

This is the law of the Elevation/burnt-offering, the meal-offering, the sin-offering and the inauguration offering, and the feast peace-offering. (7:37)

There are three forms/categories of korban, offering/sacrifice. This means that individuals from varied backgrounds and circumstances determine the category of korban which they offer. Horav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, zl, explains the following Chazal (Midrash 3:5) which relates that King Agripas, who was quite wealthy, approached the Kohen in charge of the daily service and said, "I want to bring one thousand Olos (burnt-offering) today. I do not want anyone else to occupy the Mizbayach, Altar, other than me." (Essentially, one thousand korbanos would preclude anyone else from bringing a korban.) Along came a poor man, and, in his hands, he carried two turtle doves to serve as his korban. The Kohen Gadol said, "Sorry. Today is devoted solely to King Agripas' korbanos." The poor man looked at the Kohen Gadol and said, "My master, the Kohen Gadol, every day I capture four doves, two I use to sustain myself and two I offer on the Mizbayach. If you do not accept my korban, you are (by default) cutting off my source of sustenance." (The man felt that he was blessed with the two remaining doves only because he offered two to the Mizbayach.) That night Agripas had a dream in which he was informed, "The korban of a poor man preceded your korbanos."

Rav Elyashiv explains that the poor man separated fifty percent of his earnings for the Mizbayach. Furthermore, he did not demand that his offerings be accepted; he asked; he literally begged. Such a korban supersedes all others. It rises to the uppermost category of korban, because of the level of contribution and attitude of the owner who offers it.

The second level of korban is that of Agripas, who brought an impressive one thousand korbanos, undoubtedly a noble offering on his part. How much, however, did he give of himself for this korban? Not very much, due to his extreme wealth. He wrote a check, and unlike some others – he had money in the bank!

The third category of korban is the korban brought by Kayin: from the leftovers; the extra fruits for which he had no real use. So why not offer a korban?

Rav Elyashiv continues with a comparison to Torah study. Chazal (Menachos 110a) state: "Who studies the laws of a Korban Chatas, a Korban Asham, is considered as if he had offered these korbanos on the Mizbayach." Apparently, due to our lack of a Mizbayach and, thus, no sacrificial service, Torah-study replaces the korbanos. Thus, the varied categories delineated above with regard to the korbanos likewise apply to Torah study.

The apex, sublime level, of Torah-study is he who is so devoted to Torah that he feels that without study he has no life! His livelihood, his sustenance, is dependent upon his studying Torah. He takes whatever few moments he has available and devotes them to Torah. How else will he live?

The second category is quite like the korban of Agripas. I have the time; I am not putting myself out. No sacrifice, so why not learn a little? While, indeed, the man studies Torah and puts in time, there is no real sacrifice involved in his endeavor. The third category is the one to which so many of us can sadly relate: the Kayin syndrome. We learn when we have absolutely nothing else to do. Imagine this picture. A man comes home after a day at the office (or whatever he calls work), eats

a leisurely dinner, followed by the newspaper. (Considering that the day is over, the news is really history.) He sits a little in his lounge chair so that he can digest what he has read. His wife asks: "Perhaps you will attend a shiur tonight? Maybe you should look into getting a chavrusa, study partner, for yourself?" The husband agrees, since, after all, it is too early to go to sleep, and he has already read the paper twice. He goes to the bais hamedrash and studies Torah – as Kayin brought a korban – from the extra, leftover. Why not?

This fellow is a Dayeinu Jew. I refer to the Dayeinu, "It is sufficient" of Haggadah fame: "Had Hashem just brought us to Har Sinai, and not given us the Torah, it would have been sufficient!" We would have figured out a way to live without it. Now that we have the Torah, we will learn when it is convenient. Obviously, learning as if life depends on it, does not appeal to him.

The Dvar Torah is very appropriate coming from Rav Elyashiv. He lived Torah study. To him it was dear life. Without Torah study, life was not worth living for him.