



דרכים בפרשה

תצוה



וזה הדבר אשר-תעשה להם לקדש אתם לכהן לי לקח פר אחד בן-בקר
ואילם שנים תמימם

And this is the thing that you shall do for them to sanctify them to serve Me [as kohanim]: take one young bull and two rams, perfect ones

Rashi comments that the purpose of this korban was to act as a *kapara*/atonement for the golden calf, which was a bull (Midrash Tanchuma 10). If we look later on in Parshas Shemini, (Vayikra 9:2), the Torah tells us, "ויאמר אל אהרן קח לך עגל - *And he said to Aharon, "Take for yourself a calf for a sin offering."* Rashi explains (ad loc.) that the purpose of this korban was meant for the very same reason, i.e. to atone that for Aharon's role in the golden calf. If Aharon already had his *kapara* (in our parsha), why was he required to bring yet another korban later on?

The Maharil Diskin offers an answer that there was in fact a need for two separate *korbanos*. The first ones that are mentioned here were brought as a communal korban from communal funds. This served as a general *kaparah* for all of the Kohanim, as they were now preparing to for their new role in the mishkan. The *possuk* in Shemini refers to the private korban of Aharon HaKohen, meant to atone for his own personal role that he played in the *eigel hazahav*. Although it was true that his motivation

was purely to stop it from happening, thus, entirely *l'sheim shomayim* (for the sake of Heaven), as an active participant, he still needed a *kaparah*.

The wording of the *possuk* seems to suggest this difference as well: over here, the *possuk* says "לקח" to take; in Parshas Shemini, Moshe personalizes it by saying "קח לך" -take for yourself."

On a practical level, there is a tremendous lesson that can be learned. In life, there are those that are happy to be "*yoitze zain*" with everyone else, and perhaps at times this may be the right approach. But for the most part, the Torah is teaching us that we must learn to look at ourselves in a personal light as well, never being satisfied with just "going with the flow", and always seeking self-improvement. Yes the matter may have been looked after, but have I done my own part?

If we dig deeper into these *korbanos*, we can take home another great lesson. The *Sifra* comments that the purpose of the second time around was to be offered as a gift to the *Satan*. The *Malbim* explains

this based on a well-known principal that the severity of an *aveirah* is dependent upon the level of the sinner. For a great person, even the most minor *aveirah* will have a most drastic effect, necessitating teshuva on the highest level. By contrast, a person of a lesser stature committing the same sin, may be "let off the hook" much easier.

In Parshas Shemini, Moshe was telling Aharon that, now that he had been elevated to a much higher position; his *teshuva* that we learned about in our parsha was no longer enough. Now, the Satan would try and prosecute him again based on his new exalted level. Of course the original *korban* was accepted by HaShem, but the Satan would still try and cause problems. (It is for this reason that the *korban shelamim* (peace offering) was left out in Parshas Shemini, because peace had already been made between Aharon and Hashem. But for this new level, there was still room to look back and improve on the past.)

With the realization that in life we must always strive for growth, we can never be content with our achievements of yesterday. It has been said over about Rav Saadia Gaon and the Chozeh of Lublin that they used to do *teshuva* daily for the day before's service of Hashem. "On my new level, I now realize that yesterday's *avodah* was not enough".

We must seek continued growth. It

cannot be that our commitment to davening and the *kavanah* that we have today is no more than when we davened yesterday, or even ten years ago for that matter. Have we advanced in our learning? Do we approach *chessed* with the same juvenile approach as when we were younger? Do we still perceive concepts in *emunah* the same way it was taught to us in the second grade?

A great 18th century British poet once wrote: **Nothing wilts faster than laurels that have been rested upon.** If we continuously demand more from ourselves, we will be *zoche* to reach greater levels and all new heights. Hashem never asks of us to be a Moshe or Aharon, but He does ask that we reach our own unique potential, and to get there we must never stop climbing!

Good Shabbos, **מרדכי אפפל**



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