

Yom Kippur, 2003

Introduction: Yom Kippur is a day of joy

The last page of the Tractate *Ta'anit* of the Babylonian Talmud, summarizes its long discussion of the topic of fast days by making this startling observation: "Rabbi Shimon Ben Gamliel said, There were no more joyous days in Israel than Yom Kippur and the 15th day of Av. Yom Kippur is the day for excuses and repayments, and the day on which the second set of tablets were brought down by Moses from Sinai."

We usually don't think of fast days as being joyous. The exuberant joy of Yom Kippur is most easily felt at the *Ne'ila* service. But if we think deeply about what the day means, we can become aware of a process of transformation that is the essence of the day.

On Yom Kippur, we have the opportunity of turning our sins into merits. This is an idea that is foreign to our usual way of thinking, so I'll say it again: **On Yom Kippur, we have the opportunity of turning our sins into merits.**

The word *Kippur* is literally translated as "Cover", that is a protective covering. The joyous character of Yom Kippur derives from its nature as a "Day of Cover". The cover of the day paradoxically enables us to reveal a perspective that is usually hidden from us – that G-d has a hand in what we have done wrong. When we grasp the fact that there is a G-dly aspect to our errors, we can then begin to transform our sins into merit, and there is no more joyous day in Israel than we can accomplish that transformation.

I want to look first at the meaning of a protective covering.

Then we will look an indication that on the Day of Cover, we can perceive and reveal the hand of G-d. This is shown by the ancient tradition that only on this day do we say the sentence *Boruch Shem, Kavod Malchuto L'Olam Va'Ed* aloud.

And finally, we will look at a story from the 13th century about how we can transform our sins into merit.

The theme of Yom Kippur is Covering

Often the theme of a section from the Torah can be glimpsed by a peppering of the theme word or root in the section. At the beginning of the special section we read on Yom Kippur, *Ahare Mot*, the Hebrew word-root *Copher* appears no less than ten times in the first 15 verses of the *Parsha*. The repetition is not obvious in the English because it is sometimes translated as "cover", or as "ark-covering", or as "atonement".

The English word "cover" is derived from the Hebrew; "cover" and *Copher* mean the same thing. The Hebrew root "caf-peh-resh", *Copher*, is used to describe the covering of Noah's ark, manna covering the ground, and a payment that covers one's obligation. If you want to see more about the word Kippur, it's available in the copy of this talk on the Kohelet website.

The Talmud relates Yom Kippur to the time of weddings, and there is one other occasion when the Yom Kippur *Mahzor* is recited - other than on this sacred day. The Yom Kippur service is recited by a bride and groom on the day of their wedding. In fact, we can learn about Yom Kippur from this connection with the wedding.

One of the essential moments of the wedding is the *bedeken* when the groom enters the gathering area for the bride's retinue and puts a veil on his bride. Now usually, this moment is associated with the scheming substitution of Leah for Rachel by Lavan, the opaque Mr. White. But what happens in the wedding ceremony is not taking off the veil, but rather putting it on. As Meredith Ciner explained to me at the announcement of her engagement a few weeks ago, this is an essential element of the wedding. The bride is covered, protected, not subject to continuing scrutiny, accepted wholeheartedly even though, or perhaps because, she is concealed. Concealing the bride is an essential moment of the wedding; and on Yom Kippur, we are the bride that G-d conceals.

More than just being covered, the bride wears white, just as the service leaders on Yom Kippur wear white. The *kittle* of the service leader is a reminder of the inscrutability of death; the wedding dress of the bride is a reminder of the inscrutability of life. This is also the image of the High Priest when he who wears "*bigdei lavan*", garments of white before he dares to enter into the Holy of Holies.

Many commentators, following the observation of Sir Isaac Newton, note that white is the combination of all colors. White light passing through a prism shows all of the colors of a rainbow. However, I think that another quality of white may be the more important meaning here. The Biblical Mr. White, Lavan, is the opposite of transparency or full disclosure. And white is the only color that fully blocks light. Every other hue, including black, can be transparent - you can see through a gray pane of glass, or a red, yellow, blue or green pane. But you cannot see through white. There is no such thing as transparent white. Light white is what we call frosted, opaque. It blocks the formation of an image. No other color has this quality. White is the essence of covering.

The Cover of YK is not to avoid getting caught

On Yom Kippur, we are not trying to cover up what we have done. We might want to do that, but it would be a low-level joy. The covering on Yom Kippur is something entirely different. The joy of Yom Kippur comes because we are protected by this Day of Cover, and with the benefit of this cover, we can reveal in a private, intimate conversation with the Creator of the World, and as we will see, we can also benefit from G-d's becoming a little less hidden. G-d's protective covering is the opposite of a cover-up. We cover up when we do not want to be caught. With regard to G-d, we have already been caught. As the folk song reminds us, "Can't nobody hide from G-d".

There are two aspects of a sin.

Corresponding to the two kinds of cover, there are two kinds of moral thinking, and there are two aspects of sin. Sometimes we don't do something wrong because we don't want to get caught. The idea of Yom Kippur is far beyond that. To benefit from the shelter of Yom Kippur, we should first assume that we are always going to get caught.

However, there is a deeper level of sin that pertains to Yom Kippur. Looking forward at a potential action, we should bear in mind that sin results in negative consequences, always and inevitably, even though we may not always be aware of the negative effect. However, in retrospect, sin also generates a potential for transformation. Our sins can be transformed into merit. This applies to our inadvertent wrongdoing as well as intentional wrongdoing. The distinction between accepting the consequences, and the possibility of transforming our sin into merit corresponds to the lottery between the two goats that we read about in today's *parsha*. One goat is offered as a *korban*, an offering that brings us closer to G-d. With the other goat, Aaron presses his hands on the live goat's head, and he acknowledges all of the Israelites' sins, rebellious acts and inadvertent misdeeds. Then he sends the goat to carry all the sins away into the wilderness.

Similarly, the process of dealing with what we have done wrong involves dividing the mistake into two parts – one part for the wilderness and the other part for G-d. One part of the wrong entails consequences. We may or may not be caught, and we may or may not know how we are punished. Yom Kippur does not mitigate the consequences of our actions.

However, Yom Kippur asks us to focus on another aspect of our wrongdoings. Yom Kippur is a joyous day because of how we can utilize our past mistakes. That is the special quality of Yom Kippur. On this day, we have the cover that is necessary to transform our sins into merit.

The point has been put beautifully by Rabindranath Tagore in his Gitanjali:

Wealth and fame come from Thee and it is for Thee to give or to withhold them. But this my sorrow is absolutely mine own, and when I bring it to thee as my offering thou rewardest me with thy grace.

Covering paradoxically allows us to reveal

The first step of the process is to recognize that under the protection of G-d's cover, we can reveal what we have done wrong, to ourselves and to G-d. Let me use an example from my own experience. When I was a young man, I was involved in an automobile accident in Southern France in which my closest friend and traveling companion was killed. The French court determined that there was no negligence, and I do not know whether they determined who was driving. To this day, I have amnesia about the actual event, so I do not know what preceded the accident, but I certainly have thought of plenty of possibilities. Perhaps we were arguing and I was angry. Perhaps he warned me not to continue driving in the rain. Perhaps I was speeding. In any case, I was involved and he is dead.

At the judicial inquest about my driving accident, they wanted full disclosure. Fortunately I was not asked to attend. As far as I know, whatever I did wrong is completely covered. I don't remember what happened and apparently neither does anyone else. That is the end of things for the judicial process. In other words, that goat has gone into the wilderness.

But that is only the beginning under the protective cover of Yom Kippur. There is a story told about Isaac Luria, the holy Ari, who lived in Tsfat in the middle of the sixteenth century. There was once a

man who was intent on *tshuvah*, on returning to the right way. This man went to the synagogue after midnight clad from head to toe in sackcloth, completely covered, so that people could not recognize him. For an entire twenty-four hour period he stood with his face toward the wall, praying, pleading and weeping. Absolutely no one knew who he was. The Ari used to say that this exemplifies complete and perfect *tshuva*. According to the Ari, repentance and almsgiving, *tshuvah* and *tzedakah*, are on the same level: Just as almsgiving is most perfect when done in secret, so is the process of changing our behavior best accomplished in a clandestine manner.

The Day of Covering is also a Day of Revealing

The covering of Yom Kippur allows a kind of uncovering. It is a general principle that in private, we can reveal things that we would never say in public. The confidentiality of our lawyer or therapist enables us to be open about things that otherwise we would not want to disclose.

At the same time as we find permission to reveal our shortcomings, there is another kind of revealing that is available on Yom Kippur. We can see, under the cover of this holy day, that G-d has had a hand in the things we have done wrong. Not with regard to something we are about to do in the future, but when it has already been done, we can see that everything in the past, including our mistakes, belong to G-d.

The joy of Yom Kippur derives from our ability to use the special cover of the day to give up our sins and our sorrows as an offering to G-d: that is the key to the transformation.

In the Yom Kippur liturgy, this proximity of G-d is highlighted by a jolting surprise: On every other day of the year, when we say the *Shema*, we recite the second sentence in an undertone, as if we are embarrassed to say it: ***Baruch Shem, Kavod Malchuto L'olom Vo'ed***. On Yom Kippur, we say this sentence out loud. Every other day, this sentence is covered, and on Yom Kippur it is surprisingly revealed.

First let me suggest a slightly unusual translation the sentence: Blessed is the Name, The Honor of his Sovereignty is Hidden, Forever. In this translation, the word "olam" is translated as "hidden". *Olam* is often translated as "forever", but the word is related to *alem* and *ne'elam* that come from a root that means "hidden".

We cover our bodies with special clothing, we cover our heads, we gather in a large group which conceals our individual voices and tears, and only then do we uncover this singular sentence: Blessed is the Name, The Honor of his Sovereignty is Hidden, Forever! Name, Honor, Rulership, Hiddenness, Forever.

The *Midrash Rabbah*, an ancient commentary on Deuteronomy gives us an interpretation about why this sentence is usually said in an undertone. It says (II:36) "When Moses ascended to heaven he heard the ministering angels saying to G-d, "*Boruch Shem, Kavod Malchuto L'Olam Va'ed*". This declaration, Moses brought down to Israel. And why do not Israel make this declaration publicly (i.e. aloud)? R.Assi replied: This can be compared to a man who stole jewelry from the royal palace which he gave to his wife, telling her, 'Do not wear these in public, but only in the house.'

But on Yom Kippur when Israel are as pure as the ministering angels, they do recite publicly, “*Boruch Shem, Kavod Malchuto L’Olam Va’ed*”.

We are the bride on this day, and like the bride we are covered. And on this day alone we can wear this precious jewel in public.

Why is this jewel so precious? This is the tool of *tshuvah*, the tool for transforming our sins into merit. This sentence shows the way that we can perceive the presence of G-d – even in what we have done wrong. Each word of this phrase indicates the presence of G-d.

Revealing the hand of G-d transforms our shortcomings

We have a day of cover, confidentiality that allows us to reveal our sins, and a special tool for sensing the presence of G-d, even in our wrongdoing. How does the process of transformation take place? Where does the joy come from?

There is a story from the 13th century that shows how this process of changing under cover may work.

One day, when a princess stepped out of her bath, a young man saw her. Sighing deeply, he said, “Oh, would that she were mine that I could make love to her.” The princess heard him and answered, “That will happen when we meet in the cemetery.”

*Hearing these words, the young man was very glad, thinking that she had told him to go to the cemetery to wait there until she came to him. Actually **she** did not mean that at all, but only that in death there is equality between small and great, young and old, between the common and the honored ones. But here and now, such is not the case, and it is even considered improper for one to search after such an impossible relationship.*

Nevertheless, the man went to the cemetery and he sat there, and he thought only of her. Out of his deep desire for her, his thought became more profound, more removed from the sensuous. Day and night, he thought only of the woman’s beauty.

In his solitude, he focused all of his thoughts on the one object with such single-mindedness that his soul came to be liberated from the physical. He saw that his yearning was itself a connection with the very force of life. He began to understand that all of the cravings of the world are in reality an aspect of yearning for closeness to G-d.

Eventually, his desire was transformed from a sensual desire to a desire to be in touch with the deepest source of abundance. He became so completely devoted to G-d that his prayer was heard above, and his blessing had effect for all who passed by. Merchants and knights and pilgrims passing along that way would turn to him to receive his blessing, and he became known even in distant places.

So the story has been told since the 13th century when it was ascribed to Rabbi Isaac of Acco. At first, we are inclined to think that the poor youth was pathetically literal in his interpretation. “We’ll get together in the cemetery,” the princess said, so the youth went to the cemetery to wait.

Then, the story turns on us, and we understand that it is not only the lad in the story, but also we who are being too literal. Perhaps the cemetery is not merely a physical cemetery. In effect, the young man was drawn to contemplate that his passionate craving for the young woman was itself a gift from G-d, and an opening for a relationship with the Infinite.

The cemetery was a covered place, like Yom Kippur, a place removed from the pressure and distraction of everyday life. There the young man realized that his unfulfilled desire, even if it was a prohibited desire, could itself be a gift from G-d. Indulging a prohibited passion could be seriously wrong. However, by following this desire in a way that was covered, in the cemetery, the young man elevated and refined his inappropriate desire.

This cemetery, where we realize that everything comes from G-d, is reminiscent of Shabbat, when we also practice seeing that everything comes from. Sitting in the cemetery is like dwelling under the cover of *Shabbat*. On this day of Yom Kippur, *Shabbat Shabbaton*, the day of cover, we are all the more dwelling under that cover. There is more to the comparison of Yom Kippur and Shabbat than we can explore here. And the fulfillment of Yom Kippur in Sukkot, when we dwell outside under the protective cover of G-d’s presence.

How do we take advantage of our moment of cover? By revealing what we have done wrong and making an offering to G-d of the only thing that we have not received as a gift from G-d – our mistakes.

In the story, the princess suggested that they would get together in the cemetery. Eventually the youth transformed that misunderstanding and frustration into a connection with the Infinite. And when we have the presence of mind to focus intensely on the benefit that can come to us from our wrongdoings, we will be transformed.

In our mistakes are the seeds of our growth. When we see potential merit in our failures, we can embark on a process of transformation – joyously.

As it says in the Talmud, on Yom Kippur, we are provided with excuses and repayments – these provide our protective covering. With the benefit of that cover, we can use our mistakes, our failures, and our sorrows to approach G-d.

First we have to understand that there are two sides of any wrong action – one goes to *Azazel* and one goes to G-d. Our actions do have consequences, and we have to live with that. We defend ourselves in court, we apologize to the people we have hurt, we make amends and we take our lumps.

However, on Yom Kippur, we can transform our shortcomings into merit, and the key is to recognize that our mistakes, when they have already occurred, also belong to G-d. They have occurred to give us an opportunity to reshape our soul.

The past belongs to G-d; the future is up to us. Everything that has already happened can be an offering to G-d – whether it is something that we have done or something that has happened to us. With that perspective, we can experience the joy of Yom Kippur. We send one goat into the wilderness, and we dwell beneath a protective cover. Under this cover, we can become vulnerable by privately revealing our own shortcomings. Uniquely on this Day of Cover, we reveal presence of the hand of G-d in everything we do, including our mistakes.

When we take advantage of our cover, we will be like the youth in the story, our misguided urges will turn into our merit, we will strive so sincerely to get together with the princess in the cemetery, that we will grasp that even our mistakes are gifts from the Holy One, Blessed is He.

And all who pass -- merchants and knights and pilgrims -- will turn to us for a blessing.

Additional Notes

Copher (Kippur) means Cover

In Biblical Hebrew the meaning of *Copher* is clear. Noah's ark is "*cophered*" with bitumen. When an animal is sacrificed, the altar is *cophered* with the blood of the animal. The same word is used in a different context in the Talmud where the trait of heresy, or apostasy, or denial of G-d, is known as "*Copher ba Ikar*" or "*Cophering*" the root.

The idea of covering has a set of positive, gentle and honorable connotations in Jewish tradition. Our Western society emphasizes transparency and disclosure, and neglects modesty and being covered. Yet these are essential in understanding Jewish practice and the Jewish worldview.

For example, we cover the *Challah* when we say the blessing over the wine. We cover the Torah, and show particular respect and caution when its actual skin is exposed. In kosher slaughtering of a fowl, we cover the blood. Modesty is a central value in Jewish thought, and modesty is essentially a question of when we should be discreetly covered. Humility is much prized, and that involves covering even our good deeds. The prophet Micah advises us to walk in a covered way with G-d.

Covering is the purpose of the sacrificial offerings that we made in the Holy Temple. We could say that the offerings cover our debts to the Almighty, although of course, we do not believe that G-d has any benefit from our offerings except for our own improvement.

In addition to the abundance of references in the *Parsha* to covering (*Kapparah*), there are other hints that covering is the central theme of the day. In the *haftara* that we read about the gourd that provides cover for Jonah from the withering heat of the sun in Nineveh. Without the cover of the miraculous plant, the prophet could not stand the heat.

An Article from the Tanach Study Center
On the Biblical Meaning of Kippurim

THE TANACH STUDY CENTER [<http://www.tanach.org>] by Menachem Leibtag

The Biblical Meaning of "kippurim"

Is the 'Day of ATONEMENT' a precise translation for YOM KIPPUR? The word 'atonement' implies amends for a certain wrongdoing. In this sense, the 'Day of Atonement' implies expiation for transgressions that may have been committed over the course of the previous year. However, in Chumash we find numerous instances in which the word "kippurim" is used in a very different context. Let's begin by examining the use of the shoshon k.p.r. in Sefer Breishit, in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of its meaning.

THE SHOSHON K.P.R. --- A PROTECTIVE COATING In Parshat Noach, we find the Torah's very first use of this shoshon k.p.r. [chaf peyh reish]: "And G-d said to Noach: Make an ARK out of gopher

wood... - V'CHAFARTA alav - and you shall COAT IT from within in and from without with - KOFER - pitch (a PROTECTIVE COATING)." (Breishit 6:14)

To protect ark from the mighty waters of the flood, Noach is commanded to coat the gopher wood with a protective covering. This first usage of "k.p.r." indicates that this shoresh relates to a 'protective covering'. Note that both the verb and the noun stem from the same "shoresh".

A PROTECTION GIFT In Parshat Va'yishlach, the shoresh "k.p.r." is used once again to describe a form of protection. Yaakov Avinu sends a gift to appease his brother Esav. Note how Yaakov explains the reason for sending this gift: "Maybe, - A'CHA'PRA pa'nav - I can APPEASE him - with this gift that I am sending..." (Br. 32:21)

Yaakov is not asking Esav for forgiveness, rather he hopes that this gift will deter Esav from attacking him. The gift is intended to PROTECT Yaakov from Esav's anger.

A COVERING OF THE GROUND In Sefer Shmot, the shoresh "k.p.r." is used to describe the manner in which the 'manna' covered the ground: "And behold it was on the face of the wilderness thin and flaky - k'KFOR - like 'frost' on the land." (Shmot 16:14) [Note: The biblical meaning of KFOR is not quite clear, but it undoubtedly relates to a type of covering, such as frost which covers the ground. See Tehilim 147:16 - "kfor k'efer y'fazer" (from daily davening).]

PROTECTION MONEY In Parshat Mishpatim (Shmot 21:30), the word "kofer" is used to describe a payment which can be made in lieu of punishment. This can be understood as PROTECTION from the punishment. Similarly, in Bamidbar 35:31 we find the prohibition of accepting "kofer nefesh" - payment in lieu of capital punishment.

SHORESH K.P.R. AND THE MISHKAN With this background, we now examine the use of the shoresh "k.p.r." in relation to the MISHKAN in Parshiot Trumah/Tzaveh.

THE KA'PORET Recall that the "aron" (the holy ark) was an open, gold-plated wooden box that contained the LUCHOT (Shmot 25:10- 11,21). To cover the "aron" (and possibly to 'protect' it), Moshe is commanded to make a KAPORET (see 25:17-22). This KAPORET (again note shoresh k.p.r.) was not merely a lid with a handle, rather it was an elaborate golden cover with two "keruvim" upon it, and hence these "keruvim" figuratively could be considered a 'protective cover' for the luchot. To emphasize the PROTECTIVE nature of this covering, this lid for the "aron" is NOT called a "michseh" (the Hebrew word for a box cover/ see Breishit 8:13 & Shmot 26:14), rather it is called a KAPORET (shoresh k.p.r.). The placement of specifically KERUVIM on the kaporet can support this interpretation, for just as the keruvim PROTECT the path to Gan Eden (see Breishit 3:24), so too, the keruvim of the kaporet PROTECT the LUCHOT. [See shiur on Parshat Nitzavim.] [Note also that the PA'ROCHET (a related shoresh p.r.k) - the curtain which protects the "kodesh ha'kadoshim" - is also embroidered with "kruvim" (see Shmot 26:31).]

KIPPURIM & THE SEVEN DAY MILUIM CEREMONY The first use of the word KIPPURIM itself is found in the commandment to perform a seven day dedication ceremony for the Mishkan, better known as the MILUIM. During those seven days a special korban CHATAT was offered, whose blood was sprinkled on the MIZBAYACH (see Shmot 29:1,12). At the end of the parsha, the Torah refers to

this procedure as KIPPURIM: "And each day [of the MILUIM] you shall bring a PAR CHATAT for the KIPPURIM... (Shmot 29:36)

In a similar fashion, the KOHANIM also required KAPARA. During this seven day ceremony, the blood of the AYIL, an additional korban brought for this purpose (see Shmot 29:1,19- 21), was sprinkled on the earlobes, thumbs, and toes of the kohanim. This procedure is also referred to as KAPARA: "This [meat of the korban] shall be eaten only by [the kohanim] - asher KUPAR bahen - who had KAPARA from them [from the blood of this animal]..." (Shmot 29:33) [See also parallel account in Vayikra 8:1-36, see 8:34]

Thus we find that the primary purpose of the seven day MILUIM ceremony was to perform KAPARA on the MIZBAYACH and on the KOHANIM. What was the purpose of this "kapara"? Was it necessary for the atonement of any specific sin? Even if one would suggest that the KOHANIM need atonement for "chet ha'egel" (the sin of the Golden Calf/ even though the Torah does not record this event until the next Parsha), surely the MIZBAYACH did nothing wrong. Why does it need a KIPPURIM procedure? Based on our understanding of the shoresh k.p.r. above, it would seem this KAPARA procedure was necessary to PROTECT the MIZBAYACH and the KOHANIM. Why would they need protection?

PROTECTION FROM THE SHCHINA Recall from our shiurim on Sefer Shmot that the primary purpose of the Mishkan was to create a site where the G-d's SHCHINA (His Divine Presence) could dwell: "And they shall make for Me a sanctuary - v'SHACHANTI b'tocham"- that I may dwell among them." (Shmot 25:8) [See also Shmot 29:45-46]

The presence of SHCHINA in the MISHKAN creates an environment similar to MA'AMAD HAR SINAI (see Ramban Shmot 25:2). As was the case at Har Sinai, the presence of SHCHINA results in immediate punishment for any transgression. This was also our explanation in Part I in regard to G-d's 13 MIDOT HA'RACHAMIM.] Because the KOHANIM are to work in the MISHKAN, and the MIZBAYACH is designated to become the site where the SHCHINA will descend and consume the KORBANOT which Bnei Yisrael will offer (see Vayikra 9:24), PROTECTION is necessary. [For example, on the very next day, Nadav and Avihu made one small mistake and they received immediate punishment!]

Thus, this entire KIPPURIM ceremony could be understood as symbolic, for it reflects the nature of the Divine encounter which takes place in the Mishkan. Performing this procedure teaches Bnei Yisrael that encountering the SHCHINA requires not only preparation and readiness, but also protection from its consequences.

THE MIZBACH KTORET The word KIPPURIM is mentioned once again at the end of Parshat Tzaveh, when the MIZBACH KTORET [the incense alter] is first introduced (Shmot 30:1-10). Here, to our surprise, we find the first reference in Chumash to YOM KIPPUR itself!: "v'CHI'PER Aharon al kar'no'tav - Aharon must KAPARA [sprinkle blood] on its corners ONCE A YEAR from the blood of the CHATAT HA'KIPURIM. Once a year y'CHA'PER a'lav - he must do KAPARA on it..." (Shmot 30:10)

Here, the Torah only tells us that this special procedure must be performed once a year, however it does not tell us on what day. In Parshat Acharei Mot (Vayikra 16:1-34) we find the complete

details of this CHATAT HA'KIPPURIM, including the precise date - the tenth day of the SEVENTH month. [See also Bamidbar 29:11.]

In Parshiot Trumah/Tzaveh, two aspects are unique to the MIZBACH KTORET: 1) It is the only vessel which requires this special CHATAT KIPPURIM. [Note: In Acharei Mot we see that also the PAROCHET and KAPORET need to be sprinkled with the blood of the CHATAT HA'KIPPURIM, however it is not mentioned in Sefer Shmot.]

2) It is LEFT OUT of the primary presentation of the Mishkan and its vessels. [Scan Shmot chapters 25->29/ note that 25:8 and 29:44 form 'bookends' which include almost all the vessels of the Mishkan, except for the mizbach ktoret which is left out until the very end (30:1-10/ note that this ends the "dibur" which began in 25:1). See previous shiur on Parshat Tzaveh.]

Once again, the meaning of the shoresh k.p.r. can help us understand why. The ANAN KTORET (cloud of smoke created when burning the ktoret) in the Ohel Moed acts as a BUFFER between the SHCHINA in the Kodesh Kdoshim and the MIZBAYACH in the AZARA (courtyard), thus protecting Bnei Yisrael. [Note parallel to the ANAN on Har Sinai. Note "vayered Hashem b'ANAN..." (Shmot 34:5)] Because the MIZBACH KTORET protects Bnei Yisrael each day when the ktoret is offered, it requires a yearly CHATAT HA'KIPPURIM!

YOM HA'SHMINI - THE 8th Day DEDICATION CEREMONY An additional link between Yom Kippur and our interpretation of "kapara" can be found by examining the korbanot of the YOM HA'SHMINI ceremony (the eighth day/ read Vayikra 9:1-24), the first day in which the MISHKAN began to function. Once again, special korbanot are offered for the purpose of "kapara". From the psukim describing these korbanot, one could suggest that this KAPARA is necessary to protect Bnei Yisrael from the SHCHINA which is to appear on this day: "This is the procedure which you must do, and G-d's glory (KVOD HASHEM) will appear unto you... Go near the mizbayach and offer you chatat and olah - v'CHA'PER - on your behalf and on the behalf of the people..."(9:6-7)

It should come as no surprise that the korbanot offered at that inauguration ceremony are almost identical to the korbanot offered yearly on YOM KIPPUR. In each ceremony, there is a special chatat & olah offered both by AHARON and by the PEOPLE. The following table summarizes this parallel between Vayikra 9:1-3 and 16:1-5:

Boruch Shem, Kavod Malchuto L'Olam Va'ed

Boruch: The flow of G-d's presence informs certain moments which we mark by blessing them. When we say "Baruch" it is in the passive voice; we are blessing G-d; we are noting the involvement of G-d in what we are doing or experiencing: Blessed are You who commands us. . . Blessed are You who brings forth . . . Blessed are You who creates.

Shem: A name is the handle we use to grasp what otherwise is not seen. Before it was named, where was Alzheimer's Disease or who recognized El Nino as affecting our weather? A concept or a phenomenon becomes something real when it is named.

Kavod: The honor or glory of G-d is the presence of the Infinite that we perceive in the world. In the *Kiddusha*, we say, “The whole world is filled with his *Kavod*.”

Malchuto: The sovereignty of G-d is the recognition that all of reality operates only according to his rules. When we see how things actually work, we are seeing the hand of G-d. G-d is the king of kings, His rules prevail over all others.

I’Olom: The root of *olam*, which can also mean “world” or “forever” comes from a family of words that means hidden or concealed. This is the nature of G-d’s presence in the world, it is hidden.

Va’ed: A contemporary dictionary relates this very well: “*Va’ed*” means “And How!” We usually use the translation “Forever”.

A metaphor from physics

In keeping with the theme of quantum physics and Torah at Kohelet this High Holiday season, let me suggest an image to complement the idea of what can happen under the cover of Yom Kippur. One of the benefits of contemporary science is the wealth of imagery that is available for understanding the concepts that are presented by the Torah and the sages of the Talmud:

Paul Davies, a well-respected observer of contemporary physics, describes in the following terms the phenomenon of “Quantum Tunneling”: “[There are] occasions when an electron which does not have enough energy to break the barrier nevertheless appears miraculously on the remote side. Imagine tossing a pebble lightly at a window, only to find it penetrate the glass and appear on the far side, leaving the window intact! Yet this piece of trickery is precisely what electrons are seen to do. In effect they ‘tunnel’ through an insurmountable barrier. . . It is important to realize that these outlandish antics are not merely a bit of speculative science. The ‘tunnel effect’, for instance, is exploited in a number of commercial microelectronic devices, such as the tunnel diode. Indeed, even the ordinary flow of electricity in a copper wire has an element of tunneling to it.” (Paul Davies, *Superforce*, p. 24.)

What is particularly perplexing about the phenomenon of quantum tunneling is that it only happens where it cannot be seen. The disappearance and re-appearance of the electron occur beneath the cloak of quantum uncertainty, a cloak so impenetrable that no human being, and no device that can ever be constructed by a human being, can ever perceive what goes on beneath it. On this day, like the tunneling electron, we duck behind cover so perfect that human eyes can never penetrate it. As with the tunneling electron, “[There are] occasions when a person who does not have enough energy to break a barrier nevertheless appears miraculously on the remote side. Imagine confronting a barrier that has previously been insurmountable, only to find that you can penetrate the barrier and appear on the far side, leaving the barrier intact! Yet this piece of trickery is precisely what we can do on Yom Kippur. In effect we can ‘tunnel’ through an insurmountable barrier. . .

Some stories about hearing G-d’s voice.

I.

Once the Rebbe Elimelech of Lizensk and his brother Reb Zusya arrived in a certain village, and though the head of the village wasn't at home, his wife took them in as guests. When her husband came home in the middle of the night, he lit a candle on the table and he worked to mend a rip in his fur coat.

The two brothers were in bed but awake, heard how his wife called to him saying, "Hurry up and fix the coat while the candle is still burning." And one brother said to the other "Did you hear what the lady of the house is saying? This is a great teaching: Fix yourself quickly and repent while your soul is still within you."

2.

Once when a Rebbe was taking a walk in the countryside with his disciples, they came across a hay wagon that had overturned. They tried to help the owner put it upright, but they could not lift it. "We can't do it!" they said. But the owner of the wagon yelled at them angrily, "You can all right, but you don't want to!" Then the Rebbe turned to his disciples and said "Do you hear what this man is saying? He says that we can lift up the Shechina from the dust, but we don't want to."

3.

Once an opponent townsman came to Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Ladi and rebuked him for his supposedly haughty ways. The Rebbe put his head down on his hand on the table, and he stayed that way for some time. Then he lifted his head and answered the man that a leader has to maintain some separation from his group. The man left without a comment, and when he had left, the son of the Rebbe asked him why he had put his head on his arm like that. His father then told him that he had to determine whether this man, even though he was an opponent, was delivering him a heavenly message. He put his head down to consider whether there was pride and haughtiness in his actions. When he saw that there was not, he realized that this was not such a heavenly message, and he responded to the man as he did.