

Points to Ponder  
Shimini 5778

**Take an Eigel as a Chatas (9:2)** – Rashi mentions that this bull was an atonement for the Eigel. Why does Aharon bring a Chatas to atone for the Cheit while the people bring an Olah? **Rav Belsky ztl.** explains that a Chatas is brought for a sin in action while an Olah atones for sins in thought. The people needed to atone for their role in the eigel --- namely that they believed Moshe needed to be replaced and wanted Aharon to do so. The sin was in the thought. Aharon is always identified – not as one who had sinful intent or thought with the Eigel but rather sinful action.

**With my holy ones I shall be sanctified (10:3)** – **Rav Avrohom Rivlin Shlita** noted that it is interesting that when one takes all of the Chazal statements about the sin of Nadav V'Avihu, one comes to the commonality that they acted in their own interest instead of Hashem's. It becomes odd that they are referred to as Hashem's holy ones. How did this happen? The Netziv explains that the fire of holiness that is discussed here is the fire of Hslahavus in the description of the love of Hashem. Hashem loves the energy but insists that it be channeled in the proper way – the manner that Hashem desires.

**Aharon was silent (10:3)** – The Midrash tells us that Rachel Imeinu was silent and her children engaged in the same silence. She knew that she had been switched with Leah and remained quiet and Binyamin knew that Yosef had been sold and remained silent. Shaul was anointed king and he was silent and Esther too, maintained her silence about her family of origin. **Rav Wolbe ztl** notes that sometimes silence is more powerful than words. Silence denotes acceptance of the Divine and Aharon mastered it. One who cannot, will never be able to fully appreciate anything that he experiences because he feels the need to categorize it. Letting something seep in, is a more introspective and deeper level of understanding of life. Rav Wolbe added that silence and solitude go hand in hand. Taking the time for introspection provides a person a chance to get to know himself and the world around him.

**Don't rip your clothing (10:6)** – **Rav Sheinbaum Shlita** points out that in order not to interfere by casting a pall of grief on the joy of the inauguration, Hashem forbade the usual display of mourning, even by the brothers of Nadav and Avihu. **Sefer HaChinuch (149)** explains that the Kohanim are prohibited from entering the Sanctuary with disheveled, long hair - out of respect for the Bais Hamikdash and the service which they perform. This also applies to the clothing worn by the Kohanim that may not be torn. Rabbi Sheinbaum adds that since we no longer have the Bais Hamikdash, these laws transfer over to the Mikdash Me'at. If we would appreciate the value of Tefillah, prayer, our esteem for the shul would rise.

**Moshe heard and it was good in his eyes (10:20)** – Rashi comments that Moshe was not embarrassed to admit that he had erred in that he heard and had forgotten. **Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus ztl.** points out that the greatness of man is not that he never makes a mistake but rather that he is willing to see his errors and learn from them. He compares man to a beautiful car with all the bells and whistles. It may look great but if it lacks a solid set of brakes, it will not be a source of luxury but rather tragedy. The truly great man is able to slow down, stop, redirect and recalculate.

**This animal you may eat (11:2)** – Rashi explains that Moshe showed Bnei Yisrael every single animal, bird and insect and told them whether it was kosher or non-kosher. Why did Hashem need to show Moshe each one? Why did Moshe then need to show each one to Bnei Yisrael? Why not rely on the general rules? **Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman ztl.** explains that Moshe understood that there would be times when genetic engineering or other technological advances might look like it would skirt the rule rendering something Mutar Assur or Assur, mutar. In order to prevent this from being the case, Moshe showed each creature to the people so as to prevent any mistake in the future.

**For I am Hashem who has taken you UP from of Mitzrayim to be your God and you should be holy because I am (11:45)** – Rashi cites Rabbi Yishmael who explains that the use of the words “up from” instead of “out of” teaches us that even if there is only one reason for Yetzias Mitzrayim – that we would not eat creepy bugs – it would have been worth it. But even the non-Jews do not eat bugs! Why is this such a big deal? **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** explained that while the non-Jews do not eat bugs, it is because they are aesthetically unappealing. We are told to keep away because we listen to the word of Hashem. Therefore we need to check for things that are visible but that we may not be able to see.

**Haftorah: (Machar Chodesh) – Shaul said to Yehonasan his son “Why hasn’t the son of Yishai come yesterday or today to break bread?” (I Shmuel: 20:27)** – Why does Shaul refer to him as Ben Yishai while Yehonasan calls Dovid by name? **Rav Binyamin Levo (Rav of Veroboy) ztl** explains that calling someone as merely the son of a father diminishes his individual contribution to the world. It devalues him for himself. He adds that this is why Kalev was able to silence the people when he asked “Is this the only thing the son of Amram has done?” since the people expected what would follow to be an attack. Instead, Kalev responded with strength and vigor in his defense of Moshe.