

טעמו וראו

A taste of the
Rebbe's teachings

**Parshat Acharei Mot-
Kedoshim**

>>

Why Did They Cry?

In the Second Temple era, tensions between the Sadducees and the Pharisees would come to a head when the leading rabbis would coach the High Priest for his worship on Yom Kippur.

They would all leave in tears. What exactly was going on?

In honor of

Rabbi **Sholom Ber & Chaya Mushka Shuchat,**

and their children,

Brocho Lifsha, Aliza, & Shaindel.

Part 1: The Yom Kippur Tradition

Source 1 Leviticus 16:2-4, 12-13

G-d said to Moses: Tell your brother Aaron not to indiscriminately enter the inner sanctuary behind the curtain concealing the Ark, and he will not die, for in a cloud I will appear on the ark's cover. Aaron should enter this inner sanctuary with a young bull for a Sin Offering and a ram for a Burnt Offering. He must wear a sacred linen tunic and linen pants, gird himself with a linen sash, and bind his head with a linen turban. These are sacred garments; he must immerse in water and then don them.

He shall take a pan-full of fiery coals from the Altar before G-d and a double handful of fine *ketoret*-incense and bring them beyond the curtain. And he shall place the incense on the fire before G-d; the *ketoret*-smoke will envelop the cover of the Ark of Testimony, and he will not die.

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל־מֹשֶׁה דַּבֵּר אֶל־
אַהֲרֹן אַחִיךָ וְאַל־יָבֹא בְּכַל־עֵת
אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ מִבֵּית לְפָרֹכֶת אֶל־
פְּנֵי הַכַּפֹּרֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל־הָאָרוֹן
וְלֹא יָמוּת, כִּי בָעֲנָן אֶרְאֶה עַל־
הַכַּפֹּרֶת: בְּזֹאת יָבֹא אַהֲרֹן אֶל־
הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּפָר בֶּן־בָּקָר לְחַטָּאת
וְאֵיל לְעֹלָה: כִּתְנֶת־בֶּד קֹדֶשׁ
לְבָשׁ, וּמְכַנְסֵי־בֶד יִהְיוּ עַל־
בָּשָׂרוֹ, וּבְאַבְנֵי בֶד יַחְגֹּר,
וּבְמִצְנָפֶת בֶּד יִצְנֹף, בְּגָדֵי־קֹדֶשׁ
הֵם, וְרָחַץ בַּמַּיִם אֶת־בָּשָׂרוֹ
וּלְבָשָׁם:

וְלָקַח מִלֵּאֵי־הַמִּחְתָּה גִּחְלֵי־אֵשׁ
מֵעַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ מִלִּפְנֵי ה', וּמְלֵא
חֲפָנָיו קִטְרֶת סַמִּים דָּקָה,
וְהֵבִיא מִבֵּית לְפָרֹכֶת: וְנָתַן
אֶת־הַקִּטְרֶת עַל־הָאֵשׁ לִפְנֵי ה',
וְכֶסֶה עָנָן הַקִּטְרֶת אֶת־הַכַּפֹּרֶת

Source 2 Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of the Yom Kippur Service, 1:7

Heresy sprung up in Israel in the Second Temple era, and the Sadducees emerged—may they speedily perish—who rejected the Oral Law. They maintained that the Yom Kippur incense is first placed on coals in the outer sanctuary, outside the curtain [of the Holy of Holies] and when its smoke rises, it is brought into the Holy of Holies.

בַּיָּמִי בֵּית שְׁנֵי צִפְּי הַמִּינּוֹת
בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. וַיֵּצְאוּ הַצְּדוּקִיִּם מִהֲרָה
יֵאָבְדוּ שְׂאִינָן מֵאַמִּינִין בְּתוֹרָה
שְׁבַעֲלָפָה. וְהָיוּ אוֹמְרִין שֶׁקִּטְרֶת
שֶׁל יוֹם הַכְּפוּרִים מְנִיחִין אוֹתָהּ
עַל הָאֵשׁ בְּהֵיכַל חוּץ לְפָרֹכֶת
וְכִשְׁנִיעֶלָה עֲשָׂנָה מְכַנֵּס אוֹתָהּ
לִפְנֵים לְקֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדְשִׁים.

Their rationale was based on Torah's phrase, "For in a cloud I will appear on the ark's cover." They understood this as a reference to the cloud of incense. But our sages learned from the Oral Tradition that the incense is to be placed [on the coals] in the Holy of Holies, before the Ark, as the verse states: "And he shall place the incense on the fire before G-d."

Since the High Priests of the Second Temple era were suspect of heresy, the elders would have him take an oath on the day preceding Yom Kippur. They would tell him: "My sir, the High Priest, we are agents of the court and you are our agent and an agent of the court. We administer an oath to you in the name of 'He Who causes His name to dwell in this house' that you not deviate from our instructions."

He would turn away and cry for being suspected of heresy and they would turn away and cry, because they suspected a person without knowing his opinions. Maybe he had no such thoughts in his heart.

הטעם. זה שכתוב בתורה (ויקרא טז ב) "כי בענן אראה על הכפרת" אמרו כי הוא ענן הקטרת. ומפי השמועה למדו חכמים שאין נוהגין הקטרת אלא בקדש הקדשים לפני הארון. שנאמר (ויקרא טז יג) "ונתן הקטרת על האש לפני ה'".

ולפי שהיו חוששין בבית שני שפא כהן גדול זה נוטה לצד מינות. היו משביעין אותו ערב יום הכפורים ואומרים לו אישי כהן גדול אנו שלוחי בית דין ואתה שלוחנו ושלחי בית דין. משביעין אנו עליך במי ששכח את שמו בבית הזה שלא תשנה דבר שאמרנו לך.

והוא פורש ובוכה על שחשדוהו במינות. והן פורשין ובוכין לפי שחשדו למי שמעשיו סתומין שפא אין בלבם כלום:

>> The Rebbe

Why Were They All Crying?

Maimonides writes:

"Heresy sprung up in Israel in the Second Temple era, and the Sadducees emerged—may they speedily perish—who rejected the Oral Law. They maintained that the Yom Kippur incense is first placed on coals in the Sanctuary, outside the curtain [of the Holy of Holies] and when its smoke rises, it is brought into the Holy of Holies. Their rationale was based on Torah's phrase, 'For in a cloud I

will appear on the ark's cover.' They understood this as a reference to the cloud of incense. But our sages learned from the Oral Tradition that the incense is to be placed [on the coals] in the Holy of Holies, before the Ark, as the verse states: 'And he shall place the incense on the fire before G-d.'

"Since the High Priests of the Second Temple era were suspect of heresy, the elders would have him take an oath on the day preceding Yom Kippur. They would tell him: 'My sir, the High Priest, we are agents of the court and you are our agent and an agent of the court. We administer an oath to you in the name of "He Who causes His name to dwell in this house" that you not deviate from our instructions.' He would turn away and cry for being suspected of heresy and they would turn away and cry, because they suspected a person without knowing his opinions. Maybe he had no such thoughts in his heart."

This is quite puzzling. Why do they force the High Priest to swear that he won't deviate and then cry for suspecting him!? If it is considered undesirable behavior to suspect him, why did they administer the oath without investigating his opinions? And if Torah rules that the oath must be administered regardless, why cry? They had merely fulfilled G-d's instructions!

Another question: Why would the High Priest cry for being administered the oath? Was he responsible for being suspected?

Part 2: The Innocent Suspect

Source 3 Talmud, Tractate Moed Katan 18b

Rabbi Reuven ben Itztrobili said: A person won't be suspected of something unless he did it. If he did not do it fully, he did it partially. If he did not do it partially, he planned to do it. And if he didn't plan to do it, he saw others do it and he was happy.

אמר רבי ראובן בן אצטרובילי:
אין אדם נחשד בדבר אלא אם כן
עשה, ואם לא עשה כולו - עשה
מקצתו, ואם לא עשה מקצתו
- הרהר בלבו לעשותו, ואם לא
הרהר בלבו לעשותו - ראה אחרים
שעשו ושמח.

Source 4 Tanchuma Tetzaveh 15

The High Priest would place the incense in a pan on Yom Kippur and enter the most sacred spot, the Holy of Holies... If the cloud of incense ascended upward like a cluster of grapes, he knew that Israel's sins were forgiven...and his service was acceptable, but if the smoke of the incense did not cover the ark, he knew that he would die.

Consequently, the High Priest and all Israel trembled from the moment the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies until he withdrew in peace. When he would exit, the People of Israel would rejoice that it had been received favorably,

G-d said: Of all the sacrifices you offer, the incense is most beloved...

...Look how precious *ketoret* is—a plague was halted by *ketoret*, as Moses said to Aaron: “Take your fire-pan, and put fire on it from the Altar, and place *ketoret* upon

בשעה שהיה כהן גדול נוטל
את הקטרת באותה מחתה ביום
הכפורים ונכנס לפני ולפנים
בבית קדש הקדשים ... כשהיה
ענו הקטרת מתמר ועולה ופונה
למעלה ונעשה כאשכול, היה
יודע שנתכפרו עונות ישראל...
ושנתקבלו מעשיו. ואם לא כסה
ענו הקטרת, היה יודע שהוא
מת...

נמצאת אומר, שכהן גדול וכל
ישראל מרתיתים בשעה שכהן
גדול נכנס לפני ולפנים, עד
שהיה יוצא משם בשלום. כיון
שהיה יוצא, היתה שמחה גדולה
בישראל שנתקבל ברצון.

אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא: מכל
הקרבנות שאתם מקריבין, אין
חביב עלי כקטרת...

ראה כמה חביב הקטרת, שעל
ידי הקטרת נעצרה המגפה.
בשעה שאמר משה לאהרן, קח

it... Aaron took it as Moses instructed and ran into the midst of the assembly; and behold, the plague had begun among the people...”

את המחתה ותן עליה אש מעל
המזבח ושים קטרת, ויקח אהרן
כאשר דבר משה וירץ אל תוך
הקהל והנה החל הנגף בעם.

>> The Rebbe

They Didn't Ease Their Conscience

The explanation:

“The High Priest would turn away and cry,” because, as our sages taught, “a person won’t be suspect unless...” In other words, if you are suspected, you clearly are somewhat capable of it. If it was indeed out of the question, you would never have been suspected of it.

“They would turn away and cry, because they suspected a person without knowing his opinions. Maybe he had no such thoughts in his heart.”

They were compelled to administer the oath (despite the unpleasantness of the exchange) to ensure that the Yom Kippur service in the Holy of Holies was executed properly.

For, the *ketoret*-service of the High Priest in the Holy of Holies was a most important service that had profound implications for the Jewish people’s upcoming year.

The High Priest’s bull and ram had various levels of significance. There was the sacrifice of the High Priest, of his household and of his tribe, and of the entire People of Israel, and other sacrifices as well. However, the *ketoret* service on Yom Kippur was a singular service that was carried out only once a year, on the holiest day, in the holiest spot—the Holy of Holies, and by the most sanctified Jew in the nation, the “Holy Nation,” as the verse states, “And Aaron was separated to be sanctified as holy of holy.”

Because of the lofty nature of this service, it was important to do everything possible to ensure that it was carried out correctly, even if it would imply that we suspect another Jew.

Nonetheless, they retained their feelings of *Ahavat Yisrael*. They were profoundly disturbed by the fact that they needed to suspect another Jew, even by the command of the Torah, to the point that they were moved to tears, which, [according to Kabbalah] represent extensions of our intellect. In other words, the more they contemplated the matter, the more they could not contain their distress, to the point that it was expressed through tears.

Source 5 Yalkut Shimoni 571

Our rabbis taught: It once happened that a Sadducee burned the incense before entering the Holy of Holies. When he exited, he was overjoyed, and he happened to meet his father.

His father told him: Although we are Sadducees, we are wary of the Pharisees.

He responded: All my days, I was pained by the verse, "For in a cloud I will appear on the ark's cover." When would I have the opportunity to fulfill it? And now that I had the opportunity, I shouldn't fulfill it?

It was said: It wasn't long before he died and was disposed in a garbage heap with worms exiting his nostrils.

תנו רבנן: מעשה בצדוקי
אחר שתקן מבחויץ והכניס,
ביציאתו שמח שמחה גדולה,
פגע בו אביו.

אמר לו אביו: אף על פי
שצדוקין אנו, מתיראין אנו
מהפרושיין.

אמר לו: כל ימי הייתי מצטער
על מקרא זה: כי בענן אראה
על הכפרת אימתי יבא לידי
ואקיימו, עכשו שבא לידי לא
אקיימו!?

אמרו: לא היו ימים מועטין
עד שמת ומטל באשפה והיו
תולעין יוצאין מחוטמו.

Part 3: How to Treat Your Fellow

>> The Rebbe

Take a Lesson From the Elders

Here we see the great value of loving your fellow: The teaching speaks of the day before Yom Kippur, when everyone is occupied with their preparations for the holy day of forgiveness. The elders of the court were making the final preparations to ensure that the Yom Kippur *ketoret* offering in the Holy of Holies would be carried out properly, and they therefore administered the oath to the High Priest. And after they had fulfilled their Torah-given obligation, in a matter so significant and so vital, they would leave in tears, because they were forced to suspect another Jew. And this was canonized as a ruling by Maimonides regarding the Yom Kippur service!

If we need a lesson about the significance of loving your fellow, this one law will do.

As said, the physical Temple no longer exists, but nevertheless, it is represented in a spiritual form through our thoughts and speech (in prayer) and even in action, by fulfilling deeds that aren't limited to the Temple era. The same is true here—we learn a powerful lesson about the significance of loving your fellow.

This all connects to Simchat Torah:

We see that on Simchat Torah, a situation might arise in which you do not properly respect another person's dignity, and it is even possible that you will push him. The above lesson teaches us how careful we must be to preserve another person's dignity. Even when the elders of the court fulfill their obligation, administering the oath of the High Priest to fulfill their instructions [without adding anything else], it still brought them to tears.

We raised this subject because of this situation. If someone suspects that he may have pushed a fellow without pure intentions... everything will be forgiven if you'll apologize to the individual. But it needs to bother you to the point of tears...

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מיזם של "משרד השלוחים"

נוסד בימי השבעה לזכרון ולע"נ הרב גבריאל נח וזוגתו רבקה הי"ד
שלוחי הרבי במזמבאי, הודו

