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Response to Letters to the Editor

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7. Then he is to take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the entrance to the tent of meeting.
8. He is to cast lots for the two goats—one lot for the Lord and the other for the scapegoat.
9. Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the Lord and sacrifice it for a sin offering.
10. But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to be used for making atonement by sending it into the wilderness as a scapegoat.

Soloveitchik writes:

There is a profound idea behind the casting of lots in this ritual of atonement. The penitent argues that his moral directions were influenced by forces beyond his control, that his sinning was not entirely a free and voluntary choice. The Almighty can evaluate the extent of human culpability in situations that are not entirely of man's making. Only God knows to what extent a man was a free agent in making his decisions. The casting of lots is thus a psychodramatic representation of the penitent's state of mind. The compelling intrusion of the unknown and irrational is basic to man's existential condition, and his weakness in the face of such intrusion qualifies him to reserve God's compassionate forgiveness on Yom Kippur. Only by entering such a plea can man be declared

not guilty.

Chance, the Rav says, inevitably manifests itself even in our perception of the moral realm. *Kal va-chomer* it must do so in the physical realm.

David Goldman
New York, NY

Alan Kadish responds:

I thank Stanley Boylan, Micah Seligman and David Goldman for their interesting insights.

As regarding David Goldman's letter, I fully agree that circumstances modulate the choices that we are left to make and that only God can fully understand the tests that He places before us. As the old story stipulates, our job is not to be Moshe but to be Reb Zusha.

Ba'alie Ha-Tosefot

I READ ARYEH LEIBOWITZ'S article "Redacting Tosafot on the Talmud..." *Hakirah*, vol. 20 with much interest and I wish to make a short comment about the biographical elements mentioned in fn. 32, p. 244. The author refers to E. Urbach, *Ba'alei ha-Tosafot* p. 584, at the end of the book in the index. Some information can also be found on pp. 455-456.

According to the author, R. Eliezer was a German rabbi who spent some time in France as did R. Meir of Rothenburg. This is indeed