

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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❖ PARSHAT TZAV

In this week's Torah portion, Tzav, we read the verse: "A perpetual fire shall always be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." The priests in the Holy Temple were required to light a fire upon the altar in preparation for the G-dly fire which descended from Above to consume the sacrifices. Without this preparation, the G-dly fire would not come down from heaven. The fire that descended from Above came from G-d. Thus, unlike a fire that is kindled by human beings, it was unlimited in nature.

Human beings, by contrast, are finite creatures; their abilities are likewise limited. Nonetheless, the priests had to first invest their own efforts in order for the G-dly, infinite fire to descend from on high. Thus we see that the service of limited, finite creations is a necessary condition to attain a level that transcends limitation. When a person does all he is capable of doing, G-d grants him additional powers from Above. He becomes a "perpetual fire that burns always," enabling him to transcend his natural limitations.

Every Jew possesses an inner, spiritual "Holy Temple" in which G-d's Presence dwells, as it states, "I will dwell in their midst." When a Jew invests the maximum amount of effort in kindling his spiritual flame, he merits a G-dly fire to descend from Above -- the bestowal of additional powers and an infinite abundance of blessing. What is the spiritual fire that burns in the inner Sanctuary of every Jew? None other than the warmth and enthusiasm he feels in his service of G-d. In the spiritual sense, observing the Torah and its commandments with enthusiasm is the equivalent of lighting a fire in one's inner Sanctuary.

This vitality must extend to all three dimensions of Torah and mitzvot: the study of Torah, the service of prayer, and the performance of good deeds. Torah: Learning Torah at fixed times is not enough if there is no enduring connection to the Torah throughout the day. Torah study must be so intense and vital to the Jew that it permeates his being and surrounds him constantly. Prayer: A person mustn't pray by rote or simply out of habit. Indeed, the service of prayer is "the supplication for mercy and entreaty before G-d." Good deeds: G-d's commandments are not to be performed merely to discharge our obligation. Rather, we must always endeavor to observe them in the most beautiful manner and to the best of our ability.

When a Jew does the above with enthusiasm, the fire he kindles upon his inner altar is whole. Such a person will merit that G-d's fire -- an unlimited fire -- will descend from Above, and he will see G-d's blessing in everything. (From: L'Chaim 5757 #462, Adapted for Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot, vol. 1)

"Command Aharon and his sons saying, 'This is the law of the burnt-offering.'" (6:2) QUESTION: Rashi writes that the term "tzav" denotes encouragement for the present and for future generations, and Rabbi Shimon that it is especially necessary to give encouragement in the places where there is a "chisaron kis" - "loss of money." "Chisaron kis" literally means "loss of purse." Why does the text not say "chisaron mamon" - "loss of money"? ANSWER: The burnt-offering atones for sinful thoughts

(Midrash Rabbah 7:3). A person can also sin with his eyes by viewing improper things, and with his ears by hearing evil, and with his tongue by speaking sinfully. To avoid speaking, the upper and lower jaw are like a "kis" (purse) that can lock up the tongue. The eyelids are a "kis" that can cover the eyes and prevent them from seeing evil. The external parts of the ears can be a "kis" with which to seal them from hearing evil. The only part of the body that has no protective guard is the mind. Therefore, Rabbi Shimon says that it is necessary to warn a person to be especially careful with his thought because of "chisaron kis" - the absence of an external constraint.

"In the place where the burnt-offering is slaughtered shall the sin-offering be slaughtered." (6:18) QUESTION: Why did the Torah prescribe that the two karbanot be slaughtered in the same place? ANSWER: A sin-offering is brought by a person who violated the Torah while a burnt-offering is brought as a contribution to the Beit Hamikdash. To protect the reputation of the people, the Torah commands that they both be slaughtered in the same place, so that if someone observes the animal being slaughtered, he will not suspect that the owner is a sinner, but rather a generous person bringing a contribution. Since in our generation tefilah (prayer) takes the place of avodah (sacrifices), the Gemara (Sotah 32b) says, that the Sages have prescribed that the tefilah of Shemoneh Esrei be recited quietly so that a sinner who wants to confess to Hashem should not be overheard by his neighbor and suffer embarrassment.

"And the flesh of the sacrifice of his thanksgiving peace-offerings; on the day of his offering it shall be eaten." (7:15) QUESTION: Usually an offering of lesser sanctity (kadashim kalim) such as the karban shelamim - peace offering - may be eaten for two days and one night; Why is the karban todah - thanksgiving peace-offering - limited to only one day and the succeeding night? ANSWER: A thanksgiving peace-offering is brought in recognition of a miracle that was done by Hashem on behalf of the individual. Miracles happen daily and continuously, as we say in the Amidah, "and for your miracles which are with us daily." Limiting the time when the karban todah may be eaten teaches that each day one should see and appreciate the new miracles Hashem constantly performs on his behalf. (From: Vedibarta Bam by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky)

❖ LAWS OF SHABBAT - 39 Melachot: Borer (Sorting)

General Intro (Borer): After the threshing, a mixed collection of waste matter remained on the threshing floor together with the grain kernels. Included in this combination would be small pebbles and similar debris. These pebbles could not be separated by winnowing because they were too heavy to be carried by the wind. Nor would a sieve be practical for this purpose. The pebbles and debris were therefore sorted and removed by hand. This process is the Melocho of Borer.

The definition of Borer: Any form of selecting from, or sorting of, an assorted mixture or combination can be Borer. This includes removing undesired objects or matter from a mixture or combination. **EX: removing spoiled cherries from a bowl of cherries, removing unwanted cashews from a jar of mixed nuts, straining impurities from liquids, Trimming away a brown spot on an apple or a banana, removing bones from fish, peeling an orange(to eat at a later time)**

Borer also includes sorting of nonfood items that are mingled together. **EX: Sorting mixed cutlery from a rack and placing into separate drawer compartments, sorting laundry into separate drawers, sorting soiled laundry from fresh laundry, sorting dirty silverware from a mixture of clean and dirty silverware.** (From: The 39 Melochos by Dovid Ribiat)

MY GRANDFATHER WROTE IN ONE OF HIS MAAMARIM: "IT IS NECESSARY TO STUDY SOME OF THE WRITTEN TORAH DAILY WITH RASHI, FOR HIS COMMENTARIES ARE THE T'RUMOT - THE SELECT - OF THE INTERPRETATIONS OF OUR SAGES." "...AND AT THE VERY LEAST EVERYONE MUST STUDY A TRACTATE OF TALMUD EACH YEAR." (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM ADAR II 18)

Let us finally raise the curtain that has shrouded G-d's presence for so long. We are tired of the masquerade. We have been waiting, and G-d has been waiting. Let us not make Him wait any longer.

- The Rebbe