

Parshas Tzav in a Nutshell

(Leviticus 6:1–8:36)

G-d instructs Moses to command Aaron and his sons regarding their duties and rights as kohanim (“priests”) who offer the korbanot (animal and meal offerings) in the Sanctuary.

The fire on the altar must be kept burning at all times. In it are burned the wholly consumed ascending offering; veins of fat from the peace, sin and guilt offerings; and the “handful” separated from the meal offering.

The kohanim eat the meat of the sin and guilt offerings, and the remainder of the meal offering. The peace offering is eaten by the one who brought it, except for specified portions given to the kohen. The holy meat of the offerings must be eaten by ritually pure persons, in their designated holy place and within their specified time.

Aaron and his sons remain within the Sanctuary compound for seven days, during which Moses initiates them into the priesthood. ❖



Tzav means “Command.” It expresses a command from G-d about the donation of offerings in the Sanctuary, relating to the general concept of giving charity. But Tzav has also another meaning: “Connect.” It expresses the idea that G-d’s laws establish a connection between the individual and G-d.

-- *The Rebbe*

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

Shabbos Schedule

Erev Shabbos – Mar 18 / II Adar 15

Candle Lighting 6:48 pm

Mincha 6:45 pm

Shabbos Day – Mar 19 / II Adar 16

Shacharis..... 9:30 am*

Torah Reading..... 10:40 am

Kiddush 12:20 pm

Mincha 6:50 pm

Rabbi’s Drasha 7:10 pm

Shabbos Ends..... 7:48 pm

**Latest morning Shema is now 10:00 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

Weekday Schedule (not on a holiday):

Minyan

Shacharis (Mon-Fri) 6:15 am

Shacharis (Sunday) 9:00 am

Mincha (Sun-Thurs) 1:45 pm

Maariv (Sun-Thurs) 9:15 pm

Bulletin

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Keeping In Touch

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

Often ... we are daunted by the enormity of the challenges in front of us. We must realize that what G-d is asking from us is to push with our little finger. We must know the desired purpose - to help build a Temple. And we must do what we can. When we do that, we find success beyond our greatest expectations. G-d endows our efforts with blessings that empower them to accomplish more than could ever be achieved on our own. ❖

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**Join us each weekday
morning Mon-Fri
as we delve into
the mysteries of
Chassidic concepts.
5:55 am, followed
immediately by Shacharis.**

Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, Mar 19, 2022

Daylight Savings Time

Earliest Tallis..... 6:05 AM

Latest Morning Shema ... 10:00 AM

Earliest Mincha (Gedola).. 1:36 PM

Plag Hamincha..... 5:56 PM

Earliest Evening Shema 7:35 PM

Chassidic Masters

The Continual Fire

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

"Fire shall be kept burning upon the altar continually; it shall not go out" (Leviticus 6:6).

On this verse the Jerusalem Talmud comments, "*continually — even on Shabbat; continually — even in a state of impurity.*"

As has been mentioned before, every aspect of the physical Sanctuary has its counterpart in the inward Sanctuary within the soul of the Jew.

In his Likkutei Torah (Devarim 78d) Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi explains that the altar is the heart of the Jew. And corresponding to the two altars of the Sanctuary, the outer and the inner, are the outer and inner levels of the heart, its surface personality and its essential core.

The altar on which the continual fire was to be set was the outer one. And for the Jew this means that the fire of his love for G-d must be outward, open and revealed. It is not a private possession, to be cherished subconsciously. It must show in the face he sets towards the world.

The Withdrawn and the Separated

The concept of Shabbat is that of rest and withdrawal from the weekday world. Everyday acts are forbidden. But Shabbat is not only a day of the week. It is a state of mind.

It is, in the dimensions of the soul, the state of contemplation and understanding. Its connection with Shabbat lies in the verse (Isaiah 58:13): "And you shall call the Shabbat a delight." On Shabbat, the perception of G-d is more intense, more open. And this leads the mind to a withdrawal from the secular and the mundane.

But to reach this level is to become prone to a temptation. One might think that to have reached so far in perceiving the presence of G-d is to have passed beyond passion to the realm of impassive contemplation. The mind asserts its superiority over the emotions. He has, he tells himself, no need for the fire of love. This is the man to whom the Talmud says, the fire "shall not go out — even on Shabbat."

There is an opposite extreme: The man who has traveled so far on the path of separation that he feels he has now no link with G-d. To him the Talmud says, "it shall not go out — even in a state of impurity." For the fire does not go out. A spark always burns in the recesses of the heart. It can be fanned into flame. And if it is fed with the fuel of love, it will burn continually. The Maggid of Mezeritch said that instead of reading the phrase, "It shall not be put out," we can read it, "It will put out the 'not.'" The fire of love extinguishes the negative. It takes the Jew past the threshold of commitment where he stands in hesitation and says "No."

Coldness

The remark of the Maggid stresses the fact that to put out the "No," the fire must be continual.

It must be fed by a constant attachment to Torah and to Mitzvot. "Once" or "occasionally" or "not long ago" are not enough. The fire dies down, coldness supersedes, and the "No" is given its dominion.

This explains the commandment: "Remember what Amalek did to you by the way as you came out of Egypt: How he met you (korcha) on the way..." (Deuteronomy 25:17-18). Amalek is the symbol of coldness in the religious life. The word korcha, as well as meaning "he met you" also means "he made you cold." The historical Amalek "smote the hindmost of you, all those who were enfeebled in your rear, when you were faint and weary: And he did not fear G-d" (ibid.).

The Amalek within attempts to do the same. It is the voice which says "No" when the love of G-d grows faint and weary. It is the voice which does not fear G-d. And we are commanded every day to remember Amalek. That is, never to let coldness enter and take hold of the heart. And that means that the fire of love must never be allowed to die down.

Fire From Below and Fire From Above

The continual fire, which was man-made, was the preparation in the Sanctuary for the fire which descended from Heaven. On this the Talmud (Yoma 21b) says: "Although fire comes down from Heaven, it is a commandment also for man to bring fire."

(Continued next page)

It was the awakening from below that brought an answering response from G-d. But it brought this response only when the fire was perfect, without defect.

This is made clear in this and next week's Parshahs. During the days when the Sanctuary was consecrated, it and its vessels were ready, Moses and Aaron were present, and sacrifices were being offered. But the Divine presence did not descend on it. A lingering trace of the sin of the Golden Calf remained. Only on the eighth day, when the continual fire was perfected, was the sin effaced, the "No" extinguished. "Fire came forth from before G-d" and "the glory of G-d appeared to all the people" (Leviticus 9:23-24; Rashi ibid.).

What was this fire from Heaven? Why did it require the perfection of the earthly fire?

Man is a created being. He is finite. And there are limits to what he can achieve on his own. His acts are bounded by time. To become eternal, something Divine must intervene.

This is why, during the seven days of consecration, the Sanctuary was continually being constructed and taken apart. As the work of man, it could not be lasting. But on the eighth day the Divine presence descended, and only then did it become permanent.

The seven days were a week, the measure of earthly time. The eighth was the day beyond human time, the number which signifies eternity. And hence it was the day of the heavenly fire, which was the response of an infinite G-d.

Limits

Although man cannot aspire to infinity himself, the fire of infinity descends upon him. But only when he has perfected his own fire, and gone to the limits of his spiritual possibilities. Man is answered by G-d, not when he resigns himself to passivity or despair, but when he has reached the frontier of his own capabilities.

This is suggested by the word "continual" in the description of the fire. What is continual is infinite, for it has no end in time. Time, though, is composed of finite parts, seconds, minutes, hours. And even an infinite succession of them is still limited to a single dimension. But by the perfection of our time-bounded lives we join ourselves to the timelessness of G-d, so that time itself becomes eternal. And nature itself becomes supernatural. Because the reward of our service to G-d is the blessing of a success within the natural world which goes beyond the natural order.

Fire in the Service of Man

The essential implication of this is that every Jew constitutes a Sanctuary to G-d. And even if he studies Torah and fulfills the commandments, if the continual fire is missing, the Divine presence will not dwell within him. For his service is without life. And a trace of that distant sin of the Golden Calf may remain: The "No" which is the voice of coldness.

The Jew must bring life, involvement, fire, to the three aspects of his religious existence: "Torah, service of G-d, and the practice of charity" (Ethics of the Fathers 1:2).

Torah learning should not be something done merely to discharge an obligation, and kept to the minimum required. Words of Torah should never leave the mouth of a Jew. And they should be words spoken with fire. It is told in the Talmud (Eruvin 54a) that "Beruriah once discovered a student who was learning in an undertone. Rebuking him she said: Is it not written, 'Ordered in all things and sure.' If it (the Torah) is 'ordered' in your two hundred and forty-eight limbs, it will be 'sure.' Otherwise it will not." In other words, Torah should penetrate every facet of his being until he can say: "All my bones shall say, L-rd, who is like You?" (Psalms 35:10).

"Service of G-d" means prayer and of this the Ethics says, "Do not regard your prayer as a fixed mechanical task, but as an appeal for mercy and grace before the All-Present" (Ethics of the Fathers 2:13)

The practice of charity includes the fulfillment of the commandments. And these again are not to be performed merely out of conscientiousness, but with an inner warmth that manifests itself outwardly in a desire to fulfill them with as much beauty as possible.

These are the places where the fire is lit. And this human fire brings down the fire from heaven. It brings G-d into the world, and draws infinity into the dimensions of the finite. ❖

Passover is coming !!

From Our Sages

He shall take off his garments and put on other garments (Leviticus 6:4)

Clothes in which he cooked for his master should not be worn when serving a goblet to his master.
-- (Talmud, Yoma 23b)

The fire upon the altar shall be kept burning in it . . . and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning (Leviticus 6:5)

Although a fire descended from heaven upon the altar, it is a mitzvah to add to it a humanly produced fire.

-- (Talmud, Eruvin 63a)

This is a rule that applies to all areas of life: the gifts of life are bestowed upon us from Above, yet it is G-d's desire that we add to them the product of our own initiative.

-- (The Chassidic Masters)

The fire upon the altar shall be kept burning in it . . . and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning (Leviticus 6:5)

There is a fire of love for G-d that burns within every soul. It is the task of the kohen—the spiritual leaders of the generation—to feed and preserve this fire.

-- (Alshich)

A constant fire shall burn upon the altar; it shall never go out (Leviticus 6:6)

“Constantly”—even on Shabbat; “constantly”—even under conditions of ritual impurity; “it shall never go out”—also not during the journeys [through the desert, when the altar was covered with a cloth of purple wool]. What did they do with the fire during the journeys? They placed over it a copper bowl.

-- (Jerusalem Talmud, Yoma 4:6)

Shabbat is when we disengage ourselves from all things material; “ritual impurity” (tum'ah) represents an opposite state—one of excessive enmeshment in the mundane. Yet the Torah instructs that the fire upon the altar must be kept burning “even on Shabbat” and “even under conditions of ritual impurity.”

There are times when we believe ourselves to be “above it all,” as the spirituality of the moment transports beyond the so-called trivialities of physical life. Conversely, there are times when we feel overwhelmed by those very “trivialities.” Says the Torah: the fire on your internal altar must—and can—be kept burning at all times. No moment in your life is too exalted or too debased to sustain your passion and enthusiasm in the fulfillment of the purpose to which you were created, which is to raise up to G-d the materials of your everyday existence.

-- (The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

“It shall never go out—also not during the journeys.” Special care must be taken during the “journeys” of life—the times when a person ventures away from the home environment that fosters his character and integrity—so that the fire in his soul should not succumb to alien influences.

-- (Maayanah Shel Torah) ❖

Haftorah for Tzav in a nutshell

Jeremiah 7:21-28; 9:22-23

This week's haftorah touches on the subject of sacrifices, the main topic of the week's Torah portion.

G-d tells the prophet Jeremiah to rebuke the Jewish people, saying that His primary intention in taking their forefathers out of Egypt wasn't the sacrificial offerings, rather in order that they observe the commandments. But despite the fact that G-d repeatedly dispatched prophets to admonish the people, "They did not obey nor did they incline their ear, but walked according to [their] own counsels and in the view of their evil heart, and they went backwards and not forwards." G-d further informs Jeremiah that the people will also not hearken to these words that he will speak to them now.

The haftorah concludes with G-d's admonition: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom, nor the strong man boast of his strength, nor the rich man boast of his riches. But let him that boasts exult in this, that he understands and knows me, for I am G-d Who practices kindness, justice and righteousness on the earth; for in these things I delight, says G-d." ❖



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Good Shabbos to all!