

## Shemini 5785

### **Rashi on Leviticus 9:7**

[AND MOSES SAID TO AARON] GO TO THE ALTAR, for Aaron was diffident and feared to go there. Moses therefore said to him “Wherefore art thou diffident? For this purpose hast thou been selected!” (cf. Sifra, Shemini, Mechilta d'Miluim 2 8).

THY SIN OFFERING — the young calf (v. 2)

### **Ramban on Leviticus 9:7**

Embolden yourself and come and do your priestly activities.’ Some Rabbis say that Aaron saw the [horned] altar in the form of the bull [which — as stated in Psalms 106: 20 — Israel had worshipped], and he was frightened by it. Then Moses came near and said to him, ‘My brother, Aaron, do not be afraid of that which you fear. Embolden yourself and come near it.’ This is why he said, draw near unto the altar, and [Aaron] drew near unto the altar — with zeal.” The reason for this [apparition which Aaron saw in the altar] was that since Aaron was the holy one of the Eternal, having no sin on his soul except for the incident of the golden calf, therefore that sin was firmly fixed in his mind, something like that which is said, and my sin is ever before me. It thus appeared to him as if the form of the calf was there [in the altar] preventing his [attaining] atonement [through the offerings he was to bring]. That is why Moses said to him, “Embolden yourself so that you should not be of such humble spirit,” for G-d has already accepted his works.

### **Rashi on Leviticus 9:23**

When Aaron perceived that all the sacrifices had been offered and all the rites performed, and yet the Shechinah had not descended for Israel, since the heavenly fire had not fallen to consume the sacrifice, he was uneasy in mind and said: I feel certain that the Holy One, blessed be He, is angry with me and that it is on my account that the Shechinah has not descended for Israel. He therefore said to Moses: “My brother Moses! Do you act thus with me: you know that I have entered into this matter at your bidding and yet I have been put to shame! Moses at once entered the tent with him and they offered prayer and the Shechinah descended for Israel (Sifra, Shemini, Mechilta d'Miluim 2 18).

AND THEY CAME OUT AND BLESSED THE PEOPLE — They said the words that conclude “The Prayer of Moses” (Psalms 90:17): “May the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us” — i. e. May it be God’s will that the Shechinah may rest upon the work of your hands (see Rashi on Exodus 39:43). They invoked just this blessing and not another formula because during the whole seven days of the installation when Moses was setting up the Tabernacle and officiating therein and dismantling it daily the Shechinah had not rested upon it and the Israelites felt ashamed, saying to Moses: “O, our Teacher Moses! All the trouble which we have taken was only that the Shechinah may dwell amongst us, so that we may know that the sin of the golden calf has been atoned for on our behalf!” He therefore had said to them (v. 6): “This is the thing which the Lord commanded that ye should do so that the glory of the Lord may appear unto you” (i. e. only after these offerings will have been brought by Aaron (cf. v. 7) will God’s glory appear unto you). My brother Aaron is more worthy and excellent than I am, so that through his

sacrifices and ministrations the Shechinah will rest upon you, and ye will thereby know that the Omnipresent God has chosen him to bring His Shechinah upon you.