

HOW VALUABLE IS IT?

PARSHAS NASO

At the dedication of the Mishkan, all 12 nesiiim offered korbanos to Hashem. All the korbanos were identical; three vessels of a specific weight, containing flour, oil, or incense and 21 different animals. There are 72 psukim in the Torah - repeating over and over the exact details of each identical korban from all of the nesiiim.

❖ **Rabbeinu Bechaya** questions this oddity. The Torah is always careful to be very brief- Why did Hashem include in the Torah, so many psukim? It could have been written once and indicated that this is the same korban that all of the nesiiim bought?

*"The one who brought his offering on the first day was Nachshon son of Aminadav of the tribe of Yehuda. And his offering was..."
(Bamidbar 7:12-83)*

❖ **The Midrash** explains that the "intent" of each nasi was different. Each tribe had a tradition from our forefather Yaakov what their specific destiny was. At this auspicious time, at the dedication of the mishkan, when bringing the korbanos, each nasi had in mind the destiny of their tribe. Since each intent was different, each korban was, in reality, different. Thus, the Torah listed each one separately.

Two people can say the exact same bracha or do the same mitzvah, yet qualitatively their actions can be miles apart because their intentions are different. **The value of each mitzvah is determined by the act of the mitzvah, the way it is done (quickly, happily, etc.) and by the intent.**

- 1) **Let's do our mitzvos with the highest quality, by elevating our intent, acting purely to serve Hashem.**

If we can't elevate our intent and even if our intent is self-centered, it is still important and still productive to do a mitzvah. On the way to the Land of Israel, the Jews had to battle two very powerful kings, who were also giants.

Moshe had no problem with the first battle against the mighty Sichon. Before battling the next king, Og, Moshe felt a sense of fear. What was the basis of Moshe's fear? He knew that Og had performed a good deed and was concerned that this good deed may protect Og and make it difficult or

impossible to defeat him. What was that good deed? Og was kind enough to tell our forefather Avraham that his nephew Lot was captured. This information enabled Avraham to mount a rescue mission to save Lot – which he did. It was this good deed that Moshe feared. How could Moshe possibly have been afraid of this deed? Og's intention when he performed this good deed was not very nice. Rashi tells us that he hoped Avrohom would die while trying to rescue Lot. Then Og would marry Avrohom's wife, Sarah, himself. What an evil intent! Yet the deed was still credited. Moshe feared that the reward for this deed would protect Og, until Hashem told him not to be concerned.

- 2) **Doing a mitzvah, even without pure intentions, still has some value.**

As he was about to die, the great tzadik Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai started crying. He explained his emotions, by showing his students his tzitzis and saying that this easy mitzvah costs pennies to do, yet after death, one can no longer do it.

We are born to develop a close relationship with our Creator. The way to do that is by learning Torah and performing mitzvos (between us and Hashem and to between us and our fellow man). We must grab every single mitzvah we can, while we still can. Every single mitzvah we do is precious.

Rabbi Yaakov Finestone is the director of JEP Queens. For almost 50 years JEP Queens has been in the forefront of kiruv. JEP has changed the lives of thousands of Jewish children enrolled in public schools and kiruv schools. Many are shomrei Torah and mitzvos today because of JEP.

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