Points to Ponder

Behaalosecha 5779

**לָ֣מָּה נִגָּרַ֗ע  Why should we lose out from being able to bring the Korban of Hashem within Am Yisrael (9:7)** - What did they mean “within the Am Yisrael”? Korban Pesach is a personal obligation is it not? **Rav Nisson Alpert  ztl.** explained that Korban Pesach is a public Korban but is not funded by the public. It is also only offered on behalf of those counted in the group bringing it. Thus, if someone is not able to be counted, s/he loses the chance to be included in the Tzibbur and it is as if s/he doesn’t count. This is the intent of their complaint here -- we should not lose the chance to count in a Korban Tzibbur within Bnei Yisrael. If you take away that chance from us, we DO NOT count. That is not fair…

**עֲשֵׂ֣ה לְךָ֗ שְׁתֵּי֙ חֲצֽוֹצְרֹ֣ת כֶּ֔סֶף Make 2 trumpets from silver (10:2)** - Why are the trumpets made out of silver specifically? **Rav Menacham Genack Shlita** explained that silver is the currency of economy. Silver brings people together (hence the word for silver is also the word for currency -- Kesef). The goal of the trumpets too, was to bring the people together for all sorts of different purposes. Hence it needed to be silver.

**אַל־נָ֖א תַּֽעֲזֹ֣ב אֹתָ֑נוּ כִּ֣י | עַל־כֵּ֣ן יָדַ֗עְתָּ חֲנֹתֵ֨נוּ֙ בַּמִּדְבָּ֔ר וְהָיִ֥יתָ לָּ֖נוּ לְעֵינָֽיִם Please do not leave us...you will be our eyes (10:31) - Rashi** notes that Moshe was making a request of Yisro not to leave. Why was Moshe so concerned about Yisro’s departure? And what does he mean that Yisro will be the “eyes” of the people? **Rav Nosson Tzvi Wachtfogel ztl.** explained that Yisro’s journey to Judaism was the quintessential journey of a person who had it all -- he was a leader in the world of Avoda Zara -- and he left it behind because of the truth. He was persecuted because of his beliefs. Still, he withstood the tests. And he did it on his own. Yisro serves as the image of a person whose personal investment in a relationship with Hashem was not temporary -- it was permanent. He represents the ideal service to Hashem -- from and with a personal commitment to Hashem -- an ideal image for us to live up to.

**אֲשֶׁ֣ר יָדַ֔עְתָּ כִּי־הֵ֛ם זִקְנֵ֥י הָעָ֖ם וְשֹֽׁטְרָ֑יו  That you know that they are the elders of the of the nation and its officers (11:16)** - Why do you need the people to be known as the elders and the officers? The Midrash reminds us that these people were the officers who were hit when the people did not produce the necessary number of bricks in Egypt. They took one for the team and therefore became the leaders. What is the connection**? Rav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi Shlita** noted that care and worry about the people is something that does not go unpaid. Those with the extra layer of attention, of worry, of Rachmanus and of care, are those who are ready to lead the people.

**וְהָֽאסַפְסֻף֙ אֲשֶׁ֣ר בְּקִרְבּ֔וֹ הִתְאַוּ֖וּ תַּֽאֲוָ֑ה The sin of the desirerers (11:4)** - What is the sin of the desirerers? Why does Hashem get angry at them MEOD? What is the big deal? **The Nesivos Shalom** explains that the problem with the people was that they sought a means to have someone teach them Taava. When a person replaces the emotional drive toward a desire with a cheap desire that is more attainable than a meaningful one, then Hashem is doubly upset with him/her. In the world of addiction, the deeper routed desire is covered by the easy route of attainment of that which is cheap. This makes Hashem quite upset for not only is it missing Hashem, it is misplaced and quashing of a capacity for Yediyas Hashem that is true and meaningful and deep.

**זָכַ֨רְנוּ֙ אֶת־הַדָּגָ֔ה אֲשֶׁר־נֹאכַ֥ל בְּמִצְרַ֖יִם חִנָּ֑ם  We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt for free (11:5) –** Were they really telling the truth? They were SLAVES. The fish that they ate, they paid for with their lives? **Sivan Rahav Meir Tchy”h** calls this the early reference to “fake news” that exists in the annals of people’s nostalgic minds. We remember things in the past in a more glorified manner than is really accurate and tend to make false and negative comments about the present state of things as a result. The danger of the fake news is often tragic and results in terrible consequences. It seems almost crazy to think that the Jews who left Mitzrayim in fine fashion, received the Torah, received the daily Manna and were in control of their own destiny really would trade it for some herring and garlic. But then again, don’t we do the same thing?

**פֶּ֣ה אֶל־פֶּ֞ה אֲדַבֶּר־בּ֗וֹ  I speak to him mouth to mouth (12:8) - Rav Schachter Shlita** often pointed out that this comment in the Parasha is the connection to the Haftara. Hashem notes that Moshe Rabbeinu is the adon hanevi’im, the master prophet, and his prophecies were qualitatively different than those of the other prophets. Chazal (Yevamos 49b) describe the prophecies of the other prophets as comparable to one who looks through an obscure glass (aspaklaria she’aina me’irah), whereas Moshe Rabbeinu’s prophecies were comparable to someone who looks through a clear glass (aspaklaria hame’irah). The Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim (2:43) uses the prophecy of Zechraya that is found in the haftarah as an example of how obscure some of the prophecies were. In the haftarah, Zecharya sees a vision of a menorah and asks the malach to explain the vision. We see that in addition to the superficial connection between the Torah reading and haftarah, there is a deeper connection; the haftarah highlights the idea that the prophecies of other prophets were comparable to looking through an obscure glass.

**Haftara: מָ֥ה אֵ֖לֶּה אֲדֹנִֽי: Don’t you know what these are? (Zechariah 4:2)** - In the Haftara Zechariah has a vision and learns of its interpretation. What is the connection between the olives and the spirit of Hashem? Also, what DID Zechariah realize from the vision that the Nevuah begins with the words “Halo?” **Rav Eliyahu Schlessinger Shlita** explains that Zecharia was not able to tell if the Nevuah was about present times or the future. The olives represented the Shemen HaMishcha but they were missing in the second Beis Hamikdash. It could possibly be disturbed in the future though capture by the enemy. However, Ruach Hashem would ultimately serve as a creator of Kedusha that would never be destroyed.