

PARSHAT ACHAREI MOT II
LEVITICUS 18:1-30
28 NISAN 5782/28 APRIL 2022
DAY 13 OF THE COUNTING OF THE OMER:
YESOD OF GEVURAH



Paris Through My Window
Painting by Marc Chagall (1913)

GO BEHIND TO GET AHEAD

1. וַיִּדְבֹּר יְיָ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אַחֲרֵי מוֹת (Leviticus 16:1)

וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְהָאֱלֹהִים נָסָה אֶת־אַבְרָהָם (Genesis 22:1)

וַיֵּשֶׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא וְהִנֵּה־אֵיל אַחֲרֵי

אֲחֵר – verb; to delay, tarry

adverb; (1) behind (of place); 2. afterwards (of time)

preposition; (1) behind, after (of place); (2) after (of time)

אֲחֵר – other, different

The house shall be scraped inside all around....They shall take other stones (אַבְנֵים אַחֲרוֹת) and replace the [plague infected] stones with them... (Leviticus 14:42)

2. Haran died *al p'nei* his father Terah... (Genesis 11:28)

When Abram shattered Terah's idols, they threw him into the fiery furnace. And Haran stood by, adding fuel to the fire and was enthusiastic about the flames. (P'sikta Zutarta)

3. [Hebrew does not say *acharav*, only *achar*] The ram whose horns will offer atonement for the future is to be found in the world of "*achar ha-devarim ha-eileh*" (Gen. 22:1), where what lies behind the apparent facts, what happened before, the residues of the past, suffuse the present. (Avivah Zornberg, *The Murmuring Deep*)
4. "Trauma occurs when the person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or threat to the physical integrity of self or others and the person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror." (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, American Psychiatric Association)
5. Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life. Unlike commonplace misfortunes, traumatic events generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence and death. (Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*)

Steps to restore connection: (1) establishment of safety; (2) construction of a new interpretation of the traumatic experience; (3) reconnection, development of a new self that does not feel controlled by the past.

6. Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards. (Soren Kierkegaard)
7. Acharei Mot to Kedoshim