

This week's *Parashah* continues to discuss *Korbanot* / sacrificial offerings, and it also discusses other aspects of the Temple service. R' Zvi Yisrael Thau *shlita* (founder of Yeshivat Har Ha'mor in Yerushalayim) writes: The word "*Korban*" comes from the word meaning "closeness," *i.e.*, closeness to G-d, reflecting the *Kedushah* / holiness that rests on the Jewish People through the *Korbanot*. Not only does a *Korban* lead to this *Kedushah*, also studying the laws of the *Korbanot* has that effect, R' Thau writes.

He continues: The *Gemara* (*Menachot* 85b) teaches that one who studies the laws of a *Korban* is considered to have offered that *Korban*. R' Yisrael Meir Kagan *z"l* (the *Chafetz Chaim*; died 1933) writes that, at first glance, this statement is equivalent to the *Gemara's* teaching (*Berachot* 6a) that one who wants to perform a *Mitzvah* but is unable to do so is likened by the Torah to someone who did perform the *Mitzvah*. However, says the *Chafetz Chaim*, these actually are different concepts. He explains based on other sources that one who wants to perform a *Mitzvah* but cannot do so is rewarded for his good intentions, but not to the same degree as if he did the *Mitzvah*. In contrast, one who studies the laws of a *Korban* is viewed by Heaven as if he actually brought a *Korban*.

R' Thau adds: The effect of *Korbanot* is a *Segulah* / something that cannot be explained rationally. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon us to study the *Korbanot*--both their laws and the ideas they teach--and glean whatever lessons we can.

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## Pesach

**"In each and every generation, it is incumbent upon a person to regard himself as though he personally had gone out of Egypt."**

(From the *Pesach Haggadah*)

R' Yitzchak Arieli *z"l* (1896-1974; *Mashgiach* of Yeshivat Mercaz Harav; author of *Enayim La'mishpat*) writes:

"In each and every generation, it is incumbent upon a person" to attain a deep understanding of, and to reflect upon, how spiritually impure Egypt was and how holy the Jewish People are. One must do this until he feels that he has been sanctified with the sanctity of the Jewish People and has been freed of the impurity of Egypt.

"To regard himself"--to learn about himself and what is enslaving him so that he can make his spirit the ruler over his flesh.

"As though he personally had gone out of Egypt"--One who feels that he personally has gone out of Egypt is a person who is experiencing redemption right now. The *Gemara* (*Ta'anit* 30b) says, "One who mourns for Yerushalayim merits and sees its consolation." The *Gemara* does not say that he will merit to see its consolation in the future. Rather, mourning for Yerushalayim--understanding what we are missing--is itself the beginning of the redemption. Similarly, one who understands what it means to be a Jew and not an Egyptian is experiencing redemption right now.

"As though he personally had gone out" for the purpose of understanding what he has accomplished by freeing himself and what his role is now in bringing about his own and the world's perfection.

(*Haggadah Shel Pesach Shirat Ha'geulah*)

The *Haggadah* continues: "It was not only our forefathers whom the Holy One, blessed is He, redeemed from slavery; we, too, were redeemed with them." R' Eliezer Ginsberg *z"l* (1949-2017; *Mashgiach Ruchani* of the Ponovezh Yeshiva in Bnei Brak, Israel) writes: At the time of the Exodus, all future generations of Jews were redeemed from slavery. Though we are in exile now, only our bodies are subjugated, not our souls.

(*Haggadah Shel Pesach Mesilot Chochmah U'mussar*)

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## **Parashat Parah**

**“This is the decree of the Torah, which Hashem has commanded, saying: ‘Speak to *Bnei Yisrael*, and they shall take to you a completely red cow, which is without blemish, and upon which a yoke has not come. You shall give it to Elazar the *Kohen*, and he shall take it to the outside of the camp, and someone shall slaughter it in his presence.’”** (*Bemidbar* 19:2-3)

R' Moshe ben Nachman *z"l* (*Ramban*; 1194-1270; Spain and *Eretz Yisrael*) writes: Because the *Parah Adumah* is slaughtered and burnt outside of the *Bet Hamikdash*, the gentiles mock it, as if it is an idolatrous service. The truth is that its purpose is to remove the spirit of *Tum'ah* from the world, and burning it outside of the Temple is pleasant smelling to G-d. [Until here from *Ramban*]

R' Yisrael Eliyahu Weintraub *z"l* (1932-2010; Bnei Brak, Israel) explains: Adam's sin of eating from the *Etz Ha'da'at* made death inevitable--primarily for mankind, but in man's wake, for all creatures. At *Har Sinai*, man returned to the level of Adam before the sin, but death was reintroduced because of the sin of the Golden Calf.

*Midrash Rabbah* teaches that when Moshe Rabbeinu heard about *Tum'at Met* / ritual impurity resulting from contact with a corpse, he became very worried. He wondered: How could such *Tum'ah* be purified in this world? R' Weintraub explains: *Tum'at Met* is a byproduct of Adam's sin, which will not be rectified until the end of time, at *Techiyat Ha'metim* / when the dead are resurrected. Only when Moshe learned our verses, which speak of purification from *Tum'at Met*, did he understand that the consequences of Adam's sin can be rectified somewhat in our world.

R' Weintraub continues: When Adam first was created, he understood that there is no reality in this world other than G-d's Will. The essence of the sin of the *Etz Ha'da'at* was pushing G-d somewhat out of the picture, as if there is room in this world for a will other than G-d's Will. The generation that built the Tower of Babel repeated that sin, thinking that they could make war against G-d and push Him out of their space. And, that sin was repeated yet again by the generation of the Golden Calf; whereas Moshe nullified himself completely to *Hashem*, they hoped to replace Moshe with something that was “of this world.” *Tum'ah* results from these sins because *Tum'ah* is a spiritual impurity that puts distance between man and G-d.

This is why the *Parah Adumah* service is to be performed outside of the Temple, R' Weintraub continues--it reclaims for holiness that which has been pushed away. And, this is why the slaughtering must be witnessed by the deputy *Kohen Gadol*, for reclaiming that which appears to be outside G-d's domain for holiness requires someone with lofty spiritual sensibilities.

(*Nefesh Eliyahu: Pesach*)

**“This is the Torah / law of the *Olah* / burnt offering . . .”** (6:2)

A *Midrash* relates: The students asked the sage Rabbi Yose ben Kisma, “When will *Mashiach* come?” He answered them, “This is the Torah of the *Olah*.” [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Yitzchak Weiss *z"l Hy"d* (rabbi of Verbau, Slovakia; killed in the Holocaust) explains with a parable: A king had two servants--one industrious and one lazy. The king wanted to test them, so he asked them to do something that he knew was impossible. The lazy servant immediately began to make excuses for why he could not fulfill the king's wish, while the industrious servant paced back and forth deep in thought about whether there was some way to accomplish the king's goal. Needless to say, the king was more pleased with the industrious servant's reaction.

Similarly, when we learn the laws of the *Korbanot* (“The Torah of the *Olah*”), we demonstrate our yearning to offer them in practice. Rabbi Yose ben Kisma is teaching that *Hashem* will respond to that yearning by giving us the opportunity to bring *Korbanot* following the coming of *Mashiach* and the building of the *Bet Hamikdash*. (*Siach Yitzchak*)

**“The *Kohen* shall don his fitted linen Tunic, and he shall don linen breeches on his flesh; he shall separate the ash of what the fire consumed of the elevation-offering on the Altar, and place it next to the Altar.”** (6:3)

Why does the Torah choose now to teach that the *Kohen's* garments should be “fitted”?

R' Eliyahu Ha'Tzarfati *z"l* (1715-1805; rabbi of Fes, Morocco) explains: Our verse is speaking about removing waste from the *Mizbei'ach* / altar. If the *Kohen's* robes are too long or are baggy, they will become soiled when he performs this service. The Torah is teaching here about the importance of serving *Hashem* in clean clothes.

(*Aderet Eliyahu*)

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He concludes: Our Sages teach that spectators would watch the Temple service. They were not there out of curiosity, R' Thau writes. Rather, they came out of a yearning for closeness to *Hashem*. Somehow, watching the *Korbanot* being offered could implant in a person greater holiness than any other *Mitzvah*, prayer, or even Torah study can do. This is a reason for us to study them to the best of our abilities. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Ha'rav Thau* p.23)