



Likkutei Sichos

Volume 16 | Yisro | Sichah 5

Snatching Serenity

Translated by Rabbi Kivi Greenbaum

General Editor: Rabbi Eliezer Robbins | Editor: Rabbi Y. Eliezer Danzinger

Content Editor: Rabbi Zalmy Avtzon

© Copyright by Sichos In English 2023 ◦ 5783

A note on the translation: Rounded and square brackets reflect their use in the original *sichah*; curly brackets are interpolations of the translator or editor. The footnotes in curly brackets are those of the translator or editors and do not correspond to the footnotes in the original. Bolded words are italicized in the original text.

Considerable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the translation, while maintaining readability. The translation, however, carries no official authority. As in all translations, the possibility of inadvertent errors exists.

Feedback is appreciated — please send comments to: info@projectlikkuteisichos.org

1.

TWO EXPLANATIONS MUST BE CONNECTED

On the verse,¹ “Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it,” the Mechilta² comments:

“Remember” and “safeguard”³ were pronounced in one utterance;⁴ “those who profane it shall be put to death,”⁵ and, “and on the Shabbos day, two lambs”⁶ were pronounced in one utterance;⁷ “the nakedness of your brother’s wife,”⁸ and, “her brother-in-law shall come unto her”⁹ were pronounced in one utterance;¹⁰ “you shall not wear *shatnez*,”¹¹ and, “you shall make *gedilim* {i.e., *tzitzis*} for yourself”¹² were pronounced in one utterance¹³ — it is impossible for a person to speak this way, as it says....

The Mechilta continues:

Remember and *safeguard* — Remember it beforehand, and safeguard it afterwards. From here, they ruled: We are to add from the mundane to the holy.¹⁴ This can be compared to a wolf that mauls¹⁵ what is in front of it and what is behind it.

¹ *Shemos* 20:8.

² This is quoted in Rashi in his commentary on this verse (in a different order). It is also found in *Sifri*, “*Ki Seitzei*,” ch. 22, sec. 12; *Jerusalem Talmud*, “*Nedarim*,” 3:2; “*Shavuos*,” 3:8; see *Shemos Rabbah*, ch. 28, sec. 4.

³ {*Devarim* 5:12.}

⁴ {The giving of the Ten Commandments are recorded twice in the Torah. However, in our *parshah*, it says, “Remember the Shabbos,” and in *parshas Vaeschanan*, it says, “Safeguard the Shabbos.” Our Sages say that Hashem uttered both words simultaneously.}

⁵ *Shemos* 31:14.

⁶ *Bamidbar* 28:9.

⁷ {The first verse records the penalty for performing *melacha* on Shabbos, which implies that even in the Temple, *melacha* is prohibited, whereas the second verse, requiring Temple sacrifices on Shabbos, seems to contradict this.}

⁸ *Vayikra* 18:16.

⁹ *Devarim* 25:5.

¹⁰ {The first verse prohibits a man from marrying his sister-in-law, whereas the second verse requires him to marry his sister-in-law if his brother dies childless. This is known as *yibum* — a levirate marriage. These two verses seem contradictory.}

¹¹ *Devarim* 22:11. {*Shatnez* is a garment made of wool and linen.}

¹² *Devarim* 22:12.

¹³ {The two verses combined teach us that although wearing *shatnez* (a mixture of wool and linen) is usually prohibited, nevertheless, they may be used for *tzitzis* (*Hagaos R' Menachem Di Lozano*).}

¹⁴ {There is an obligation to add time to the Shabbos day at its start and at its end. This is referred to as *Tosafos Shabbos*. According to many *poskim*, halachic authorities, this is a Torah obligation, although it is not clear how much time must be added.}

¹⁵ Likewise, this is the term used in *Yalkut Shimoni* on the verse.

We need to clarify: As known, all the interpretations given for the same word or subject share a connection. This is especially true in our case, in which the two expositions follow one another.

What, then, is the connection between Mechilta's first teaching (regarding those things that were "pronounced with one utterance") and the teaching, "Remember it beforehand and safeguard it afterwards. From here, they ruled: We are to add from the mundane to the holy"?

2.

ADDING HOLINESS APPLIES TO ALL YOM TOVS

We can clarify this issue by prefacing with an explanation of the teaching in the Mechilta: "Remember it beforehand and safeguard it afterward...." The fact that the Mechilta derives the law that "we are to add from the mundane to the holy" from the verse, "remember the **Shabbos** day...", would imply that this is a law that (primarily) applies to **Shabbos**. This needs to be clarified, because the law that the principle to "add from the mundane to the holy" applies equally to Yom Kippur and Yom Tov. As the beraisa quoted in the Gemara says,¹⁶ "Anywhere that 'rest,' שבות, is commanded of us, we add from the mundane to the holy."

We cannot say that this teaching is merely a textual *asmachta*¹⁷ {and thus, the law "to add from the mundane to the holy" would not be restricted to Shabbos}, because this exposition in the Mechilta is grouped with other expositions that are not *asmachtaos*, but from which, in fact, we derive **biblical** laws.

[From the exposition, "'remember' and 'safeguard' were pronounced in one utterance," we derive¹⁸ that women are obligated biblically in the mitzvah of

¹⁶ *Rosh Hashanah* 9a; *Yoma* 81b; *Toras Kohanim*, "Emor," ch. 23, sec. 27.

¹⁷ {*Asmachta* (pl., "*asmachtaos*") is a scripturally based allusion (to a halachah) used as a support for an exposition but which is not the legal grounds or source of the halachah.}

¹⁸ *Shavuos* 20b.

kiddush (because whoever is included in the obligation to “safeguard” is also included in {the obligation to} “remember”).¹⁹ From the fact that {the following pairs of verses} — “those who profane it shall be put to death,” and, “on the Shabbos day two lambs”; “the nakedness of your brother’s wife,” and, “her brother-in-law shall come unto her”; and “you shall not wear *shatnez*,” and, “you shall make *gedilim* {i.e., *tzitzis*} for yourself” — were pronounced in one utterance, we derive that the *tamid* sacrifice is offered on Shabbos; *yibum* is permitted; and that wearing *shatnez* is permitted for *tzitzis*.

The next exposition (in the Mechilta) also concerns a law related to the obligation of remembering the Shabbos during the week: “Remember it {Shabbos} on Sunday — if you come upon a nice portion, prepare it for the sake of Shabbos” (according to Shammai).²⁰ Likewise, next, there is the exposition of Rabbi Yitzchak: “Do not count {the days} as others count them, but rather, count them for the sake of the Shabbos {e.g., “today is the fourth day of the Shabbos”}. This law, to remember Shabbos (not only on the day of Shabbos itself, but) also throughout the week, is (according to Ramban) a biblical, positive mitzvah.^{21]}

It would be very strained to say that the exposition, “remember it beforehand and safeguard it afterwards...” (which appears in the **middle** of the above expositions) is only an *asmachta*.

¹⁹ {“Safeguard” refers to the Shabbos prohibitions, and women are obligated to observe all the Torah’s prohibitions; “remember” refers to the positive mitzvos of Shabbos, such as *kiddush*. See Rashi on *Shevuos* 20b, s.v. “*kedeRav Ada*.”}

²⁰ *Beitzah* 16a; quoted by Rashi on *Shemos* 20:8.

²¹ See Ramban on *Shemos* 20:8; Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 60, par. 4.

3.

SHABBOS IS DIFFERENT

Seemingly, we could say that in this case, there is a dispute between the Mechilta and the *Beraisa*, and the Mechilta doesn't maintain that "anywhere that 'rest' is commanded of us, we add from the mundane to the holy."

However, since there is a rule²² that we don't needlessly increase the number of disputes,²³ it doesn't make sense to introduce a dispute between the Mechilta and the *Beraisa* concerning the **law** as to whether the law of adding {to the mundane} only applies to Shabbos, or also to Yom Tov and Yom Kippur. Rather, the dispute between them is only with respect to where or how they derive their expositions from the Torah. According to the *Beraisa*, we learn the law of "adding" onto Shabbos from the same verse as we learn the law of "adding" onto Yom Kippur and Yom Tov. According to the Mechilta, however, "adding" onto Shabbos is something **unique**, which doesn't apply to Yom Kippur and Yom Tov. And this novelty is learned from the verse, "Remember the day of Shabbos to sanctify it." [The *Beraisa*, however, does not learn that this is a unique novelty regarding Shabbos, and adding on to Shabbos is derived from the fact that we learn the law for Shabbos from Yom Kippur.]

We could posit that Mechilta alludes to the novelty regarding adding to Shabbos by saying, "This can be compared to a wolf that mauls what is in front of it and what is behind it." This doesn't seem to make sense (as the commentaries ask):²⁴ What insight does this analogy contribute to the concept of adding "from the mundane into the holy"? This will be explained below.

²² {*Sdei Chemed*, "Klalei HaPoskim," ch. 16, sec. 52, et al.}

²³ Especially since in regards to Yom Kippur everyone agrees, "that adding onto Yom Kippur is biblical" — *Shabbos* 148b; *Beitzah* 30a (see *Tosafos* on *Rosh Hashanah* 9a, s.v., "v'Rabbi Akiva").

²⁴ See *Zayis Raanan* on *Yalkut Shimoni*: "I don't know why he compares it to a wolf."

4.

THREE WAYS OF “ADDING”

The explanation is as follows: The law that “we are to add from the mundane to the holy” can be understood in three ways:²⁵

- a) It is a mitzvah that requires the person **to accept upon himself** the addition to Shabbos, and not to do any *melacha*. However, if he transgressed and **did not accept** upon himself the addition, he may do *melacha* until Shabbos begins (the beginning of twilight).
- b) Even when a person **does not accept** upon himself the addition to Shabbos, the prohibition of performing *melacha* on Shabbos applies to him (during this additional time) **against his will**. This means that the **Torah** forbids the performance of *melacha* for a (certain period of)²⁶ time before Shabbos.

The common denominator between the two is that in both, the obligation devolves upon the ***gavra***, the person, but there are two opinions how his obligation comes about: (a) The prohibition devolves upon the person when he accepts the obligation; or, (b) the prohibition devolves upon him even should he not accept it.

A third way:

- c) Adding from the mundane to the holy derives from **Shabbos itself**, as expressed in the known {scholarly} lexicon, the “*cheftza*”²⁷ of Shabbos is added before it and after it. The sanctity of Shabbos suffuses the time before it

²⁵ Regarding these two ways, see *Sefer Tosafos Shabbos* sec. 261, subpar. 113; *Biur HaRif Perla*, “asei 34” (p 199c ff), et al. (according to *Biur HaRif Perla*, most *Rishonim* maintain that a person has to accept upon himself the addition to Shabbos); *Responsa of Chelkas Yoav*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 30.

²⁶ See *Rosh Hashanah* 9a, *Tosafos*, s.v. “*Rabbi Akiva*”; *Beitzah* 30a, *Tosafos*, s.v., “*deha tosefes*”; Ran on *Beitzah* 30a; et al.

²⁷ {*Cheftza* is the “object” of the mitzvah, in this case, Shabbos; as opposed to *gavra*, which is the “person” performing the mitzvah.} Note the *Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch*, sec. 261, ‘*Kuntres Acharon*’, par. 103 where he differentiates between the time really close to dark, in which case, although he did not accept upon himself the Shabbos, it is automatically accepted ‘from Mount Sinai,’ because twilight is added against his will even it is day, unlike the time prior to this, when it depends on a person’s acceptance.

and after it, so **automatically** the person is forbidden to do *melacha* during those times.

5.

SHABBOS IS DIFFERENT

This is the innovation of the Mechilta:

The law that “we are to add from the mundane to the holy,” according to the beraisa (in the Gemara) is a command that devolves only on **the *gavra*, the person**. The law that “anywhere that ‘**rest**’ is commanded of us, we add from the mundane to the holy” is part of the obligation for the ***gavra*, the person, to rest**. One must also rest from *melacha* in the mundane time that is close to the holy time {of Shabbos or Yom Tov}.

According to the Mechilta, Shabbos has a deeper aspect to its “addition.” {The sanctity of} Shabbos **itself** adds to the time before it and after it. This explains the analogy brought in the Mechilta: “This can be compared to a **wolf** that mauls what is in front of it and what is behind it.” Just as regarding a wolf, it is the **wolf** that mauls what is in front of it and what is behind it, so, too, the addition to Shabbos is such that the Shabbos itself “mauls” what is in front of it and what is behind it.

[We could say that this is also emphasized in the Mechilta’s exposition, which derives this law from “remember” and “safeguard” — a positive²⁸ and a negative scriptural mitzvah **in** Shabbos itself. According to the Gemara, however, which derives all the Yom Tovim from Yom Kippur, the teaching (that we begin our fast **during the daytime...**) derived from the verse, “you shall afflict your souls **on the ninth**,” emphasizes that it is **not** the time of the day itself.]

²⁸ See the continuation of the Mechilta there: “To sanctify it with the blessing that we sanctify the wine....”

The reason (according to the Mechilta) this law specifically applies to Shabbos and not to (Yom Kippur and) Yom Tov, is in line with the general difference between the sanctity of Shabbos and the sanctity of (Yom Kippur and) Yom Tov. Shabbos is already sanctified²⁹ {from the six days of Creation} — it is an essential sanctity based on the “*cheftza*” of Shabbos, and therefore, the addition to Shabbos also is based on the *cheftza* (it is not dependent on “the *gavra*, the person”). Regarding (Yom Kippur and) Yom Tov, on the other hand, “**Israel** sanctifies the {festive} seasons.”³⁰ Therefore, the addition to (Yom Kippur and) Yom Tov is not self-generated by the “*cheftza*” of (Yom Kippur and) Yom Tov but is a {a product of a} law linked with “the *gavra*, the person.”

6.

THE DIFFERENCE

The difference between the above teachings of the Mechilta and the Gemara is relevant in halachah, and one of the practical differences is as follows:

According to the Gemara, the obligation to add from the mundane to the holy is the **same** “anywhere ‘rest’ is commanded.” It is **a single** command on the person dictating that “anywhere that ‘rest’ is commanded of us,” the person should add rest to the holy from the mundane. [Therefore, the law that we take from the mundane and add to the holy for Yom Kippur, Shabbos, and Yom Tov is all derived from **one** verse, since it is the same command.]

According to the Mechilta, however, the adding {time} to Shabbos is a **Shabbos** concept, while adding {sanctified time} to (Yom Kippur and) Yom Tov is different.

Therefore, there is a practical difference in halachah: According to the opinion of the Gemara, the addition to Shabbos is only a positive mitzvah. Meaning, if a person performed a *melacha* in the added time (whether he had

²⁹ *Beitzah* 17a.

³⁰ *Berachos* 49a.

already accepted the addition to Shabbos, or even without accepting it, depending on the two previously mentioned opinions), he transgresses only a positive mitzvah — the mitzvah to “rest” on “שַׁבְּתֵיכֶם”³¹ {you shall rest on your rest day, your Shabbos} — “anywhere ‘rest’ is commanded, we add....”

According to the Mechilta, however, {the sanctity of} Shabbos spreads to the time added beforehand and to the time added afterwards; therefore, the prohibition of doing *melacha* during the additional time is also connected with a **prohibition** — “you shall not do any *melacha*”³² — which derives from the sanctity of Shabbos.

7.

SANCTIFY IT

According to what was discussed above — multiplying the number of disputes is avoided — we would have to say, seemingly, that even the Gemara agrees with the Mechilta that Shabbos itself *mauls* “what is in front of it and what is behind it.” The Gemara just adds **another** teaching — that for Shabbos, there is also a mitzvah and an obligation for a person to accept the added time from the mundane to the holy.

True, this approach is strained: Since it is an aspect of Shabbos itself that Shabbos itself “mauls” {the time beforehand and the time afterwards}, what does the person contribute {to the process by accepting Shabbos}? Nevertheless, we could explain that this resembles what we find regarding Shabbos itself, that the sanctity of Shabbos comes automatically, and yet, there is a mitzvah to “remember the day of Shabbos to **sanctify** it.” Similarly, in our case, although the time added to Shabbos is holy on its own, there is also an obligation, nevertheless, on the person to sanctify the time.

³¹ {Vayikra 23:32.}

³² {Shemos 20:9; Devarim 5:14.}

However, we cannot understand the rationale this way, because, as discussed, the Gemara emphasized, “anywhere that ‘**rest**,’ is commanded,” which implies:

- a) Adding from the mundane to the holy applies to **resting** from work and not to the command “to sanctify it” by adding to it.
- b) This is something that applies equally “anywhere” — on Shabbos, Yom Kippur and Yom Tov. It is not, as discussed, that the law of adding from the mundane to the holy applies differently to Shabbos than to Yom Kippur and Yom Tov. (Namely, the mitzvah of sanctifying Shabbos applies only to the additional segments, whereas the sanctification of the entire Yom Tov is an obligation placed solely on the *gavra*, the person).³³
- c) The main point: Halachic authorities (including *Shulchan Aruch*)³⁴ rule in accordance with the previous beraisa: “It is a positive mitzvah from the Torah to add from the mundane to the holy.” They don’t maintain, however, that there is a **negative** mitzvah against doing *melacha* during the time added to Shabbos because of its intrinsic sanctity. Thus, we can conclude that the Gemara disagrees with the Mechilta, and the law of adding {time to Shabbos} is only classed as an obligation of the *gavra*, the person. (This is also implied by a simple understanding of the Gemara’s words, “From where do I derive *Shabbasos*?” {i.e., the time added to Shabbos doesn’t have any intrinsic, biblical sanctity.})

³³ {The sanctity of Yom Tov depends on the Jewish Court sanctifying the months.}

³⁴ Rif, Rosh on *Yoma* 81b; Alter Rebbe’s *Shulchan Aruch*, sec. 261, par. 4; and beg. of sec. 608; see *Beis Yosef*, “*Orach Chaim*,” sec. 261.

8.

IT IS PART OF SHABBOS

According to the explanation of the Mechilta discussed above, we can also explain the connection between this exposition in the Mechilta and the expositions brought before it: “Those who profane it shall be put to death,” and, “and on the Shabbos day, two lambs” were pronounced in one utterance; “the nakedness of your brother’s wife,” and, “her brother-in-law shall come unto her” were pronounced in one utterance; “you shall not wear *shatnez*,” and, ‘you shall make *gedilim* {i.e., *tzitzis*} for yourself” were pronounced with one utterance — {even though} it is impossible for a person to speak this way....”:

In explaining the Mechilta (regarding those matters that “were pronounced with one utterance), commentaries³⁵ say that the Mechilta’s novelty is that when there is a positive mitzvah, it does not {need to} override the prohibition. For example, when we offer the two lambs on Shabbos day, from the outset, there is no desecration of Shabbos, because it is like a condition that limits the prohibition. Meaning, the negative mitzvah doesn’t take effect in a case where there is a positive mitzvah.

In other words, the fact that we offer the lambs on Shabbos day is not only a **fulfillment of the positive mitzvah** to offer the *musaf* offerings³⁶ (and the *tamid* offerings)³⁷ for Shabbos, because the positive mitzvah suspends³⁸ the prohibition³⁹ (or permits⁴⁰ it),⁴¹ but rather, it is (also) connected to the prohibition: The prohibition was, at the outset, never intended to apply to offering the lambs in the Temple. [Therefore, the two verses were pronounced in one utterance — the positive mitzvah is a **condition** that limits the **prohibition**].

³⁵ *Teshuvos Maharam al Ashkar*, sec. 102, quoting Rav Sherira Gaon and Rav Hai Gaon; Rav Nissim Gaon on *Shabbos* 133a.

³⁶ {The additional sacrifice, offered for the sake of Shabbos.}

³⁷ {Pl., of “*tamid*,” the daily sacrifice.}

³⁸ {In the Hebrew original, “דוהה.”}

³⁹ Note Ramban on our *parshah* on this verse: “Therefore a positive mitzvah is greater than a prohibition just as love is greater than fear.” See *Tanya*, “*Iggeres HaTeshuvah*,” ch. 1.

⁴⁰ {In the Hebrew original, “הותרה.”}

⁴¹ {The *melacha* is suspended.}

In continuation to this, the Mechilta brings the exposition: “Remember it beforehand, and safeguard it afterwards. From here they ruled: We are to add from the mundane to the holy. This can be compared to a wolf...” The law of adding onto Shabbos is not (only) a law that applies to “*gavra*, the person,” but it applies to Shabbos itself — its sanctity spreads itself “beforehand,” earlier, and “afterwards,” later.

9.

A DEEPER LESSON

On a deeper level: By bringing the exposition, “Remember it beforehand, and safeguard it afterwards...,” as a continuation of the above-mentioned exposition (“they were both pronounced in one utterance”), the Mechilta teaches another point about the dictum, “the wolf mauls....” To preface:

Seemingly, the above explanation does not suffice concerning those things that were pronounced in one utterance. To communicate the above teaching that the positive mitzvah is like a condition that limits the prohibition, it would have sufficed had one statement been said after the other, as it is with every condition. Why did the two statements have to be said specifically “**in one utterance**,” in a way that “**it is impossible for a person to speak this way**”?

This (both verses being pronounced “**in one utterance**”) proves that not only is the positive mitzvah a **condition** that limits the prohibition (the prohibition was, at the outset, never intended to apply in a case where there is a positive mitzvah), but moreover — the prohibition and the positive mitzvah present a single theme: Just as the sanctity of Shabbos is **one** idea that expresses itself in many details (including also the negation of “those who profane it...” — by not profaning Shabbos, we sanctify it), so, too, by offering the lambs, we fulfill (the negation of) “those who profane it....” Were the sacrifices not offered on Shabbos, not only would the positive mitzvah of bringing *musaf* (and *tamid*) offerings on Shabbos not be fulfilled, but such a failure would be synonymous

with profaning it — it is a desecration of Shabbos. (From this, we understand that this is also true regarding the other subjects pronounced in one utterance).

10.

THE WOLF HIMSELF MAULS

On this basis, we could posit that the Mechilta juxtaposed these expositions in order to convey to us that the same concept applies to the idea that Shabbos “mauls what is in front of it and what is behind it”: It is not the case that Shabbos has are two **different** laws — the sanctity of the Shabbos day itself, and the time it *mauls*, meaning, the spreading of the sanctity beforehand and afterward. Rather, they are one and the **same** sanctity. The sanctity of Shabbos lasts “מֵעַתָּה לְעַתָּה” (twenty-four hours) — for the duration of Shabbos — **concomitant** with the sanctity beforehand and afterwards.

[We could say that the difference between the two approaches {as to whether the sanctity of the Shabbos day itself and the added time are two separate factors or one} would be as follows:

- a) Whether we can fulfill the mitzvos of Shabbos (such as *kiddush*, etc.,) during this added time;
- b) If we maintain Shabbos is a single point,⁴² it is reasonable to say that according to the first approach, this is true only concerning the primary twenty-four hours of Shabbos, but not the added time of Shabbos (which has its own distinct parameters). According to the second approach, that the time added on to Shabbos is part and parcel of the sanctity of Shabbos (it bears the same sanctity of Shabbos itself), then the time added on to Shabbos is included in the single point of the twenty-four hours of Shabbos.]

This idea is also hinted at in the analogy of the wolf that mauls what is in front of it and what is behind it: The novelty of this dictum is not just that the **wolf** mauls what is in front of it and what is behind it (and others don't leave

⁴² See *Mefaneach Tzefunos*, ch. 3, par 10.

food for it) — which in our case (Shabbos) means that the addition is accomplished by Shabbos itself. But also, when feeding, since the wolf “**mauls** and eats”⁴³ — **automatically**, it also “**mauls** and eats — what is in front of it and what is behind it.” {I.e., the mauling of what is in front and behind it is part of the parameters of how it feeds.} The same applies concerning Shabbos: the sanctity of Shabbos also applies to the time added “in front of it and behind it,” as discussed above.

11.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE ALTAR

The Tzemach Tzedek⁴⁴ connects the teaching, “this can be compared to a wolf that mauls what is in front of it and what is behind it” (from the aforementioned the Mechilta) regarding the addition onto Shabbos, to the verse⁴⁵ “Binyamin is a wolf that mauls.” The Gemara⁴⁶ says that this alludes to the altar (that was in the portion of “the one that mauls” {Binyamin}); and the altar is called “wolf,”⁴⁷ as the Midrash says,⁴⁸ “Just as a wolf seizes, so, too, the altar seizes the sacrifices.”

All matters are reflected in the revealed part of Torah. On the basis of the above discussion, we could posit that the accomplishment of the time added to Shabbos, based on the Mechilta’s analogy of the wolf that mauls what is in front of it and what is behind it, also applies to the altar.

Just as Shabbos *mauls* {i.e., projects in time to} what is in front of it and what is behind it, time that would otherwise not be holy, so, too, concerning the altar that “seizes the sacrifices”: Even an **invalid** sacrifice, “if it went up {the altar}, it should not come down.”⁴⁹

⁴³ *Taanis* 8a.

⁴⁴ *Or HaTorah*, “*Yisro*,” p. 927 ff.; p. 932 ff.; see also *Tzafnas Paaneach al HaTorah*, “*Vayigash*,” p. 165; “*Vayechi*,” p. 191.

⁴⁵ *Bereishis* 49:27.

⁴⁶ *Zevachim* 53b ff.

⁴⁷ *Zohar*, vol 1, 247b.

⁴⁸ *Bereishis Rabbah*, ch. 99, sec. 3.

⁴⁹ *Zevachim* 83a ff.; *Toras Kohanim* on *Vayikra* 6:2.

We could say that as with Shabbos, by comparing it to “a wolf that mauls what is in front of it and what is behind it,” the Mechilta establishes that this is dynamic exists within the parameters of Shabbos and makes up a Shabbos law itself (as discussed at length above), so, too, the comparison between the “altar that seizes” to “this wolf that seizes” emphasizes that “if it went up up {to the altar}, it should not come down” is a law concerning the altar itself. As the Gemara⁵⁰ derives from the verse,⁵¹ “(It is the *olah* {that stays} on the flame) on the altar” — “the **altar** sanctifies it” — “to teach you that the reason it is not brought down is that **it has the sanctity of the altar.**”⁵² Similarly, Rashi’s wording:⁵³ “*The altar sanctifies it* — even if something invalid went up, the **altar** sanctifies it, making it into Hashem’s bread,⁵⁴ and we do not take it down.”

Meaning, the rule “if it went up, it should not come down” is not a law or obligation concerning the act of offering — since we brought it up (on the altar), we are obligated not to bring it down,” or even more, we must offer it on the altar.

Moreover, the rule “if it went up, it should not come down” tells us not only that the altar sanctifies what is brought up in the detail of the by imposition of this restriction — we do not take it down. Rather, it is a law concerning the altar: The altar infuses the offering with its sanctity (“it seizes”) even those items that (on their own) have no affinity to the altar {i.e., animals that may be unfit to be offered}. Since the item is sanctified with the sanctity of the altar, then **automatically**, “it should not come down” and it must be offered on the altar.

⁵⁰ *Zevachim* 83b (according to Rabbi Yehoshua).

⁵¹ *Vayikra* 6:2.

⁵² *Zevachim* 83b, Rashi, s.v., “*mikdash mizbeach.*”

⁵³ *Zevachim* 83a (mishnah).

⁵⁴ *Zevachim* 83b.

12.

THE PARALLEL BETWEEN SHABBOS AND THE ALTAR SEEMS LACKING

This, however, does not suffice, because: (a) in the end, the aforementioned law is specific — “**if it went up** (it should not come down)” — which does not mirror exactly what was said above {concerning the sanctity of Shabbos seizing the time before and after it, a sanctification of time} that happens on its own; (b) it does not illustrate the idea of mauling **what is in front of it and what is behind it**; and, (c) most importantly, this idea — that even an invalid sacrifice becomes holy if it was brought on the altar — pertains not only to the outer altar, which is analogous to “a wolf that mauls,” but it is also pertains to the inner altar (and all the ministering utensils).⁵⁵ In fact, this law is even more relevant to the inner altar: “The inner altar sanctifies things which are invalid, whether suitable or unsuitable for it. The outer altar, however, sanctifies only invalid things that are {potentially} suitable.”⁵⁶

13.

THE ALTAR MAULS TOO

This is connected to what Scripture itself says about Binyamin {who is compared to a wolf}:⁵⁷ “In the morning, he will devour prey, and in the evening he will distribute spoils.” Commenting on this verse, the Midrash says (in connection to what was said earlier, “Just as this wolf seizes {its prey}, so, too, the altar seizes the sacrifices”): “*In the morning he will devour prey* — {this refers to} ‘the one lamb you shall make in the morning’;⁵⁸ *in the evening he will distribute spoils* — {this refers to} ‘and the second lamb you shall make in the afternoon.’”⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Pesulei HaMukdashim*,” ch. 3, par. 18.

⁵⁶ {*Zevachim* 83 discusses differing opinions concerning which offerings are just considered invalid and which are unsuitable for the altar.}

⁵⁷ {*Bereishis* 49:27.}

⁵⁸ {*Bamidbar* 28:4.}

⁵⁹ {*Bamidbar* 28:4.}

The sacrificial service in the Temple is performed only during the day, based on the verse,⁶⁰ “on the day he commanded.” However, the mitzvah to burn the fats and the limbs is in force throughout the entire night⁶¹ — after the altar service {was completed, as derived from the Gemara’s exposition:} “on it,⁶² complete,”⁶³ — meaning, after the afternoon *tamid* was offered. The same holds true concerning the service of removing the ashes,⁶⁴ which is unrelated to the **conclusion** of the day’s service, but to the beginning of the day’s service⁶⁵ — **before it** {meaning, it was performed before daybreak}.

Accordingly, comparing the altar to a wolf that mauls, reveals that the burning of fats and limbs later — the entire night, and the removal of the ashes before the new day’s service begins, are part of the halachic parameters of the altar — the altar *mauls* “what is in front of it and what is behind it.” This means that the consummate state of the altar (offering sacrifices on it during the day) is linked with the service performed on the altar beforehand and afterwards during the night. This {continual usage of the altar} **resembles** what the commentaries say:⁶⁶ “For the sake of Hashem’s honor, we are obligated to leave over from the limbs and the fats {of the day} and burn them during the night, so that the **altar** is idle neither at day nor at night.”⁶⁷

— Based on talks delivered on *Acharon Shel Pesach* and *Motzei Shabbos parshas Acharei*, 5738 (1978)

⁶⁰ *Vayikra* 7:38.

⁶¹ *Megillah* 20b; *Toras Kohanim* on *Vayikra* 6:2.

⁶² {*Vayikra* 6:5.}

⁶³ *Yoma* 33a. {*Vayikra* 6:5 says, “the *kohen* shall kindle wood on it every morning... and shall cause the fats of the *shelamim* to go up in smoke **on it**.” The term “on it” means that he must complete all other sacrifices after the morning *tamid* sacrifice rather than after the afternoon *tamid* sacrifice. In all cases, the afternoon *tamid* is the last sacrifice offered. The fats and limbs, in contrast, were brought all night.}

⁶⁴ *Yoma* 20a.

⁶⁵ See *Yoma* 27b; *Yoma* 27b, *Tosafos*, s.v., “*ikka*”; *Yoma* 33a, *Tosafos*, s.v., “*Abayei*.”

⁶⁶ *Bechor Shor* on *Vayikra* 6:2.

⁶⁷ This **resembles** the supplemental offerings brought on the altar during the day whenever there were no obligatory offerings to be brought (*Shavuos* 12a).