

# PARSHAS BAMIDBAR

*by Gedalia Litke*

Many reasons are given for the tragic deaths of Nadav and Avihu. (See Vayikro Rabbah 20:8,9)

Among the reasons more readily implicit in the Chumash are one in Parshas Bamidbar and three in Sefer Vayikro. The reason in Parshas Bamidbar is for not having married and fathered children (3:2). The three in Vayikro are for having drunk wine prior to undertaking the Avodah and for having paskened halacha in front of Moshe Rabbeynu, both derived in Parshas Shmini (10:2; see Rashi), and also for having entered the Kodesh at a time when they were not commanded to do so (Acharei Mos 16:1,2; see Rashi). Why are some reasons given or derived in Sefer Vayikro and another is in Sefer Bamidbar?

Along the same line, why are some karbanos (the musafim of Parshas Pinchos, in particular) described only in Sefer Bamidbar - isn't Sefer Vayikro the 'Toras Kohanim'? Put differently, what is the difference between the karbanos taught in Sefer Vayikro and those taught in Sefer Bamidbar?

The fundamental difference between Vayikro and Bamidbar is that Vayikro is about the individual or Klal Yisroel drawing close to HKB'H (korban=drawing close; Vayikro is a special expression of endearment - see first Rashi on Vayikro), whereas Bamidbar is about the individual or Klal Yisroel acting as an emissary of HKB'H to the outside world.

Bamidbar means 'in the desert', implying its subject matter is how we are to address or orient ourselves toward the outside. The many events of Sefer Bamidbar bear out this theme, from counting the people for army and avodah purposes to sending emissaries to 'tour' the Land to interactions with Balak, Bilam, Sichon, Emori, etc., all the way through and including the events of the ultimate emissary, Pinchos (Pinchos=Eliyahu).

Accordingly, whereas the karbanos of Vayikro are designed exclusively to bring us close to HKB'H, the karbanos of Bamidbar are designed to convey HKB'Hs message, sometimes for us and sometimes for the nations of the world.

The Vayikro reasons for the deaths of Nadav and Avihu relate to personal shortcomings, so to speak, or misdeeds which they committed relative to their extraordinary potential. They failed to draw as close as they could and their misdeeds are therefore alluded to in Sefer Vayikro.

The Bamidbar reason for the death of Nadav and Avihu is that they lacked a critical component in being qualified emissaries - they didn't marry and father children. In order to be HKBH's emissary

one must have a deep sense of responsibility, and this is best gained by having a spouse and children. Because this issue relates to their capacity as emissaries it is alluded to in Sefer Bamidbar.

[This is based on a shiur of HoRav Yochanan Zweig, Shlita.]

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