

And to Bnei Yisrael speak as follows: Take a he-goat for a sin-offering and a calf and a sheep... for an elevation offering. (9:3)

The *Sifra* identifies the sins for which the *eigal*, calf, and the *se'ir izzim*, he-goat, atoned. The *eigal* was offered to expiate the sin of the golden calf. The goat served as an atonement for the sin of selling Yosef as a slave and slaughtering a goat in order to dip Yosef's multi-colored tunic into its blood. Understandably, the sin of the Golden Calf was the catalyst for the *Mishkan* which atoned for it. What does *mechiras Yosef*, the sale of Yosef, have to do with the eighth day of *milluim*, inauguration, of the *Mishkan*? Some form of identification was definitely needed to expiate the sin, but is it related to the *Mishkan*?

The *Meshech Chochmah* explains that, until the creation of the *eigal ha'zahav*, golden calf, with the accompanying revelry that magnified it, it was possible to vindicate the brothers for their act of treachery against Yosef in some manner. [I write "act" since everything was part of Hashem's Divine Plan. Selling a brother, on the surface, appears to be treacherous.] Until now, the tribes/brothers had been able to claim that had Yosef come to them with his list of their indiscretions they would have worked it out. Why did he not rebuke them? Rather, he went to their father and maligned them. This being said, something might have justified their behavior. What was Yosef's excuse for not rebuking them?

All this might have been true and could have served to somehow mitigate the gravity of the allegation against them. The sin of the golden calf, however, was the game-changer. *Klal Yisrael* acted with complete abandon; clearly in a manner that rebuke would not suffice. Indeed, Chur made the attempt to give them *mussar*, reproach, to knock some sense into their heads. His "reward" was that the *eigel* worshippers murdered him. They showed that they were beyond reproach. They did what they felt justified in doing. Thus, with the advent of the golden calf, the sin of selling Yosef had a greater negative connotation. To purge this blemish from their spiritual persona, it was incumbent upon them to bring a he-goat.

Horav Moshe Shternbuch, Shlita, expounds on this idea. At times, one can find ways to ameliorate his sinful conduct. We are able to find merit in his otherwise decent behavior, thus abating the gravity of his sin. This is all doable when we are not dealing with a hypocrite. (A hypocrite is one whose present actions demonstrate that his previous behavior was not compliant.) We do not exonerate a charlatan. His lies are the barometer by which his sins should be measured. "Concerning the prohibition of eating *chazir*/pig, for its hoof is split and its hoof is completely separated, but it does not chew its cud, it is unclean to you" (11:7). The *chazir* is the symbol of the opportunist who connives his way into acceptance, all the while covering up his true essence. The *tzvuim*, imposters, who impersonate the righteous while simultaneously concealing their evil intentions and true characters are represented by the *chazir*, who presents an outward kosher sign (split hooves) and covers up the fact that it does not chew its cud. *Chazal* (*Midrash* cited by *Ritvah*

Kiddushin 49b) teach that the pig is called a *chazir*, which means return. One day, Hashem will change the pig's characteristics and, in the future, it will bring up its cud, so that it will be included among the kosher animals. *Rav Shternbuch* explains that the primary reason for prohibiting the pig is its impersonation of a kosher animal. In the End of Days, truth will reign and the imposter will be exposed, allowing for the pig to be acceptable.

The deceiver who outwardly presents himself as a member of the righteous spiritual elite, while his true evil and lack of observance is concealed from the eyes of the public arena, is a member of the *tzvuim* consort. While we never know the truth about him, since he postures himself in to fit the present picture, we really do not know which one of the "hats" he is wearing defines the real individual. The following vignette underscores this idea.

The *Tzemach Tzedek* of Lubavitch had *chassidim* throughout Russia. Among these *chassidim* was a businessman whose ventures took him to the large business centers of the large cities of Russia, as well as to foreign capitals. When he first started out, he continued to wear the *chassidic* garb of long black kaftan and accompanying hat. Gradually, with time and exposure, he felt it more prudent to adopt a more secular mode of dress, so that he would not stick out in the crowd. He felt it was better for business for him to look like his colleagues. Understandably, when he presented himself to his *Rebbe* in Lubavitch, he was bedecked in complete *chassidic* garb.

One day he appeared in Lubavitch in his business suit. "*Rebbe*," he said, "I have decided to put an end to my hypocritical behavior. Since this is how I dress throughout all my travels, why should I delude myself and others with my *chassidic* clothing?"

The *Rebbe* replied, "*Reb Yankel*, do you think I am unaware that your mode of dress in Leipzig and Paris is different than in Lubavitch? However, until now, I thought that when you arrived home in Lubavitch, you showed your true self (*chassidic* garb) and, in the business world, you were the hypocrite. Now I wonder who the real 'you' is."