



## *Parshas Tzav 2020, our flame shall never be extinguished*

*This week's Parsha Perspective is sponsored in memory of Shlomo Ben Edward; may his soul be uplifted and his memory a blessing.*

*This weekend is a special Shabbos called Shabbos Hagadol; it is customary that the Rabbi gives a speech regarding the intricate and complex laws of Pesach. However, since we are in unique times with social distancing, we must listen to classes online or read some of the many articles concerning the laws of Pesach.*

Our Parsha begins with G-d instructing Moshe to tell his brother Aaron and his sons how to fulfill their duties in the Mishkan. How to perform the various types of sacrifices, and what must be brought along with them. The Parsha concludes with Moshe completing the process of anointing his brother and his descendants to serve in Mishkan and Beis Hamikdash.

However, a question comes to mind: At the beginning of the Parsha, we read about the fire that must be lit continuously on the Mizbeach. The Pasuk states (6:6), *"A continuous fire shall burn on the Mizbeach, and it shall never be put out."* Why does the Torah, which is usually very concise with its wording, add the words *"it shall never be put out"*, if *"A continuous fire"* implies the same result?

Furthermore, the Pasuk right before it (6:5) states the same point, *"And the fire on the Mizbeach shall burn, and never be put out. The Cohen shall add wood to it each morning and then place the Olah offering and the fats of the Shelamim offering upon it."* Why does the Torah repeat the same detail multiple times?

Rashi explains that the Torah adds these seemingly redundant words to teach us that if the fire on the Mizbeach is put out, the person who did so committed two separate transgressions.

The first sin comes from the actual act of putting out the fire, *“It shall never be put out.”* The second one occurs because there is no fire on the Mizbeach at that moment: *“A continuous fire shall burn on the Mizbeach.”*

However, the Lubavitcher Rebbe gives a deeper and more powerful explanation. He writes that the sin to extinguish the fire on the Mizbeach also refers to the fire within ourselves, our **soul**. Shlomo Hamelech said in Mishlei (20:27), *“The lamp of G-d is the human soul.”*

Since the fire on the Mizbeach signified G-d’s presence in the Mishkan, the Torah reiterates and repeats the transgression to tell us an important lesson. Putting out the fire on the Mizbeach is like extinguishing the flame within ourselves, implying a severed connection to G-d.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that just as we are commanded never to extinguish our flame, we are also instructed to ensure that our fire, the soul, never goes out as well. The Pasuk says (6:5), *“And the Cohen shall add wood to the fire each morning.”* The Gemora in Yoma (21b) adds, *“Even though the fire of the Mizbeach would come from the heaven, it is still a Mitzvah for a person to bring fire to the Mizbeach.”*

The Rivta explains that the man-made fire would join the heavenly flames and become one of the ten miracles of the Beis Hamikdash. The miracle that the wind never dispersed the pillar of smoke that ascended from the Mizbeach. Our actions ensure the flame’s survival and strengthen its holiness and glory.

In our daily life, we must not only work on securing our flame's survival but also focus on its development. This can only be done by doing more Mitzvahs and adding to our Torah learning. They increase our trust and belief in G-d and will spark the coming of Moshiach!

***“A great flame can only follow a small spark.”***

*Have a meaningful Shabbos!*

*Rabbi Sholom Yemini*