

וְנִי לֹדֵד וְלֹדֵדָה

While the king was still at his table, my sins gave forth its fragrance. – [The congregation of Israel replies and says:] “All this is true. You bestowed good upon me, but I repaid You with evil, for while the king was still at the table of his wedding banquet...” **My sins gave forth its fragrance:** This is instead of saying, “gave forth its stench.” When the Shechinah was still at Sinai, I sinned with the Calf; Scripture describes it with an expression of love, “gave forth its fragrance,” and did not write, “stank,” or “became putrid,” because Scripture speaks euphemistically. **A bundle of myrrh is my Beloved to me** - My Beloved has become to me as one who has a bundle of myrrh in his bosom, and he said to him, “Here, take this bundle, which will give a more fragrant scent than the first one that you lost.” So was the Holy One, blessed be He, appeased by Israel for the incident of the Calf and found them an atonement for their iniquity and said: Donate to the Tabernacle, and let the gold of the Tabernacle atone for the gold of the Calf. (*Shir HaShirim 1:12,13* with Rashi)

Why does Hashem give us more after atoning for the sin of the Golden Calf than He would've given us had we not sinned at all?

Perhaps we can understand this with the following parable:

“They were a match made in heaven, and their deep love for each other was incomparable. For this very reason, when they got into a fight, though they made peace quickly, the scars still remained. The husband knew that merely assuring his wife that their relationship is now as strong as ever, would not comfort her from her sorrow over having the stain of such a fight upon their perfect marriage. After much thought the husband found the words that would indeed bring her complete and total comfort: ‘Our relationship won’t be the same as it was before, rather, through our reconciliation and the lessons that we have learned, it will be stronger than had we never got into a fight in the first place!’”

So too, Hashem, our Beloved, seeks to comfort Klal Yisroel completely and therefore tells us, “Not only has your sin not resulted in a weakening in our relationship, rather, it has led to an even greater level than before.” We find this concept regarding *teshuva* from any sin as well, as Chazal state: *One who does teshuva out of love, his sins turn into merits (Yoma 86b)*. As we begin a new year, let us remember that not only has Yom Kippur rejuvenated our relationship with Hashem, it has brought with it ever higher levels of closeness to Him!

