Seems Like the First Time

וַיַּקְרֵב אֵת קָרְבַּן הָעָם וַיִּקָּח אֶת־שְׂעִיר הַחַטָּאת אֲשֶׁר לָעָם וַיִּשְׁחָטֵהוּ וַיְחַטְּאֵהוּ כָּרָאשׁוֹן (ויקרא ט:טו)

He brought forward the people's sacrifice. He took the people's sin-offering goat, slaughtered it, and performed the procedures of a sin-offering on it, just like the first. (Vayikra 9: 15).

The Torah tells us that Aaron brought a sacrifice on behalf of the nation and he performed the procedures of the sacrifice just as he did with the original sacrifice or "first" sacrifice is being referenced in this pasuk? Rashi explains בעגל שלו – like the sin offering that Aaron offered on his own behalf that is depicted in pasuk 8 - ייִקרב אַהְרַן אֶל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיִּשְׁחֵט אֶת־עֵגֶל הַחַטָּאת (Aaron approached the Altar and slaughtered his sin-offering calf).

Why is it necessary for the Torah to

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specifically state that the offering Aaron brought on behalf of the nation was performed in an identical manner as the sacrifice he brought on his own behalf? What message is the Torah seeking to convey?

Ray Yosef Nechemia Kornitzer (last Ray of Krakow before WWII), offers the following insightful explanation. Hazal derive from a pasuk in Kriyat Shema that when we refer to וָהַיוֹ הַדְּבַרִים הָאֱלֶה, אֱשֶׁר אַנכִי מְצַוְּךְ he mitzvot that are being – היוֹם – על-לבבַר commanded today (Devarim 6:6), we are to feel as if the Torah was given today יהיו בעניך כחדשים. Similarly, the Gemara (Berachot 57a) interprets the pasuk מורשה קהילת יעקב not as an inheritance but rather as מאורשה – an engagement, highlighting that the Torah should feel new and exciting like a newly engaged bride. There is a halacha that when someone visited the Temple, they had to exit from a different path to maintain the excitement. Aaron's sacrifice may be interpreted in a similar manner.

Imagine how Aaron felt after waiting for the completion of the construction of the Mishkan and finally offering his first sacrifice. It must have been so special. Often when one repeats an act it loses the vim and vigor that existed when it was performed for the very first time. The Torah stresses that the second time Aaron offered a sacrifice he experienced the very same enthusiasm and excitement as he had the first time he offered a korban.

We ought to integrate this characteristic into our daily lives. We recite the same tefillot three times each day. We read the same parshiyot year after year. We have to seek to feel that each time we open a siddur or chumash it is as if it is the first time we are reciting a prayer or reading a pasuk. To feel the fire and to be able to transmit it to others around us. Perhaps by better understanding the words we are reciting in our tefillot (if we learned one new word a day, we would master 365 words in a year), or studying a new commentary, we would infuse a freshness into these repetitive actions. Aaron was able to maintain his excitement day after day, we ought to emulate that attribute so that it imbues our actions with meaning and passion.







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