

A repeatedly baked offering, broken into pieces. (6:14)

The concept of *petisah*, *pitim*, breaking the *minchah* into pieces, applies to all *Korbanos Minchah* that are baked. The *Korban Minchah* brought by the *Kohen Gadol* is slightly different, but the requisite of *pitim* applies. The *Korban Minchah* is the *korban* of choice that the poor man offers, simply due to economics. *Horav Aharon Bakst, zl*, observes how far the Torah has gone in order to protect the feelings of the poor man (*ani*). His wealthy counterpart brings a fowl or sheep for a *korban*. It is large and takes a while to be consumed. The *Korban Minchah* “disappears” quickly when it is baked. It is hardly noticed. Thus, the Torah instructs us to break it into pieces in order to make the pan appear full. Likewise, we find the wings of fowl used for the *korban* of a poor man are burned on the *Mizbayach*. The odor that accompanies this burning is foul. Nonetheless, it is done, so that it appears that something special was burned on the *Mizbayach*. [The *ani*’s fowl is very small and would otherwise be consumed quickly.] We have other examples of the Torah’s sensitivity to the feelings of the poor man – anyone whose unfortunate circumstances contribute to his being downcast.

For a time, *Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl*, slept in a room together with his distinguished student, *Horav Yitzchak Meltzan, zl*, who was still single. They had two keys to the apartment: one which *Rav Yisrael* kept; and the other one which *Rav Yitzchak* held. One night, *Rav Yitzchak* left the apartment and forgot to take his key. *Rav Yisrael* was aware that his student had a communal engagement which would end late at night. Knowing the refined character traits of his student, he knew that he would not awaken his *Rebbe* in order to gain entry into the apartment. Therefore, to circumvent a problem, *Rav Yisrael* walked back and forth in front of the apartment on a frigid, wintry night, until way past midnight when *Rav Yitzchak* returned. This is but one example of *nosei b’ole im chaveiro*, carrying the yoke with one’s friend, or, constantly being aware of – and understanding – the needs of others.

The needs of our fellow are often self-contrived. In other words, one has convinced himself that he requires something – be it a distinguished lifestyle or public esteem and acclaim – when, in fact, the man is nothing more than a “legend in his own mind.” Nonetheless, this is what he needs. To deprive him of his moment of fame, his required joy, would, in some cases, be demoralizing and disheartening. Thus, we go along with his self-imposed demands for *kavod*, glory. In certain circumstances, this is all that he has.

Horav Zaidel Epstein, zl, was a *mussar* personality without peer. Yet (or perhaps because he was such a real *baal mussar*), he never sought any acclaim. He would learn on Friday night in the *Agudah Minyan shul* in Boro Park. In that *shul*, a certain man would deliver a *shiur* to a group of *baalei batim*, laymen. These were simple Jews who were not well-versed in *Gemorah*. Indeed, he would prepare the *Gemorah*, open it up to the correct page, and go around the table pointing to the place, so that they each would follow the *shiur*. He would then proceed to translate every single word into English to make sure that they each understood the lesson.

One winter night, in addition to the frigid air that accompanied it, a storm was raging outside, so that no one showed up for the *shiur* – except for the *rebbe*, and, of course, *Rav Epstein*, who was learning in his corner. Anyone who has ever prepared a *shiur* only to discover that no one was present to listen understands the feeling that enveloped the *rebbe* as he waited for his “students” to arrive. Sensing the *rebbe*’s emotional downturn, *Rav Epstein* walked over and asked if he could join the *shiur* for that night. He proceeded to sit down by the table as the *rebbe* held forth as if he were speaking at Madison Square Garden. He was *nosei b’ole im chaveiro*.

I heard the following story, for which I have no names. A *rosh yeshivah* whose success in attracting serious-minded students related that, for most of his years as a *yeshivah* student, he was an average student. He was never considered to be among the lions of the group. He learned, reviewed the *shiur*, understood as best as he could and went on. Then an incident occurred during which, he rose, to the astonishment of many, in an idiosyncratic manner to Torah distinction.

It was a regular *Shabbos davening* followed by *Krias HaTorah*, the Torah reading. He was given the honor of *hagbah*, lifting the Torah scroll, prior to its being unwrapped and returned to its rightful place in the *Aron HaKodesh*. The manner of lifting the Torah is raising it up in the air with the letters of the scroll facing the one who has *hagbah*. Once a year, *hagbah*, is performed the other way, with the letters facing the congregation – on *Simchas Torah*. When he had *hagbah*, he did a *Simchas Torah hagbah* to the mirthful reaction of everyone in the *bais hamedrash*. The laughter, accompanied by the remarks questioning his cognitive status, lasted throughout the morning. Later on, his *Rosh Yeshivah*, knowing full well that his actions were motivated by more than simple-mindedness, asked him why he had acted so. He explained that the student who had been called up to the last *aliyah* had stuttered terribly when he said the *brachah*. In order that this *bachur*’s difficulty not haunt him all day, he decided to flip the Torah around, so that the *bachurim* would have something else to think about that day. Ever since that day, the *otzros ha’chochmah*, treasure troves of wisdom, were opened up for him as he quickly rose to unprecedented spiritual heights. All because he was thoughtful of another fellow’s feelings.