

Sedra Highlight

- Dr Jacob Solomon

T'TZAVEH

This is what you shall offer on the Mizbei'ach... one lamb in the morning and another lamb in the morning... it is a regular burnt offering before G-d... where I, G-d, will set my place of meeting for speaking to you (29:38-42).

The long and elaborate details of the ceremonies that were to inaugurate the completed Mishkan into regular service finish by telling us about the daily proceedings there: the Korban Tamid, the twice-daily communal offering. Though what we read here is virtually identical with the p'sukim in Parashat Pinchas that we say daily in the early part of Shacharit. The Ha'amek Davar observes that this passage differs in two essentials. Here, the Torah links it with the Ohel Mo'ed, the place where G-d will rest His presence in the most intense form. There, but not here, it describes the Korban Tamid as LACHMI - My food. The Ha'amek Davar suggests that in this parasha the emphasis is on the Korban Tamid's role in maintaining the closeness between G-d and Israel as they move from place to place encamped in the wilderness. In contrast, in Parashat Pinchas, the emphasis was that the twice daily offerings would bring wealth to the

nation. Am Yisrael, in parting with wealth for such worship in order to maintain 'My food' - G-d's twice-daily service, will in turn be blessed with even greater riches.

In addition, the introduction to the Ein Ya'akov quotes an unattributed Midrashic source which opens with R. Akiva's claim that V'AHAVTA L'REI'ACHA KAMOCHA - you shall love your neighbour as yourself is a general rule in the Torah. But it then proceeds to consider other general rules in the Torah that some hold to be even greater. The final one on that list is Shimon ben Pazi claim for ET HAKEVES ECHAD TA'ASEH BABOKER, V'EIT HAKEVES HASHEINI TA'ASEH BEIN HA'ARBAYIM - one lamb in the morning, one lamb in the evening. Up jumped an unnamed Tanna instantly declaring: "The Halacha goes according to Ben Pazi!" Not V'AHAVTA L'REICHA KAMOCHA, but ET HAKEVES ECHAD TA'ASEH BABOKER.

This could be explained in the following way. Checking in with G-d and mitzva observance is not something you do when the mood or circumstances feel right, but something that you do every day, whether you're ready for it or not. That is the great general rule in the Torah, exemplified by ET HAKEVES ECHAD TA'ASEH BABOKER. Not only at special occasions, stunning inaugura-

tions, great tensions, or spectacular yeshuot, but daily, persistently, whether your mood is aligned or not. Particular difficult with Mincha in the fast-paced working day or Arvit coming home exhausted after a hard day's graft. Impressive as the inauguration of the Mishkan would be, it would not be an end in itself. The Mishkan was to be fully active and operational from that moment onwards, as a place of regular meeting with G-d who was at the elbow of the people as they travelled through hostile territory and depended on Providence to get them through lands with: "snake, fiery serpent, and scorpion, and thirst where there was no water... bringing water out of the rock of the flint" (D'varim 8:15). Once they were secure in settled lands, they had a firm experience of G-d at their elbow which they would pass on to future generations. This is where the repeat ET HAKEVES ECHAD comes in. It was not spectacular miracles, but a covenant with G-d guaranteeing prosperity to His people as long as they follow His ways. His ways include regular service. Then it was the daily korbanot, now it is Shacharit, Mincha and Arvit. Not just remembering Him when you happen to feel like it. Regular Torah study, regular t'fila, constant g'milat chasadim... the importance of ET HAKEVES TA'ASEH implies the impact of our traditions on us and our

communities as we engage in them daily, year in year out, from generation to generation, 'come rain or shine'. 🌿📖