Points to Ponder

Vayikra 5781

**וַיִּקְרָ֖א Vayikra (1:1)** - We know that the word Vayikra appears with a little Alef in it. Why? The **Rosh** explains that it was done because Moshe requested that Hashem show the future generations that Moshe was not comfortable with the attention showered upon him. But why here with the Mishkan and not at Matan Torah where his involvement was more intense? **Rav Yisrael Reisman Shlita quoted Rav Mordechai Druk ztl.** who explained that at Matan Torah, Moshe had a certain appreciation of the Gadlus of Hashem. But when the people came to bring Korbanos after building the Mishkan, Moshe knew that his awareness of the greatness of Hashem was even more inadequate than previously. The bigger our appreciation of Hashem, the more aware of our smallness in His presence really is.

**מִן־הַבְּהֵמָ֗ה מִן־הַבָּקָר֙ וּמִן־הַצֹּ֔אן From animals, ovine or bovine (1:2)** – Why is there no Korban from fish? **The Likkutei Anshei Shem** explains that the animals are gilgulim of people from previous experiences and they too, need atonement. Fish can only be Gilgulim of Tzaddikim so they do not need the Tikkun through Korban.

**צָפֹ֖נָה And he shall slaughter it northward toward Hashem (1:11) – Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl**. noted that the **Taz** (OC 1) notes that as soon as a person mentions Northward toward Hashem in his/her davening, Hashem remembers the Akaidas Yitzchak. Why? Rav Moshe explained that north is a reference to physical things (the Shulchan was in the North). When one slaughters an animal to Hashem in the North it is symbolic of a declaration that one is willing to cut off all extraneous needs for Hashem and a relationship with Him. It is not about the animal itself but rather the vehicle for connecting to Hashem.

**וְנֶ֗פֶשׁ כִּֽי־תַקְרִ֞יב קָרְבַּ֤ן מִנְחָה֙ When a soul will bring a Mincha to Hashem (2:1)** – The Gemara (Menachos 104b) notes that the word Nefesh only appears by the Mincha since it is the poor who usually bring it. Hashem promises to accept that Korban as if the one bringing it offered his soul. **Rav Yaakov Bender Shlita** explained that this is due to the fact that the poor person is literally making sacrifice in order to bring the offering. When Hashem sees the effort we put into the Mitzva or the Korban, this is more than the outcome in terms of acceptance in front of Hashem.

**כָּל־הַמִּנְחָ֗ה Korban Mincha (2:11-13)** – On the one hand we are not allowed to allow this to become Chametz and cannot allow sourdough on the Mizbeiach but at the same time, it needs to be salted. Why? **Rav Gifter ztl**. explained that Honey and sourdough are added ingredients salt merely brings out the flavor from that which is already there. Judaism also, doesn’t allow for new ingredients but to flavor the present? That’s ideal.

**אֲשֶׁ֥ר נָשִׂ֖יא יֶֽחֱטָ֑א When a Nasi sins (4:22**) – When does a Nasi sin? The **Ben Ish Chai** explains that if one looks at the Roshei Teivos of the words Asher Nasi Yechta it spells Ani – that when a Jewish leader focuses on himself he is likely to sin.

**לְאַשְׁמָ֥ה בָֽהּ L’Ashma Vah (5:26)** – **Rav Schachter Shlita** often noted that there was a minhag to complete the Parsha with the statement “L’Keil Asher Shavas Mikol HaMaasim (the Roshei Teivos equal L’Ashma). What is the connection? Rav Schachter explained that when we speak of Shmiras Shabbos we are returning Maaseh Berashis to its creator in the same way that he who denies a Pikadon can do the same and and be forgiven.

**Haftara:**

**עַם־זוּ֙ יָצַ֣רְתִּי לִ֔י This nation I have created to sing my praises to me (Yeshayahu 43:21) – Rav Avrohom Rivlin Shlita** explains the difference between the service of Hashem and the Yetzer for Avoda Zara. The latter has an individual serving his personal god for his own purposes. When it comes to Hashem, it is He – not we—who “chose”. He selected us, as a nation to serve His will in this world – including singing his praises.