

# SICHA SUMMARY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



## Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 23

*Nasso, Sicha 2*

### The Context:

Prior to the dedication of the altar, the twelve tribes joined together to donate the means of transportation for the Mishkan's components. Each leader donated one ox, and each pair of leaders donated one wagon. Then, each leader offered an identical offering to dedicate the altar in the Mishkan on separate days. The Torah then summarizes the total amounts of the leader's donations: "This was the dedication offering of the altar presented by the chieftains on the day it was anointed; there were twelve silver bowls, twelve silver basins and twelve gold spoons..." (*Bamidbar 7:84*)

Thus, the verse considers the total of the leader's offerings to have been offered "on the day it [the altar] was anointed," even though each leader brought their offering on different days. This, the Midrash says, teaches us that "all the leaders are considered to have brought their offering on the first day, and on the last day."

### The Question:

The value of offering the donation on the first day is understood — it is the donation that truly inaugurates the altar. What value could there be to be the one who offered the donation on the last day?

### The Explanation:

The sacrifices allude to the general framework of divine service, of drawing close to G-d. Each person serves G-d differently, according to their diverse abilities, talents, and natures. These differences are represented by the twelve tribes, each tribe possessing a different calling in Divine service. Each leader's inaugural sacrifice, therefore, inaugurates the altar for that form of service, opening the channel for Jews of that persuasion to begin their divine service.

As long as the last tribe has not offered their sacrifice, the altar is not complete, it has not been inaugurated for all forms of Divine service. Thus, the advantage of the last day is that it completes the altar, preparing it for the divine service of the full spectrum of the Jewish people.

Thus, the fact that every tribe is considered to have brought their offering on the last day alludes to the interconnectedness of the tribes, that each of them is considered to hold the potential for all divine services.

### Further Questions:

If all the tribes are considered interchangeable in the sense that each holds within them the potential for all forms of divine service, then why did they indeed offer their sacrifices of different days? Furthermore, the Midrash describes how each leader brought their offering with a different intention, further underscoring the individuality of the sacrifices.

Their initial donation of wagons and oxen also complicates things: Each leader only offered a partial donation, half a wagon, and half a team of oxen. This again underscores the communal aspect of the tribes, that each needed the other.

So are the leader's sacrifices an expression of universality or individuality?

### The Explanation:

Every Jew possesses a unique soul with unique personality and qualities which differentiates him from others, and also possesses an immutable essence which he shares with all other Jews.

Unity is possible in both planes. From the perspective of the shared essence, all Jews

are the very same, there is no place for differentiation. From the perspective of our uniqueness, we each contribute something that no one else can, and therefore we each need the other's contribution. This level of unity recognizes our connection with each other even within our differences.

The ultimate unity is one that synthesizes both dimensions: Our uniqueness is not separate from our essence. In fact, the essence of the soul carries the capacity for every shade of ability, it is only that part of those abilities are manifest in a particular life. Thus, we can recognize that our individuality is sourced in the essence that we share with all Jews. So that in each particular kind of Jew, there is truly every other kind of Jew.

Thus, first the leaders offered a partial offering wherein each needed the other's contribution — the wagons and oxen. This alludes to a basic conception of unity, that each person is incomplete without the other. But this leads to the deeper conception of the individual sacrifices. Each leader brought their own offering on a different day with a different intention, yet the verse considers as if they all brought their offering on the same day. This alludes to a recognition that our differences are born out of our essential unity of our shared essence.

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