



Parshas Pinchas/17th of Tammuz

The Mishna in Taanis 26a lists five tragedies that occurred on the 17th of Tammuz: the Luchos were broken, the Korban Tamid ceased to be brought, the city of Jerusalem was breached, אפוסטמוס burned a Sefer Torah, and erected an idol in the Heichal. The Rambam in Hilchos Taanis (5:2) quoting this Mishna writes the following:

ושבעה עשר בתמוז וחמשה דברים אירעו בו נשתברו הלוחות, ובטל התמיד מבית ראשון והובקעה ירושלם בחורבן שני ושרף אפוסטמוס הרשע את התורה והעמיד צלם בהיכל עב"ל.

The first question one could ask is that the majority of the tragedies that occurred on the 17th of Tammuz can be understood innately as tragic. However the tragedy of the cessation of the Korban Tamid being brought on face value doesn't seem to carry the same weight as the other tragedies. Therefore, what was so tragic about the Korban Tamid not being brought? Furthermore, what is the significance of the Rambam writing the cessation of the Korban Tamid specifically by the destruction of the first Beis Hamikdash? Lastly, it's clear from the Gemara that the breaching of the walls of the city by the destruction of the first Beis Hamikdash happened on the 9th of Tammuz and only on the 17th of Tammuz were the walls of the second Beis Hamikdash breached. If this is the case, why is it that we only commemorate the breaching of the city by the destruction of the second Beis Hamikdash, but not of the first Hamikdash?

The Hakdamah to the Sefer Ein Yaakov quotes the following Medrash:

בן זומא אומר מצינו פסוק כולל יותר והוא שמע ישראל וגו'. בן ננס אומר מצינו פסוק כולל יותר והוא ואהבת לרעך כמוך. שמעון בן פזי אומר מצינו פסוק כולל יותר והוא את הכבש האחד תעשה בבוקר וגו'. עמד ר' פלוני על רגליו ואמר הלכה כבן פזי וכו' ע"כ ושם הביא ביאור למח' התנאים ע"ש

The Medrash says that there was a debate amongst the Tanaim as to which Pasuk in the Torah is most fundamental and all encompassing. One Tana held it was לרעך כמוך, ואהבת, another held it was שמע ישראל, and the third one held it was the Pasuk in Parshas Pinchas by the Korban Tamid וכו' את הכבש האחד תעשה בבקר וכו'. The question is that two out of three of the Psukim mentioned are easily understood as to why they are so crucial and all encompassing. שמע ישראל and לרעך כמוך are the basis of our אמונה and לחבירו. However the Pasuk by the Korban Tamid את הכבש האחד is seemingly out of left field. How can we understand this?

The Maharal in his Sefer Nesivos Oilam writes as follows:

נתיב אהבת ריע פ"א שפ' זז"ל רצה לומר מה שהאדם עובד הש"י בתמידות הגמור והוא עבדו, וכמו שהעבד לא סר עבודתו מן אדון שלו רק הוא עובדו תמיד, ולכך אמר את הכבש האחד תעשה בבוקר וגו' שזה נאמר על קרבן תמיד שחר וערב דבר זה הכלל בתורה, שתכלית המכוון שיהיה האדם עבד להקב"ה וכו' ע"ש.

We see from the Maharal the importance of serving Hashem constantly like a servant who never leaves his master which is the message in the Pasuk את הכבש האחד תעשה בבוקר .

Perhaps we can just add the following to the explanation of the Maharal. The concept of a “masmid” which comes from the word תמיד has two connotations. The more well-known is the individual who is constantly found in the Beis Medrash but occasionally he’ll miss a day. This person is known as a “masmid” because he can usually be found in the Beis Medrash day and night. This is the constant “masmid.” But there is another individual who is a “masmid” and that’s Mr. Consistent. He doesn’t learn twelve hours straight without disruption, however he does learn every day, day in and day out, rain or shine, without fail, a few hours in the morning and a few hours in the afternoon/evening, and doesn’t miss a day! The first type of “masmid”, the constant one, is more plausible when a person is young, בימי בחרות and doesn’t last forever. However, for the majority of his life, the consistent “masmid” is more plausible and attainable, that he can designate a set time to learn each day, but it can’t be all day continuously.

The message of the Korban Tamid is to display the significance of the second category of “masmid”, the consistent individual. The Korban was brought once in the morning and once in the evening, but not all day. This is the path of serving Hashem for the majority of people for most of their life.

With this we can understand the significance of the Korban Tamid of why this Pasuk is all encompassing and rivals in importance with the Psukim of שמע ישראל and ואהבת לרעך כמוך. And we can also understand the significance of the cessation of this Korban being brought because it is a direct attack on the way of life the majority of Klal Yisrael lives.

We can answer the other questions with the following idea said by the Maharal in his Sefer Netzach Yisrael¹. He writes that by the first Beis Hamikdash, the presence of Hashem (Shechina) resided and was present in the Mikdash and therefore it was the three cardinal sins which caused the destruction. The defilement through these three sins made it impossible for the Shechina to reside in the Mikdash. However, by the second Beis Hamikdash where there was no Shechina present, and the greatness of the Mikdash came from Klal Yisrael and their unity no breach existed in Klal Yisrael. Therefore, what destroyed it and brought it down was the baseless hatred, they were opposed at heart, and therefore there was no room anymore for the Mikdash whose whole existence was because of the unity among Klal Yisrael.

According to this, we can explain why the cessation of the Korban Tamid was more significant by the destruction of the first Beis Hamikdash because it was an attack on the way of serving

¹ז"ל ההבדל בין בית ראשון ובית שני, שבית ראשון נחרב בעון ג' חמורות, ואילו בית שני נחרב בשביל שנאת חנם, וביאר דבזמן בית ראשון היה שכינה שורה ביניהם וזהו מעלת בית המקדש ראשון שהיה מיוחד במעלה שהיתה השכינה שורה בו ולפיכך חורבן שלו כאשר לא היה ראוי שתשרה שכינה ביניהם, דהיינו כשטמאו את בית המקדש, ואין השם יתברך שורה בתוך טומאתם ואילו ג' חטאים נקראו טומאה אבל מקדש שני, שלא היתה השכינה שורה בו כמו במקדש ראשון, ולכך לא נחרב בשביל אלו ג' עבירות. אבל מעלת מקדש שני היה מחמת ישראל עצמם. ודבר זה ברור, כי ישראל הם מתאחדים על ידי בית המקדש שהיה להם; כהן אחד, מזבח אחד, ונאסרו הבמות, שלא היה פירוד וחלוק בישראל. והדבר הזה מבואר, ועוד יתברר בפרק שאחר זה. לכך בית המקדש על ידו הם אומה אחת שלימה. ומפני כך נחרב הבית בשביל שנאת חנם, שנחלק לבבם, והיו מחולקים, ולא היו ראויים למקדש אשר הוא התאחדות ישראל ע"כ.



Hashem, similar to the three cardinal sins, that because of them, there was no longer a place for the presence of Hashem to reside. Regarding commemorating the walls of the city being breached specifically by the destruction of the second Beis Hamikdash that symbolizes a break down in unity because the walls keep everything inside and together. This message was more significant by the destruction of the second Beis Hamikdash because its greatness was only the fact that a special unity existed among Klal Yisrael, but when that began to corrode, it no longer had its purpose, and the walls which kept it all together were destroyed as well.