



Parshat Tzav: Inner Service of G-d

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Hershel Reichman

When a *korban mincha* was offered in the *Mishkan*, a *kemitza*, a certain amount of flour was put on the altar and burnt for Hashem. The rest of the flour or *matzah* was eaten by the *kohanim*. But if the *kohen* himself brought the *mincha*, the whole sacrifice was burnt on the altar. Why was this so? In addition, there's an interesting distinction between the *kohen* and the *levi*. Before beginning the service, the *kohen* was commanded to wear four pieces of clothing and the *kohen gadol* eight, while the *levi* was allowed to wear any clothing he wanted. Why did the Torah require a uniform for the *kohen* while exempting the *levi*?

The Shem MiShmuel quoting the Avnei Nezer explains that the *kohanim* signify *penimiyut*, a secret hidden holiness. The *leviim* are *chitzoni* (external) and their *avodah* is *b'hitgalut* (revealed). Much of the *kohen's* service was done privately in sanctity while the *leviim's avodah* was visible involving song and music. Inner holiness must be covered and sanctified. Outer holiness can be revealed. Since

the *kohen's kedusha* was internal, it had to be covered with clothing.

This parallels the deep inner holiness of a Jewish woman which is why they have more strictures regarding modesty. The *kedusha* of men is more outward and therefore they have less limitations on their external dress. Men are meant to be in the public arena and to serve as leaders of the community. Women are meant to reign in the private domain of their home. They are called the *akeret habayit*, the foundation of the Jewish home. According to Kabbalah, the man symbolizes the right side, which is dominant and more open, while the woman is the left hand which is not as visible or active. The right hand is *chesed*, reaching out and connecting to others, while the left hand is *din*, restraint and discipline.

Every parent is an educator as the Torah says, "*V'shinantem levanecha*." When teaching children, it's important to focus on the externals of Jewish education, on the right

side. We must also focus on the left side, which is close to the heart. It's crucial to give over to our children the technical details of how to live as a Jew. We must also convey the love and warmth inherent in *Torah*. The *kohen* represents *chesed* and the *levi* is *din*. There's a part of us that's *chitzoni*, visible holiness meant to be shared with the world. And there is a private *kedusha* that's meant to be contained within. The Avnei Nezer gives the example of Shabbat, a day of *neshama* when one can tap into the private inner sanctity of one's soul.

When a Jew brought a *mincha* offering to the *mishkan*, the *kohen* symbolically took the deepest, holiest, part of the sacrifice, the *kemitza*, and offered it to Hashem. The rest of the *mincha*, which was lighter and more superficial, was eaten by the *kohen*. However since that profound inner *kedusha* permeates the essence of a *kohen*, his own *mincha* was completely burnt.

Who Knows One

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Leah Kohn

The theme running through the *Hagadah* is exile turned into redemption. The Torah describes the beginning of the enslavement in Egypt, "*Vayimoruru et chayehem b'chomer uv'levenim*. They embittered their lives with clay and bricks." *Bnei Yisroel* had to collect the material that was needed to build. It was a very difficult situation.

The verse can also be understood on a spiritual level. The Egyptians embittered the Jews' lives by forcing them to constantly be busy with *chomer* (materialism) so that they had no energy left to devote to spirituality.

It follows that the exile had two consequences, the physical aspect and the spiritual consequences of it. The first exile was exceptionally difficult. In subsequent exiles we were able to look back and see how we coped and how Hashem helped us in the end. In addition, the influence of the Egyptian culture was so strong that our sages compared taking

the Jewish people out of Egypt like taking a baby out of the womb of his mother. Just as the baby is totally dependent on its mother for everything, the Jewish people were so influenced by the culture of Egypt that it was very difficult to leave. Every year, we celebrate our redemption from Egypt. But the reality of Egypt did not end when we were redeemed. Our sages say we are obligated to see ourselves as if we left Egypt. We are not asked to pretend something that doesn't exist. We are still in the process of getting out of Egypt today and every Pesach is meant to bring us closer to freedom from what Egypt was about.

The Sefat Emet writes that we tend to view exile as a very difficult experience on a physical level. However, that is only the external expression of something that is happening inside. The main exile is the soul that is imprisoned in the body. Before Adam sinned, the body and soul worked together as a team. When Adam wanted to do something that accorded with the will of Hashem the body

followed without struggle. After the sin, the soul had to contend with the body. It was no longer free to do what it wanted.

Shir Hashirim discusses the relationship between Hashem and the Jewish people. It says, "*Kol dodi dofeq*. I can hear the voice of my beloved knocking." There's a knock that is seeking to change reality. It is the spiritual power inside the Jew that knocks on the door and asks to be let in. This is the voice of the soul awakening man. The embitterment the Jewish people felt because of the slavery was because life was focused on building in the physical arena without letting the spiritual voice express itself. The soul was imprisoned in the body of the people and from this perspective exile still exists. There are many areas where the soul wants one thing and the body resists. Just as the Jews were in exile on a national level, the same exists for each individual. The soul is in exile within the body, which doesn't let it express itself to its fullest.

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The verse in Tehilim states, "*Karva el nafshi ge'ala.*" We ask Hashem to come close to our soul and redeem us. Although we pray for

redemption on a national level, we must pray that Hashem redeem our soul on an individual level. The physical exile is only an expression

of our spiritual exile. If we will pray for our souls to be redeemed, we can then in turn bring the eternal redemption closer.

The Holiday of Pesach – Part I

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller

The Arizal teaches that the story of *Galut Mitzrayim* began in *Gan Eden*. The snake convinced Chavah to eat of the fruit by saying, "You could be like Hashem, knowing good and bad."

A good choice made in an autonomous fashion has much greater power than a choice made while in a robotic state of mind. The snake meant to say that if you integrate evil within you and you continuously choose good despite it, you can attain a much higher level. This was true, except that Adam and Chava weren't ready for it yet. If they would have waited for Shabbat, they could have achieved this lofty state.

After the sin, humanity was doomed to an ongoing battle with the *yetzer hara*. Adam and Chava could have accomplished ultimate rectification but instead they caused fragmentation. Now billions of people over thousands of years would each receive a specific mission to draw Hashem back into the world through self-rectification and rectification of the world.

At the end of Parshat Bereishit we see failure. The people sunk lower and lower until Hashem brought the Great Flood upon them. This created a partial rectification. Just witnessing so much death and seeing the force of life, water, turn against them, made the people aware of their finite nature. It may have stilled their passion towards promiscuity, but the drive for autonomy which brought them to idol worship and rebellion was still

alive and well.

The Arizal teaches that the people who died in the flood were reincarnated in the generation of the tower of Bavel. Their test was to use their ability to understand and relate to the world and to serve Hashem. They failed, and the ensuing dispersion only accomplished a partial rectification. They were reincarnated third time in the generation of the people enslaved in Egypt.

The Baal Hatanya explains, sometimes you might feel as if there is a rock on you heart. You want to pray, yet your heart is hard as a stone. You've become so taken with the part of yourself that's coarse, vulgar, and sinful that your heart becomes locked. That doesn't mean this is the real you or that the door can never be opened again. But at the moment, while you're praying, you're thinking of everything in the world, but what you're supposed to be saying, because physicality has claimed you. The Zohar says if there's a rock blocking the entrance, take a hammer and shatter it.

The Egyptian exile was meant to break down the Jews' coarseness and physicality so that the holy soul hidden within them could shine forth. And indeed, the toil and suffering broke them. They could not listen to Moshe *m'kotzer ruach*, from shortness of breath. They found Hashem from the deepest and blackest place, and they cried out to Him from the depths of their heart. At that moment, they shattered the rock. They were close to attaining what Adam

wanted when he integrated evil through eating the forbidden fruit. As soon as they reached that point, Hashem appeared to Moshe in the burning bush and initiated the process of redemption.

What gave the Jews merit to be redeemed? Even though they were at the 49th level of impurity, the Gemara says they didn't change their clothing, names, and language. Wasn't this hypocrisy? Every person has a huge gap between what he wishes to be and what he is. The desire to be more than one is, is still a holy desire.

The Talmud tells us that many Jews died during the plague of darkness. In the encampment of the Jews though there was spiritual light. Hashem showed them who they could really be. Anyone who wanted to get out of Egypt – both at the outer lever and at the inner level – lived. Anyone who wanted to stay exactly the way he was was doomed. Hashem responded according to the person's will. They needed the suffering to break through, but in the end they had to make their own decisions. Do I want to leave or not? And they had to concretize their decision. They had to be able to reach down deep into their very life blood, to their instinctive selves. They had to risk their lives by taking the Pascal lamb, spreading the blood on the lintels, and affirming their allegiance to the One who would redeem them, "from slavery to freedom and from darkness to a great light."