entitlement, his appreciation will wane and he will no longer feel beholden to his benefactor. His misconception is rooted in his ego, which is the basis of man's regression in spirituality.

G-d does not owe anything to anyone, yet He continuously bestows unlimited blessing upon mankind. Even if one is not worthy, the goodness that is bestowed upon him is unceasing. He provides life, health, sustenance, etc. on a continuous basis. However, since these amenities are continuous, one feels that this is the basic entitlement for a human being. In fact, many people feel that they deserve much more than they actually receive. This is again rooted in the ego of man and one's sense of his own self worth. On the other hand, at the end of time, the evil inclination will be vanquished and man will no longer be distracted from truth. Man will feel negated in the presence of G-d. This will cause a realization and internalization of the good that one receives. All mankind will experience true joy, even for what is considered minor.

Kind David in Psalms: "I have set G-d before me always..." Because King David was at a level that he sensed G-d's Presence continuously, he was always in a negated state, thus always appreciating G-d's Beneficence. He thus expressed his appreciation through praise and song which is recorded in the book of Psalms.

The Innate Quality of the Species that Qualify to be Sacrifices

Midrash in the Portion of *Bereishis*: "He Gazed into the Torah and Created the world." The *Torah* itself was the blueprint for the creation of existence. Thus, every aspect of existence was created in order to facilitate the fulfillment of the entire *Torah*. Since there are dietary laws in the *Torah*, G-d Created *Kosher* species that possess the criteria set forth in the *Torah*. Since a *Torah* scroll, *tefillin*, and *mezuzah* must be written on the hide of a *Kosher* species, G-d created the *Kosher* species with hides in order for these particular *mitzvos* to be fulfilled.

Torah: "When an ox or sheep or a goat is born..." These are the only three species that qualify to be brought as an offering.

Ramchal: Because these three species were utilized for sacrifices the species of the ox, sheep, and goat assume an elevated status because they are linked to the service of G-d in the Temple.

Torah: If one wears a fourcornered garment, one is obligated to put fringes (*tzitzis*) on its corners. However, one is not obligated to wear a four-cornered garment.

Ramchal: Although the majority of one's garments are not fashioned to have four corners; nevertheless, since he has a four cornered garment that is utilized for a *mitzvah*, the Jew's entire wardrobe assumes an elevated status because it is linked to the garment that represents holiness. This principle holds true with all other aspects of the life of a Jew.

Midrash: "The species that qualify to be brought as offerings were chosen in the merit of the Patriarchs. The ox was chosen in the merit of *Avraham*, our Patriarch. As it states regarding *Avraham*'s hosting of the angels, "Avraham ran to the cattle, took a calf tender and good, and gave it to the youth who hurried to do it..." *Avraham* was unique in his performance of acts

of kindness. He had chosen to emulate the Attribute of Kindness of G-d because it was through Kindness that G-d Created the World. As it states Psalms, "With Kindness the world was created."

The concept of sacrifices exists only within the context of the Attribute of Mercy. When the *Torah* mentions sacrifices they are referred to as "*Korban L'shem* (Sacrifice to G-d)." Since the *Torah* uses the appellation for G-d (*YKVK 'Hashem'*) that connotes the Attribute of Mercy, it indicates that without G-d's Mercy, one would not be atoned through the sacrifices.

The Jewish people are able to merit G-d's Mercy through the ox because *Avraham*, our Patriarch utilized the ox as a vehicle to perform the *mitzvah* of loving kindness (*chesed*).

Midrash: "The sheep was chosen to qualify as an offering in the merit of *Yitzchak*. As the verse states regarding the *Akeidah* (binding of *Yitzchak*), 'And *Avraham* looked up and saw- behold a ram - after it had been caught in the thicket..." The species of the ram reminds G-d of the special act of the *Akeidah*, which was the most difficult test presented to *Avraham*.

G-d valued *Avraham*'s selfless service and self negation which was demonstrated through the bringing of the ram, as if he had sacrificed his son *Yitzchak*. It is only through the merit of the *Akeidah* that the prosecution of *satan* is silenced on *Rosh Hashanah*. Thus, because the sheep was used to facilitate the *Akeidah* it was chosen to be the species to be brought as a sacrifice to evoke G-d's Mercy for the Jewish people.

Midrash: "The goat was chosen to be an offering in the merit of *Yaakov*. As the *Torah* states (regarding *Rivka*, our Matriarch, telling her son *Yaakov* to receive the blessing of the birthright from his father *Yitzchak*), 'So now, my son, heed my voice to that which I command you. Go now to the flock and fetch from there two good goats...' It is only because *Yaakov* utilized the goat to receive the blessings from his father *Yitzchak* that the Jewish people were able to exist. Thus, the goat was chosen to be a sacrifice to evoke G-d's Mercy on behalf of the Jewish people.

With the principle stated by *Ramchal* we are able to say that because the Patriarchs had used these species within their context, it caused the species to assume a special level and were therefore chosen by G-d to be used as the species that qualify to be sacrifices in the Temple.

Torah regarding the positive commandment of redeeming the firstborn: "...You shall set apart every first issue of the womb to G-d...Every first issue donkey you shall redeem with a lamb or kid..." The firstborn of every domesticated kosher species assumes a state of sanctity upon its birth. The donkey, although it is a non-kosher species, also assumes a consecrated status upon its birth and therefore it must be redeemed by giving a sheep to the *Kohen*.

Rashi citing *Chazal* who explain that since the donkey was the pack animal that assisted the Jewish people to transport the wealth out of Egypt during the exodus, fulfilling G-d's promise to *Avraham* at the time of the covenant between the parts ("You shall leave with great wealth"), its firstborn assumes a consecrated status. Therefore, the entire species of the donkey was elevated because it facilitated the fulfillment of G-d's Promise.

If the donkey, which is a non-Kosher species was elevated to such as special status because of its role in the fulfillment of G-d's Word, how much more so are the Jewish people, who possess a uniquely holy status because they were taken to be G-d's people at *Sinai*? The spiritual dimension of the Jew is something that cannot be fathomed. When the Jewish people declared, "*Naaseh V'nishma* – we will do and we will listen" they achieved a unique worthiness because they accepted upon themselves the Will of G-d, whatever it may be, which guaranteed the fulfillment of the objective of Creation.

The Uniqueness of the Pursued

Torah: The ox, the sheep, and the goat are the only species that qualify to be brought as offerings.

Midrash: The reason G-d chose only these particular species is based on a verse from Ecclesiastes, "King Solomon writes, 'G-d favors the pursued.' *Reb Hunah* says in the name of *Reb Yosef*, 'In the future G-d will demand the blood of the pursued from their pursuers. Even if it was a *tzaddik* (righteous) who had pursued another *tzaddik*. Even if a *rasha* (evil person) pursued another *rasha*. Even if a *rasha* pursued a *tzaddik*, G-d will favor the pursued. Even if *tzaddik* would pursue a *rasha* (in order to destroy him), G-d will favor the pursued.'

Where do we find this in the *Torah*? We find *Abel* was pursued by *Cain*. As a result of being the pursued, G-d favored the offering of *Abel* and rejected the offering

that was brought by *Cain*. *Noach* was pursued by the members of his generation. As a result of this, *Noach* was favored by G-d as it states, 'Noach found favor in the eyes of G-d.' (He thus survived the Great Flood) *Avraham* was pursued by *Nimrod* (The King who decreed that *Avraham* should be cast into the fiery kiln).

Midrash: "Avraham was favored by G-d as it states, 'You are Hashem, G-d who has chosen Avraham and has taken him out of the fiery kiln...' *Yitzchak* was pursued by the Philistines..., *Yaakov* was pursued by *Esav*, as it states, 'Yaakov was chosen by G-d.' *Yosef* was pursued by his brothers..., *Moshe* was pursued by Pharaoh (he needed to flee from Egypt...' Because *Moshe* was pursued by Pharaoh he was able to defuse G-d's Wrath against the Jewish people after they had sinned... The Jewish people are pursued by the nations of the world. As it states, 'G-d chose them to be his treasured nation...' Therefore, since the ox is pursued by the lion and the sheep is pursued by the wolf and the goat is pursued by the mountain lion, G-d favors these species over others and thus are the only ones that qualify to be brought as an offering."

Why does G-d favor the pursued? One could say that perhaps since G-d is the Father of Mercy, He takes pity on the one being pursued and gives him favor. This however, is not the basis for G-d favoring the pursued.

Chazal: *Moshe* is the greatest Jew who ever lived. Seemingly, he was able to achieve this because he was "the most humble man who ever walked the face of the earth." One can be humbled either from his own recognition that he is negated before G-d, Who is the Omnipotent Being, or one's humility could come about through experiencing difficulties from which there is no apparent relief.

When one is in a pursued state one is unceasingly and relentlessly hounded by his pursuer. He has no escape or manner to disengage from his pursuer. The pursued has no place to seek refuge. Although the Jewish people, throughout history, have had moments of respite and lulls from being pursued, they nevertheless have not been released from the pursuit of the nations of the world. When they realize that they are the pursued, it is only a matter of time before they realize that there is no solution to their problem.

The pursued has only one recourse that can extricate him from his pursuer. He turns to G-d with a depth

of understanding that only He can help him. The internalization of this reality establishes a special and unique relationship between the individual (the pursued) and G-d. His circumstance has brought him to understand that all existence is determined by G-d Himself. This is the basis of G-d favoring the pursued, regardless of his spiritual classification. G-d favored the offering of Abel because he was pursued by Cain.

Gemara in Tractate *Sanhedrin*: Although there were other righteous people in the generation of *Noach* he was the only one to survive.

Chazal: When the Attribute of Justice is in effect, it does not differentiate between the righteous and the wicked because no one is perfect enough to withstand it.

How then did *Noach* survive? It was because “*Noach* found favor in the eyes of G-d.” *Noach* found special favor in the eyes of G-d, which allowed him and his family to survive, because was pursued by his generation. Although *Moshe* was the most special Jew to ever live, he was chosen by G-d and his supplication saved the Jewish people from destruction after they had sinned because he was pursued by Pharaoh.

Sinai, The Spiritual Anchor

Torah: “When you will slaughter a peace-offering to *Hashem*...”

Sforno: “G-d said at *Sinai* (in the first commandment), ‘I am *Hashem* Your G-d Who has taken you from the land of Egypt...’ At *Sinai* when the Jewish people accepted G-d as the Omnipotent Being (G-d’s Unity in existence) it was the equivalent of what they had said at the time of the splitting of the Sea, ‘This is My G-d and I will extol Him...’”

At the time of the splitting of the Sea, G-d’s presence was so palpable that even the lowly maidservant experienced a revelation of G-d at a level that was greater than *Yechezkel* the prophet. Thus, when they declared “This is my G-d...” it was the equivalent of the *Sinai* event when G-d had said to them “I am *Hashem* Your G-d...”

Torah after the splitting of the Sea: “...And they had faith in *Hashem* and in *Moshe*, His servant.” If at the splitting of the Sea the Jewish people had reached an understanding and belief that G-d is the Omnipotent Being, why did G-d need to reiterate it at *Sinai*? In addition, the first commandment states “I am *Hashem* Your G-d Who has taken you from the land of Egypt...” If the Jewish people already had understood that G-d is the One and only, it is obvious that He is the G-d that had taken them out of Egypt.

Rambam in the Laws of the Fundamentals of *Torah*: Until the receiving of the *Torah* at *Sinai*, although the Jewish people at that time believed with absolute clarity that G-d had taken them out of Egypt, later generations could question that perhaps *Moshe* had used sorcery to bring about the miracles that brought about the exodus and the splitting of the Sea.

Thus, the immutable authenticity of the *Torah* would come into question. However, at *Sinai* where every Jew had experienced the revelation of G-d that was a communication at the level of face to face, *Moshe*’s position as G-d’s spokesman could never be contested.

Although their belief in G-d and His intervention on their behalf regarding the exodus and splitting of the Sea was accurate and correct at the time of the splitting of the Sea, it was only established securely and irrefutably for eternity at *Sinai*.

Although the generation that was at *Sinai* had experienced G-d at a level that was incontestable, how do the future generations who did not experience *Sinai* not question the authenticity of *Torah*? It is only through the transmission of *Torah* from generation to generation, whose origin begins from an incontestable source. This transmission is continuous through the study of *Torah* and the performance of *mitzvos*. However, the Jew who is not engaged in the study of *Torah* and the performance of *mitzvos*, will not have a sense of its profoundness and have difficulty accepting its Divine value which is communicated from generation to generation. The guarantee of the tradition of *Torah* is only through the spiritualization of the Jew through *Torah* and its *mitzvos*.



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