



## MESIVTA ATERES YAAKOV

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### Rabbi Baruch Fogel *Rosh Bais Medrash*

#### פרשת צו

When Hashem commands Moshe to tell the Bnei Yisroel which animals they are permitted to eat, Hashem tells him to first tell the laws to Aharon and his remaining sons, Elazar and Isamar. The pasuk then says that they, as a group, were the ones to inform the Bnei Yisroel of these laws. This is different than most other mitzvos, where the responsibility of teaching the Bnei Yisroel was Moshe's. What is different about the laws of the kosher and non-kosher animals that it needed four people to teach them? In addition, Rashi points out that Aharon and his sons were appointed as messengers of Hashem's word in reward for their silence and acceptance of the deaths of Nadav and Avihu. What is the connection between their silence and acceptance of Hashem's decree and the privilege of teaching Klal Yisroel the laws of kosher animals?

In truth, there is another mitzvah where we find that someone else helped Moshe. In parshas Bo (Shemos 12:3), regarding the mitzvah of rosh chodesh and the laws of pesach in Egypt, the pasuk tells us that Aharon joined Moshe in commanding and teaching the Bnei Yisroel. In addition, there is another connection between the laws of kosher animals and the sanctification of the new moon. The Midrash tells us that there were four things that Moshe was trying to understand, and that he needed Hashem to show him. One of the four was the moon at the beginning of its new cycle. Another of the four, were the different types of animals and insects that are kosher. The fact that these two mitzvos are connected, both in the way that Hashem gave them over to Moshe, and in the way that they were taught to Klal Yisroel, seems to imply that they share something in common.

Though there are many reasons given (that we can understand) for the dietary laws, one simple one is that they refine the soul of a person. As the saying goes, "you are what you eat". Every living thing has some sort of spirit in them, and when their physical properties are digested, so is their spirit. The dietary laws make sure that we do not acquire any harmful spiritual matter. This being said, we can extrapolate and posit that those who decide which animal is kosher are in reality deciding what is spiritually acceptable. Whether it is determining which animal is kosher or whether it is deciding if it has been slaughtered properly, these decisions pertain to the realm of the spiritual, (even though they are to be decided based on the practical knowledge that we have, and not based on any spiritual means).

The mitzvah of determining the new moon also makes this point. The court which determines when the month starts, and thereby, when the yomim tovim fall out, are making very spiritual decisions, even though they are based on astronomical calculations. They are determining when Hashem will be closer to us, and when it is time for us to do certain mitzvos. Again, the decision is based on physical factors, but nonetheless, determines what the spiritual reality will be, and what spiritual effect our actions will have.

This is the connection between the two mitzvos. Both demonstrate the ability of the teachers of Klal Yisroel to determine what the reality will be, on an elevated and spiritual level. That is what Hashem showed Moshe. He showed him the ability of the Bnei Yisroel and their teachers. That could be the reason that these mitzvos included other teachers of Klal Yisroel, besides Moshe. It was to teach us the role of the teachers in these (and all) mitzvos. Every decision in these areas determines what will be the reality. That is the connection to Aharon and his sons acceptance of Hashem's will. The ability to accept Hashem's will stems from a true knowledge and recognition that it is Hashem's world, and that He is in charge. Only after total recognition of this fact is it possible to realize that we can determine what the spiritual reality will be. Because they accepted what happened, they were able to take their place in deciding how the Hashem's reality fits in the world.