

PARSHAS SHEMINI



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UNDERSTANDING THE PETIRAH OF TZADDIKIM



In this week's *parshah*, we learn about the *petirah* of Nadav and Avihu, the sons of Aharon. We will try to understand why the *onesh* happened specifically on the day of the establishment of the *Mishkan*. So let's take a look at the *Sifra* on this *parshah*. The compilation of *breisos* on *Sefer Vayikra*, is called the *Sifra*. It's known as *Toras Kohanim* in *lashon hakodesh* and *Sifra* in Aramis. Do you know what it's called in *Shemos*? *Mechilta*. Do you know what it's called in *Bereishis*? *Pesikta*. Do you know what it's called on *Bamidbar* and *Devarim*? The *Sifri*.

THE DEATH OF AHARON'S SONS WAS MEKADESH THE MISHKAN

The *Sifra* on this *parshah* says that Aharon was standing in amazement at what happened to his two sons.¹ Moshe came to him and משה אצלו, he was appeasing him, ואמר לו, and he said to him, אהרן אחי, "Aharon my brother, from Sinai it was told to me, והיה מפייס, Hashem said: I'm going to be *mekadesh* the *Mishkan*. Hashem told me His plan and Hashem told me: באדם גדול אני מקדשו, I'm going to be *mekadesh* it with a big person, והייתי סבר, I thought it's either with me or with you that the House will become *niskadesh*. עכשיו נמצאו, now we see that your children are greater than me and you. You know why? Because it was with them that the *Mishkan* was *niskadesh*." So when Aharon heard this, צדק עליו את הדין ושתק, he accepted the *din* and was quiet.

This teaches us an amazing *yesod*, that the *misas tzaddikim* wasn't a *mikra* (coincidence). The *misas tzaddikim* was a part of *kiddush haMishkan*. This episode occurred on *yom hashemini l'milu'im*. Hakadosh Baruch Hu was *mekadesh* the *Mishkan* on that day. His *Shechinah* was coming down to the world. So our question is why did they die *davka* in this time? But the whole question is a mistake. It wasn't just an episode that happened in that specific time and place. That was part of the *ma'arachah*, the order that was planned from the beginning. The job of the *Mishkan* is to reveal the *middas hadin* in this world. When we talk about the *kedushah* and the *kavod* that this Home gave off, it says ונועדתי שמה לבני ישראל, and I will meet over there with the Bnei Yisrael, ונקדש, I will become sanctified through My *kavod* (Shemos 29:43) In other words, the whole *inyan* of the *Mishkan*, of having a physical house, is to deepen the recognition of the *kedushah* of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, of the One who resides in it.

The purpose of the *Mishkan* is to make you aware of the *kedushah* of the One inside it. That was part of the *korbanos*. The *korbanos* served that purpose. You know why? With *korbanos*, people were *makriv* animals instead of themselves. It was a sign of a *bitul*. You were *mevatel*. It was a *bitul* of the *nimtza'im*, of the people in the world, *klapei* Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and the animals were just representatives of ourselves. That's the whole *inyan* of a *korban*.

So the whole idea was that Hashem planned that the *Mishkan* should be consecrated with a major *kiddush Hashem*. How? By having *gedolim*, the greatest *gedolim* of Klal Yisrael, die on that day. When people see the *middas hadin* being *pogea*, coming in contact with the *yodei haMakom*, the people who are close to Hakadosh Baruch Hu, you know what happens? It clarifies how great the *kavod* of Hakadosh Baruch Hu is. How even the smallest *pegiah* can cause a *hanhagah* of such a harsh *din*. The *din* of *tzaddikim* shows how even *tzaddikim* are *batel* to Hashem. Even *tzaddikim* don't exist independently. Even the biggest *tzaddik* is *batel* to Hakadosh Baruch Hu. That's why this episode took place *davka* on the day of *hakamas haMishkan*, because it was a *chelek* of the *chanukas haMishkan*. Hakadosh Baruch Hu demonstrated His awesome power and His awesome *kedushah*, and this implanted *yirah*, a deep fear, in the hearts of the people. That was the whole purpose of Har Sinai, ובעבור נסות אתכם, and in order that there should be יראת ה' על פניכם. Hakadosh Baruch Hu wanted to be *mechanech* the *Mishkan* in order that Klal Yisrael should remember the founding of the *Mishkan*.

THE DIN CAUSES YIRAH OF HASHEM

It says in the *passuk*: "Through those near to Me, I shall be sanctified, and before all the people I will be honored" (Vayikra 10:3). Rashi says, מִקְרָא, when Baruch Hu metes out *din* to *tzaddikim*, He becomes feared, ומהתעלה ומתקלס, exalted and praised. People fear Hashem. He becomes elevated. אם כן באלו, and if it's true with these great *tzaddikim* כִּי שָׁכַן בְּרִשְׁעִים, how much more so is it true in the case of the wicked! That's why it says מִמִּקְדָּשֶׁיךָ, Rashi says: אל תקרי, don't read 'from your sanctuaries' but 'because of your sanctified ones.' That means the *middas hadin* testifies on the great distance that exists between a *nivra*, us, and the Borei, the Creator, and it strengthens the knowledge that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is *muvdal umufrash min haolam* and every *metzius* is *batel* to Him totally. That's what a person has to know. That's what the *passuk* says בקרובי אקדש, I will become *kadosh*. Do you know what the word *kedushah* means? *Muvdal umufrash*. That's what the word *kedushah* means, *muvdal*, separated, and *mufrash*, and beyond, and we can't even begin to imagine or be *ma'arich* Hashem. We don't have a familiarity. And that's what it says in *Shemos* (29:43), ונועדתי שמה לבני ישראל, it's going to be a meeting place with My people, ונקדש, and I'm going to become *kadosh*, ובכבודי, and the Midrash says: אל תקרי בכבודי אלא בכבודי, through my respected ones - Nadav and Avihu.

Now you understand why the *cheit* of Nadav and Avihu was a *nekudah* of *yiras shamayim*. That was the *cheit*. Whatever the *pshat* is, the *shores hadavar* was because there was some lack of *yirah* of Hashem. That's what it says.

¹ כיצד היתה מיתתן? שני חוטין של אש יצאו מבית קדשי הקדשים ונחלקו לארבעה. שנים נכנסו בחוטמו של זה ושנים בחוטמו של זה, ונשרף גופם ובגדיהם קיימים שנאמר "ותצא אש מלפני ה'". היה אהרן עומד ותוהא, אומר "אוי לי, כך עבירה בידי ובידי בני שכך הגעתי". נכנס משה אצלו והיה מפייס. אמר לו: אהרן אחי, מסיני נאמר לי "עתידי אני לקדש את הבית הזה - באדם גדול אני מקדשו". הייתי סבור או בי או בר בית מתקדש. עכשיו נמצאו בניך גדולים ממני וממך שבהם הבית נתקדש. כיון ששמע אהרן כך - צדק עליו את הדין ושתק שנאמר "וידם אהרן". ולומדים צדיקים שמצדיקים עליהם את הדין. אברהם צדק עליו את הדין שנאמר (בראשית יח, כז) "ואנכי עפר ואפר" עקב צדק עליו את הדין שנאמר (בראשית לב, יא) "קטנתי מכל החסדים ומכל האמת אשר עשית את עבדך".

You saw it in Rashi. Rashi brought down a *Tana DeRabi Yishmael*. It says *לֹא מִתּוֹ שְׁנֵי בְנֵי אֹהֶרֶן אֲלֵא מִפְּנֵי שִׁנְכֻסּוֹ שְׁתֵּי יָיִן*, they entered after having made a *lechaim*. A kohen is not allowed to go into the *Beis Hamikdash* if he drank a *revi's* of *yayin*. You think it means they were *shikur* from a *revi's* of wine? No. It's forbidden even after drinking just a *revi's*. You know why? Because if it could possibly impair your mind, your thinking, in the slightest bit, then you won't understand, you won't *ma'arich* the *yirah* of Hashem properly.

Now Rav Tzadok said: what's the *pshat* they went in drunk? He says *chas vechalilah*. These were *tzaddikim*. You know what they did? They went in with a little extra *simchah*. They were feeling the *simchah*. It was the first day of the *avodah* in the *Mishkan* (Rosh Chodesh Nissan). This was the greatest day. This was their moment in history. They were *makriv* at this moment. It says *yayin* is *יִשְׂמַח לִבּוֹ אִישׁוֹ*, wine gladdens a man's heart. They made a *l'chaim*. They were in a *matzav* of *simchah*. And what this caused was a diminishing of the *yirah*. There's a *passuk* that says *וְגִילּוֹ בְּרַעְדָּה*, you have to have rejoice with fear, with trembling. There was a *mi'ut* of *derech eretz* and *yirah*. Where else do you find such a thing in the *chumash*? It says in the *passuk*, *וַיַּחֲזוּ אֶת הָאֱלֹקִים וַיֹּאכְלוּ*, (Shemos 24:11). Remember by Har Sinai? It says, "they saw Hashem and they ate." They were so overcome with *simchah*. A person has to remember that sometimes you can't become familiar with Hashem. You can't imagine that you're His 'buddy.' You always have to remember that you're *batel* to His *metzius*.

You definitely have to demonstrate *yirah*. The *metzius* is that kohanim work in the *Beis Hamikdash*. They do the job, you know what I mean? *L'ma'aseh*, they could feel a certain *heimishkeit*. They feel *k'mo babayit*. *Habayit sheli*. You have to remember this was a *chisaron* of *morah klapei* Hakadosh Baruch Hu, so Hakadosh Baruch Hu chose them to be the vehicles to *megaleh*, to reveal, the *morah*, the fear, of Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

In *Sha'ar Hagilgulim*, Rav Chaim Vital says that his *rebbe*, the Arizal, explained to him something unique about Shimshon Hagibor, based on the *passuk* in Shmuel *alef* (12:11). The *passuk* says as follows: *וַיִּשְׁלַח ה' אֶת יִרְבֶּעֶל וְאֶת בְּדָן*, "and Hashem sent Yerubbaal and Bedan." Rashi says: *בְּדָן זֶה שְׁקִיטוֹן*. Why do they call him Bedan? You know what the Arizal says? Shimshon was a *gilgul* of Nadav, the son of Aharon Hakohen, and that's why the Torah refers to him as Bedan. Bedan backwards spells Nadav. Arizal says that one of the reasons why Nadav died was because he didn't want to get married. Nadav and Avihu were very holy. They were so into Hashem that they didn't want to get married. They said there's none among the *Bnos Yisrael* who are *hagunah lanu*, who are fit for us.

SHIMSHON WAS MESAKEN NADAV'S CHEIT

That's why Shimshon, who was the *gilgul* of Nadav, was punished. He was grinding flour with the Philistine women in the jail. Because he said there were no Jewish women. Nadav also felt there were no Jewish women that were fit for him. So as a punishment for that, when he came back as Shimshon, he was forced to grind flour, to work in the kitchen, with *goyishe* women.

Then it says (Rashi, Vayikra 10:2) *וְשִׁתְּוֵי יָיִן נָכְסוּ לְמִקְדָּשׁ*, they came in *shtuyei yayin*, while intoxicated. That's why Shimshon was a *nazir min habeten*. You know what a *nazir* is? A *nazir* can't drink wine. Shimshon was *nazir* to be *mesaken* what he messed up in his previous lifetime. You think his death was a *tikun*? Yes, he still needed a *tikun*.

Now, let's understand this. The Arizal is telling us that because Nadav went into the *Mishkan* on this day *shetuyei yayin*, having drunk wine, and he was *pogeh* in the *middas hayirah*, therefore he came back to the world as Shimshon to be *mesaken* that by becoming a *nazir olam*. A *nazir olam* is somebody who is *muval* and *mufrash* from *yayin* in an extreme way.

As a result, the *middas hadin* was revealed to the world. Do you know why? He was given immense power because of that. Shimshon was Shimshon Hagibor. He had the *gevurah* of *din*. That *gevurah* came from *middas hadin*. He was able to punish *reshaim* and to be *mekadesh shem Hashem yisbarach* in the world. That's why it says *וַיִּשַׁלְחֵם ה' אֶת יִרְבֶּעֶל וְאֶת בְּדָן וַיִּצַּל*, He saved you, מִד, "he delivered you from your enemies around you; and you dwelt in security" (ibid). Shimshon was *mesaken* that *bechinah*.

It's interesting to note that Nadav comes from the term "*nedavah*," a free spirit. But Dan is a term of *din*, judgment, the opposite of Nadav, free spirit. It's amazing to start to see the things with a *shtickel mehalech* over here.

MISAS TZADDIKIM IS MECHAPER THE DOR

Now, whenever *tzaddikim* leave this world, *middas hadin* is removed from this world. *Misas tzaddikim* is *mechaper* on the sins of the generation. It's a quote from *chazal*. Therefore, you know what we read on Yom Kippur, the day of *kapparah*? We read this *parshah* of *misas bnei Aharon*. You know why we read it? It should be a *kapparah* for the sins of Klal Yisrael.

My grandfather (Rav Avigdor Miller) would always say that whoever cries when the *parshah* of *misas bnei Aharon* is read on Yom Kippur, their kids will not die in their lifetime.² He used to say that when he was a little boy, he remembers people used to cry when this episode was read in shul on Yom Kippur. They didn't want their kids to die in their lifetime. This is based on the Zohar (ibid) in Parshas Acharei Mos, which says: *בְּיוֹם הַזֶּה קוֹרִים אַחֲרֵי מוֹת בְּנֵי אֹהֶרֶן*, on this day (i.e., Yom Kippur) we read this episode, כדי שישמעו העם, so that the people listen. It doesn't say you should be davening from a *machzor*; it says the *am* should listen to this - *וַיִּצְטַעַר*, and they should be pained over the loss of *tzaddikim*. Then they will have *kapparah* for their sins. Anyone who's *metztaer* over the loss of *tzaddikim*, Hakadosh Baruch Hu makes an announcement about them. You know what it says? *סָר עוֹנוֹיְךָ וְחַטָּאתְךָ תִּכּוּפֶר*, your sins should be removed and forgiven, and not only that, but *וְלֹא עוֹד*, your children will not die during your lifetime. About this, the *passuk* says in the Navi: *וַיִּרְאֵה זֶרַע יֶאֱרִיךְ יָמִים*, "he will see his offspring with long life" (Isaiah 53:10). When they talk about the death of *tzaddikim*, that reveals the *middas hadin*. The *middas hadin* instills *yirah*. You recognize the greatness of Hashem. The more one is pained over the death of *tzaddikim*, the more it shows that he's connected to the *middah* of *din*, because he realizes that *middas hadin* took away such a big *tzaddik* from us. Now he recognizes the *mora* - fear - of Hashem, the *kavod* of

² בכל זמן שהצדיקים מסתלקים מן העולם, מסתלקים מן העולם הדינים, ומיתם של הצדיקים מכפר על עונות הדור. וע"כ פרשת בני אהרן, אנו קוראים ביום הכפורים, שתהיה כפרה לעונות ישראל, אמר הקב"ה, התעסקו במיתם של צדיקים אלו, ויהיה נחשב לכם, כאלו אתם מקריבים קרבנות ביום הזה לכפר עליכם. שלמדנו, כל זמן שישראל יהיו בגלות, ולא יקריבו קרבנות ביום הזה, ולא יוכלו להקריב שני שעירים, יהיה להם זכרון של שני בני אהרן, ויכופר להם. וע"כ ביום הזה, יוה"כ, קוראים, אחרי מות שני בני אהרן, כדי שישמעו העם ויצטערו על הצדיקים שנאבדו, ויתכפרו להם עונותיהם. כי כל המצטער על צדיקים שנאבדו, או מוריד דמעות עליהם, הקב"ה מכריז עליו ואומר, "וסר עונך וחסאתך תכופר". ולא עוד, אלא שלא ימותו בניו בימיו. ועליו כתוב, "יראה זרע יאריך ימים" וגו'. (כמובא בס' סוד ושורש העבודה, וזה הפירוש של זה"ק)

Hakadosh Baruch Hu, who took away such a big tzaddik for a small *chisaron*. That's what the *passuk* says ועל פני כל העם בקרובי אקדש. And that's why somebody who has pain over the loss of tzaddikim will have kapparrah for his *avonos* because he is *mesaken* the *shoresh* of the *cheit*. The *shoresh* of the *cheit* is lack of honor and fear of Hashem. And that's what causes the *middas hadin* to leave the world. Once a person has the *yirah* in his heart there's no reason anymore to cause loss of more *nefashos*.

CRYING BRINGS FORGIVENESS

You should know this is a *Gemara* in *Shabbos* (105b). The *Gemara* says, anyone who cries over an *adam kasher* who dies, they forgive all his sins. It says *adam kasher*, a kosher man. אמר רבי שמעון בן פזי אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי משום בר קפרא כל המוריד דמעות, anybody who lets tears down, for a kosher man, הקדוש ברוך הוא סופרן, Hakadosh Baruch Hu counts those tears, ומניחן בבית גנוז, and He places them in His storehouses. Do you know which storehouse that is? That's the storehouse mentioned in the *Gemara* in *Brachos* (33b): אין לו להקדוש ברוך הוא בבית גנוז אלא אוצר של יראת שמים שנאמר יראת ה' הוא אצרו: "The Holy One, Blessed be He, has nothing in his treasury other than a treasure of fear of Heaven, as it is stated: 'Yiras Hashem, that is His treasure'" (Yeshaya 33:6). So the tears that you cry for an *adam kasher*, you know what it does? It's connected to the *middas hayirah* and that's why Hashem puts them away in the *otzar* of *yiras shamayim*. Through them, Hakadosh Baruch Hu becomes full of *rachamim* for Klal Yisrael.

It comes out that the *misah* of *shnei bnei Aharon* is the conclusion of the *korbanos*. The *korbanos* began in *Sefer Vayikra*, with *Parshas Vayikra*, *Tzav* and then *Shemini*. *Shemini* is the story at the end of the *korbanos* because the whole idea of *korbanos* is to express and show a complete *hisbatlus*, nullification - I'm *mevatel* myself to Hakadosh Baruch. So, too, the *misah* of *bnei Aharon* shows that also.

AVEILUS SHOULD AWAKEN PEOPLE

And that's the whole idea of all *aveilus*. When somebody is an *avel* he should see the *din* of Hakadosh Baruch Hu. The Rambam (Hilchos Aveilus 13:12) says: כל מי שאינו מתאבל, if a person does not mourn, כמו שציוו חכמים הרי זה אכזרי, he is ruthless. אלא יפחד, he should be afraid, וידאג, he should be worried, ויפשפש במעשיו, he should search his own *ma'asim*, ויחזור בתשובה.³ The Rambam says, אחד מבני החבורה שמת תדאג כל החבורה כולה. You know how an *avel* is supposed to think of himself? He says, whenever you're an *avel* or it's one in your *chaburah* who dies, כל שלשה ימים הראשונים יראה את עצמו, the first three days a person should see himself, כאילו חרב מונחת לו על הצוואר, as if there's a sword on his neck. משלשה ועד שבעה, the next four days, he should see it as if it's being carried in front of you in the street. You hear that? What's the *pshat*? What's the whole purpose? To wake up. The Ramban says you have to prepare yourself. You've got to wake up from your sleep. That's the purpose. If you see a sword in front of you, you have to wake up. Get serious. The Rambam says מכלל שצריך להקיץ, a person needs to awaken.

Based on this, we could also understand the famous *medrash* of the *asarei harugei malchus*. It says the soldiers said to Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua, "If your G-d is such a בשמים מלך גדול הוא בשמים, why doesn't He save you?" So he said אמר להם כדי שיתבע דמנו מכם, "Hashem wants that He should exact our blood from you." That means *kol zman* that we're not *zocheh* to the *geulah*, Hakadosh Baruch Hu is *megaleh*, reveals His *middas hadin* in the world through the death of tzaddikim. But *leasid lavo* (in the future) you should know Hakadosh Baruch Hu will reveal His *middas hadin* by taking vengeance from all those nations that were *metza'er Yisrael*. That's what it says. ונקיתי דמם לא נקיתי. Hashem says: I won't forgive you, וה' שוכן בציון. That means Hashem said: I can possibly forgive them for other sins, but I won't forgive them for spilling the blood of Bnei Yehudah. When is that going to be? When שוכן בציון, hopefully *bimeheirah b'yameinu amen*. That's what he said, שיתבע דמנו מכם. It means to be *megaleh* the *middas hadin*. Right now, we're not *zocheh*. When Klal Yisrael needs a big *kapparrah*, Hashem brings a *misas tzaddikim*. Hopefully, many Yidden cry from that, get aroused to *yiras shamayim* and it becomes a major *kapparrah*.

THE FUTURE HALACHAH AND HANHAGAH

In conclusion, I will tell you just one thing you should know. You may have heard a little bit about it. We know of the *machlokes* between Beis Hillel and Beis Shammai, and the *halachah* is like Beis Hillel and not like Beis Shammai. But *l'asid lavo*, the *halachah* is going to be like Beis Shammai. We have to understand this. If nowadays the *halachah* is like Beis Hillel, why is it going to change *l'asid lavo*? The answer is that Shammai and Hillel had two opposite *shitos*. The *shitah* of Shammai was *middas hadin*. Shammai was known to be a *kapdan*. He was *makpid*, very *makpid*. He demanded perfection. He didn't tolerate nonsense. But many people mistakenly think Shammai was a *ka'asan*. He was an angry person. He had a temper, a temperamental being. That's why he had a *shitah*. *Chas v'chalah*. The Maharal, Rav Tzadok, the Arizal, and Rav Yisrael Salanter write that Shammai's *neshamah* and his *shoresh* was *middas hadin*, *middas hagevurah*. Shammai, you should know, lived on the highest level. He strove to live completely up to *middas hadin*. On the other hand, Hillel was *ochez b'middas hachessed* and therefore he was *mesnaheg* in the *ofen* of *rachamim*. That's why generally, Beis Shammai is always *machmir* and Beis Hillel is always *meikel*, because the *middah* of Shammai is rooted in *gevurah*, in strictness, and the *middah* of Hillel is rooted in *rachamim*. You hear that?

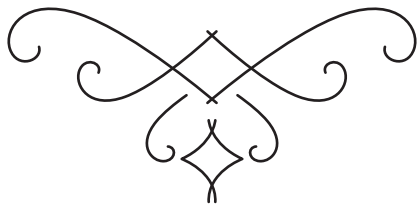
Now we can understand why *l'asid lavo* it's going to change. The whole reason why the *halachah* is like Beis Hillel is not because they're more correct than Beis Shammai. The famous *gemara* in *Eiruvin* (13b) says: יצא בת קול ואמרה אילו ואילו דברי אלקים, but *halachah* is like Beis Hillel.⁴ The reason why the *halachah* was established according to Beis Hillel is simply because the *hanhagah*, the way Hashem runs the world, is *al pi chessed v'rachamim*. The *halachah* therefore was established according to Beis Hillel because that's how Hashem conducts the world, with *chedes*. עולם הסד יבנה. *Rachamim*. He saw the world could not be *meskayem*. But *l'asid lavo*, the *hanhagah* is going to be with *middas hadin*. Then the *halachah* is going to be like Beis Shammai. That's their *middah*. Therefore, in the World to Come, there's no *rachamim*. That's why you hear stories about people coming back to this world for the slightest

³ כל מי שאינו מתאבל כמו שציוו חכמים הרי זה אכזרי. אלא יפחד וידאג ויפשפש במעשיו ויחזור בתשובה. ואחד מבני חבורה שמת תדאג כל החבורה כלה. כל שלשה ימים הראשונים יראה את עצמו כאלו חרב מונחת לו על צווארו. ומשלשה ועד שבעה [כאלו היא] מנחת בקרן זוית. מכאן ואילך [כאלו] עוברת כנגדו בשוק. כל זה להכין עצמו ויחזור ויעור משנתו. והרי הוא אומר הפיתה אתם ולא חלו מכלל שצריך להקיץ ולחול.

⁴ אמר רבי אבא אמר שמואל: שלש שנים נחלקו בית שמאי ובית הלל, הללו אומרים: הלקה כמותנו, והללו אומרים: הלקה כמותנו. יצאה בת קול ואמרה: אלו ואלו דברי אליהם חיים הן, והלקה קבית הלל

misconduct, not even a fraction. I told you a story on Shabbos that a kid nursed from a *goyishe* lady and that's why he couldn't get higher in *Shamayim*. That's called *din*. *Din* is the reason why Nadav died a *misah meshuneh b'sha'as ma'aseh* and had to come back in Shimshon to be *mesaken* his mistake in this world. That's *middas hadin*.

It comes out both *shitos* are *mechaven l'emes*, but the *hanhagah* of *olam hazeh* is different from that of *olam haba*. This is a very important *yesod*. Understanding the whole *yesod* of *misas tzaddikim* and our relationship to them is *mushrash* in this *parshah*.



❧ IN CONCLUSION ❧

The powerful episode of the *misas shnei bnei Aharon* occurred on the eighth day of the *miluim*, while Hashem was being *mekadesh* the Mishkan. *Chazal* say the *shoresh* of the *cheit* of Nadav and Avihu was a lack of *yirah* of Hashem. The two sons of Aharon were very great people, and their passing was not a coincidence. On the contrary, it was part of the *kiddush haMishkan*, and served to reveal Hashem's *middas hadin* in *Olam Haze*. Regarding the Mishkan, *Chazal* say that the *misas shnei bnei Aharon* made *Klal Yisrael* more aware of the *kedushah* of the Mishkan and Hashem Who dwells inside it. *Klal Yisrael* saw that even great *tzaddikim* are *batul* to Hashem, and they saw how great the *kavod* of Hakadosh Baruch Hu is. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu becomes feared, He becomes elevated, as it says *נורא אלקים ממקדשיך*. The deep *yirah* that came out of the episode strengthened the hearts of the people in their fear of Hashem. Whenever there is *misas tzaddikim*, the establishment of *yirah* helps to bring us to the next stage, one of *rachamim*. Once *yirah* is ingrained in our hearts, there is no reason to cause further loss of *nefashos*. At that point, Hakadosh Baruch Hu becomes full of *rachamim* for *Klal Yisrael*. This week, I will think about the concept of *misas tzaddikim* and how I can respond to it with improvement in *avodas Hashem* by taking my *avodas Hashem* more seriously to ultimately bring greater *rachamim* to myself and others.