



In Parshat Sh'mini, Aharon loses two sons and is immediately commanded by Moshe to offer up a meal-offering and a sin offering, following which Moshe inquired of Aharon and his sons as to why they did not eat of the meat of the sin-offering, nor of the Mincha. Moshe's question is perplexing because a person in Aharon's situation (his being an ONEIN) is forbidden to eat of a sacrificial offering (Rashi on Vayikra 10:12).

Aharon responded that in the eyes of G-d, eating the meat in his current state was not appropriate - and Moshe acquiesces. But why did Moshe originally instruct Aharon to disregard this prohibition? And why did Aharon and sons, yes, first eat of the meal-offering (which seemingly negates his argument to Moshe) and then decline to eat the flesh of the sin offering? And why did Moshe accept Aharon's justification?

Rashi explains that the meal-offering was a one-time celebration of the inauguration of the sacrifices, while the sin-offering was to be a regular Rosh Chodesh event. Aharon

reasoned that Moshe's instruction to eat the flesh was a unique matter that only applied to the festive offering. From Moshe's highly spiritual perspective, however, the first-time ever Rosh Chodesh sin-offering (and its flesh) was an opportunity to rectify the Moon's audacity in requesting to be of equal size to the sun (cf. Midrash), that mirrored Adam's appetite for power in the Garden of Eden. Ah! It could have inaugurated a messianic period - and now the Jewish people will, like the Moon, have to wax and wane till another opportunity will arise. Speedily - and in our days. **MP**