

א ביסל תורה!

The Maimonides School Parsha Newsletter

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צו

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The Continuous Fire

By Hodaya Sapir

פרשת צו further discusses the קרבנות that were brought in the משכן. Right at the beginning of the פרשה משה ה' tells us: "וַיִּקְרָא וַיֹּאמֶר: מִשֶּׁהָ ה' פָּרַשָׁה", "אֵשׁ תָּמִיד תִּקְדַּח עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לֹא תִכָּבֶה" (ויקרא ו:ו): משה ה' פָּרַשָׁה "A perpetual fire shall be kept burning on the altar, not to go out". What does אש תמיד mean and what's the point of the מזבח always staying lit?

רש"י explains that the word "תמיד" didn't have to be included in the פסוק. He says that if "תמיד" wasn't included in the פסוק we would still know that the fire must be continually burning since it states that it must never go out. רש"י explains the word "תמיד" was also used in שמות כז:כ: "לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד" "to light the lamps continually." The usage of "תמיד" both by the lighting of the מזבח and by the lighting of the מנורה allows us to learn that the מנורה must be lit with from from the מזבח. In שמות כז:כ: רש"י explains that the word תמיד is often used to refer to things which are only day to day, or night to night. The קרבן תמיד for example is only brought during the day, every day and yet it is called the קרבן תמיד.

חזקוני explains "אש תמיד" as a perpetual fire. It should keep burning on שבת, even if it becomes impure. He goes on to explain "לֹא תִכָּבֶה", "where it will not go out." Even while בני ישראל were traveling through the desert, ה' honor demanded that precautions be taken and that this flame be kept burning.

The חתם סופר, in תורת משה, explains that we don't want the flame to go out because the אש תמיד refers to learning תורה. We don't want the fire of our תורה learning to burn out because it's the heart of בני ישראל.

The אש תמיד was created by ה', so we don't want a fire that He created to go out. We have to respect ה' and do as he says by keeping the fire burning. Just like we don't let ה' fire go out on the מזבח, we also can't allow our belief in ה' to burn out of us and leave us. If the אש תמיד refers to תורה learning we can't blow out the fire. Instead, we have to keep it burning and pass on our knowledge to the next generation, no matter the situation. The אש תמיד didn't go out when it became impure and it didn't go out on שבת. It is our responsibility to keep the fire burning no matter the hardship. Even in a situation where we might feel at a distance from Judaism, may we remember to keep the fire burning and to keep learning תורה and passing it on.

What is the Significance of the קרבן עולה?

By Doron Storm

In פרשת צו, we learn about the various types of offerings that בני ישראל were commanded to bring to the משכן. One of the most important offerings is the קרבן עולה. We know that the קורבן עולה was fully consumed from this pasuk: “אשר תאכל האש את-העלה על-המזבח” “The קרבן עולה was consumed on the altar by the fire” (ויקרא ו:ג). This offering symbolizes בני ישראל’s complete surrender to ה’ and their desire to be closer to Him.

If we look at the different types of קרבנות a person can give, we see a portion of each קרבן is eaten by the person bringing the קרבן, and/or the כהן. Rav Hirsch explains that the קרבן עולה is unique, since it was completely burned by fire. No portion of the קרבן was to be eaten by any human beings. This symbolizes בני ישראל’s desire to completely surrender ourselves to ה’. Similarly, in our own lives, we must strive to surrender ourselves completely to ה’s will and allow ourselves to be fully devoted to ה’.

רמב”ן explains that the קרבן עולה can be brought by individuals, not just by the community as a whole. This teaches us, that not only a communal מצוה to get closer to ה’, through the קרבן עולה, it is also a מצוה for every individual. This personal obligation is one of the ways each and every one of us draws closer to ה’ and offer ourselves up to Him.

Finally, אבן עזרא notes that the קרבן עולה can be brought without any specific request or need. He says that the קרבן has to be from one's own initiative and cannot be forced. Furthermore, there cannot be any blemishes, as the קרבן has to be תמים, perfect. This clearly shows the importance of serving ה’ simply out of love and devotion without any motive. When serving ה’, we have to be serving Him without any impurities.

In conclusion, the קרבן עולה teaches all of us the importance of surrendering ourselves completely to ה’, creating a passion to serve Him constantly, recognizing our personal obligation to draw closer to him, and serve him out of pure love and devotion. May we all strive to keep the fire burning in our own lives and draw closer to ה’ each day.

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