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MISHKAN:

G-d's Preference To Dwell
On The Terrestrial

YadAvNow.com Weekly Audio Series: Shemini

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

A Reciprocal Dedication Between Brothers

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One Perspective One Reverence

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Ultimately Positioned to Advocate for Another

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The Detoxification of the Body & Soul

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1. The Torah classifies the kosher & non-kosher species.
2. The Hebrew term for undomestic species is chaya.
3. The Torah presents the permitted species which include the domestic as chaya.
4. Midrash: "chaya" is an expression of life (chayim: the Jewish people are attached to G-d), it is essential they should be spiritually alive.
5. "G-d separated them from impurity and proscribed to them mitzvos."
6. Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh: Observing negative commandments is to wean the person from spiritual impurities.
7. The value of positive commandments is to introduce illumination into one's soul.

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YadAvNow.com Weekly Audio Series: Shemini

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

Does G-d Prefer to Dwell on the Terrestrial with Man?

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1. Aaron and his sons were installed as Kohanim on the 8th day.
2. The Mishkan assumed permanent status on the 8th day, the first of Nisan.
3. Opinion in the Gemara: the world was created in the month of Nisan.
4. Gemara: G-d's joy on the 8th day was the equivalent to the day of creation.
5. The initial intent of creation was for G-d to dwell on the terrestrial with man – not in heaven with the angels.
6. After Adam ate of the tree of knowledge & putrefied himself & all existence, G-d ascended from the terrestrial.
7. After the sin of the golden calf, G-d said to Moshe "Make for me a sanctuary so that I shall dwell in your midst."
8. The intent of creation came to be on the 8th day.
9. G-d's joy was no less than his joy before the sin of Adam.
10. Shalah Hakadosh: Before the sin of Adam, Adam's vestment to serve G-d was his body.
11. After eating of the Fruit of The Tree, the body became putrefied thus invalidating it as a vestment.
12. Aaron and his sons were installed as Kohanim on the first day of Nisan in their priestly vestments to qualify their service.

When One's Demise Has Greater Value Than Life

CLICK TO VIEW!



1. Nadav and Avihu were struck down by G-d on the eighth day of the Mishkan's inauguration.
2. Either they transgressed when they officiated after drinking wine, or had ruled without consulting Moshe.
3. Moshe said to Aaron: G-d told me that I will be sanctified with those who are closest to me.
4. "I had thought it was going to be me or you, now that they were chosen indicates that they are greater than us."
5. This was the only sin of their lives; The sanctification of G-d, even when one is slightly flawed, doesn't escape His retribution.
6. Aaron remained silent.
7. Seforno: He was consoled knowing their death was a sanctification of G-d's Name.
8. At Sinai, Nadav, Avihu and the Elders gazed directly at the Divine Presence.
9. They deserved to die at that moment; G-d delayed their death so not to undermine the joy of the giving of the Torah with tragedy.
10. The Elders died at a later date when the Jews desired meat.
11. Nadav, Avihu and the Elders were liable for the same disrespect, yet the death of Aaron's sons was a sanctification of G-d, but the Elders' was not.

Where Was The ROI On Moshe's Investment

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1. Moshe tells Aaron he was chosen by G-d to be High Priest.
2. Midrash: Aaron asks: "Since you toiled for the Mishkan, you should be the High Priest."
3. Why ask if Moshe was established as the irrefutable spokesman of G-d at Sinai?
4. Those instructed to remove the remains of Nadav & Avihu from the sanctuary became contaminated.
5. Once contaminated, one cannot participate in the Pascal Lamb.
6. In the second year they were in the desert the Jews brought a Pascal Lamb; those contaminated did not.
7. They complained to Moshe: "Why should we be minimized?"
8. Seforno: Why were they penalized for doing a mitzvah removing human remains from sanctuary?
9. Their question was valid: G-d responded there is a makeup Pascal Lamb.
10. Aaron's question to Moshe was similar: If Moshe toiled for the Mishkan, should not The High Priesthood be his?

Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Shemini



MISHKAN:

G-d's Preference To Dwell On The Terrestrial

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The Death of the Sons of Aaron in Correlation with the Divine Presence

Torah: On the eighth day of the inauguration of the *Mishkan*, the Divine Presence entered into the *Mishkan*. It expressed itself as fire that consumed the offerings. When the Jewish people witnessed the Divine Presence coming upon the altar they sang G-d's Praises and prostrated themselves. At that moment, *Nadav* and *Avihu*, the sons of *Aaron* brought forth fire pans with incense, which was considered sinful.

Torah: "A fire came forth from G-d and consumed them, and they died before *Hashem*. *Moshe* said to *Aaron*: Of this did *Hashem* speak, saying, 'I will be sanctified through those who are nearest to Me, thus I will be honored before the entire people.'"

Rashi citing the *Midrash*: "Where did G-d tell *Moshe* that He would be sanctified through those who are 'nearest to Me?' It states, 'I will be sanctified with My own Glory...' The verse should not be read, 'I will

sanctified with My Glory...' but rather it should be read, 'I will be sanctified through those who Honor Me...' *Moshe* said to *Aaron*, '*Aaron*, my brother, I knew that His House would be sanctified through those who are closest to Him. Initially I had thought it would be either me or you to bring about this sanctification through our death. However, after the death of *Nadav* and *Avihu* I understand that they are greater than we.'" Why was it necessary on the eighth day of the inauguration of the *Mishkan*, that the Name of G-d should be sanctified through those who are closest to Him?

Torah at the conclusion of the first day of creation: "And there was evening and there was morning, day one (*yom echad*)."

After the second day of creation the *Torah* states, "And there was evening and there was morning, a second day (*yom sheini*)."

Chazal: "According to the order of counting of the days of creation, the first day should have been referred to as 'the first day (*yom rishon*)' as the second day is

referred to as 'the second day (*yom sheini*)'; why is the first day referred to as "day one (*yom echad*)?" It is because the reference of "one" is alluding to the fact that the only thing that existed on the first day was G-d Himself. It was only on the second day that G-d created the angels.

Maharal of Prague: Until the angels were created on the second day, there was no question based on one's perception that all emanates from the unity of G-d, His Oneness. It was only after the creation of the various echelons of angels (each one of another dimension of holiness), that the unity of G-d became slightly obscured.

Midrash: When *Adam* was created, he radiated with such a degree of holiness that the angels had confused his radiance with that of G-d's and began singing songs of praise to him. Because the angel has a degree of G-d's Holiness, it causes the perception and grasp of G-d's Omnipotence to be blurred. Thus, the indisputable absoluteness of G-d's Oneness became slightly oblique after the creation of the angels. This was the initial basis for idolatry, which claims that G-d had given over His power to other deities to maintain existence.

Gemara in Tractate *Megillah*: The level of joy that G-d had experienced at the time of the inauguration of the *Mishkan* was the equivalent of the joy that He had at the time of Creation of heaven and earth. Why did the *Mishkan* evoke that level of joy from G-d?

Chazal: The initial objective of Creation was that G-d should dwell on the terrestrial level among mankind. However, because of the sin of *Adam*, existence became putrefied and thus was rendered unfit for the location of the Divine Presence. The Jewish people, who had ascended at the time of Sinai to the level of *Adam*, before the sin merited to bring heaven to earth. The Divine Presence rested upon the mountain. As a result of the golden calf, G-d commanded the Jewish people to build the *Mishkan* so that it should be the medium to allow the Divine Presence to dwell in their midst. Because the initial intent of Creation came to fruition with the permanence of the *Mishkan*, G-d's joy was the equivalent of the day He Created heaven and earth.

On the eighth day of the inauguration of the *Mishkan* G-d had to demonstrate His Kingship over existence in the most obvious manner through His judgment. It was on that day, through the Attribute of Justice

that He established His Dominion. This is why G-d had said, "On that day I will be sanctified through those who are closest to Me." This clearly demonstrates that even the nearly perfect devoutly righteous do not escape G-d's judgment.

The Profoundness of the Joy Within Aaron's Heart

Torah: On the eighth day of the inauguration of the *Mishkan*, *Moshe* installed *Aaron* as the High Priest just as he was commanded to do so by G-d. Why was *Aaron* uniquely qualified to be the High Priest?

Midrash: "Reb *Shimon Bar Yochai* says, 'G-d said, 'The heart that rejoiced over the greatness of his brother (for being chosen as the Redeemer of Israel), will merit the precious stones (of the breastplate) to be placed upon it. As it states, 'Aaron should carry the names of the Children of Israel on the breastplate of judgment on his heart...'"

The *Torah* identifies the location of the breastplate to be upon the heart of *Aaron*, which indicates its unique status and dimension. Although *Aaron* was the elder of *Moshe*, when *Moshe* was chosen by G-d to be the Redeemer of Israel, he experienced joy in his heart for when he was informed of his brother's appointment. Before *Moshe* returned to Egypt as the Redeemer, G-d had engaged with him at the burning bush over a seven-day period in order to convince him that he was truly as the Redeemer and he would succeed in that role.

After G-d had engaged with *Moshe* for seven days, *Moshe* said, "Please, My Lord, send through whomever You will send!"

Chazal: Since *Aaron* functioned in the capacity as G-d's Agent and Prophet in Egypt, *Moshe* had said, "Let the one who had been chosen in the past be Your representative to be the Redeemer." G-d insisted that *Moshe* was the only one who was truly qualified. Although *Aaron* had been G-d's Agent and the older brother of *Moshe*, he was not offended when he was passed over to be the Redeemer.

Torah: "G-d said to *Moshe*, 'When *Aaron* will be informed of your elevation, he will come out to greet you in the desert and he will see you and have joy in his heart.'"

Gemara in Tractate *Pesachim*: The *Bnei Biseira* were the Princes of Israel when *Hillel* had come to the Land of Israel from Babylon. When the *Bnei Biseira* initially met *Hillel* they realized that he was greater than they. Appreciating *Hillel's* greatness, they relinquished their position as princes of Israel to him. The *Bnei Biseira* demonstrated a unique level of humility by conceding their position to *Hillel*. However, *Aaron* was not only not offended when he was passed over by G-d to be the Redeemer, he rejoiced in his brother's good fortune. This is the reason his heart qualified to be the location of the breastplate.

Midrash: "For the seven days that *Moshe* officiated in the *Mishkan* and sprinkled the blood of the offerings, G-d said to him, 'Do you think that you will be the High Priest? Call *Aaron* and his children...'" While it is understandable that *Aaron's* heart was uniquely qualified to wear the breastplate, why does it qualify him to be the *Kohen* and the High Priest? The High Priest is the ultimate officiant of G-d who represents the entire Jewish people in His service. He is the only one qualified to enter into the Holy of Holies on *Yom Kippur* to plead for the atonement of the Jewish people.

Gemara in Tractate *Berachos*: One who benefits from his own handiwork is greater than one who has fear of heaven.

Maharal of Prague: The meaning of this passage is that the one who can have benefit from his own earnings, regardless of how meager they may be, is greater than the one who fears G-d. He is the one who is satisfied with his lot. It is only because he is able to be satisfied and not feel deprived or denied that it demonstrates his love for G-d. It is only because he internalizes G-d's love for him, that he can understand that not having more is truly in his best interest. Thus, he can have benefit from his handiwork, regardless of how meager it may be.

In contrast, one who fears G-d, although he is in awe of his Maker, and does not question G-d's decision that he should have less, he nevertheless would prefer to have more in order to satisfy his lack. Thus, the one who can benefit from his handiwork is greater than the one who reveres G-d because to love G-d is greater than to fear G-d. With this understanding we can appreciate the special dimension of *Reb Chanina Ben Dosa*.

Gemara: Every day a Heavenly Voice emanates from *Choreiv* (Sinai) and declares, "The entire world is sustained in the merit of *Chanina* My son and it is

sufficient for him to subsist on a small measure of carob from one eve of *Shabbos* to the next." The heavenly voice states that "it was sufficient" for *Reb Chanina Ben Dosa*, regardless of the paltry amount, in order to reveal that he had no interest or need in having more elucidate why his was so special and his merit was so great. It was a demonstration and expression of his love for G-d.

Mishna in *Ethics of Our Fathers*: "Who is the wealthy individual? The one who has joy in his portion." The *Mishna* does not state that the wealthy man is one who has "everything" or "enough." Rather, it is the one who experiences joy in his portion who is considered wealthy. The only way one can be truly be satisfied and feel joy is if he has love for G-d. He understands that his having less is only because G-d gave him less because it is in his best interest to have more.

Similarly, *Aaron* had joy in his heart when *Moshe* was chosen to be the Redeemer because he understood due to his unique level of love for G-d, that it was in his best interest not to be chosen to be the Redeemer. The joy was a confirmation of the unique level of love that *Aaron* possessed for G-d. He was thus uniquely qualified to be the High Priest, the ultimate officiant of G-d.

The Setting For Inspiration

Torah: "The sons of *Aaron*, *Nadav* and *Avihu* each took his fire pan...and brought before G-d a strange fire.... A fire came forth from G-d and consumed them, and they died before *Hashem*. *Moshe* said to *Aaron*: Of this did *Hashem* speak, saying, 'I will be sanctified through those who are nearest to Me, thus I will be honored before the entire people.'"

Rashi citing *Chazal*: "When G-d brings judgment upon the righteous, He becomes revered, elevated, and extolled. Why is this so? It is because of the lesson that is learned: If the devoutly righteous who dedicated themselves to fulfilling the Word of G-d in the most meticulous manner are judged for even the most minor infraction, how much more so will the evil be judged!" Thus, the righteous one is the model for the lesson to be learned by the evil one so that he may repent.

Torah: G-d decreed that *Moshe* would not enter into the Land of Israel because he struck the rock rather than speaking to it to give forth water. G-d said to *Moshe*, "Speak to the rock to give forth its water." *Moshe*, struck

the rock rather than speaking to it, causing the water to come forth. G-d said to *Moshe*, “You will pass away in the desert and not enter into the Land because you had the opportunity to sanctify My Name by speaking to the rock, but you chose to strike the rock.” What would have been the sanctification of G-d’s Name if *Moshe* had spoken to the rock rather than striking it?

Rashi citing *Chazal*: Had *Moshe* spoken to the rock, the Jewish people would have been able to draw an important lesson from what had taken place. If a rock that is not subject to reward and punishment responded to the Will of G-d, how much more so should the Jewish people who are subject to be rewarded for their good deeds and liable for punishment for their transgression should respond to His Will. However, because *Moshe* chose to strike the rock, he denied the Jewish people the opportunity to have a setting of a model from which they could have drawn upon. Because they were denied this model, it was considered a desecration of G-d’s Name and thus *Moshe* was held culpable.

Gemara in Tractate *Pesachim*: *Chananya*, *Meshael*, and *Azaria* were given a choice to either bow to the image of *Nebuchadnezzar* (Babylonian Emperor) or be cast into a fiery kiln. They chose not to bow and were thus thrown into the kiln. They merited a miracle and emerged alive. The *Gemara* explains that they had drawn upon a logical conclusion that was derived from the plague of frogs in Egypt. When G-d decreed the plague of frogs upon the Egyptians, He decreed that they should even go into the ovens that were fired. A frog naturally would not go into fire; however, in order to sanctify G-d’s Name the frogs entered into the fire and were burnt.

Chananya, *Meshael*, and *Azaria* had said, “If the frog that is not commanded to sanctify G-d’s Name went into the fire to sanctify Him, we who are obligated to sanctify His Name and not desecrate it, should definitely give our lives to sanctify G-d.” The frogs were the model from which *Chananya*, *Meshael*, and *Azaria* had drawn the inspiration to give their lives for G-d. If *Moshe* would have spoken to the rock, the Jewish people would have had a similar setting to be inspired and motivated.

Rashi citing *Chazal*: There is a verse in Psalms, “G-d is revered when the world witnesses the righteous being judged...” It is because of the logical inference that the evil will make when they witness the devoutly

righteous, which will allow them to understand their culpability for spiritual transgression. This will give them the opportunity to repent.

The Joy of Sinai Vs the Joy of the Inauguration of the Mishkan

Torah: After the death of the sons of *Aaron*, *Nadav* and *Avihu*, “*Moshe* summoned *Mishael* and *Elizafan*, sons of *Aaron*’s uncle *Uziel*, and said to them, ‘Approach, carry your brothers out of the Sanctuary to the outside of the camp...the entire House of Israel shall bewail the conflagration that *Hashem* ignited.’” Why did they need to remove the corpses of *Nadav* and *Avihu* from the Sanctuary?

Rashi citing *Chazal*: “It is as a man says to his fellow, ‘Remove the corpse from before the bride so that it should not interfere with the joy.’” In order not to detract from the great joy of the inauguration of the *Mishkan*, the corpses of *Nadav* and *Avihu* had to be removed from the Sanctuary. The verse continues, “The entire House of Israel shall bewail the conflagration that *Hashem* ignited,” indicating that the Jewish people had an obligation to grieve over the loss of *Aaron*’s sons. Seemingly, there is a contradiction – should the Jewish people be in a state of joy or should they be in a state of grieving?

Rashi in *Mishpatim*: The *Midrash* states, “The original group of seventy elders and the sons of *Aaron*, *Nadav* and *Avihu*, deserved to die at the time of the giving of the *Torah* at Sinai because they had openly gazed upon the Divine Presence, which was considered inappropriate and disrespectful.... Why did G-d not strike them down at their moment of disrespect at Sinai? Had He done so, it would have interfered with the joy at the time of the giving of the *Torah*.”

G-d therefore delayed the death of the sons of *Aaron* until the eighth day of the inauguration of the *Mishkan*. However, we see from the verse regarding the removal of the bodies of *Aaron*’s sons, that G-d did not want to disrupt the joy of the inauguration. If so, what was the value of choosing this particular time for their death?

In order for the Jewish people to be able to internalize the *Torah* at the most advanced level, they needed to be in a state of joy. Had the sons of *Aaron* been struck down at that moment it would have undermined and

interfered with the giving of the *Torah* at Sinai. It was crucial for the Jewish people to fully focus on the *Torah* that they were receiving in order to revere and esteem it for its fullest value. As we say every morning, "How fortunate are we because of our portion and because of our lot." While the joy at Sinai was intended for the Jewish people, the joy at time of the inauguration of the *Mishkan* was the joy that was experienced by G-d.

Gemara in Tractate *Megillah*: The level of joy that G-d had experienced at the time of the inauguration of the *Mishkan* was the equivalent of the joy that He had at the time of Creation of heaven and earth. Thus, removing the corpses from in front of the bride is so that it should not interfere with G-d's joy. However, regarding the Jewish people, they needed to understand and appreciate the loss of two righteous people and thus were obligated to grieve.

In order for one to merit the Divine Assistance that will allow one to merit understanding the truth of *Torah*, one must value and esteem the *Torah* for what it is. As we say in the blessing of the *Torah*, "...that He had chosen us from among all the nations and had given us His *Torah*..." The ultimate acknowledgement of G-d to indicate the spirituality of the Jewish people was that He had given them what was most precious to Him.

Dietary Laws, a Confirmation of the Eternity of the Jewish People

Torah: "Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aaron, saying to them: Speak to the Children of Israel saying: These are the creatures that you may eat from among the animals that are upon the earth."

Midrash citing a verse from *Chavakuk*: 'G-d had stood and measured/evaluated the Earth. He saw and released the nations.' What is the meaning of 'G-d measured the Earth?' When G-d wanted to give the *Torah* to the Jewish people, He evaluated the Earth (existence) and decided to give it in the desert in a public setting. Initially, when the nations of the world rejected the *Torah*, G-d was going to cause the world to revert back to a state of water (preexistence).

However, when the Jewish people accepted the *Torah* unequivocally with their declaration of 'Naaseh V'nishma - we will do and we will listen,' existence continued. It was only when the Jewish people accepted the *Torah* that the world became tranquil. As

it states in Psalms, 'The Earth was fearful and tranquil.' When the Jewish people accepted the *Torah*, the nations of the world received their release. They were permitted to eat the forbidden contaminated species such as rodents.

To what is this analogous? To a doctor who evaluated two patients. One was deathly ill with no chance of recovery. The doctor told his relatives that he should not be denied anything that he wants to eat. Afterwards, the doctor evaluated the second patient and believed that he would recover. He then instructed the family that he was only permitted to eat certain foods; however, other foods must be withheld from him so that he should be able to recover.

After hearing the doctor's prescription to each of the patients, the doctor was asked, 'Why do you differentiate between the two patients regarding what they are permitted to eat?' The doctor responded, 'Regarding the patient who is deathly ill, since he will die in any case, there is no reason to deny him anything that he desires. However, the patient, who has relevance to life, must adhere to a strict dietary regiment if he is to live.'

Similarly, G-d permitted to the nations of the world to eat anything that they desired. However, since the Jewish people have relevance to eternity, they need to maintain their spiritual purity and sanctity. Therefore, G-d forbade them from eating the species that would contaminate them. As it states, 'You who cling to Hashem, your G-d, you are all alive today.'

Initially G-d had offered the *Torah* to the nations of the world. Each nation rejected it for their own reason. However, when the Jewish people chose to accept the *Torah* they did so unequivocally with their declaration of "Naaseh V'nishma." Had the Jewish people not done so, the world would have reverted back to a state of preexistence. Because of their acceptance of the *Torah*, the world assumed a state of permanency. G-d chose to give the *Torah* to the Jewish people in a public setting which was Mt. Sinai. Why did G-d choose to give the *Torah* in the desert, which is a location that is the ultimate setting of desolation?

Gemara in Tractate *Nedarim*: The reason G-d chose to give the *Torah* to the Jewish people in the desert was because it is a location that is ownerless and barren. Just as the desert has no innate value, so too must the one

who wants to acquire *Torah* render himself ownerless like the desert (humble). It is only through one's self-negation does one become a proper receptacle for the processing and retention of *Torah*. It seems from the *Midrash* that G-d chose to give the *Torah* in the desert because He wanted to give It in a public setting that had no distractions. Because if there were any distractions at the moment of the giving of the *Torah*, one would not be able to appreciate the profundity of the event.

G-d wanted the *Torah* to be given in the most public setting because He wanted the nations of the world to understand that the world only exists in the merit of the Jewish people. It was only because the Jewish people embraced the *Torah*, unequivocally, that existence has any value. The nations of the world needed to appreciate and understand that they owe their very existence to the Jewish people, who dedicated themselves to G-d.

Chazal: There was a negative aspect to receiving the *Torah* in a public setting.

Midrash: The reason the Jewish people were vulnerable to the Sin of the Golden Calf was because the nations of the world had given them an "evil eye," which was rooted in envy. Had they received the *Torah* in a more private setting, they would not been minimized by the envy of the nations. Although the Jewish people were put in a compromised position, as a result of the public setting, G-d chose to give the *Torah* before the eyes of the world, so that they could understand that their existence is only due to the Jewish people receiving the *Torah* at Sinai.



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