**S.A.L.T. – PARASHAT PINCHAS**

**By Rav David Silverberg**

Motzaei Shabbat

The Torah in Parashat Pinchas tells of the census of *Benei Yisrael* taken by Moshe towards the very end of the nation’s sojourn in the wilderness. In presenting the findings of this census, the Torah lists the major families of each tribe, noting how the name of each family’s patriarch became the name of that family. For example, in reference to the first tribe, Reuven, the Torah writes, “The sons of Reuven: Chanokh – the Chanokhi family; for Palu – the Palu’i family; for Chetzron – the Chetzroni family” (26:5-6). This pattern continues throughout the entire census.

Rashi (26:5) cites a Midrashic explanation of these names from *Shir Hashirim Rabba* (4:12), which observes that the families’ names were prefixed by the letter *hei* and suffixed by the letter *yod*, as in “*Ha-Chanokhi*” and “*Ha-Palu’i*.” Symbolically, the Midrash comments, this represents the association of God’s Name – which is formed by these two letters – with the names of the Israelite families. This was done in response to the cynical claim made by the other nations of the time that the women of *Benei Yisrael* were defiled by the Egyptians during the period of enslavement, and thus the younger generations are not the biological children of their presumed fathers. By having His name associated with each major family among *Benei Yisrael*, the Midrash explains, God confirmed that these families were, in fact, pure, and every person was the child of the man he presumed to be his father.

A number of commentators addressed the question of why this concern arose only now, nearly forty years after the Exodus. An earlier census had been conducted thirty-nine years prior, just one year after the Exodus, and in that census (Bamidbar 1) we do not find the families being named in this fashion. Why only in this later census did God find it necessary to confirm the legitimate status of all of *Benei Yisrael*’s children born in Egypt?

One answer, perhaps, relates to the fact that this census was held immediately following the tragedy of *Ba’al Pe’or*, when God punished *Benei Yisrael* for their involvement in the nation of Moav, engaging in illicit sexual relations and worshipping the Moavite god. Indeed, Rashi earlier (26:1) cites the *Midrash Tanchuma* as explaining that this census was conducted to count the number of people who remained after the plague that God brought upon the nation in retribution for the sin of *Ba’al Pe’or*. We might suggest that in the aftermath of this crushing failure, after having fallen to the depths of sexual immorality and pagan worship, *Benei Yisrael* felt insecure and vulnerable. They began questioning their singular status, and started to wonder if perhaps the skeptics of the world were correct, that there was nothing special about *Am Yisrael*. If they could decline so sharply, and engage in the most grievous offenses, then, they feared, the other nations might be correct, that they – *Benei Yisrael* – are just like any other nation. God’s reassurance of their singular status was necessary specifically now, in the wake of one of *Benei Yisrael*’s greatest religious failures, which may have triggered serious doubts in their minds as to whether they are, indeed, God’s special nation chosen to represent Him in the world. (A similar explanation is given by *Keli Yakar*.)

If so, then the Midrash here perhaps teaches us of the need to support and encourage those who have stumbled. The Gemara in Bava Metzia (58b) famously establishes that reminding a penitent sinner of his past misdeeds violates the Torah prohibition of *ona’at devarim* (verbal oppression). From the Midrash’s comments regarding the census in Parashat Pinchas, we might add that beyond the strict prohibition against scorning penitent sinners for their past mistakes, we are also urged to do just the opposite – to offer them encouragement and boost their self-esteem so that they believe in themselves and trust that they are beloved, sacred children of the Almighty despite the grave mistakes they have made. Just as God sought to reassure *Benei Yisrael* of their cherished status after the tragic failure of *Ba’al Pe’or*, so must we relate to those who have erred as our cherished brethren despite their past failures.

Sunday

The Torah in Parashat Pinchas presents the command of the *korban tamid*, the daily sacrifice that was offered twice each day, with one sheep sacrificed in the morning and a second in the afternoon. This sacrifice was accompanied by a *nesekh* – a libation of wine which was poured on the altar (28:7).

The Gemara in Masekhet Yoma (34a-b) cites and discusses a debate among the *Tanna’im* regarding the relationship between the morning and afternoon libations. The majority view among the *Tanna’im* interprets the verse here in Parashat Pinchas as requiring a libation to accompany the afternoon *tamid* sacrifice, whereas the requirement of a libation accompanying the morning *tamid* flows from the association between the two sacrifices. Rabbi Yehuda Ha-nasi, however, held that to the contrary, the Torah speaks of a *nesekh* accompanying the morning *tamid*, and the association between the two sacrifices instructs that we apply this requirement even to the afternoon sacrifice.

*Tosefot* (34b) explain that the significance of this debate involves a situation where there is a shortage of wine, such that the *kohanim* in the *Beit Ha-mikdash* can perform only one of the two libations. If there is only enough wine for one *nesekh* (namely, the amount of one *revi’it*) on any given day, should the *kohanim* use the wine with the morning *tamid*, or with the afternoon *tamid*? The answer, *Tosefot* write, hinges on this debate between Rabbi Yehuda Ha-nasi and the other Sages. If the primary *nesekh* obligation applies in the morning, and the afternoon libation is derived only secondarily, by virtue of the halakhic parity that exists between the two *tamid* sacrifices, then the wine should be used in the morning. According to the majority view, however, that the primary *nesekh* is that which accompanies the afternoon *tamid*, then the *kohanim* should perform the morning *tamid* without the accompanying libation, and save their limited supply of wine for the afternoon *tamid*.

Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein, in [*Chashukei Chemed* (Yoma, pp. 245-246)](http://hebrewbooks.org/pdfpager.aspx?req=49712&st=&pgnum=244), notes the latent assumption underlying *Tosefot*’s discussion, namely, that a future, higher-level *mitzva* takes precedence over a lower-level *mitzva* that applies at the present moment. According to *Tosefot*, the majority viewwould require the *kohanim* to forego on the morning *nesekh* in favor of the afternoon *nesekh*, which is the primary *mitzva*, because fulfilling the primary *mitzva* takes precedence over the secondary *mitzva*, even though the secondary *mitzva* is relevant earlier. Normally, *Halakha* forbids unnecessarily delaying a *mitzva* opportunity, and requires performing a given *mitzva* at the first chance we can. It appears, however, that at least in *Tosefot*’s view,one should forego on an immediate *mitzva* opportunity if this is necessary to facilitate a higher-level *mitzva* in the future.

In discussing *Tosefot*’s assumption, Rav Zilberstein warns against confusing this question with the well-known controversy surrounding the issue of delaying a *mitzva* to perform it at a higher standard. Rav Yaakov Reischer (*Shevut Yaakov*, 34), for example, maintained that a person who, on Sukkot, anticipates receiving a high-quality *etrog* later in the day should wait until that *etrog* arrives before performing the *mitzva*. Others, however, disagree, and maintain that the value of prompt performance overrides the value of performance at a higher standard. (See [Rav Asher Weiss’ “*Zerizin Makdimin Le-mitzvot*,”](https://www.torahbase.org/%D7%91%D7%A2%D7%A0%D7%99%D7%9F-%D7%96%D7%A8%D7%99%D7%96%D7%99%D7%9F-%D7%9E%D7%A7%D7%93%D7%99%D7%9E%D7%99%D7%9F-%D7%9C%D7%9E%D7%A6%D7%95%D7%95%D7%AA/) section 7.) Rav Zilberstein clarifies that this issue stands separate and apart from the assumption made by *Tosefot* regarding the *nesakhim* accompanying the *tamid* sacrifices. The question dealt with by Rav Reischer involves a single *mitzva* which can be observed at an average standard immediately, or at a higher standard in the future, and the question then becomes which of these two important values – promptness and high standards – takes precedence. The situation addressed by *Tosefot*, however, involves two separate *mitzvot*, one of which is known to be a higher-level *mitzva* than the other, and circumstances allow for observing either one, but not both. Here, the question is not whether a *mitzva* should be delayed so it can be performed at a higher standard, but rather whether one should neglect a current obligation for the sake of a higher-level future obligation, and *Tosefot* appear to have unhesitatingly maintained that one should.

Tomorrow we will *iy”H* explore possible practical applications of *Tosefot*’s assumption.

Monday

Yesterday, we noted *Tosefot*’s comments in Masekhet Yoma (34b) addressing the situation where the *kohanim* in the *Beit Ha-mikdash* have only enough wine for one of the two daily *nesakhim* (libations). The procedure in this case, *Tosefot* write, would hinge on the debate among the *Tanna’im* as to the relationship between the two libations. According to Rabbi Yehuda Ha-nasi, who held that the primary *nesekh* is the one accompanying the morning *tamid* sacrifice, the limited supply of wine should be used in the morning, at the expense of the *nesekh* accompanying the afternoon *tamid*. The majority view, by contrast, maintained that the afternoon *nesekh* constitutes the primary libation requirement, and would therefore require suspending the morning *nesekh* in favor of the afternoon libation.

Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein ([*Chashukei Chemed* -Yoma, pp. 245-246](http://hebrewbooks.org/pdfpager.aspx?req=49712&st=&pgnum=244)) raises the question of whether and how we can reconcile *Tosefot*’s comments with a ruling of the Radbaz concerning a captive whose captors allow him to attend the synagogue services one day a year. As cited by the *Mishna Berura* (90:28), the Radbaz was asked whether the person should choose to pray with a *minyan* in the synagogue the first day he could, or if it would be preferable to choose Yom Kippur or perhaps some other special occasion as his annual opportunity to pray in the synagogue. The Radbaz ruled that the captive should perform the *mitzva* of praying with a *minyan* immediately, at the first opportunity granted to him, rather than wait until Yom Kippur, explaining that one should not sacrifice a present *mitzva* opportunity even for the sake of a greater *mitzva* opportunity that will present itself in the future. Seemingly, *Tosefot* felt otherwise, as they required (according to the majority view among the *Tanna’im*) suspending the morning *nesekh* for the sake of facilitating the primary *nesekh* obligation in the afternoon.

Rav Zilberstein cites his father-in-law, Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, as reconciling these two sources by distinguishing between private and communal *mitzva* responsibilities. Rav Elyashiv asserted that when it comes to a communal obligation such as the rituals in the *Beit Ha-mikdash*, there is special value to maintaining the highest possible standards. If a *mitzva* is performed on behalf of the public, high standards assume paramount importance, and thus override the value of promptness and immediately seizing *mitzva* opportunities. Additionally, Rav Elyashiv explained, when it comes to a public *mitzva* opportunity, there is less reason to fear squandering the opportunity. An individual can never know for sure whether his future plans will materialize, and thus he should seize a present *mitzva* opportunity rather than suspend it in favor of a higher-level *mitzva* which he assumes he will be able to perform in the future. When it comes to public *mitzvot*, there is greater room for certainty of future prospects, and thus *Tosefot* require suspending the morning libation in favor of the afternoon libation.

Rav Zilberstein adds that Rav Avraham Danzig, in *Chayei Adam* (68:1), imposes a significant restriction on the Radbaz’s ruling. He writes that the Radbaz requires granting precedence to the current *mitzva* only if the future *mitzva* opportunity presents itself on a different day. If, however, one anticipates the opportunity to perform a higher-level *mitzva* later that same day, then he should neglect the current *mitzva* in favor of the future *mitzva*. Accordingly, there is no conflict whatsoever between the Radbaz’s ruling and *Tosefot*’s comment requiring suspending the morning *nesekh* in favor of the afternoon *nesekh*.

Rav Zilberstein applies this discussion to the case of a person who, for whatever reason, must choose on Purim between the nighttime *Megilla* reading and the daytime reading. It is generally assumed that the primary *Megilla* reading obligation applies on Purim day, and the nighttime reading is of secondary importance. Nevertheless, the *Arukh Ha-shulchan* (O.C. 687:2-3) rules that if a person has the opportunity to read the *Megilla* on only one of the two occasions, he should seize the opportunity at night, even at the expense of the higher-level *mitzva* of the daytime reading, since one should not forfeit a *mitzva* opportunity that currently presents itself. Based on the *Chayei Adam*’s distinction, however, Rav Zilberstein ruled that to the contrary, since the higher-level opportunity presents itself that same halakhic day, one should sacrifice the nighttime reading in favor of the daytime reading.

Tuesday

As we’ve mentioned in our last two editions of S.A.L.T., the *Tanna’im* (Yoma 34a-b) debate the question as to the relative statuses of the two daily *nesakhim* (libations) – the one brought with the morning *tamid* sacrifice, and the one accompanying the afternoon *tamid*. The majority view maintains that the primary libation required by the Torah is the afternoon *nesekh*, and we infer the morning obligation based on the connection between the two daily *temidin*, the implication that they are to be treated equally. According to Rabbi Yehuda Ha-nasi, however, the primary obligation spoken of by the Torah is the morning *nesekh*, whereas the afternoon *nesekh* is required by virtue of the halakhic parity between the two daily *tamid* offerings.

This debate seems to revolve around the interpretation of the verse in Parashat Pinchas (28:7) which introduces this libation requirement. After commanding the offering of the two daily sacrifices, the Torah then adds, “And its libation – a quarter of a *hin*…” According to Rabbi Yehuda Ha-nasi, apparently, the word “its” refers to the morning *tamid*, while the other *Tanna’im* understood that it speaks of the afternoon *tamid*. They thus debate the question of whether the primary obligation applies to the morning offering or the afternoon offering.

Many writers noted that several verses later, the Torah seems to explicitly state that the morning libation constitutes the primary requirement. In the final verse of this section (28:8), the Torah writes, “You shall perform the second sheep in the afternoon – you shall make it like the morning grain offering and its libation…” The Torah explicitly writes that the afternoon *tamid* is modeled after the morning *tamid*, and thus requires an accompanying grain offering and libation just like the morning *tamid* sacrifice. It thus seems very difficult to understand why the majority view disputes Rabbi Yehuda’s position, and maintains that to the contrary, the morning *tamid* is modeled after the afternoon *tamid*.

Among the *Acharonim* who addressed this question is Netziv, who, in his *Eimek Ha-Netziv* commentary to the *Sifrei*, offers a novel (and perhaps somewhat strained) reading of the Gemara. He asserts that when the Torah first mentions the requirement of *nesakhim* associated with the *tamid* sacrifice, it is clear that it refers to both the morning *tamid* and the afternoon *tamid*. However, one might have thought that these libations should be performed together in the afternoon, following the offering of the afternoon *tamid*. Although each *tamid* requires a *nesekh*, it does not necessarily or intuitively follow, Netziv suggests, that each *nesekh* is performed after each *tamid*. Conceivably, the Torah might have required pouring two libations at the end of the day, corresponding to the two *tamid* sacrifices. The second verse cited above dispels this possibility, by stating that the afternoon sacrifice is offered “like the meal offering of the morning and its libation,” which implies that the first libation had been poured with the morning *tamid*, and is not poured together with the second libation in the afternoon.

This, Netziv suggests, is how the majority opinion understood the verses. According to this opinion, the morning *nesekh* is modeled after the afternoon *nesekh* in the sense that it follows the morning *tamid* just as the afternoon *nesekh* follows the afternoon *tamid*. It was clear from the outset that the afternoon *nesekh* is offered following the afternoon *tamid*, and the only question was whether the *nesekh* corresponding to the morning *tamid* is offered in the morning or in the afternoon. According to the majority opinion, *Chazal* derived that just as the afternoon *tamid* is followed by a *nesekh*, the morning *tamid* is also followed by a *nesekh*.

Wednesday

The Torah in Parashat Pinchas describes the obligation of the *korban tamid* – the daily offering in the *Beit Ha-mikdash* – with the phrase, “*Et ha-keves echad ta’aseh va-boker ve-eit ha-keves ha-sheini ta’aseh bein ha-arbayim*” – “You shall perform one sheep [as a sacrifice] in the morning, and you shall perform the second sheep in the afternoon” (28:4). This verse appears in nearly identical form earlier in the Torah, in Sefer Shemot (29:39), where the Torah introduces the command of the *tamid* sacrifice in the context of the commands concerning the building of the *Mishkan*. The only difference between the two verses, which at first seems trivial and insignificant, is that whereas here in Parashat Pinchas the Torah refers to the morning *tamid* with the expression “*ha-keves echad*” (“one sheep”), in Sefer Shemot it adds the definitive article “*ha*” (“the”), writing, “*ha-keves* ***ha****-echad*.”

This subtle distinction may perhaps explain an otherwise perplexing discussion in the Gemara, in Masekhet Menachot (50a). The Gemara there cites the second half of this verse – “and you shall perform the second sheep in the afternoon” – and explains it to mean that the afternoon *tamid* is offered only if it is “the second sheep.” In other words, if the morning *tamid* was not offered, such that the afternoon *tamid* would be the “first sheep” of that day, rather than the second, it is not offered. The afternoon *tamid* cannot be offered unless the morning *tamid* had been offered that day. However, the Gemara then immediately limits this *halakha* to a very specific instance – if the morning *tamid* was not offered because the altar was new and not yet ready to be used. In the specific case where a new altar needed to be constructed, and it was not ready until the afternoon, such that the morning *tamid* was not sacrificed, the afternoon *tamid* also cannot be offered. However, if the altar was intact in the morning, and the morning *tamid* was not sacrificed for some other reason, the afternoon *tamid* may be offered.

The Gemara does not explain the basis for this distinction, which seems difficult to understand. After all, once we understand the phrase “and you shall perform the second sheep in the afternoon” as implying that the afternoon *tamid* must be the day’s “second sheep,” then why would it make a difference whether the morning *tamid* was missed because the altar was not ready, or for some other reason?

Rashi explains that the Gemara’s inference was made specifically from the verse in Sefer Shemot, which, as mentioned, appears in the context of the commands concerning the *Mishkan*’s construction. Since the Torah there speaks of the initial construction of the altar, it stands to reason that the implication of this phrase, that the afternoon *tamid* must be the second sheep sacrifice of the day, refers specifically to the scenario where the altar, which was now being constructed, became ready for use only in the afternoon. However, Rashi does not explain the reason why this inference was made only from the verse in Sefer Shemot. This phrase – “and you shall perform the second sheep in the afternoon” – appears in identical form in Parashat Pinchas. Why, then, do we not make the same inference from the verse here in Parashat Pinchas, and conclude that the afternoon *tamid* cannot be brought anytime the morning *tamid* was not offered, regardless of why this happened?

Rav Wolf Heidenheim, in his [commentary to the Rosh Hashanah *machzor*](http://hebrewbooks.org/pdfpager.aspx?req=43503&st=&pgnum=118), explains that the distinction drawn by the Gemara is actually rooted in the subtle textual difference between the two verses which we noted above. Normally, when the Torah distinguishes between two items with the formulation, “one…whereas the other…,” it employs the formulation found in Sefer Shemot, with the definitive article “*ha*”preceding both items. An example is the Torah’s identification of Eldad and Meidad earlier in Sefer Bamidbar (11:26): “*Sheim* ***ha-echad*** *Eldad ve-sheim* ***ha-sheini*** *Meidad*” (“One’s name was Eldad, while the other’s name was Meidad”). The implication of this syntax, Rav Heidenheim postulates, is that the two entities are basically similar, other than with respect to the point of distinction being noted by the verse. In some instances, however, the Torah omits the prefix “*ha*” from the first item. An example is a verse in the beginning of Sefer Shemuel I (1:2), which names Elkana’s two wives: “*Sheim* ***achat*** *Chana ve-sheim* ***ha-sheinit*** *Penina*” – “The first one’s name was Chana, whereas the second one’s name was Penina.” This formulation, Rav Heidenheim claims, is used when the two items are fundamentally dissimilar, and the distinction between them runs deeper than the distinction being noted in the verse. In the case of Elkana’s wives, they differed from one another far more significantly than with respect to their names. As we later read, Chana was Elkana’s beloved wife, but was infertile, whereas Penina was Elkana’s less cherished wife, but was blessed with many children. This fundamental difference is alluded to by the use of the term “*achat*” – without the prefix “*ha*” –in reference to one and the word “*ha-sheinit*” in reference to the other.

Returning to the *tamid* sacrifice, Rav Heidenheim suggests that in Sefer Shemot, where the Torah speaks of the *tamid* in the context of the *Mishkan*’s construction, the formulation used implies a connection and linkage between the two *tamid* sacrifices. The phrase “*Et ha-keves* ***ha-echad****…ve-eit ha-keves* ***ha-sheini***” suggests a close relationship between the two offerings, which *Chazal* understood as an allusion to their interdependence, that one cannot be offered without the other. This requirement, however, applies in the context addressed in Sefer Shemot, where the Torah speaks of the initial construction of the altar. In a case where the altar became usable only in the afternoon, the afternoon *tamid* is not offered, because the two sacrifices are interdependent. In Parashat Pinchas, where the Torah speaks generally about the *tamid*, it drops the prefix “*ha*” from the first *tamid*, writing “*Et ha-keves echad*,” instructing that generally, the two sacrifices are not interdependent, and each can be offered even if the other cannot.

Thursday

We read in Parashat Pinchas of the ceremony God commanded Moshe to conduct for the purpose of formally naming his disciple, Yehoshua, as his successor to the position of leader of *Benei Yisrael*. God told Moshe to have Yehoshua stand before “the entire congregation,” and to “command him in their presence” (27:19). Rashi, based on the *Sifrei*, offers a surprising explanation of this instruction: “Command him over Israel: ‘You should know that they are burdensome, they are disobedient.’” Moshe was to warn Yehoshua at this event of the difficulties involved in leading *Benei Yisrael*, so that he would accept the position knowing full well what it entailed.

Already the Ramban questioned this explanation by wondering how God could have Moshe say such a thing to Yehoshua in the presence of the entire nation. While we readily understand the importance of Yehoshua recognizing the full extent of the hardships and frustrations he could expect serving as the nation’s teacher and leader, it seems difficult to imagine God having Moshe issue this warning in the nation’s presence. As the Ramban writes, “This matter is more appropriate to be spoken among themselves in private, for in their [the nation’s presence] – this would cause them [further] rejection.” Warning Yehoshua of *Benei Yisrael*’s disobedience and pettiness in their presence would all but guarantee further disobedience and pettiness.

To explain Rashi’s comments, Rav Moshe Rubenstein ([*Parperet Moshe*](http://hebrewbooks.org/pdfpager.aspx?req=47827&st=&pgnum=271&hilite=)) suggests that they be understood in light of his remarks several verses later (21), where the word “*eida*” (“congregation”) appears again. Based on the Gemara in Masekhet Sanhedrin (16a), Rashi interprets the word “*eida*” in that verse as referring specifically to the *Sanhedrin*, and not to the entire nation. Conceivably, then, Rashi also understood the command to Moshe to bring Yehoshua “before the entire congregation” as referring not to all *Benei Yisrael*, but rather to the *Sanhedrin*. As such, Moshe was not, in fact, warning Yehoshua about the nation’s shortcomings in their presence.

Regardless of whether we accept this creative explanation, or whether we find some other approach to defend Rashi’s comments, we would be well-advised to heed the Ramban’s comment that offensively deriding people to their faces “would cause them further rejection.” Our instincts may at times drive us to criticize and condemn people for their deficiencies directly, explicitly, sharply and disdainfully, but more often than not, this will have the precise opposite of the desired effect. Rather than result in their improvement, it will lead to resentment which will in turn yield further deterioration and decline. The Ramban’s discomfort with Rashi’s comments remind us that people – whether children or adults – do not decide to improve themselves in response to insults and name-calling, and thus when constructive criticism is warranted, it must be communicated in a dignified and respectful way.

Friday

The Torah in Parashat Pinchas presents the obligation to offer the *korban tamid*, the daily sacrifice in the *Beit Ha-mikdash*, commanding, “*Et ha-keves echad ta’aseh va-boker ve-eit ha-keves ha-sheini ta’aseh bein ha-arbayim*” – “You shall perform one sheep [as a sacrifice] in the morning, and you shall perform the second sheep in the afternoon” (28:4).

*Keli Yakar* finds it significant that the Torah refers to the morning *tamid* with the phrase “*ha-keves* ***echad***” (“one sheep”), as opposed to “*ha-keves* ***ha-rishon***” (“the first sheep”). To explain this nuance, *Keli Yakar* references the comment of the Midrash (*Bamidbar Rabba* 21:21) regarding the atonement achieved by the *tamid* sacrifice. The Midrash teaches that the morning *tamid* brought atonement for any sins that may have been committed over the course of the previous night, whereas the afternoon *tamid* brought atonement for violations that occurred over the course of that day. *Keli Yakar* notes that generally speaking, different kinds of sins are committed at night and during the day. During the night, at least in ancient times when illumination was limited, people did not engage in much activity. As such, nighttime sins were, for the most part, sins of the mind, scheming and planning to act inappropriately. This type of misdeed, of course, is far different from sins committed in the daytime hours, when people were busy at work and going about their affairs.

It turns out, then, that the two *tamid* sacrifices brought atonement for two very different types of wrongdoing. And for this reason, *Keli Yakar* suggests, the Torah uses in this context the term “*echad*,” which alludes to a degree of sameness. *Keli Yakar* cites the famous verse describing the conclusion of the first day of creation, “*Va-yehi erev va-yehi voker yom* ***echad***” – “It was evening and it was morning, one day.” He explains that whereas certain pagan nations believed that the daytime and nighttime were governed by different deities, as they were incapable of conceiving of a single Deity controlling such disparate natural phenomena, the Torah affirms that both day and night were “*echad*” – part of the same system governed by the same Supreme Being. *Keli Yakar* applies this same interpretation of “*echad*” to the *tamid* sacrifice. The phrase “*keves echad*” emphasizes that although the two offerings atoned for very different kinds of misdeeds, both are offered to the same God. In order to dispel the pagan notion that there exist different gods who issue different commands and are angered by different forms of misconduct, the Torah employs the word “*echad*” in this context to emphasize that all forms of misdeeds violate the will of the one, true God, from whom we must seek expiation.

Underlying *Keli Yakar*’s discussion is a warning to avoid the tendency people sometimes have to classify our religious responsibilities in narrow, simplistic terms. Just as the ancient pagans could not imagine a single God producing both pleasant, tranquil weather and fierce storms, similarly, there are those who have trouble believing that a single God can impose upon us very different kinds of obligations. It is sometimes difficult to accept that God wants us to scrupulously observe the detailed minutiae of *Halakha*, but also to focus on broader moral and spiritual ideals; that we are to study Torah with intellectual rigor, on a high level of sophistication, but also to develop an emotional bond with God; that we are to live our lives in the faithful service of God, but also to be sensitive, kind, generous and caring to other people; that we are to develop our own, personal connection to our Creator, while also devoting ourselves to the needs of the community. *Keli Yakar* is teaching us that just as the natural world consists of very different phenomena perfectly balanced and harmonized with one another, our religious experience, too, must be characterized by this quality of “*echad*,” the seamless synthesis of many different obligations and responsibilities that blend together to form a complete, integrated life of religious devotion.

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