

He slaughtered it, and Moshe took the blood...and he purified the Mizbayach....and he sanctified it to provide atonement for it. (8:15)

The *Yalkut Shimoni* questions the reason for atonement. What had *Bnei Yisroel* done that would have been considered sinful? Moshe was concerned that perhaps during the collecting for the *Mishkan*, undue pressure might have been applied upon people, causing them to contribute out of shame. This can be viewed as *gezel*, theft. Although a gift given under duress, out of embarrassment, is halachically valid, this gift cannot be considered *b'ratzon*, willful, as emanating from a total *nedivus ha'lev*, heartfelt contribution. In order for the *kedushah*, holiness, of the *Mishkan* to be pervasive, it was essential that it be built in total harmony with every person. Every Jew who contributed towards the *Mishkan* was requested to do so willingly.

Horav Aharon Kotler, z"l, infers from here that the *kedushah* of any *mitzvah* is dependent upon the element of *ratzon* and *simchah*, willingness and joy, inherent in it. If one is not excited and enthusiastic about performing a *mitzvah*, its *kedushah* is lacking. Indeed, accepting money from someone who contributes under duress is tantamount to accepting *gezel*. Rav Aharon explains that performing a *mitzvah* with *simchah* demonstrates the esteem one has for this *mitzvah*. *Chazal* tell us in the *Talmud Shabbos 130a* that any *mitzvah* which *Klal Yisrael* accepted with joy is still being performed with joy. The joy expressed in *mitzvah* observance indicates one's appreciation for the value of this *mitzvah*. The excitement exuded for a *mitzvah*, the enthusiasm expended in its performance, shows how much one cares for the *mitzvah*. A *mitzvah* that is valued maintains the continued allegiance of its adherents, regardless of the pressures that might imperil its performance.