

## פרשת שמיוני

The Parasha begins with Moshe instructing Aharon and his sons to bring sacrifices on the alter in honor of the inauguration of the Mishkan. This day was Rosh Hodesh Nissan. It was one of the most special days in our history. It is written in Seder Olam that 10 crowns were taken by that inauguration day of Rosh Hodesh Nissan. It was a day that marked the first time for many holy ceremonies (including the first time the Mizbeah services were performed, the first time fire came down onto the Mizbeah, the first day the Shechinah came down onto the Mishkan etc.). It was a most joyous and holy day.

Moshe instructed Aharon to bring three Korbanot Chatat. The first was a Korban to atone for the sin of the golden calf. The second, was the sacrifice of Nachshon ben Aminadav (the prince of the tribe of Yehudah) and the third was the Korban of Rosh Hodesh. In the interim, the sons of Aharon, Nadav and Avihu were killed while offering the קטורת-incense in the Mikdash. Later on Moshe had inquired about the Korbanot which he instructed Aharon and his sons to offer, and he found that instead of partaking of the Korban of Rosh Hodesh as Moshe instructed, they burnt it totally. Moshe became angry at them and had demanded to know why they had disobeyed his command and instead burnt it! Why didn't they eat from it- just like they ate from the first two Korbanot?! Aharon explained to Moshe that since his sons had just died he was an Onen and an Onen should not partake from Korbanot. The reason why they ate from the first two Korbanot even though they were Onen is because those were considered קדשי שעה (holy for the hour) meaning they were a once in a lifetime Korban- commanded to be brought only once in history- and therefore even though they were Onen they ate, since they would never again have this opportunity to bring these Korbanot. However the Korban of Rosh Hodesh will be brought on every Rosh Hodesh, therefore it is classified as קדשי דורות (holy for the generations) and since the chance to perform these Korbanot will come again, it is not proper for an Onen to partake of them. When Moshe heard this he was appeased and admitted to Aharon that he indeed was correct.

What needs to be understood is how can it be that Moshe became **angry** at Aharon and his sons for burning the Korban Rosh Hodesh. The anger of Moshe is rarely seen in the Torah, and this seems to be simply a matter of a debate in Halacha, is that a reason to get angry?! In addition, we must understand how it is possible that Moshe did not think of this very logical difference between the Korbanot, and how did he not realize that the Korban Rosh Hodesh should have been burnt! There must be a deeper understanding to this entire incident.

There is a Gemarah in Hulin Daf 60B that quotes the Pasuk in Parashat Bereshit that says "ויעש אלקים את שני המאורות הגדולים. את המאור הגדול.. ואת המאור הקטן" "Hashem made the two great luminaries. The great one etc. and the small one" The Gemarah asks that if the Torah describes the two luminaries as great than how can it proceed to refer to one of them as small?? The Gemarah explains that the moon came to Hashem and asked "is it possible that two kings should rule simultaneously? (meaning how could the sun and I both be so big?!) Hashem responded; you are correct, go and minimize yourself. The moon said to Hashem; " master of the world since I have said something proper before you does this mean that I have to become smaller"?! Hashem proceeded to try and appease the moon and told the moon that you will be seen in both the day and the night (as we can sometimes see the moon even in the daytime). The moon was not satisfied and said; "who needs my light during the day when the sun is shining"?! Hashem continued to try and appease the moon and told the moon that the Jews will use you to determine when the holidays and New Years are. This still did not appease the moon. Hashem said to the moon; the Tsadikim will name themselves after you (Ex; Yaakov Hakatan, Shemuel Hakatan, David Hakatan all Katan [small] like the moon). Still, the moon refused to be appeased until Hashem exclaimed: "הביאו עלי' "bring for me a Korban" for I have made the moon smaller!!

This Korban "for Hashem", is the Korban of Rosh Hodesh. The Pasuk in Bamidbar (Perek 28 Pasuk 15) refers to the Korban Chatat of Rosh Hodesh as "חטאת לה" (a sin offering- לה) meaning it is a sin offering **for** Hashem- for minimizing the moon. This explains why in the Korbanot portion of Shacharit we say "חטאת הצבור והיחיד. אלו הן" "חטאת הצבור- שעירי ראשי חדשים" Why does it say "these are the Korbanot of Sibbur **and individual**" then go on to list **only** the Korbanot of the Sibbur? It should have just said; these are the Korbanot of the **Sibbur** etc... The answer is because when it says והיחיד (individual)- it is referring to the יחיד ומיוחד the one and only **Hashem**. The Korban that it proceeds to list first is the Korban of Rosh Hodesh and as mentioned, this was the

Korban brought for Hashem, who is truly the **יחיד**-individual. This is why the list begins with **והיחיד** even though it proceeds to list only Korbanot Sibbur.

(incidentally we see from this episode the tremendous level of humility of Hashem, in that he felt he had to try and appease the moon again and again and ultimately felt that he needed a Korban to gain "atonement" for this act. Like it says **כל מקום שאתה מוצא** "כל מקום שאתה מוצא" whenever you find Hashem's greatness that is where you find his humility". A hint to this is when you analyze the numerical value of Hashem's name it is 26 and  $2+6=8$  if we take two of Hashem's name  $26 \times 2=52$  and  $5+2=7$ . Three times Hashem's name is  $26 \times 3=78$  and  $7+8=15$  [ $1+5=6$ ] and so on... We find that the more times that we multiply Hashem's name, the less the numbers will total when added together. This is a hint to "the greater Hashem, the more humble").

The darkness of the moon represents more than just a physical darkness. It is written in the Gemarah about the dangers of traveling alone at night and sleeping alone at night in a dark place. There are evil forces lurking at night (three of the forces are referred to as **אף-חמה-השחתה**). This is why we begin Arvit with the Pesukim of **והוא רחום** that we ask protection from these three when we say: **ולא ישחית** והרבה להשים **אפו**: (ולא יעיר כל **חמתו**). We recite Keriat Shema at night which includes the **ישב בסתר** - a prayer recited for protection that is said in a graveyard to clear away the evil spirits. We ask in the Berachah of Arvit "שומר את עמו ישראל" -to be protected from all evil. Night represents the exile and its difficulties. In the future however the light of the moon will be equal to the light of the sun as it says "והיה אור הלבנה כאור החמה" there will be only light ,and the exile -and all of the evil spirits of the night- will cease to exist.

The goal of Moshe Rabeinu was to bring the final redemption.

The Zohar explains that Moshe Rabeinu will be the Mashiach. The Pasuk says in Parashat Veyehi that Yaakov told his sons in reference to Mashiach "עד כי יבא שילה" and the Zohar says **דא כמנין דא**. This one is the same numerical value of that one, meaning the word **שילה** is the same numerical value as Moshe- both equal 345. **הן** **אחרית כראשית**, גאלתי אתכם **אחרית כראשית**, the later redemption will be like the earlier redemption and just like the earlier redemption of Egypt was through Moshe so will be the final redemption. This is why when Moshe initially refused to be the redeemer of Israel he told Hashem "שלח נא ביד תשלח" -"please send them with whom you will send them", using a double terminology of sending since he realized that whoever is the first redeemer will also be the final redeemer (the Ohr Hacham clarifies that even though we know that the Mashiach is from the tribe of Yehudah it can still be Moshe Rabeinu

since he was comprised from all the Neshamot of Israel and therefore the Neshama of Mashiach is also contained in him!).

Moshe knew that he is to be the final redeemer and he felt that the perfect day for the ultimate final redemption was that very day of Rosh Hodesh Nissan of the inaugural ceremonies of the Mikdash. He tried to add an eleventh crown on that day. The crown of Mashiach! Moshe tried to bring the world to its future stage, a world in which the light of the moon is as great as the light of the sun. This would represent an eternal "כפרה"- "atonement" for Hashem for minimizing the moon. How was this atonement to be accomplished? Through the Korban Rosh Hodesh of that day!

It is written in Torat Kohanim and in the Gemarah Zevachim Daf 101B "כהנים אוכלים" "the Kohanim eat and the owner of the offering gains atonement". The eating of the Kohanim is the integral part of the Korban achieving atonement for its owner. Moshe was looking forward to the Korban of Hashem- the Chatat of Rosh Hodesh being sacrificed and **then eaten** by the Kohanim in order for Hashem to have his "atonement" and the moon no longer be dark and it would be as bright as the sun, signifying the end of the exile forever!! When he investigated and saw the Korban had been burnt and **not** eaten, this was a tremendous "let down" to Moshe and he was upset at Aharon and his sons, since this could have brought the eternal redemption!! That Korban Rosh Hodesh should be viewed as קדשי שעה -(holy for the hour)- a once in a lifetime Korban, since if it would have been completed then- it would never have to be brought again!! The Kapara would have been complete. In Moshe's opinion there was no greater קדשי שעה-a once in a lifetime moment as pivotal as this!

This explains Moshe's reaction to the burning of the Chatat of Rosh Hodesh, but what was Aharon thinking?? Why in fact did he burn it? Whatever the reason, Moshe ultimately agreed with it!

The answer lies in the story of the death of Nadav and Avihu, the sons of Aharon. Nadav and Avihu felt the holiness of the day and they too sought to accomplish a lofty goal on that day, they were trying to be מתקן (rectify) the sin of Adam Harishon!

Adam ate from the tree of wisdom after Hashem had told him not to. How can this be? If Hashem had told us directly not to do something we surely would not disobey! Can we truly believe that Adam simply "couldn't control himself" and ate?! The holy books explain that Adam's eating from the tree was done with great calculation. By eating from the tree he was trying to internalize the Yezer Hara to be a part of himself

and of every Jew. This way, there will be a test for every Jew whenever he would attempt to do a Misvah. He figured: how valuable are our Misvot if we have no force to challenge us when we try and perform them?? If we have to overcome something- it would make our Misvot would be so much more valuable!! There was just one problem. He did not first ask Hashem's permission, and for this he was punished and brought death to the world.

Nadav and Avihu tried to rectify this sin of Adam by bringing incense when they **were not** commanded, just as Adam acted without first being commanded. They drank **wine** before they entered the Mikdash because the tree that Adam had eaten from (according to one opinion) was **grape** vine. They specifically chose wine to show they were coming to rectify this sin of Adam. In Parashat Bereshit in discussing the creation of the world the Pasuk says "ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום **אחד**"-referring to the first day as אחד, in describing Rosh Hodesh Nissan the Torah says **ראשון** הוא לכם-it is the first. The word ראשון is an even greater way to describe "the first" than the word אחד, so they felt that this was the perfect time to rectify the world to bring it back to the way it was when it was created!

The Pasuk says that they brought the pan of incense and burnt an alien fire אשר לא היה צוה ה' that Hashem had not commanded them. The cantorial note under the word לא is a rare note called תרי טעמי which literally means 2 reasons. This hints to their reasoning for bringing this unauthorized fire. It was to "repeat" for a second time what Adam had done in order to rectify it and bring the world back to its original state before Adam had sinned!

There was just one problem, they too should have asked first! They should have consulted before taking the initiative to rectify Adam's sin by offering an unauthorized fire in the Mikdash. For this reason they were killed and failed to bring the world back to its original pre-sin state. When Aharon saw this, he understood that this was **not** the time for the world to be brought to its perfection and **not** the time for the final redemption. He therefore explained to Moshe that since he was an Onen-meaning since his sons had died trying to rectify the world- this showed him that Hashem is not ready for the final redemption right now and therefore this was **not** the time to eat from Hashem's Chatat to bring the final rectifications to the world and have a moon as bright as the sun. Moshe understood that indeed- it was not the time for the final redemption and admitted to Aharon that he was correct.

Even though Nadav and Avihu were not successful in their attempt to rectify the world, their death did accomplish a tremendous atonement for the Jewish people for the generations. We read about their deaths on Yom Kippur showing the atonement

that we receive through their deaths and the Pasuk says "כל בית ישראל יבכו את השרפה"- "the Jewish people **will** cry for their burning" יבכו is a future tense showing that even the later generations will cry for the deaths of the sons of Aharon in that they died trying to "save the world" and ultimately were an atonement for us.

It is written that at the same time of the passing of a Tsadik, the good qualities and unique gifts and traits of the Tsadik are "available" and are given to the other Tsadikim and to those who are worthy in the generation (this is illustrated in the story of the Baal Shem Tov who was one washing his hands Netilat Yadayim for Seudah Shelishit on Shabbat and suddenly exclaimed כבה נר המערבי "the light of the west has been extinguished" he was referring to the death of the Ohr Hachaim who live in Israel. The Baal Shem Tov explained to his students that the Ohr Hachaim had just passed away. How do you know asked his students?! [They were in Russia with no way of knowing what was happening in Israel!!] I know because when I started to wash for Netilat Yadayim of Seudah Shelishit a certain כונה [holy intention] came to my mind at that moment and I know that only one Tsadik in the generation is privileged to this כונה and until now it was the Ohr Hachaim. Now that it came to me it must be that he passed away and it was passed to me!).

Who received the traits and qualities of Nadav and Avihu? Moshe and Aharon. This is precisely how Moshe realized the greatness of these Tsadikim when he felt the new qualities inside of him. This is why Moshe told Aharon that he knew that someone holy would have to die to sanctify the Mishkan but "I thought it would be me or you". "עכשיו" "I see that they were greater than me and you!" "I see that they were greater than me and you!" We can now understand these words to say: now I see that they were great people- ממני וממך **from** me and you. Meaning, from the after effects of holiness that both you and I received after their deaths we see exactly how holy they were!!

Who received these gifts of Nadav and Avihu after Moshe and Aharon died? Pinhas, since he **too** did an act that he was **not** commanded to do (killing Zimri) but he **first asked** if it was o.k. This is why he became a Kohen, and the Pasuk refers to him as אהרן בן אהרן -the son of Aharon- since he took the place of Aharon's sons.

It is written that just like there is an alter on earth there is also an alter in the heaven. What is sacrificed on this alter? The Tsadikim. The angel מיכאל sacrifices the souls of the Tsadikim on this alter in order to effect atonement for the Jews. As it says ואשי

שמים. מלאך מיכאל in the שמים. "the sacrifices offerings of the Jews should be accepted". This refers to the Tsadikim being offered as sacrifices by מיכאל in the שמים. תקבל ברצון ישראל...תקבל ברצון

When a Tsadik dies there is a הלולא for him, which is like a party. Why are we celebrating a Tsadik's death? We celebrate the holiness and good traits that the Tsadik left to us.

Aharon realized that even though his sons were not successful in their goal to perfect the world they still effected a great atonement for כלל ישראל. He understood that they were now being offered as sacrifices by מיכאל on such a holy day (as hinted to in the words of the Pasuk 'נראה אליכם' -literally;" this is the day Hashem appeared before you"-the words נראה אליכם also spell אהרון-מיכאל showing that through Aharon's sons מיכאל too was able to bring holy sacrifices on that day). He knew that the qualities and holiness of Nadav and Avihu were given over to Moshe and himself and understood all of the ramifications of what had transpired.. This is why אהרון-וידם "Aharon was silent" he had no claims against Hashem in his heart, he saw all that was going on in the heavens and realized the tremendous benefits of the passing of his sons. This is hinted to in what we say at a Brit Milah"חיי בדמיך חיי בדמיך חיי"- literally-"through your blood you shall live through your blood you shall live". The word בדמיך is also- מלשון וידם- a term of silence, showing that through your silence **you will live**. Silence in the face of hardships shows trust and אמונה-faith in Hashem. Like it says "צדיק באמונתו יחיה"- "a Tsadik **lives** by his faith". Whatever hardship one endures, he must have faith in Hashem that there are great ramifications and benefits that he, as well as the **entire Jewish nation** receive **through** his hardships and silence. Faith will give a person the life and strength to endure to see the light of redemption. Amen.