

“And Moshe took half of the blood and placed it in basins and half of the blood he threw upon the Mizbayach. And he took the Book of the Covenant... and they said, ‘All that Hashem has spoken we will do and we will obey.’ And Moshe took the blood and threw it upon the people.” (24:6-8)

Horav Mordechai Rogov, z.l., derives a compelling lesson from the sprinkling of the blood of the *korbanos*, sacrifices, at the time of the receiving of the Torah. We are being taught to defend and uphold the Torah even at such times when doing so requires that we invest our own blood and our very lives for Torah’s sake.

Every drop of Jewish blood that has been spilled *l’shem Shomayim*, for the sake of Heaven, to defend the Torah, does not go to waste. This blood has been preserved as the lives of the living are strengthened and inspired by the lives of the martyrs. We cherish, admire and value their dedication and commitment to Torah and *mitzvos*. Their ultimate devotion – actually relinquishing their lives for Torah ideals – concretizes our faith in Hashem as it incorporates their *mesiras nefesh*, supreme devotion, into our national agenda. Their willingness to defend the *Torah* strengthens our own resolve to sustain the Torah.

Rav Rogov notes that the impact of these selfless deeds goes beyond our own people. Its far-reaching effect inspires even the gentile world which witnesses such dedication. While it is true that other nations also manifest a form of self-sacrifice, these people, regrettably, are willing to die while they kill others. This is not self-sacrifice. This is moral hypocrisy and blatant murder.

Chazal tell us that the executioner who was assigned to carry out the death sentence against Rabbi Chanina *ben Teradyon* by burning him to death at the stake was himself overcome by what he saw. Rabbi Chanina’s submission and devotion melted the executioner’s wicked heart to the point that he himself repented. He gave up his life in order to decrease Rabbi Chanina’s suffering by hastening his death.

This phenomenon has repeated itself throughout the millennia. Those who have witnessed our People marching to their death with their heads held high, with pride and devotion in our beliefs, with resolution and fortitude in the face of impending death, have come to admire the Torah and its teachings. Many of them have sustained this inspiration and dedicated their own lives to observe the Torah’s laws. Some have even entered under the protective wings of the *Shechinah*.

Moshe *Rabbeinu* took half of the blood and placed it into basins. He took the other half and sprinkled it on the Altar. The blood from the bowl was then sprinkled upon the people. The significance of these actions helped to energize the spiritual psyche of the people, so that they would serve Hashem enthusiastically – with vibrancy and vigor. The other half was directed at the

Mizbayach, the symbol of Jewish sacrifice. This teaches us that Torah's mission includes a profound commitment, a readiness for sacrifice when the need arises.