

# Maharal Tzintz

pearls from the teachings of the Gaon from Plotzk reprinted from sefer  
**Chamudei Shai** on the Torah and Holidays - ספר תמודי ש"י על התורה והמועדים

## Parashas Shemini

Chazal state that when Aharon looked at the *mizbaiach*, it appeared to him in the form of a calf, and he recoiled. They have already explained that Heaven forbid, it is not to say that Aharon participated in the sin of the *egel*, the Golden Calf. On the contrary, all his actions were intended to delay the people in the making of the *egel* as much as he could. He himself did not sin in the worship of the *egel* and did not need atonement for it.

Yet, Rashi, explains the *pasuk*, "And Aharon approached the *mizbaiach* and slaughtered the calf of the sin-offering that was his" "אשר לו" to teach us that the sin of the *egel* is atoned for, and this *egel* of the sin-offering is "that was his." In the Baal HaTurim, it is stated that "*egel ben bakar*," in gematria, is "to atone for the sin of the *egel*." How can it be that Aharon needs atonement for the sin of the *egel*?! According to the words of the Gaon of Plotzk, everything will be explained with a different approach, with the help of Heaven.

The Maharal Tzintz, of blessed and holy memory, in his sefer *Melo HaOmer*, on our Parasha, on the *pasuk*, "And Moshe said to Aharon, Approach the *mizbaiach*, etc." Rashi explained that Aharon was ashamed and afraid to approach. Moshe said to him, "Why are you ashamed? For this you were chosen!" The Maharal Tzintz explains: "It seems that he was ashamed because he built a *mizbaiach* before the *egel*, as it is written, 'And Aharon saw and built a *mizbaiach* before it.'" The Maharal Tzintz continues: "In truth, Aharon's intention was for the good, as explained in several ways, and therefore Moshe said, on the contrary, approach the *mizbaiach*, for you have a closeness due to the *mizbaiach*." Meaning, your intention was good, and even though you built a *mizbaiach* before the *egel* with the intention to delay the people, this does not disqualify you from

serving and offering on the *mizbaiach* of Hashem. On the contrary! For this you were chosen! So, approach the *mizbaiach*!

The Maharal Tzintz continues, "The matter is that in truth, Aharon did not sin, only that it appeared as if a transgression was attributed to him, and he came under suspicion." Meaning, those who saw him suspected him of having sinned in the sin of the *egel*, even though in truth he did not sin, but wanted to delay the people from actually worshipping an idol until Moshe returned. "If so, it can be said, as Chazal stated, 'He (the Kohen Gadol) withdraws and weeps, and they (the elders) withdraw and weep.' Why? He, because they suspected him, and they, because they suspected him unjustly."

The people suspected Aharon of participating in the sin of worshipping the *egel*. To suspect the righteous is a grave sin. "And here, Aharon caused them this suspicion." Meaning: Through his actions, Aharon caused them to suspect him, and this violates והייתם נקיים מה' ומישראל - And you shall be clear before Hashem and before Yisrael," and therefore "atonement is needed for both. However, Aharon did not participate in the sin of the people and has no part in it."

The words of the Maharal Tzintz are precise and beautifully aligned with the *pasuk*, like a "bud and blossom!" First, it is written, "Approach the *mizbaiach* and perform your sin offering and your burnt offering and atone for yourself and for the people," which refers to the sin of suspicion, in which Aharon is also guilty for causing it. The *pasuk* continues, "And perform the korban of the people and atone for them..." which refers to the sin of worshipping the *egel*, in which Aharon had no part, and this is clear and evident.

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