**Miller’s Musings** **פרשת וַיִּקְרָא**

Our memory can be a rather capricious tool, prone to moments of amnesia, distortion and eventually the ravages of time.  The Parsha talks about two lapses of concentration through which one can become liable, either by entering the Holy Sanctuary whilst forgetting that he is impure or knowing that he is impure but being unaware at that moment that he is in the Sanctuary.  The former transgression is one that we could possibly understand, but how could it ever occur that a person would overlook the fact that he is standing within the walls of the Beis Hamikdosh, the holiest place on earth.  The preparations needed to enter, the sanctity required, the splendour of the edifice and the holiness of the service that was taking place would surely eliminate any possibility of not knowing that one is in the Holy Temple!

Although it may be hard to fathom, Reb Elyashiv zt’l explains that this could indeed happen as a consequence of habit.  A person can become so accustomed to something, even as remarkable as entering the place of the Shechina, that they can lose sight of where they are and what they are doing momentarily and thus err in this manner.  King David in Tehillim, only too aware of this challenge, asks that he “should dwell in the house of Hashem” and because it was “all the days of my life” required that it be “to visit in his Sanctuary” i.e. each time with the feeling of visiting the place with a fresh sense of its importance as if unacquainted as he was with this holy place.

The sad truth is that a person can go through their life, seemingly fulfilling all the requirements of a religious Jew, and still be missing out to a great extent on their purpose and the true meaning of their actions.  If they are merely going through the motions, without stopping once in a while to consider what they are actually doing, the act can become perfunctory and devoid of true depth.   To pray each day without being cognizant of the fact that one is actually communicating with our Creator, to learn Torah without pausing to reflect on this being a way of learning the wisdom of the Infinite and to do mitzvos without realising that by doing so one is connecting with the Divine, is both a tragedy and a missed opportunity of vast proportions.  Whenever you can, stop and reflect upon the true nature of the act that you are performing.  It may transform that action from the mundane to the sublime.

May we stop and consider the true profundity of Shabbos this week.

לעילוי נשמת לאה בת אברהם