

## It shall be yours for examination until the fourteenth of the month. (12:6)

The lamb used for the *Korban Pesach* was taken on the tenth day of the month and not used until the fourteenth. During those four days, the animal was checked for blemishes that would render it unfit for use as a sacrifice. This requirement applied only concerning the first *Korban Pesach*, which was offered in Egypt. *Chazal* explain that, after the many years of the Egyptian exile, the Jewish People had descended to a very low level of spirituality. They had plummeted to the nadir of depravity, and they had no *z'chusim*, merits, to warrant their redemption from Egypt. Hashem gave them two *mitzvos*: *Korban Pesach* and *Bris Milah*, circumcision. Both of these rituals involve blood. Since the circumcision had to take place on the tenth day of *Nissan*, in order to allow for the three-day healing process to be completed before the *Korban Pesach* was actually slaughtered, it was incumbent that they take the lamb also on the tenth day of the month. Thus, they were involved with *mitzvos*, in whose merit they were redeemed.

The *Midrash* teaches that all of the people did not immediately acquiesce to the circumcision command. They said, "We would rather remain slaves in Egypt than have our bodies physically maimed." Hashem had Moshe *Rabbeinu* prepare the *Korban Pesach*. He then had the winds of *Gan Eden* attach themselves to the *Korban Pesach* and allow the aroma to waft through the camp. The people were mesmerized by the aroma. They asked Moshe, "Please, may we partake of your *Korban Pesach*?" Moshe replied, "You can partake of the *Korban Pesach* only if you are circumcised." They immediately agreed, performing the *mitzvah*. Hashem then kissed each one.

The *Midrash* is absolutely mind-boggling. Two *mitzvos* – that is it! The Jewish People carried out two *mitzvos* – *shelo lishmah* – not for the sake of the *mitzvah*, but rather, for ulterior motives. Yet, it was these two *mitzvos* that warranted their redemption. How are we to understand this anomaly? There has to be something more than two *mitzvos* to sanction their redemption after such a long period of bondage. Apparently, this was it. Why?

**Horav Yaakov Galinsky, Shlita**, relates that he once visited **Horav Chaim Kreisworth, zl**, when the *Rav* was Chief Rabbi of Antwerp, Belgium. Antwerp is known as one of the preeminent diamond centers of the world. It makes sense that many members of the Jewish community are employed or involved in this industry in some way. *Rav* Kreisworth said to *Rav* Galinsky, "Let me share with you a *din Torah* dispute that came before me for adjudication yesterday. A broker had closed a deal on a sale of diamonds and demanded his brokerage fee of six percent. The owner of the diamonds claimed that he had only promised him five percent. The dispute centered around one percent."

*Rav* Galinsky laughed. After all, how small-minded and petty can a person be, to argue over one percent? *Rav* Kreisworth noted *Rav* Galinsky's attitude and immediately said, "One percent may not be very much, but when the sale is for fifteen million dollars, it suddenly becomes quite a huge

sum of money.”

We now understand, explains *Rav Galinsky*, how two *mitzvos* can have the required merit power to ensure the Jews’ redemption from Egypt. When one takes into mind the incredible reward that the performance of a *mitzvah* generates, it is awesome and beyond our imagination to perceive. Thus, even a *mitzvah* that is carried out not for the sake of the *mitzvah*, is still of inestimable value – very much like the percentage of a large principle. If we take the two *mitzvos* and multiply their reward by 600,000, we have a substantial total.