



Parshas Acharei Mos 2019, they can't break us

This week's Parsha Perspective is dedicated to the memory of Lori Kaye HY"D, the victim of the terrorist attack on the Chabad of Poway last Shabbos. May G-d grant solace and comfort to her family and community and a speedy recovery to those injured in the attack.

Our Parsha has an unfortunate correlation with the horrible attack that happened last Shabbos at the Chabad of Poway. We begin immediately following the death of Aaron's two sons Nadav and Avihu. G-d commands Moshe to tell Aaron and his 2 remaining sons not to go into the Holy of Holies at will, for lest they will share the same consequences as Nadav and Avihu.

Only Aaron can enter the Holy of Holies on the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur. The Torah then details the Kohen Gadol's service on Yom Kippur, which includes the incense offering in the Holy of Holies, and casting lots for the fate of two goats, one for G-d and Azazel.

However, a question comes to mind, why did G-d expound on the service of Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, which includes entering the Holy of Holies immediately following the death of Aaron's two sons in the same place?!

Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein of Chabad of Poway who was injured in the attack issued a message from the hospital immediately following his surgery. He quoted the Lubavitcher Rebbe, "When we are unfortunately hit with tragedy and overcome with darkness, we must be proactive in adding light to the world through acts of kindness."

Rabbi Goldstein asked, that every Jew go to Shul this Shabbos to show our enemies that they did not, and will never sweep us away. Even though the Shul was the site for an unthinkable tragedy, we must unite to fill every Shul to the brim, and show the world that **AM YISRAEL CHAI!**

G-d was telling Aaron that although the Holy of Holies was the location for the untimely death of his two children. He must not shy away from the place where G-d's presence is most felt and where the source of light and blessing is for this world.

In Parshas Shemini, where we read the story of Nadav and Avihu being killed for bringing an unauthorized offering, we read that when Aaron was informed of his sons' death, he said nothing: (10:3) "**And Aaron was silent.**" The meaning of silence is of course ambiguous. However, the Talmud states that silence can be viewed as an admission of guilt or obligation.

However, there is a rabbinic tradition, that Aaron's silence expressed his acceptance of the Divine decree. As painful, and perhaps inexplicable, as his sons' deaths may have been, Aaron deferred to G-d's greater wisdom and was rewarded by being addressed by G-d alone, and taught the laws of Kohanim. We must always pray that G-d reveal His kindness to shine in this world.

In our daily life, it is imperative that we understand, that to overcome failure, we must be able to revisit the place of the loss. Whether it is a physical location, a mental state, or an emotional space. Only then are we able to reconquer the narrative and switch it from failure and defeat to an experience that will strengthen us and help us grow and achieve our potential.

"We are strong, we are united, they can't break us, Am Yisroel Chai".

-Rabbi Yisroel Goldstein to his congregation after being shot in his hand.

Have a meaningful and inspirational Shabbos!

Rabbi Sholom Yemini