



בין החיים ובין המתים

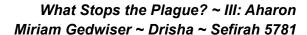
(1) Bamidbar 17:1-15

1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Order Eleazar son of Aaron the priest to remove the fire pans—for they have become sacred—from among the charred remains; and scatter the coals abroad. 3 [Remove] the fire pans of those who have sinned at the cost of their lives, and let them be made into hammered sheets as plating for the altar—for once they have been used for offering to the LORD, they have become sacred—and let them serve as a warning to the people of Israel. 4 Eleazar the priest took the copper fire pans which had been used for offering by those who died in the fire; and they were hammered into plating for the altar, 5 as the LORD had ordered him through Moses. It was to be a reminder to the Israelites, so that no outsider—one not of Aaron's offspring—should presume to offer incense before the LORD and suffer the fate of Korah and his band. 6 Next day the whole Israelite community railed against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You two have brought death upon the LORD's people!" 7 But as the community gathered against them, Moses and Aaron turned toward the Tent of Meeting; the cloud had covered it and the Presence of the LORD appeared. 8 When Moses and Aaron reached the Tent of Meeting, 9 the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Remove yourselves from this community, that I may annihilate them in an instant." They fell on their faces. 11 Then Moses said to Aaron, "Take the fire pan, and put on it fire from the altar. Add incense and take it quickly to the community and make expiation for them. For wrath has gone forth from the LORD: the plague has begun!" 12 Aaron took it. as Moses had ordered, and ran to the midst of the congregation, where the plague had begun among the people. He put on the incense and made expiation for the people; 13 he stood between the dead and the living until the plague was checked. 14 Those who died of the plague came to fourteen thousand and seven hundred, aside from those who died on account of Korah. 15 Aaron then returned to Moses at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. since the plague was checked.

- 1 וַיִדַבָּר ה' אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמְר:
- 2 אֱמֹר אֶל־אֶלְעָזָׁר בֶּּן־אַהַרְּן הַכּּהֵוּ וְיָרֶם אֶת־הַמַּחְתֹּת מִבֵּין הַשְּׁרֵפָּה וְאֶת־הָאֵשׁ זָרָה־הַלְאָה כִּי קָדָשׁוּ:
- 3 אֵת מַחְתּוֹת ゚הַחַשָּאִים הָאֵׁלֶּה בְּנַפְשׁתָּם וְעָשׁוּ אֹתָם רִקָּעִי פַחִים ׁצְפְּוּי לַמִּזְבֵּׁחַ כִּי־הַקְרִיבָּם לִפְנֵי־ה' וַיִּקְדֵּשׁוּ וַיְהִיָוּ לְאִוֹת לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאַל:
 - 4 וַיַּקֵּח אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן אֲת מַחְתָּוֹת הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר הִקְּרָיבוּ הַשְּׂרֻפֵים וַיְרַקְעוּם צִפְּוּי לַמִזבֵּח:
- 5 זִכָּרוו לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵׁל '゚לְמֵעַו אֲשֶׁׁר לְאֹ־יִקְרֵבׁב אִישׁ זָּר אֲשֶׁר לָא מְזֶרַע אַהֶרוֹ הוּא לְהַקְטִיר קְטָרֶת לִפְנֵי ה' וְלָא־יִהְיֶה כְקֹרַחׁ וַכְעֲדָתׁוֹ כַּאֵשֵׁר דָבֵּר ה' בִּיִד־מֹשֵׁה לְוֹ:
 - 6 וַיּלֹּנוּ כָּל־עֲדֻת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מְמָּחֶרָּת עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעָל־אַהָרָן לֵאמֵר אַתֶּם הָמִתֶּם אַת־עֵם ה':
- 7 וַיְהִי בְּהִקְּהֵל הָעֵדָה ׁ עַל־מֹשֶׁה וְעֵּל־אַהָּרֵּ וַיִּפְנוֹ אֶל־אָהֶל מוֹעֵׁד וְהַנֵּה כָפָּהוּ הָעָנֵן וַיֵּרֵא כָּבִוֹד ה':
- 8 וַיָּבָא מֹשֶׁהֹ וְאַהָּרֹן אֶל־פְּנֵי אָהֶל מוֹעֵד: (פּ)
 - נְיִדַבֵּר ה' אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמְׂר: **9**
- 10 הֵרֹמוּ מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדֶה הַזֹּאת וַאֲכֵלֶה אֹתֶם כֵּלָה אֹתֶם כֵּלָה אֹתָם כֵּלָה אֹתָם כֵּלָה אֹתָם בִּרְגַע וַיִּפְּלִוּ עַל־פָּנִיהֵם:
- 11 וַיּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֱל־אַהֶּרֹן קַח אֶת־הַּמַּחְתָּה וְתָן־עָלֶּיהָ אֵשׁ מַעַל הַמִּזְבֵּתֹ וְשִִּים קְטֹרֶת וְהוֹלַךְ מְהֵרֶה אֶל־הָעֵדָה וְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיהֶם כִּי־יֵצָא הַקֵּצָף מִלֹּפָנִי יָהוָה הַחֵל הַנָּגָף:
 - 12 וַיִּלֵּח אַהַרֹוְ כַּאֲשֶׁר וּ דָּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה וַיָּרֶץׂ אֶל־תִּוֹך הַקָּהָּל וְהִנֵּה הַחֵל הַנֶּגֶף בָּעֶם וַיִּתֵּן אֵת־הַקְּטֹׁרֵת וַיִּכָפָר עַל־הַעָם:
 - 13 וַיִּעֲמָד בֵּין־הַמֵּתָּים וּבֵין הַחַיִּים וַתֵּעָצָר הַמַּגַפָה:
- 14וַיִּהְיֹּוּ הַמֵּתִּים בּמַגּפָּה אַרְבָּעָה עָשֶׂר אֶלֶּף וּשְׁבַע מֵאֶוֹת מִלְבָד הַמֵּתִּים עַל־דְּבַר־קְׂרַח: 15 וַיָּשָׁב אַהְרֹן אֶל־מֹשֶׁׁה אֶל־פֶּתַח אְֹהֶל

מוֹעֵד וְהַמַּגַּפָה נֶעֱצְרָה: (פּ)

For full text see: https://www.sefaria.org/Numbers.17?lang=bi&aliyot=0





(2) Shabbat 88b-89a

And Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: When Moses ascended on High to receive the Torah, the ministering angels said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, what is one born of a woman doing here among us? The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to them: He came to receive the **Torah.** The angels **said before Him:** The Torah is a **hidden** treasure that was concealed by you 974 generations before the creation of the world, and you seek to give it to flesh and blood? As it is stated: "The word which He commanded to a thousand generations" (Psalms 105:8). Since the Torah, the word of God, was given to the twenty-sixth generation after Adam, the first man, the remaining 974 generations must have preceded the creation of the world. "What is man that You are mindful of him and the son of man that You think of him?" (Psalms 8:5). Rather, "God our Lord, how glorious is Your name in all the earth that Your majesty is placed above the heavens" (Psalms 8:2). The rightful place of God's majesty, the Torah, is in the heavens.

וְאָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֶׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי: בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁעֶלָה מֹשֶׁה לַמָּרוֹם אָמְרוּ מַלְאֲכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת לִפְנִי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא: רְבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלֶם, מַה לִּילוּד אִשָּׁה בִּינֵינוּ? אָמַר לָהָן: לְקַבֵּל תּוֹרָה שָׁגְנוּזָה לָךְ תְּשָׁע מֵאוֹת וְשְׁבְעִים וְאַרְבָּעָה דּוֹרוֹת קוֹדֶם שֶׁנִּבְרָא הָעוֹלָם, אַתָּה מְבַקֵּשׁ לִיתְּנָה לְבָשֶׁר וָדָם? ״מָה אֱנוֹשׁ כִּי תִזְכְּרָנוּ וְבָן אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנוּ״? ״ה׳ אֲדֹנֵינוּ מָה אַדִּיר שִׁמְךְ בְּּכְל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר תְנָה הוֹדְךָ עַל הַשָּׁמִיִם״!

The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moses: Provide them with **an answer** as to why the Torah should be given to the people. Moses said before Him: Master of the Universe, I am afraid lest they burn me with the breath of their mouths. God said to him: Grasp My throne of glory for strength and protection, and **provide them** with **an answer**. And from where is this derived? As it is stated: "He causes him to grasp the front of the throne, and spreads His cloud over it" (Job 26:9), and Rabbi Nahum said: This verse teaches that God spread the radiance of His presence and His cloud over Moses. Moses said before Him: Master of the Universe, the Torah that You are giving me, what is written in it? God said to him: "I am the Lord your God Who brought you out of Egypt from the house of bondage" (Exodus 20:2). Moses said to the angels: Did you descend to Egypt? Were you enslaved to Pharaoh? Why should the Torah be yours? Again Moses asked: What else is written in it? God said to him: "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3). Moses said to the angels: Do you dwell among the nations who worship [89a] idols that you require this special warning? Again Moses asked: What else is written in it? The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: "Remember the Shabbat day to sanctify it" (Exodus 20:8). Moses asked the angels: Do you perform labor that you require rest from it? Again Moses asked: What else is written in it? "Do not take the name of the Lord your God in vain" (Exodus 20:7), meaning that it is prohibited to swear falsely. Moses asked the angels: Do you conduct

אמר לו הקדוש בּרוּךְ הוּא לִמשׁה: החזיר להֶן תַּשוּבה. אמר לפניו: רָבּוֹנוֹ שֵׁל עוֹלַם, מִתְיַיֵרֵא אֲנִי שַׁמַּא ישַרפוּני בּהַבֵּל שַבַּפּיהַם. אַמר לוֹ: אֱחוֹז בָּכסּא כָבוֹדי וחֱזוֹר ַלַהֵן תָּשׁוּבַה. שַׁנֵּאֱמַר: ״מָאחֵז פָּנֵי כּסא פּרשׁז עליו עננוֹ״, ואמר רבּי נַחוּם: מָלַמֵּד שֶׁפֶּירַשׁ שַׁדַּי מָזִיו שָׁכִינַתוֹ וַעֲנַנוֹ עַלַיו. אַמַר לְפַנַיו: רבונו של עוֹלַם, תוֹרַה שֵׁאַתַּה נוֹתן לי מה כָּתִיב בַּהּ? ״אנכי ה׳ אַלהֵיךָ אֲשֵׁר הוֹצאתיךָ מאַרֵץ מְצְרַיִם״. אָמַר לָהֶן: לְמִצְרַיִם יַרַדְתָּם? לְפַרְעָה הְשָׁתַּעְבַּדְתָּם? תוֹרָה לַמַּה תָּהָא לַכֶם! שוּב: מַה כָּתִיב בַּהּ? ״לֹא יִהְיֵה לְךְ אֱלֹהִים אַחרים״. בּין הגוֹים אתֵם שָׁרוּיין, ישָעוֹבָדין **פ״ט א** עַבוֹדה זרה? שׁוּב: מַה כָּתִיב בַּהּ? ״זַכוֹר אֵת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ״ — כָּלוּם אַתֶּם עוֹשִּׁים מְלַאכָה, שֶׁאַתֶּם צָרִיכִין שָׁבוּת? שׁוּב: מַה כָּתִיב בַּה? ״לא תַשָּא״ — מַשָּא וּמַתַן ישׁ בּיניכֶם? שׁוּב: מה כָּתיב בּהּ? אב — ״כַּבַּד אַת אביך ואַת אמֵך״



business with one another that may lead you to swear falsely? Again Moses asked: What else is written in it? The Holy One. Blessed be He, said to him: "Honor your father and your mother" (Exodus 20:12). Moses asked the angels: Do you have a father or a mother that would render the commandment to honor them relevant to you? Again Moses asked: What else is written in it? God said to him: "You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal" (Exodus 20:13) Moses asked the angels: Is there jealousy among you, or is there an evil inclination within you that would render these commandments relevant? Immediately they agreed with the Holy One, Blessed be He, that He made the right decision to give the Torah to the people, and as it is stated: "God our Lord, how glorious is Your name in all the earth" (Psalms 8:10), while "that Your majesty is placed above the heavens" is not written because the angels agreed with God that it is appropriate to give the Torah to the people on earth.

ָּוְאֵם יֵשׁ לֶּכֶם? שׁוּב: מָה כְּתִיב בָּהּ? ״לֹא תִּרְצָח״, ״לֹא תִּנְאָף״, ״לֹא תִּגְנֹב״. קּנְאָה יֵשׁ בֵּינֵיכֶם? יֵצֶר הָרֶע יֵשׁ בֵּינֵיכֶם? מִיָּד הוֹדוּ לוֹ לְהַקְּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ״ה׳ אָדֹנֵינוּ מָה אַדִּיר שִׁמְךְ וְגוֹי״, וְאִילוּ ״תְנָה הוֹדְךָ עַל הַשָּׁמִיִם״ לָא כְּתִיב.

Immediately, each and every one of the angels became an admirer of Moses and passed something to him, as it is stated: "You ascended on high, you took a captive, you took gifts on account of man, and even among the rebellious also that the Lord God might dwell there" (Psalms 68:19). The meaning of the verse is: In reward for the fact that they called you man, you are not an angel and the Torah is applicable to you, you took gifts from the angels. And even the Angel of Death gave him something, as Moses told Aaron how to stop the plague, as it is stated: "And he placed the incense, and he atoned for the people" (Numbers 17:12). And the verse says: "And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped" (Numbers 17:13). If it were not that the Angel of Death told him this remedy, would he have known it?

מִיָּד כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד נַעֲשָׂה לוֹ אוֹהֵב וּמָסַר לוֹ דָּבָר, שֶׁנֶּאֶמַר: ״עָלִיתָ לַמָּרוֹם שָׁבִיתָ שֶׁבִי לָקַחְתָּ מַתָּנוֹת בָּאָדָם״, לָקַחְתָּ מַתָּנוֹת. שַׁקְרָאוּךְ ״אָדָם״, לָקַחְתָּ מַתָּנוֹת. שַף מַלְאַךְ הַמָּוֶת מָסַר לוֹ דָּבָר, שַל הָעָם״, וְאוֹמֵר: ״וַיִּעֲמֹד בִּין הַמֵּתִים וּבֵין הַחַיִּים וְגוֹי״ — אִי לָאו דַּאֲמַר לֵיהּ מִי הֲוָה יָדַע?

(3) Zevachim 88b

The Gemara asks: Is that so, that the priestly vestments atone for these sins? But doesn't Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi say: There are two matters that we do not find for them an atonement with offerings, but we find for them an atonement from another place, and they are: Bloodshed and malicious speech.

With regard to **bloodshed**, its atonement comes **from** the **heifer whose neck is broken**. This is referring to a case where a murdered body is found but the identity of the murderer is not known. In such an instance, the Torah mandates that the neck of a heifer must be broken as an atonement for the murder. **And** with regard to **malicious speech**, its atonement comes **from incense**, **as Rav**

איני והא"ר יהושע בן לוי שני דברים לא מצינו להן כפרה בקרבנות ומצינו לו כפרה ממקום אחר ואלו הן שפיכות דמים ולשון הרע

שפיכות דמים מעגלה ערופה ולשון הרע מקטרת דתני רב חנניה מנין לקטרת שמכפרת שנאמר (במדבר יז, יב) ויתן את הקטרת



Hananya teaches in a *baraita*: From where is it derived that the incense effects atonement? As it is stated after the Israelites spoke slanderously against Moses and Aaron and a plague was sent against them: "And he put on the incense, and made atonement for the people" (Numbers 17:12).

The Gemara continues: And similarly, the school of Rabbi Yishmael teaches: For what does incense effect atonement? It effects atonement for malicious speech, in order that an item that is offered in private, i.e., the incense, which is offered by a priest acting alone, shall come and atone for an action generally occurring in private, i.e., malicious speech.

Accordingly, there is a difficulty between that which is stated with regard to malicious speech and that which is stated with regard to malicious speech, as according to Rabbi Inini bar Sason the robe atones for malicious speech, whereas according to the baraita it is only the incense that effects atonement for that transgression. Likewise, there is a difficulty between that which is stated with regard to bloodshed and that which is stated with regard to bloodshed, as according to Rabbi Inini bar Sason the tunic effects atonement for bloodshed, whereas according to the baraita only the heifer whose neck is broken effects atonement for it.

The Gemara answers: With regard to bloodshed, it is **not difficult**, as **this**, the tunic, effects atonement for bloodshed in an instance **where it is known who killed** the victim, and **this**, the heifer, effects atonement in an instance **where it is not known who killed** the victim. The Gemara challenges: **If it is known who killed** the victim, that man **is deserving of death**, and there is no atonement for the community otherwise, as it is stated: "And no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is shed within it, but by the blood of him that shed it" (Numbers 35:33). The Gemara responds: It is referring to a case where he murdered **intentionally but** witnesses **did not forewarn him** of the consequences of committing murder. Therefore, the court may not execute him, as no earthly punishment may be administered without forewarning.

And with regard to the contradiction between that which is stated with regard to malicious speech and that which is stated with regard to malicious speech, it is also not difficult. This, the incense, effects atonement for malicious speech spoken in private, whereas this, the robe, on which the bells that produce noise are placed, effects atonement for malicious speech spoken in public.

ויכפר על העם

ותני דבי רבי ישמעאל על מה קטורת מכפרת על לשון הרע יבא דבר שבחשאי ויכפר על מעשה חשאי

קשיא לשון הרע אלשון הרע קשיא שפיכות דמים אשפיכות דמים

לא קשיא הא דידיע מאן קטליה הא דלא ידיע מאן קטליה אי דידיע מאן קטליה בר קטלא הוא במזיד ולא אתרו ביה

ולשון הרע אלשון הרע נמי לא קשיא הא בצינעא הא בפרהסיא:



(4) Midrash Aggadah (Medieval France), Numbers 17

And he placed the incense - What did Aharon do? He took the firepan with the incense and put it before the angel of death, as it says "They shall offer your incense to savor."

ויתן את הקטרת. מה עשה אהרן, נטל את המחתה עם הקטרת ונתנה בפני מלאך המות, כמה דאת אמר ישימו קטורה באפיך (דברים לג י):

And he stood between the living and the dead - the angel stood, and Aaron blocked him and did not allow him to pass and stopped him by his loins, as it says "and the plague was stopped." And regarding this it says "Bless, O Lord, his substance." The angels said to Aharon. The Omnipresent sent me to kill and you are holding on to me? Aharon said to him: So Moshe commanded me, that I grab hold of you. The angel said, I tell you The Blessed Holy One sent me and you tell me Moshe? Aharon said to him, everything that Moshe said is from the KBH's mouth and in the KBH's will. The angel said to Aharon, and who will trust you? He said, behold, Moshe is the the Tent of MEeting and the KBH is there with him, let's both go there. Immediately Aharon grabbed the angel against his will and brought him to Moshe to the tent of meeting. That is what is written, "And Aharon returned to Moshes to the entrance..."

ויעמוד בין המתים ובין החיים. עמד המלאך ואהרן מנעו ולא הניחו לעבור ועצרו במתניו, שנאמר ותעצר המגפה, ועליו נאמר ברך ה' חילו (שם שם יא). אמר המלאך לאהרן המקום שלחני להרוג ואתה מחזיק בי, אמר לו אהרן כך צוני משה שאחזיק בך, אמר לו המלאך אני אומר לך הקב"ה שלחני ואתה אומר לי משה אמר לו אהרן כל מה שאמר לי משה מפי הקב"ה וברצונו של הקב"ה, אמר המלאך לאהרן ומי יאמינך אמר לו הרי משה אמר מועד והקב"ה גם הוא שם, נלך שנינו לשם, מיד תפס אהרן למלאך בעל כרחו, והוליכו אצל משה לאהל מועד, הדא הוא דכתיב וישב אהרן אל משה אל פתח וגו' (פסוק טו):

(See also Rashi ad loc)

(5) Devarim 33:8-11

And of Levi he said: Let Your Thummim and Urim Be with Your faithful one, Whom You tested at Massah, Challenged at the waters of Meribah:

Who said of his father and mother, "I consider them not." His brothers he disregarded, Ignored his own children. Your precepts alone they observed, And kept Your covenant.

They shall teach Your laws to Jacob And Your instructions to Israel. They shall offer You incense to savor And whole-offerings on Your altar.

Bless, O LORD, his substance, And favor his undertakings. Smite the loins of his foes; Let his enemies rise no more.

וּלְלֵנֵי אָמֵּׁר תָּמֶּיךְ וְאוּרֶיךְ לְאִישׁ חַסִּידֶךְ אֲשֶׁר נָסִיתוֹ בְּמַסָּה תְּרִיבֶהוּ עַל־מֵי מָרִיבָה:

ָהָאֹמֵר לְאָבֶיו וּלְאָמוֹ לְא רְאִיתִּיו וְאֶת־אֶחָיוֹ לָא הִפִּיר וְאֶת־בנו [בָּנָיו] לָא יֵדֵע כִּי שָׁמְרוּ אִמְרָתֶׁךְ וּבְרִיתְךָ יִנְצִרוּ:

יוֹרְוּ מִשְׁפֶּטֶׂירְ ֹלְיַעֲלֶּב וְתוֹרָתְךָּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל יָשִׁימוּ קטוֹרַה בְּאֵפֶּרְ וְכֵלִיל עֵל־מִזְבְּחֵךְ: יָשִׁימוּ קטוֹרַה בָּאַפֶּר וְכֵלִיל עֵל־מִזְבְּחֵךְ:

בָּרֶךְ הֹ חֵילֹוֹ וּפִּעַל יֵדָיו תִּרְצֶה מְחַׂץ מַתָנֵים קַמֵיו וּמִשָּׁנָאִיו מַן־יָקוּמָוּן: (ס)



(6) Seforno Bamidbar 17:6, 13

You have killed - That you said to them to be tested by incense, which only the one who offers the Tamid sacrifice should bring, and you should have tested them with offerings, which are appropriate for many priests together.

And he stood between the dead and the living - After he already stood there, he tarried to protect the sick that they not due, the opposite of "separate from the people..."

 (ו) אתם המתם – שאמרתם להם שינסו בקטורת, שאין ראוי שיקטירנה אלא המקריב עולת התמיד, והיה לכם לנסות בזבחים, הראויים לכהנים רבים יחד.

(יג) **ויעמד בין המתים ובין החיים** – אחר שכבר התיצב שם, התעכב להגן על החולים שלא ימותו, על היפך "הבדלו מתוך העדה" (פסוק כ"א).

(7) Or Ha-Chayim to Bamidbar 17

It is also desirable to illuminate more how their eyes glinted for evil to complain against Moses without reason, even after they saw how much he humbled himself before Datan and Aviram, maybe they would do teshuvah. This shows that he tried to prevent their deaths. But the complaint of the people was about how Mosheh made the test of the incense with all of them together, because he should have done the test with Korach alone and when God did justice against him the 250 leaders would not have approached and would not have died. And this is what it says "saying, you have killed..." - meaning, when you said "take each man his firepan..." to the 250, through that you killed the assembly of the Lord. The nation did not complain about the deaths of Korach Datan and Aviram, rather about the 250, who were all heads of Sanhedrins. And according to the Rabbis who said that the complaint of the people was about why he commanded them to burn incense, which is a service of more strict laws, and did not make the test with another service, it can be explained similarly: "saying, you have killed" meaning, by telling them to bring incense you were the reason for their deaths.

. . .

Take the firepan - Since they said that the reason for the burning was because of the incense, the incense that causes the death of the people of the Lord, therefore he showed them that even if incense

עוד ירצה בהעיר עוד איך טח מראות עיניהם לעשות תלונה על משה בלא סיבה מה פשעו ומה חטאתו. ומה גם אחר שראו כמה השפיל עצמו לפני דתן ואבירם אולי ישובו וכו׳ זה יגיד שהשתדל לבל ימותו. אכן תרעומת העדה היתה על מה שעשה משה המבחן של הקטרת בכולן יחד שהיה לו לעשות המבחן בקרח לבד וכשהיה ה׳ עושה בו המשפט לא היו נגשים המאתים וחמשים נשיאי עדה ולא היו מתים, והוא אומרו **לאמר אתם המיתם** וגו׳ פירוש במאמרכם שאמרתם להם קחו איש מחתתו וגו׳ חמשים ומאתים בזה המיתם את עם ה׳, ולא התרעמו העדה על מיתת קרח דתן ואבירם אלא על המאתים וחמשים שכולן היו ראשי סנהדראות, ולדברי רז״ל שאמרו שתרעומת העדה היתה למה שציום להקטיר הקטורת שהיא עבודה יותר קדושה וחמורה ולא עשה המבחן באחד משאר עבודות, יתבאר גם כן על זה הדרך **לאמר אתם המיתם** פירוש במאמרכם שאמרתם להם להקטיר קטורת אתם הייתם סיבה שימותו.

(יא) **קח את המחתה** – להיות שאמרו כי סיבת השרופים היתה בשביל הקטרת הקטורת שהוא סבב מיתת עם



is outside its time and outside its place, on the contrary, it stopped the death from upon Israel, and through this they would justify that the whole was God's doing, because God kills the guilty without [other] causes. And the Rabbis said that they learned this from S.M when he went up to receive the Torah.

And Aharon took - Meaning, close to the words of Moshe, to teach you that he did not wait even a moment. It also requires explanation, the matter here is the opposite of the law to bring incense outside its time and place. Therefore it says "and Aharon took" - the meaning of "took" is "when Moshe said." A prophet is trusted to violate a single Torah law on a temporary basis, like Elijah at Mt. Carmel.

ה׳ לזה הראה להם כי הגם שהקטורת היה חוץ לזמנו וחוץ למקומו אדרבא עצר המיתה מעל ישראל, ובזה יצדיקו כי הכל מעשה ה' כי הוא ממית לחייב באין סובב, ורז״ל אמרו (שבת פט.) כי דבר זה למדו מס״מ בעלותו לקבל תורה. (יב) ויקח אהרן כאשר וגו׳ – פירוש סמוך לדיבורו של משה ללמדך שלא שהה אפילו רגע. עוד ירצה לצד שהענין כאן הוא הפך הדין להקטיר קטורת חוץ לזמנו וחוץ למקומו, לזה אמר **ויקח** אהרן וטעם ויקח הוא כאשר דבר משה פירוש על פי נביא, ויאמן נביא כשיאמר לעבור על מצוה אחת ממצות התורה לפי שעה, וכאליהו בהר הכרמל (מלכים .(מ'יח).

(8) R. S.R. Hirsch, Bamidbar 17:10

The claim of the people was surely entirely an ascription of personal guilt, and in response God said to Moshe: If that;s what you want, remove yourselves from them, and I will destroy the masses who rise against you. Bu Moshe and Aharon did not leave. Rather they fell on their faces before God. They did not act according to the intention that the upstart masses ascribed to them. They did not seek the death of those who harmed them, and refused to be agents of death among the people of God. Rather Aharon ran into the midst of the people, which was already adjudged to death, he gave expression to giving himself over to God in heart and soul, with incense that goes up to God. And so he stood between the dead and the living, like an agent of atonement and salvation. And in this way Aharon showed the people his true character and the true nature of his appointment: to redeem and to defeat death.

(י-יג) הרמו וגו׳ – טענת העם בוודאי הייתה כל כולה הטלת אשמה אישית, ובמענה, אמר ה' למשה: אם רצונכם בכך, הסירו עצמכם מהם, ואכלה את ההמונים המתקוממים עליכם. אך משה ואהרן לא סרו; אלא נפלו על פניהם לפני ה׳. הם לא פעלו על פי הכוונה שההמונים המתקוממים ייחסו להם. הם לא תבעו את מות אלה שפגעו בהם, ומיאנו להיות שלוחי המוות בקרב עם ה׳. אלא אהרן רץ אל תוך הקהל שכבר נידון למוות, נתן ביטוי להתמסרות לה' בלב ונפש בקטורת העולה אל ה', וכך עמד בין המתים והחיים כשליח כפרה וישועה. בכך הראה אהרן לעם את טיבו האמיתי ואת טיבה האמיתי של שליחותו: לפדות ולנצח את המוות.