

Loss of Smell

Excerpted and adapted from a *shiur* by HaRav Chaim Weg

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<https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Bechkoasi-5783-Raiach-Nechoach.mp3>

I will put your cities to ruin and I will make your sanctuaries desolate; I will not smell your satisfying aromas.

Vayikra 26:31

According to Rashi, “*velo ariach bereiach nichochachem* (I will not smell your satisfying aromas)” means the *korbanos* will cease with the destruction of the *Bais Hamikdash*. But the Ramban says it means that Hashem’s acceptance of *karbanos* with favor will end with the *churban* until *Mashiach* comes—so there was no *reiach nicho’ach* from any *korbanos* brought in the *Bayis Sheini*. He holds that although *reiach nicho’ach* is certainly an important part of *avodas hakorbanos*, not having it does not invalidate a *korban*, so all the *korbanos* brought during *Bayis Sheini* were valid. This adheres to the simple meaning of the Mishnah in *Zvachim* (46b), which says that although a *korban* must be *shechted* for *reiach nicho’ach*, if one had contrary intentions, the *korban* remains valid.

The Netziv takes a different approach, that this *pasuk* invalidates *korbanos* at a time of *galus* due to the lack of *reiach nicho’ach*. The purpose of *korbanos* is for Klal Yisrael to find favor in Hashem’s eyes, and during *galus*, *reiach nicho’ach* is not available, so *korbanos* are *pasul*. This would accord with the Brisker Rav’s understanding of the Mishnah, as he explains that the reason a *korban shechted* for a purpose other than *reiach nicho’ach* is valid is not because *reiach nicho’ach* is not *me’akeiv* the mitzvah, but rather because it is *stama lishmah*, meaning that *reiach nicho’ach* is built into the *korban*, so intending otherwise will not remove it. According to the Netziv, *reiach nicho’ach* was restored when the second *Bais Hamikdash* was built.