

Tzav  
and Purim  
Inner and Outer Holiness

### A. The Completely Consumed Korban

The *parsha* teaches us *kol minchas kohen kalil tihyeh lo seiacheil*. “Every *korban mincha* of a *kohen* should be completely burned and shall not be eaten.” Normally, every *mincha* has a *kmitza*, a palmful of flour that is burned on the *mizbeach*, while the rest of the flour or *matza* of the *mincha* is eaten by a *kohen*. However, if a *kohen* brings a *mincha* there is no *kmitza*, no separation of the small amount. Instead, the whole *mincha* is burned on the *mizbeach*. Why is this so?

### B. Kohanim and Leviim

In the Beis Hamikdash and Mishkan, the *kohanim* and *leviim* had different roles. The *kohanim* brought *korbanos* and the *leviim* sang songs and acted as watchmen. Each of them had a different kind of preparation to qualify for his role. *Kohanim* had to wear official uniforms. The *kohein gadol* had to wear eight pieces of clothing, and a regular *kohen* wore four pieces of clothing. A *levi* however could wear whatever clothing he wanted. A *levi* could walk into the Beis Hamikdash dressed casually, even wearing jeans and a T-shirt. If a *kohen* is not wearing his uniform he is not considered a *kohen* at that moment, and he is forbidden from doing the *avoda* in the Beis Hamikdash. The *levi* however can do his service without wearing any special clothing. Why does the Torah require a uniform for a *kohen*?

The Avnei Nezer explains that *kohanim* are *pnimiim*, internally focused, and their *avoda* is *b'chashai*, their service to Hashem is performed privately. The *leviim* are *chitzoniim*, externally focused, and their *avoda* is *b'hisgalus*, performed publicly. The *kohen* represents a secret, hidden, holy power and sanctity. It is a very deep sanctity, hidden from view. Much of his service is done in silence. The *kohen* does not sing. He may say a few short words to clarify his intentions before offering a particular sacrifice. But usually when he slaughters the animal, collects its blood and brings it to the *mizbeach*, the *kohen* says nothing. During the service of a *korban mincha*, and also during the *ktores*, there is no speaking. The *kohen* walks *b'regesh*, with feeling, but with no outward noise. His devotions are private. His *kedusha*, sanctity, is private.

The *levi* is the opposite. The *levi* sings songs and plays instruments. The sound of the service of the Beis Hamikdash is produced by the *leviim*. Their choir must have had an amazing sound, as thousands of voices sang together with the accompaniment of their instruments. This form of service reflects their *kedusha*, which has a visible form.

### C. Inner, Private Holiness and Outer, Revealed Holiness

When the holiness of a certain object or person is an inner holiness, it should be covered and sanctified. On the other hand, outer holiness can be revealed, because that fits its nature. Since the holiness of *kohanim* is *pnimiis*, an inner and hidden holiness, it has to be covered with clothing. Since the *kedusha* of the *levi* is seen, visible, and heard, *leviim* don't wear any special clothing. A uniform is not relevant to their holiness, which is meant to be revealed.

In Judaism, there is value in hiding holiness. There is a type of holiness that is supposed to be private,

not to be shown or displayed. This is the concept of modesty, of clothing oneself in a modest *tzanua* way. Shem Mishmuel is giving us a basis to understand the modesty of the Jewish woman. The requirements of Torah law and practice is for Jewish women to dress in a modest way. Thus the *kedusha* of Jewish women is inward, they have inner private holiness, and their holiness is supposed to be covered with modest clothing.

The *kedusha* of men is not so inward, but rather more external and outward facing. This is why men don't have so many restrictions on their clothing, because their *kedusha* is more external. This is an important point in order to understand the normative society of Torah. In Torah society, the woman is generally a private person, whereas the man is generally a more public person. For example, we only consider men for public positions such as king. According to the culture of Torah and the social norms and practices of Torah society, men function in the public arena. Women are supposed to be more private. The private domain of the home is the woman's arena, more than the man's. Jewish women are the foundation of the Jewish home, the *akeres habayis*. Within the home, women rule the family. This is an expression of the holiness of a woman on the one hand, and the holiness of a man on the other hand. Women have internal *kedusha*, and men have external *kedusha*.

#### **D. Right-Handed *Kedusha*, Left-Handed *Kedusha* – A Paradox?**

In Kaballa and Chassidus men are called *tzad yemin*, the right side, and women are referred to as *tzad smol*, the left side. The right hand is generally stronger. People generally use their right hand more than their left hand. The left hand though, is important. Its function however, is just not as prominent and visible. It is nonetheless very important. We put *tfillin* on our left hand. In fact, the halacha teaches that the *tfillin* on the left hand are supposed to be covered. The private *kedusha* of a person is on the left side.

The right side is called *chesed* and the left side is called *din*. *Chesed* is *hispashtus*, spreading out, reaching out and connecting with others. Strength, *din*, is about respect and privacy. The hidden *kedusha* is on the left. The revealed *kedusha* is on the right.

However, we now have a problem to resolve. According to Shem Mishmuel, the *kedusha* of a *kohen* is more hidden, which is related to *din*. The *kedusha* of a *levi* is more revealed, which is *chesed*. However, paradoxically, according to *chassidus* and *kaballa*, the *kohen* represents *chesed* and the *levi* represents *din*. This is illustrated by the sin of the golden calf. Aharon the *kohen* went along with the enterprise in some way and did not openly fight against the idolaters because of his *midas hachessed*. Whereas Moshe and the *leviim* openly fought the idol worshipers with *midas hadin*. So which way should we view *kohanim* and *leviim*, as people of *chesed* or of *din*?

Perhaps we can resolve this problem with an idea taught by my rebbe, Harav Yosef Dov Halevi Soloveichik zt"l. He distinguished between the *kedusha* of the *kohen* inside the Beis Hamikdash and his *kedusha* outside the Beis Hamikdash. Inside the Beis Hamikdash a *kohen* must wear the priestly garments to perform the holy service. However, outside of the Beis Hamikdash, a *kohen* acts as a *kohen* without any special garments. Thus, we see that a *kohen* has general *kedushas kehuna* without the priestly uniform, while in the Beis Hamikdash he has a specialized sanctity which is endowed upon him by his *kohen* uniform.

In this vein, we may suggest that outside of the Beis Hamikdash, the *kedushas kohen* is *chesed*,

whereas inside of the Beis Hamikdash his *kedusha* is *din*. Outside of the Beis Hamikdash the *kohen's* role is to bring *shalom* to the Jewish people. He behaves like Aharon, the first *kohen*, who was *ohev shalom v'rodef shalom, ohev es habriyos um'karvan l'Torah*. The *kohen* pursues peace, loves people and brings them closer to Torah. This is *midas hachessed*. However, in the Beis Hamikdash a different *kedushas kohen* emerges, a hidden and deep sanctity, covered by his priestly garments. Here the *kohen* serves Hashem in silence and in awe. Here he personifies *din*.

We can support the reverse roles for the *levi* as well. Outside of the Beis Hamikdash, the *levi* is the great student of Torah and Torah teacher. *Yoru mishpatecha l'Yaakov v'sorascha l'Yisrael*. Torah study is essentially *din*, with all of the Torah laws and strictures. So the *kedushas levi* outside of the Beis Hamikdash is one of *din*. In the Beis Hamikdash though a different *kedushas levi* emerges. Here the *levi* sings and plays songs for Hashem in the public arena of the Beis Hamikdash, facing a public audience. He then performs with *chesed* – with an open full display of song, joy and religious ecstasy. Here he epitomizes *chesed*.

These reversals seem surprising. However, the truth is that every person has a combination of *chesed* and *din*. We all have a right side as well as a left side. We all have an open, revealed part of our holy selves. And we all have a hidden private side of our holiness. Sometimes we act with our revealed interactive selves. At other times, we focus on the very personal and private aspects of our *kedusha*.

There is a part of me that is private. Another part of me is public. I have inner *kedusha*. I have external *kedusha*. I have within me both *midos, chesed* and *din*. What's true for *kohanim* and *leviim* is true for every one of us. We are all *mamleches kohanim v'goy kadosh*, a kingdom of *kohanim* and a holy nation.

## **E. The Ananei Hakavod, Clouds of Glory**

Our Sages say that the merit of Aharon Hakohen brought the *anaei hakavod*. Special clouds of glory accompanied the Jewish nation in its wanderings through the desert. When Aharon died these clouds disappeared. After the clouds departed, Amalek attacked. What was the spiritual connection between Aharon and the clouds of glory?

The clouds of glory provided a form of cover for the Bnei Yisrael in the desert. A gentile in the desert would see only clouds when the Jewish nation walked by him. The Jews were walking inside the clouds of glory and were thereby concealed. Just as Aharon's *kedusha* was a private and personal inner *kedusha*, the clouds that his *zechus* brought to the nation shared this sense of privacy with the Jewish people. The Jewish people also have an external *kedusha*, visible to all. The clouds of glory though, emphasized and concealed their inner private *kedusha*, not to be seen by the rest of the world. These were the *ananei hakavod* that surrounded the Jewish people in the *zechus* of Aharon.

This is an important concept in order to understand the Jewish relationship with the rest of the world. There is a part of our being and mission that is exposed and visible. It *should* be shared with the rest of the world. We should speak publicly of Jewish kindness and generosity. We should share this holiness with the rest of the world. We can be proud of Jewish charity in the United States and in the rest of the world. For example, there are many hospitals with Jewish names, like Mt Sinai and Maimonides that were built with Jewish charity. This is an expression of our *kedusha chitzonis*, our external holiness.

However, there is also a private holiness that is inside the Jew. For example, Yom Kippur is a day of

outward silence. It is not a public day at all. On Yom Kippur, a Jew stays all day in the synagogue or at home. This is an expression of the inner and concealed holiness within us.

Aharon represents our inner, concealed holiness. He goes into the *kodesh kadashim*, where no one else goes. The *leviim* are outside in the courtyard. When all the Jews would come to visit the temple on the holiday, the *leviim* would dazzle them with their choir and instruments. Their holiness is external.

The *anaei hakavod* were in the *zechus* of Aharon's inner holiness. His private and personal holiness created this *hashpaa* that separated Jews from the rest of the world.

## **F. The Holy Handful, *Kometz Hamincha***

The *korban mincha* has a *kometz*, a small amount of flour in a cup. It is enough to fill the palm of a hand, and is burnt as an offering on the *mizbeach*, the altar. The rest of the *korban* is eaten by the *kohanim*. This is the *halacha* when a regular Jew brings a *mincha* offering. But when the *kohen* brings a *korban mincha*, the entire offering is burnt. Why?

The idea of the *kometz* is the idea of the secret holiness that lies deep within things. The deepest sanctity of the *mincha* is hidden within it, and the *kohen* locates it in the *kemitza*. Thus the *kohen* takes a small amount, a handful of flour in his hand. Symbolically, he takes the deepest and holiest part of the *mincha*. This *kemitza* is elevated and burned on the *mizbeach*. The rest of the *mincha* is *chitzonis*, external, superficial, and lighter holiness. The *kemitza* part of the *mincha* though is *kodesh kadashim*, the holiest of the holy. These two parts exist in the *mincha* offering of a regular Jew, because a regular Jew possesses both inner and outer levels of *kedusha*.

The holiness of a *kohen* in the Beis Hamikdash, however, is completely inward. His *mincha* therefore is completely burnt on the *mizbeach*. His own deep *kedusha* permeates it completely. This is why his *mincha* is completely consumed. There are no gradations or different levels of holiness, as is in other *menachos*. The *mincha* of the *kohen* is holy of holies in its entirety. Its entirety is fit to go onto the *mizbeach*.

## **G. The Day of Complete Holiness**

According to the Zohar, the day of Shabbos is completely a holy soul, *kula nishmasa*. During the week we experience both *guf* and *neshama*, our physical and spiritual sides. There are many action *mitzvos* we do during the week. We have to be honest in business, take care of family and friends, fight for Jewish survival, work to heal the sick, and help the unfortunate. The body does many good things during the week. This is an external expression of our responsibilities and holiness.

There are also many times during the week when we are private. We pray in private and study Torah privately. We are thus a combination of external body and inner soul. However, Shabbos, the Zohar says, is *kula nishamas*, all soul. On Shabbos, the body and its needs are toned down. We are not involved in *mitzvos* of the body. We don't wear *tfillin shel yad* on Shabbos. *Tfillin shel yad* represents the actions of the hand. We don't wear the *tfillin shel rosh* on Shabbos either. On Shabbos, we don't plan the actions of the week. Shabbos has no need for the body to put on the *tfillin*. The day of Shabbos is completely focused on the Jewish soul, on our inner holiness.

## H. Amalek's Deep-Seated Opposition to Holiness

Pirkei d'Rebbi Eliezer draws a strange comparison. It compares the cup of kiddush on Shabbos to the cup of Amalek, which is a sour, bitter, and vinegary sort of wine. The cup of Shabbos *kiddush* is good wine, but Amalek's cup is filled with spoiled wine. What is the connection between these two cups?

Shabbos is an inwardly facing day, the day of the holiness inside the Jew. What is Amalek? Amalek is our enemy, but not an external enemy. It is an enemy that attacks the Jew on every level of Jewish existence. Amalek attacks us from the lowest to the highest level, on the levels of *nefesh*, *ruach* and *neschama*. Amalek has deep power, attacking the Jew even on his deepest, most holy level.

Hashem always creates balance. *Zeh kneged zeh bara haElokim*. Every good force in the world is counterbalanced by an equally powerful evil force. The Jewish people has an Aharon Hakohen level, an inner level of private sanctity, endless in depth. Amalek has the same level in evil, an evil that is infinitely deep. Amalek is not fighting the Jew because he has some external problem with us. He doesn't fight us because of land. The seven Canaanite nations fought us over the land of Israel. Amalek, though, came to fight the Jews in the desert. Bnei Yisrael were not even headed towards the land of Amalek. Amalek had no alliance with even one of the seven nations. Then why did Amalek attack the Jews?

Amalek's confrontation is not an external confrontation. He is a fundamental enemy of the Jewish soul. He resents the holiness of the Jew. He wants to deny it and destroy it. This is the Hitler Nazi ideology, which says that the Jew is the enemy of humanity. The Jew preaches kindness, which in the eyes of Amalek is weakness. Amalek believes that the weak only promote defeat. In history we know of Sparta and of certain Indian cultures who hated and killed the weak. They resented unfortunate people. They believed that only the strong should survive. Even today in America there are professors who now promote this type of barbaric, savage agenda.

The hatred of Amalek for the Jewish people is very deep. It has nothing to do with anything external. It is an internal fundamental hatred and antagonism. In a certain way Amalek is the opposite of Shabbos. If Shabbos is the Jewish day of internal, deep and profound holiness, Amalek has internally profound wickedness, contamination, and defilement. Shabbos is the day of the holiness of the holy Jewish soul. Amalek represents the soul of *tuma*, of defilement. It is the opposite of Shabbos and of Aharon Hakohen.

## I. Holy Privacy

In Parshas Chukas, the Torah says that when Aharon died, the clouds of glory departed and then, according to our sages, Amalek attacked. Amalek is the opposite of Shabbos and Aharon. Aharon strengthened, developed and enabled the Jews to have an inner sanctity within their souls. Amalek promotes the very opposite.

Shem Mishmuel says that Aharon could take the external and make it internal, Aharon made everyday affairs into deep spiritual experiences. Amalek did the opposite. He defiled the pure and holy, and instead made it public, crass and showy.

When one rises the other falls. If Aharon is strong, and the Jews maintain a strong inner holiness, then

Amalek cannot touch us. However, if a Jew unfortunately weakens or ignores his or her inner holiness and only is holy on the outside, then Amalek could take the power of the inside of the Jew and defile it.

We must take this to heart. Our people has done and does do great things. We continuously help better our society. We help in numerous external ways, with hospitals, charity and marching for civil rights. But are we doing enough for our own private and deep personal sanctity? Unfortunately, I don't think we can say that as a nation we are doing enough.

We should not let our external good deeds excuse us to then ignore our left side, our private personal sanctity. It is important to help the world. But that is not the sum total of Judaism. Judaism is also about private personal service between oneself and Hashem, such as in the privacy of prayer. During the privacy of the Yom Kippur *shemoneh esrei*, we reveal many private things and bring out the holiness of our Jewish soul. This is the other side of Judaism: the private, inner side that cannot be neglected.

We cannot say that we contribute to the world, and that this alone justifies our being Jewish. This is not enough! We must also take care of our inner selves – the deepest parts of our souls. We must commune with our Creator. We must discover and enter the holy of holies, like Aharon Hakohen who entered the holy of holies in the Mishkan. We must prevent the attack of Amalek, who are our attackers on our deepest level.

### **J. Responding to Today's Amalek**

We see this in Amalek today. Our response to the Amalek that confronts us today is to strengthen our inner beings, our prayers and devotions and feelings for Hashem. We need to feel our own souls, to feel our soul in the privacy of our own rooms, in the quiet times away from the public. We must commune with Him and feel Him taking us into that inner sanctum. In times of Amalek opposition, this is what we need to focus on.

Shem Mishmuel explains that this is the reason the Torah gave us the special *mitzva* of remembering Amalek. We are supposed to speak about Amalek in public. Amalek attacks us inside. The word Amalek has the same *gematriya*, numerical value as *safek*, doubt, 240. Amalek is an attack on the Jewish resolve, commitment and trust in God. It is a deep, inner attack. One could be a great Jew on the outside. Amalek can still attack on the inside. It is important to speak about Amalek, to discuss him externally. We reveal this problem. We reveal the fact that we are not inwardly focused enough, and have not fully developed our inner sanctity. When Amalek is ignored, he works well. But when we focus on Amalek and bring him towards the outside, we can destroy him. This is what Esther did to Haman. She revealed his plans, and thus succeeded in destroying him. This is what we celebrate on Purim – the destruction of Amalek.

We must pay attention to our inside and thus banish Amalek. Torah must be a deep experience. Our study of Torah must affect us deeply. We must talk about Amalek, put him outside of us and replace him inside of us with the inner holiness of the Jew.

### **K. Developing the Left and Right Sides of Holiness**

I am involved in Jewish education. You also are a Jewish educator, especially if you are a parent. Every parent is an educator. We must focus on two levels of Jewish education. We must teach our children the

externals, such as how to say a *bracha*, how to put on *tfillin*, how to pray, and how to give charity. These are all right handed, external expressions of holiness, and they are important. But we must also focus on educating the left side as well, the side that is closer to the heart. This is the side of the *tfillin* that are covered. We must develop the feelings, depth and sanctity of Judaism, the emotions of Judaism, the *lev*. It is important to give our children this love of Judaism and Torah. We must give them the deep sense of inner sanctity that is in the *kedusha* of Aharon.

When we do this we will be able to defeat any attack by Amalek on our resolve and commitment. Our future will be bright with the holiness of the Temple and with *kohanim* entering the holy places of the Beis Hamikdash.

May we all enjoy a deep and holy Purim!

### Questions:

1. What is the core difference between the *kedusha* of *kohanim* and the *kedusha* of *leviim*?
2. Why did Aharon Hakohen's merit produce *ananei hakavod*?
3. Why does Amalek oppose the Jew?
4. How do we spiritually defeat Amalek?
5. Can Jewish kindness alone defeat Amalek?

### Exercises:

1. List for a day activities you did that expressed outer *kedusha* and inner *kedusha*.
2. Are you more of an outer or inner *kedusha* person? Explain.
3. How can you express even more of your type of *kedusha* in your life?
4. Devise a program to bring more *kedusha* of both types into your daily life.
5. Try out your program for a week.