

TZAV AND PURIM

INNER AND OUTER HOLINESS

A

The Completely Consumed *Korban*

The *pasuk* states, “*V’chol minchas kohen kalil tihyeh lo sei’acheil*. Every *korban mincha* of a *kohen* should be completely burned and shall not be eaten” (Vayikra 6:16). Normally, every *mincha* has a *kemitza*, a palmful of flour that is burned on the *mizbei’ach*, 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 *kemitza*, no separation of a small amount. Instead, the whole *mincha* is burned on the *mizbei’ach*. Why is this so?

B

Kohanim* and *Levi'im

In the Beis Hamikdash and Mishkan, the *kohanim* and *levi'im* had different roles. The *kohanim* brought *korbanos*, while the *levi'im* 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 *kohen gadol* had to wear eight pieces of clothing, and a regular *kohen* wore four. If a *kohen* is not wearing his uniform, he is not considered a *kohen* at that moment, and he

is forbidden to do the *avoda* in the Beis Hamikdash. A *levi*, on the other hand, could wear whatever clothing he wanted. A *levi* could walk into the Beis Hamikdash dressed casually, even wearing jeans and a T-shirt. Why does the Torah require a uniform only for a *kohen*?

The Avnei Neizer explains that *kohanim* are *pnimiyim*, internally focused, and their *avoda* is *b'chashai*, performed privately. The *levi'im*, on the other hand, are *chitzoniyim*, 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 *mizbei'ach*, the *kohen* says nothing. During the service of a *korban mincha* and during the *ketores*, there is no speaking at all. The *kohen* walks *b'regesh*, with feeling, but with no outward noise. His devotions are private. His *kedusha* is private.

The *levi* is the opposite. The *levi* sings songs and plays instruments. 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, as befits its nature. Since the holiness of *kohanim* is *pnimis*, it has to be covered with clothing, a uniform.

Since the *kedusha* of the *levi* is meant to be revealed, both seen and heard, *levi'im* don't need to wear a uniform.

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, *tzanuah* way. The Shem Mishmuel is giving us a basis to understand Torah law and practice regarding the modesty of the Jewish woman. 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, on the other hand, is more external and outward facing. This is why men don't have as many restrictions on their clothing. 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 both women and men. Women have internal *kedusha*, and men have external *kedusha*.

D

Right-Handed *Kedusha*, Left-Handed *Kedusha*—a Paradox?

In Kabbala 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 and used more than the left. The left hand is still important, though its function is not as prominent

and visible. We put *tefillin* on our left hand. In fact, the halacha is that the *tefillin* 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 revealed *kedusha* is on the right. The hidden *kedusha* is on the left.

However, we now have a problem to resolve. According to the 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*. But according to Chassidus and Kabbala, the *kohen* represents *chesed* and the *levi* represents *din*. This is illustrated by the sin of the golden calf. In some ways, Aharon the Kohen went along with the enterprise and did not openly fight against the idolaters because of his *midas hachesed*. Moshe and the *levi'im*, on the other hand, openly fought the idol worshippers with *middas hadin*. So which way should we view *kohanim* and *levi'im*, as people of *chesed* or of *din*?

Perhaps we can resolve this problem with an idea taught by my Rebbe, Harav Yosef Dov Halevi Soloveitchik *zt"l*. He distinguished between the *kedusha* of the *kohen* inside the Beis Hamikdash and outside of it. Inside the Beis Hamikdash, a *kohen* must wear the priestly garments in order to perform the holy service. Outside of the Beis Hamikdash, however, 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 with which he is endowed via his uniform.

In this vein, we may suggest that outside of the Beis Hamikdash, the *kedushas kohen* is *chesed*, whereas inside, 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'rodeif shalom, ohev es habriyos u'mekarvan laTorah*” (Pirkei Avos 1:12). The *kohen* pursues peace,

loves people, and brings them closer to Torah. This is *middas hachessed*. But in the Beis Hamikdash, a different *kedushas kohan* emerges, a hidden and deep sanctity, covered by his priestly garments. Here, the *kohen* serves Hashem in silence and 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 the Torah teacher. “*Yoru mishpatecha l’Yaakov v’soras’cha l’Yisra-
el*” (Devarim 33:10). Torah study is essentially *din*, with all of the Torah laws and strictures. Thus, 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 through our revealed, interactive selves. At other times, we focus on the very personal and private aspects of our *kedusha*. What is true for *kohanim* and *levi'im* is true for every one of us.

E

The Clouds of Glory

Our Sages say that the merit of Aharon Hakohen brought the *ananei hakavod*, the special clouds of glory that 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 private and personal, 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 hakodashim*, where no one else goes. The *levi'im* are outside in the courtyard. When all the Jews would come to visit the Beis Hamikdash on the holiday, the *levi'im* would dazzle them with their choir and instruments. Their holiness is external.

The *ananei hakavod* were in the *zechus* of Aharon's inner

holiness. His private and personal holiness created this *hashpa'a* that separated Jews from the rest of the world.

F

The Holy Handful

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 *kemitzah*. 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 *mizbei'ach*. The rest of the *mincha* is *chitzonis*—external, superficial, and of lighter holiness. The *kemitza* part of the *mincha*, though, is *kodesh kodashim*, 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* is totally burnt on the *mizbei'ach* because his own deep *kedusha* permeates it completely. There are no gradations or different levels of holiness as in other *menachos*. The *mincha* of the *kohen* is holy of holies; its entirety is fit to go onto the *mizbei'ach*.

G

The Day of Complete Holiness

During the week, we experience both *guf* and *neshama*, our physical and spiritual sides. There are many action-based *mitzvos* we do during the week. We have to be honest in business, take care of family and friends, fight for Jewish survival, and 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. But Shabbos, the Zohar says, is *kula nishmasa*, 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 *tefillin shel yad* on Shabbos. *Tefillin shel yad* represents the actions of the hand. We don't wear *tefillin shel rosh* on Shabbos, either. Shabbos has no need for the body to put on the *tefillin*. It is completely focused on the Jewish soul, on our inner holiness (not the actions of the week).

H

Amalek's Deep-Seated Opposition to Holiness

The Pirkei d'Rabbi 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, and not just in a physical sense. It 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 *neshama*. Amalek has deep power, attacking the Jew even on his deepest, holiest level.

Hashem always creates balance. "*Zeh l'umas zeh asa ha'Elokim*" (Koheles 7:14). 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, one that is infinitely deep. Amalek is not fighting the Jew because it has some

external problem with us. It doesn't fight us because of land, like the seven Canaanite nations in Israel. Amalek came to fight the Jews in the desert; Bnei Yisrael were not even headed towards the land of Amalek. The Amalekim had no alliance with even one of the seven nations. Why did they attack the Jews?

Amalek's confrontation is not an external one. Amalek is a fundamental enemy of the Jewish soul. It resents the holiness of the Jew. It wants to deny and destroy it. This is the Hitler/Nazi ideology, which says that the Jew is the enemy of humanity. The Jew preaches kindness, which is weakness in Amalek's eyes, because Amalek believes it only promotes 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*, 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.

The Shem Mishmuel says Aharon could take the external

and make it internal; he made everyday affairs into deep spiritual experiences. Amalek defiled the pure and holy, making 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 is only holy on the outside, then Amalek is empowered to defile the inside of the Jew.

We must take this to heart. Our people has done and still does 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 we're doing enough as a nation.

We should not let our external good deeds excuse our neglect of the 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 that of prayer. During the privacy of the Yom Kippur Shemoneh Esrei, we reveal many 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, our enemy on the deepest level.

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, 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's ascent, this is what we need to focus on.

The 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. The word Amalek has the same *gematriya* as *safeik*, doubt—240. Amalek is a deep, inner attack on the Jewish resolve, commitment, and trust in God. One could be a great Jew on the outside and yet be vulnerable to Amalek on the inside. It is important to speak about Amalek, to discuss him externally. In doing so we reveal this problem. We reveal the fact that we are not focused enough on our inside, 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.

Developing the Left and Right Sides of Holiness

I am involved in Jewish education. You are also a Jewish educator, especially if you are a parent. 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 *tefillin*, 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, the one that is closer to the heart. This is the side of the *tefillin* 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 Amalek's attacks on our resolve and commitment. Our future will be bright with the holiness of the Beis Hamikdash and with *kohanim* entering the holy places of the Beis Hamikdash.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

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

PERSONAL QUESTION

1. Are you more of an outer- or inner-*kedusha* person? Explain.

EXERCISES

2. For a day, list activities you did that expressed outer *kedusha* and inner *kedusha*.
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.

