

## דרכים בפרשה אמור

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### עד ממחרת השבת השביעת תספרו חמשים יום

**והקרבתם מנחה חדשה לה'** *Until the day after the seventh week, you shall count fifty days, and you shall bring a new meal-offering to Hashem.*

What is “new” about the korban mincha? A simple understanding from the pesukim is that it comes from the new crops. Until the korban is brought, the new crop is forbidden. This marks the very first opportunity to partake in the new harvest. However, the pesukim reveal an even deeper chiddush.

On this possuk, the Kli Yakar shares a beautiful thought, explaining this mincha in a completely different light. What is the mincha made of? The possuk tells us: חמץ תאפינה, it shall be baked as chametz. For all other mincha korbanos, one must be careful not to allow it to become chametz. Yet here, chametz is not only permitted, it is required.

Why do we usually stay as far away as possible from chametz? The Gemara in Brachos (17a) tells us: רצוננו רצונך, לעשות רצונך, Hashem, our desire is to perform Your will; what You want is exactly what we want.

Yet we so often fall short. What is holding us back? The Gemara answers that it is the שיעור שבעיסה, the yeast in the dough, that prevents us. This, explains Chazal, is the very essence of chametz. Klal Yisroel was created בצלם אלוהים, but Hashem also created the yeast, which represents the yetzer hara, and He combined us with it. The yetzer hara was given to challenge us, transforming the pure dough into chametz. Just as yeast is an insidious infiltrator, slowly taking control, so too is the yetzer hara. It begins gradually and seeks to take over completely. Furthermore, chametz represents bloated, overblown pleasure, something we would surely not want to bring close to the mizbeach, as the Maharsha explains.

And yet, on that fiftieth day, the Yom Tov of Shavuos, we are specifically commanded to bring it as a korban.

The Gemara in Shabbos (88b-89a) recounts the arguments between Moshe Rabbeinu and the Malachim. The Malachim argued that it was inconceivable to give the Torah, the חמדה גנוזה, the hidden treasure, to a mere mortal of flesh and blood, sending the Torah from above to below. Many

arguments were put forth by Moshe to the Malachim, but finally, Moshe pulled out the trump card: “Do you have a yetzer hara?”

The Kli Yakar explains that the Torah was given specifically to take control of the yetzer hara. As the Gemara in Kiddushin (30b) states: בראתי יצר הרע בראתי, לו תבלין, I created the yetzer hara, and I created a remedy for it. The purpose of the Torah is to counter the yetzer hara. By utilizing the Torah, we are able to take control of it; without the Torah, we are completely lost.

Therefore, if not for the yetzer hara, we would never have received the Torah. So, on this fiftieth day, the day of Matan Torah, after having spent all the days leading up to the Yom Tov, we are specifically commanded to bring a korban of chametz. This act proclaims our ability to take control of the yetzer hara. We were created for this very purpose, to confront it and to rule over it, as the Torah tells us: הלא אם תיטיב שאת ואם לא תיטיב לפתח חטאת רבץ ואליך תשוקתו ואתה תמשל בו, *“The yetzer hara crouches at the door, its desire is towards you, but you can rule over it.”*

We can now also understand why the Torah never explicitly states that Shavuos is the day of Matan Torah. The truth is that each and every day we receive the Torah anew, and with it, the koach to confront the yetzer hara once again. We are constantly meant to experience new tastes in the Torah, like a baby enjoying a new taste with every suckle from his mother, and like a fish that swims to the top of the water as the rain drops fall, yearning for that freshness even while fully immersed in the water.

Each and every day, we set out for our daily battles and struggles. The moment our alarm clocks buzz, the yetzer hara is already at work, trying to convince us to hit the snooze button. And so, the day begins.

How do we win this battle? The Torah is right there, waiting to be utilized as the great weapon that overcomes the yetzer hara, allowing us to live as Torah Yidden.

May we be zoche to receive the Torah properly and allow it to fully counteract the yetzer hara, taking hold of us and shaping us. In this way, when we bring the mincha chadasha, it will symbolize our ability to take even the chametz within us, and bring it close in the service of Hashem.

**מרדכי אפפעי, Good Shabbos**