

RABBI GOLDBERG'S *Parsha Perspectives* FOR TODAY

Short Divrei Torah on Parshas Tzav for your Shabbos Table

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DVAR TORAH FOR THE FRIDAY NIGHT MEAL

Turning Our Homes Into a *Beis Ha'mikdash*

In discussing the *korban mincha* (grain offering), the Torah commands that after a portion of the offering is placed on the *mizbei'ach*, the rest is eaten by the *kohanim*: *במצות יאכל במקום קדוש, בחצר אוהל מועד יאכלוהו*: "It shall be eaten as unleavened bread in a sacred location; they shall eat it in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting" (6:9). The *mincha* offering must be prepared as *matza*, and not *chameitz*, it is to be eaten specifically *במקום קדוש*, in the *azara* (courtyard) of the *Beis Ha'mikdash*.

Rav Shlomo of Radomsk, in *Tiferes Shlomo*, advances several homiletic readings of this *pasuk*, explaining it as an allusion to the consumption of *matza* on Pesach. First, he writes, the Torah here instructs that we must ensure that we eat *matza* on Pesach *במקום קדוש*, in a sacred place – by making ourselves and our homes sacred. *בחצר אוהל מועד יאכלוהו* – we must transform our home into a *Beis Ha'mikdash*, a place worthy of the residence of the *Shechina*, through our refined conduct and spiritual devotion, as it is within such an environment that the *matza* must be eaten. Therefore, the *Tiferes Shlomo* writes, as we prepare for Pesach, our preparations must include efforts to elevate ourselves and our homes, to turn the home into a *מקום קדוש* that is worthy of having the *matza* consumed within its walls.

Before *Matan Torah*, God spoke to Moshe and had him deliver a message to *Benei Yisrael*, which included *ואשא אתכם על כנפי נשרים* – remembering how God "carried" them out of Egypt "on the wings of eagles" (Shemos

19:4). *Targum Yonasan ben Uziel* explains this phrase to mean that on the night of the very first *seder*, when *Benei Yisrael* offered the first *korban pesach* in Egypt just before *מכת בכורות*, they were carried to Yerushalayim, to the site of the *Beis Ha'mikdash*, so they could offer the *korban* there. This does not mean that *Benei Yisrael* were actually flown from Egypt to Yerushalayim. It means that their homes, where they partook of the *korban pesach*, became sacred like the *Beis Ha'mikdash*. If we prepare properly for Pesach, and we come to the *seder* with the proper frame of mind, then no matter where we might be geographically, we are considered, in a sense, as though we serve Hashem in the *Beis Ha'mikdash*.¹ As Pesach approaches, we are given the challenge – and the opportunity – to uplift ourselves and our homes, and turn them into a *Beis Ha'mikdash*, a place of purity, sanctity, and devoted *avodas Hashem*.

Another explanation offered by the *Tiferes Shlomo* interprets the expression *מקום קדוש* as a reference to the mouth – the place where the *matza* is actually eaten. In order to eat *matza*, we must ensure that our mouths are a *מקום קדוש*, that they are pure of forbidden speech, such as gossip, *lashon ha'ra* and vulgarity. The *matza*, the special food we eat on Pesach, requires a *מקום קדוש*, a sacred mouth, a mouth that has not been contaminated through prohibited speech. Thus, our preparations for Pesach must include special attention to the way we speak, cleansing our mouths of any sort of inappropriate words, ensuring that our mouths will be worthy of partaking of the *matza* on Pesach.

¹ It hopefully goes without saying that this idea does not in any way undermine the importance and value of being physically present in *Eretz Yisrael*. As I've said many times, *aliya* must be a matter of when, and not a matter of if, for every one of us.

DVAR TORAH FOR THE SHABBOS DAY MEAL

Feeling Grateful for Every Day

The Torah requires a *kohen* to bring a special *mincha* offering on the first day he performs the *avoda* in the *Beis Ha'mikdash*. Interestingly, the *kohen gadol* is obligated to bring this *korban* – called the *minchas chavitin* – each and every day: והכהן המשיח תחתיו מבניו יעשה: (אבותה חק עולם 6:15).

Rav Moshe Feinstein, in *Derash Moshe*, explained that the *kohen gadol* is required to bring this daily offering so that he views each day as the day of his inauguration, as the first day he is given the opportunity to serve in this exalted position. The *kohen gadol* must never take this privilege for granted, and must instead, in Rav Moshe's words, look upon his position *כמתנה חדשה בכל יום* – "like a new gift each day." He must recognize that it could be lost at any moment. If Hashem decided that the *kohen gadol* should no longer serve in his position, He could cause him to develop a disqualifying blemish. And, of course, God could take his life at any moment. Every day on the job is to be seen as a gift, and every day is to be appreciated as though it is the first day – because, indeed, the *kohen gadol* has this job today only because Hashem chose to give it to him today. From the *kohen gadol's* perspective, every day he serves in this capacity is like the day he was formally consecrated.

This is true, of course, not only about the position of *kohen gadol*, but of any position or role that a person is privileged to hold. Countless things could potentially happen to a person at any moment that would cause him to lose his job. If a person's job requires public speaking, for example, a vocal disorder, Heaven forbid, would force him to step down. Every day in which we are able to continue doing what we're doing, to continue serving and contributing the way we want, is a precious gift, and must be appreciated as such. No matter how long we have been privileged to work a certain job or occupy a certain position, we must view each day as the first day, because we have the opportunity to serve in this capacity today only because God has chosen to grant us this opportunity anew today.

DVAR TORAH FOR SHALOSH SEUDOS

Responding to God's Beneficence

The Torah in Parshas Tzav introduces the concept of the *korban toda* – the thanksgiving offering, which one would bring to express gratitude to God. The Gemara (Berachos 54b) discusses different situations when

people would bring this *korban*, based on a chapter in Tehillim (107) which speaks of the offering of a *korban toda* after emerging from four types of dangerous situations: serious illness, captivity, sea travel, and desert travel. Additionally, Rabbeinu Bechayei (here in Parshas Tzav) writes that people would bring a *korban toda* on other joyous occasions, such as a bride and groom when they got married.

This *korban* was unique in that it consisted of a large amount of food that needed to be eaten within a short period of time. The meat of the animal, as well as the forty loaves of bread which accompanied it, all had to be eaten on the day the *korban* was brought, or that night. Nothing was allowed to be left over by the next morning (7:15).

The Netziv famously explained that this unique requirement forced the person who offered the sacrifice to conduct a large gathering, inviting others to join him in his celebration. This was the only way to ensure that all this food would be eaten by the next morning. The idea behind this requirement is that when somebody feels genuine gratitude, he does not want to keep it inside. He wants to share the news, and tell people about what he had just experienced. When somebody found himself in a perilous situation, and was saved, his feelings of gratitude should overflow, and lead him to want to talk about it with as many people as possible. The person offering a *toda* was therefore required to invite guests to his feast, so he could share the news of his experience and express his feelings of gratitude to, a large number of people.

The work *U'sitcha Elyon* offers an additional insight into this special feature of the *korban toda*. After experiencing Hashem's beneficence, a person should respond by seeking to follow His example and dispense kindness to others. When God showers us with His blessings, we are to proceed to share those blessings with other people. Gratitude should lead to action. When we feel grateful for what Hashem has done for us, we must follow up on those feelings by looking for ways to give to the people around us, to extend kindness to people just as Hashem has extended kindness to us. Therefore, the Torah arranged that the *korban toda* should be brought in a manner that necessitated a large crowd, compelling the individual offering the sacrifice to invite a large number of guests and share his food with other people. When we contemplate Hashem's kindness, and are overcome by feelings of gratitude, we should feel inspired to follow His example and give to others just as Hashem is constantly giving to us.