

Rabbi Ari Zahtz

The Relationship Between the Tamid and the Musaf

The essence of the *Musaf* Prayer is certainly the verses describing the *musaf* sacrifice, for which the prayer is eponymously named. The *musaf* sacrifice, as its name implies, is an additional sacrifice that is brought on various special days throughout the year. To what is this *korban* an addition? What is the relationship between the *musaf* sacrifice, which is additional to the regular *korban* of the day, which is the more basic obligation?

An examination of the verses in the Torah that describe the *musaf* sacrifice provides a fascinating backdrop to understanding the nature of the days on which it is brought and the *Shalosh Regalim* in particular. Every day in the Temple the *tamid* sacrifice was offered. Day in and day out, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, this sacrifice was brought. On special days there was a *musaf* sacrifice brought in addition to the *tamid* sacrifice, hence the description as “*musaf*,” additional. This point is made clear in the verses that describe the *musaf* sacrifice. At the conclusion of these verses that are taken from *Parashat Pinchas* and inserted as appropriate into the *Musaf* Prayer the Torah explicitly tells us that the special *korbanot* are brought above and beyond the *tamid* sacrifice that is brought every day.

A close examination of these verses, however, reveals a very subtle difference that needs to be explicated. The Torah, when describing the *musaf* sacrifice of Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh, says that the *korban* was brought “*al olat ha-tamid*” – “on the *korban tamid*,” every day the *tamid* was brought and on Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh additionally the *musaf* sacrifice was offered. By contrast, however, when the Torah writes about the *musaf* sacrifice that is brought on the holidays, the Torah changes the language slightly and says that the *musaf* sacrifice is brought “*milvad olat ha-tamid*” – “besides the *korban tamid*.” Practically it appears to mean the exact same thing – the daily *tamid* sacrifice was brought on the altar and in addition a special sacrifice was brought for the special day known as the *musaf*. But why would the Torah change the language if the meaning is identical?

In the work *Ben Melekh*, the author suggests an approach. The Torah is reflecting that the nature of the *musaf* of both Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh is that it is brought because of the day; the same way every day obligates us to bring a *tamid* sacrifice, the day of Shabbat obligates us to bring an additional *musaf* sacrifice and the same on Rosh Chodesh as well. Therefore it’s very similar in nature to the *tamid* and is brought “*al olat ha-tamid*,” literally, “on top of,” building on the *tamid* sacrifice of the day. The uniqueness of Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh is calendric. Shabbat is the seventh day of the week, Rosh Chodesh the first of the month; their very nature is connected to the calendar, similar to the *tamid* brought every calendar day.

The holidays are different. Certainly they have a set date, but they don’t define the calendar. The celebration is not because that date is special, rather because something special happened on that day and is commemorated. The fifteenth of the month of *Nisan* (the calendar date of Pesach) is not inherently special on the Jewish calendar; rather, it is special because something special happened on that date – namely, the Jews left Egypt.

The *musaf* sacrifice which reflects the unique nature of the day is therefore different. It is not merely an extension of the *tamid* (which is brought because it’s a new day on the calendar), it’s besides the *tamid*, totally separate, “*milvad olat ha-tamid*.” The holiness is not just that of the date on the calendar, it transcends it and must be noted as such with a separate special *korban*.

What about Rosh Ha-Shanah, the beginning of the Jewish year? Seemingly it is similar to Rosh Chodesh and Shabbat whose very nature is connected to the calendar; the *tamid* marks the day, Shabbat marks the week, Rosh Chodesh marks the month, and Rosh Ha-Shanah defines and marks the year. Therefore the *musaf* should be described as “*al olat ha-tamid*” as it is for Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh and not as “*milvad olat ha-tamid*” as the holidays are described. Yet Rosh Ha-Shanah is grouped with the description of the holidays. Why?

The Torah itself answers the question. In the *parashah* of *musafim* itself the Torah defines Rosh Ha-Shanah as taking place on the the first day of the seventh month. How can it be Rosh Ha-Shanah, the beginning of the new year, and simultaneously be on the first of the seventh month – it should be on the first day of the first month? The answer seems to be that there are different beginnings of the year, as the first *mishnah* in *Rosh Ha-Shanah* says, and although

we colloquially refer to our Day of Judgment as Rosh Ha-Shanah that is not the essence of the day; rather, as the Torah describes it, it is *Yom Teru'ah*. Certainly then, the description of the *musaf* sacrifice being *milvad olat ha-tamid*, besides the *tamid* and not just on top of it, is a very apt one.

This distinction is not just a theoretical one; in fact it reflects on the very nature of these special days and how we relate to them and how we experience them. The holiness of Shabbat most clearly manifests itself through abstention from forbidden work; it can be experienced passively, although the holiness certainly can be sensed and appreciated. It marks a moment on the calendar more than commemorating an event that took place on that day. However, Yom Tov is different, Yom Tov needs our active engagement, there are unique *mitzvot* that we are tasked to actively perform. Certainly there's a general obligation of rejoicing on Yom Tov, including actively finding ways to enhance one's enjoyment and one's experience of Yom Tov; once again reflected in the nuance of the verse, that beyond marking a date on the calendar the Yom Tov is the time to commemorate by re-experiencing that which the Yom Tov marks.

This distinction in the verses of the *musaf* goes one step further and can help explain a difference even within the holidays.

There is a distinction in the prayers of Sukkot and Pesach related to the recitation of *Hallel*. On Sukkot we recite the full *Hallel* every day of Chol Ha-Mo'ed while on Pesach we only recite half *Hallel* on Chol Ha-Mo'ed. Why? The reason is because every day of Sukkot has its own unique *musaf* sacrifice, while Pesach does not (*Arakchin* 10b). Interestingly, based on the idea mentioned above more depth can be added.

Every day of Sukkot the Torah states that same *pasuk* of "*milvad olat ha-boker*," but on Pesach we do not. Yes, the first day we do, but on the subsequent days the Torah states, "*ka-eileh ta'asu la-yom shivat yamim...al olat ha-tamid*." If the theory is correct that the *musaf* of holidays are described with "*milvad*" – "besides," what happened to the *milvad* on Chol Ha-Mo'ed Pesach?

There must be a distinction between the intermediary days of Pesach and the intermediary days of Sukkot. The Torah is highlighting that on Pesach the significance of the days that follow the first day really stems from being connected to the first day, without their own special significance, so it's just *al olat ha-tamid* – an extension of the calendar and the *korban tamid*; but Sukkot is different, even Chol Ha-Mo'ed – each day is special, hence its own *korban*, its description as separate from the *tamid* sacrifice, and the recitation of full *Hallel*.

In no way do these distinctions lessen the importance of some of our holidays or special days over others; rather through subtle nuances in our perfect Torah, the Torah reminds us that each experience is different and adds to our lives as Jews. May we merit soon to once again being able to offer the *musaf* sacrifices in the *Beit Ha-Mikdash*, which should be built speedily in our days.