

**Parshat Vayikra:  
 On Body and Soul**  
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Parshat Vayikra begins with an analysis of two voluntary sacrifices that were brought to the Mishkan and Beit Hamikdash: the *olah* (animal sacrifice) and the *mincha* (grain offering). A close look at the Torah verses reveals that the *olah* is brought by an *adam* and the *mincha* offering is brought by a *nefesh*. Both words, *adam* and *nefesh* are used to describe a person in the *pesukim* below.

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: When any man of you bringeth an offering unto the Lord, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle...(Vayikra 1:2)	דִּבֶּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם, אָדָם כִּי-יִקְרִיב מִכֶּם קֹרְבָן, לַיהוָה--מִן-הַבְּהֵמָה... (ויקרא א:ב)
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And when any one bringeth a meal-offering unto the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour; (Vayikra 2:1)	וּנְפֹשׁ, כִּי-תִקְרִיב קֹרְבָן מִנְחָה לַיהוָה--סֹלֶת, יִהְיֶה קֹרְבָנוֹ; (ויקרא ב:א)
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What’s the difference between a person that is described as *adam* and one that is described as *nefesh*? The Talmud in Mesechet Menachot(110a) notes that the wealthier, more substantive *korban* is brought by *adam*, and the more modest *mincha* grain offering is brought by the *nefesh*. It is more difficult for the poor person to bring even a smaller sacrifice, since he has less, and he therefore gives with his soul. As it says in the gemara: Hence, the Holy One Blessed is He, says: “I account if for him as if he has sacrificed his very soul!” (Menachot 104b, as quoted by Rashi.) Because of the immense personal sacrifice he makes, God sees the *korban* as if he offered it with his entire soul.

In addition, an elaborate offering causes one to focus on the accoutrements, on the external trimmings, not on what really counts. The person donating the *korban* is less invested, more detached from the gift. The *adam*, the generic man, brings it. The *mincha* offering may be more meager, but it is brought with tremendous energy. The simplicity allows the person to focus on the inner essence of the experience. On the spiritual connection between the person and God. The *korban* is brought out of a deep sense of love, with the person’s full being. With her entire *nefesh*.

The truth is both are necessary— *adam* and *nefesh*, outside and inside, the body and the soul.

There is a parable (Vayikra Rabba Ch. 4) told about two people, one lame, one blind. The one who cannot walk says: “look over there at that fruit in the orchard, I want to eat it, but I cannot get there”. The blind one forlornly answers that he cannot see it, but wants to find it. After much discussion, they devise a solution. The blind man will carry the lame one on his back. Together they will get to the fruit, and enjoy the sweetness that the orchard has to offer.

The blind person represents the body and the one who can’t walk is the soul, the *nefesh*. But, both-- the body and the soul, are necessary to walk, to move forward, to uncover the sweetness of the world.

The marrying of body and soul, the external and internal, the *adam* and the *nefesh*, will help us bring sacrifices to serve God. The author of the *Degel Machane Efrayim (Vayikra)* hears in the word *korban* (sacrifice) echoes of another word - *hitkarvut* (drawing near). The offering of a sacrifice is an attempt to draw near to God, regardless of whether the person is rich or wealthy, spiritual or materialistic, lame or blind.

Both the *orla* and the *mincha* offering are gifts to God, meant to highlight the multiplicity of human experience at different points in our lives. So, today, when we no longer serve God through *korbanot*, we have to surface the *nefesh* and the *adam* facets of ourselves, all with an eye towards drawing closer, and serving the Divine.



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