המוסד למען קדושת חיי אדם

Saving Jewish Lives



Healing Jewish Hearts

TORAH READING:
Shemini: Leviticus 9:1-11:47

The torah reading this week, Shemini 9:1-11:47, begins on the 'eighth' day - the day following seven days establishing the Tabernacle for the Divine Presence. Aaron and his four sons assume their priestly duties, preparing the various and plentiful sacrifices that are necessary to atone for the sin of the Golden Calf that had taken place almost a year previously. God's presence among the Jewish people is contingent upon a sincere expression of regret for this egregious display of idolatry. Only after Aaron prepares the sacrifices according to Moses' instructions and prays to God that his sin be forgiven does the whole nation witness a Divine fire descend from Heaven to consume the sacrifices, after which the Divine Presence remains to dwell in the Tabernacle.

The priestly duties are explicitly transmitted directly from God to Moses, and to Aaron and his sons, establishing a fundamental relationship between the Almighty and the children of Israel based on unconditional obedience to God's will. In the Tabernacle, sinning by defying the clear cut guidelines for priestly service means death. When Aaron's two older sons, Nadav and Avihu, offer incense to God without permission, their souls are literally incinerated while their bodies are left untouched. This shows us that even seemingly righteous, justifiable actions when done outside the purview of God's will constitute sin and lead to spiritual death. Upon activating our self will, we sever our covenantal relationship with HaShem, without which our soul withers and dies.

In the Haftorah portion this week, II Samuel 6:1–19, a similar fate befalls Uzza, a righteous man immediately struck dead when he attempts to save the Ark from tumbling over during transport by grabbing onto it. Although his motives are good, his action is beyond the dictates of HaShem.

These terrifying lessons in Torah warn us to carefully examine whether our ideas and actions align with, or supplant, God's will. Many Jews disregard or never learn Torah's life affirming principles that sanctify human life from conception to natural death, value each human being as created in the image of God, and exact a penalty from heaven for harming a child in the womb. Decades of abortion industry propaganda has convinced good hearted, well intentioned Jews to advocate for unlimited abortion access, and to feel good about seeking abortion for unplanned pregnancy, leading to tragic deaths of vast numbers of children and spiritual death to those involved. We pray that these spiritually desolate souls find renewed life through sincere prayer to HaShem for forgiveness and with acts of service based on lovingkindness and mercy for all God's children, including our precious children in the womb.