

## Parshas Shemini

This week's Parsha is Shemini, which was the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the inauguration of the Mishkan, and Aaron's sacrifices weren't initially accepted; once Moshe intervened, the sacrifices were accepted, and the Jews celebrated. Then Ahron's sons, who were of spiritual greatness, brought up a fire inappropriately and died. Then, Ahron and Moshe argued why Ahron didn't eat certain sacrifices, which Moshe agreed to. The rest of the Parsha discusses the laws of Kashrus, which are given to the Jews because of their unique soul, which connects us directly to Hashem.

The progress of the Parsha teaches us that Hashem empowered us Jews to live in a physical world and use the Torah to drive the physical elements of the world to G-dliness, and bring G-dliness into this world. On the one hand, there was the offering of sacrifices, which is an act from below to up, and then they needed to be accepted, a connection from above to below. But only once was the below adequately prepared for (i.e. after Moshe intervened), and the world was ready, did the Korban get accepted.

Then, a lesson from Aaron's sons is that they tried to take the below, and make the below like the above, which was not allowed, and those souls were taken back to Hashem, because they were not yet ready to be physical beings encloded in a body. Then, Aaron and Moshe used the

Torah and interpreted how and when the Korban of everyday versus special days was supposed to be eaten. Meaning our role to serve Hashem must come from learning Torah, and discussing, which even then, "Moshe" can be convinced, if the argument is through Torah, that there is an alternative path.

Finally, the Parsha concludes by describing that within this physical existence, there are rules and regulations guided by the Torah that we must adhere to, to stay connected to Hashem easily. Without these rules, there can be manipulated interpretations of how one ought to serve Hashem, which, like the sons of Aaron's inappropriate korban, can be problematic, even if it is sourced in the idea that it is for Hashem.

This is important because we have the Torah to define our lives and purpose. Emotionally guided service to Hashem has a place, but it becomes tricky if Halacha is not followed. This Parsha shows us that connections to Hashem are constantly made, and we have a special way of living, that even if we aren't thinking about it, we are still connected to Hashem. Even the small Mitzvos, like keeping kosher, which may be easier for some than others to maintain, is nourishment of the soul. Further actions that are given in the Torah to keep whether a big or small Mitzva, are the actions we take in this physical world to ensure that what we are doing is bring G-dliness into this physical real, which are doing

“La’asos Lo Dirah Bitachtonim” (to make an abode in the lower realms). Which will culminate, sooner than later, with the coming of Mashiach.

Good Shabbos