



פרשת מטות מסעי
מנחם אב תשע"ט

BEIS HAMIKDASH EVENING & MELAVE MALKA

All men and women are invited to the Kollel's annual Beis Hamikdash evening this Motzai Shabbos.

Learn about the Beis Hamikdash and enjoy a Melave Malka buffet spread.

Rabbi Pinchas Ash will discuss some of the historical aspect of the building of the Beis Hamikdash.

Kollel Rabbis **Michael Stern** and **Yossi Moshel** will present on influences of the Beis Hamikdash on the features and design of our Shules.

Menachem Av 2 - August 3
8:15pm in the Goldhirsch Hall
\$5 cover.

SIYUM HARAMBAM

All men and women are invited to a communal Siyum Harambam celebrating the conclusion of the 38th cycle of learning Rambam Mishneh Torah as established by the Rebbe.

This Monday night 'אור לה' August 5, 8:00pm in the Goldhirsch Hall

Guest Rabbonim from across the community will share Divrei Torah and Divrei Brocha including **Rabbi Shlomo Kohn** Mara Deasra of Adas Yisroel.

DAILY SIYUMIM

Each night after 8:30pm Maariv in the Yeshiva Shule

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא **חידוש** Chiddush



Three Weeks Halacha shiur with Rabbi Michael Stern

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Conquering your inner Israel

As the Jewish people are poised to enter Eretz Yisroel, Parshas Masei defines the borders of the land which would be given to the Tribes.

Since the borders are identified by cities and geographical features (some of whose locations are not precisely known), there is much debate among the commentators as to the exact size and shape of the Land.

Defined borders are necessary to demarcate the land which is sanctified with Kedushas Eretz Yisroel. Mideoraisa, the agricultural Mitzvos such as Terumah, Maaser, Shemittah and Challah only applied to the land within these borders.

According to all of the authorities, this area is a far cry from the 'Greater Israel' promised to Avraham; a country spreading from the Nile to the Euphrates.

Whilst Avraham was promised the territory belonging to 10 nations, the inheritance described here was that of only 7 Canaanite nations. This conquest will only be actualised in the Messianic age when 'Hashem your G-d will extend your borders' to incorporate the remaining 3 lands.

Yet even the borders in our Parsha could be shifted outwards. Halachically, any land conquered by a Jewish king, judge or prophet on behalf of the Jewish people becomes a part of Eretz Yisroel, sharing the same level of Kedusha. And so, Eretz Yisroel towards the end of the first Temple period was much larger, extended by a succession of kings.

The Kedusha of Eretz Yisroel was only imbued when the Jewish people conquered and settled the Land. In the times of the patriarchs it may have been G-d's chosen Land, but it was not yet holy.

Mekom Shmuel explains that this holiness is created by the potential for the Mitzvos connected to the land to be fulfilled.

Whilst this is true for the rest of the Land, Yerushalaim and the site of the Beis Hamikdash were exceptional. The Rambam writes that the holy city was sanctified by the Divine Presence. It always was and always will be holy no matter what.

Chassidus explains that the Kedusha of Eretz Yisroel parallels the Kedusha of Bnei Yisroel.

Hashem gave each one of us a 'land' - our body and the life and environment into which we have been placed.

Our 'land' too is inhabited by the Canaanite existence of our animalistic soul whose 7 negative drives are represented by the 7 nations of Canaan. Our spiritual battle is to drive out these 'nations' and settle our 'land' with the Kedusha of our Neshama as the dominant driver within our lives.

When we are victorious in this conquest, our lives become infused with the Kedusha of Eretz Yisroel.

Yerushalaim is the essence of the Neshama - the *pintele* Yid which. The essence of the Neshama is a part of Hashem Above. It's Kedusha is innate and cannot be blemished no matter how Canaanite-dominated our lives may be. It is from this intrinsic connection to Hashem that we gain our strength and strategic advantage in our conquest to assert our G-dly self over our animalistic self in our daily lives and tasks.

In this sense we are all settlers. The mind frame of the settler is twofold;

Firstly we must strengthen and protect our existing borders; bolstering our commitment in keeping the Torah and Mitzvos that we already do. We cannot cede even one inch of the holiness in our lives.

But we cannot remain on the defensive. We have to strive to extend our borders outwards, conquering even more aspects of our lives and ourselves and filling them with Kedusha. Like the conquest of Bnei Yisroel, when we put in the effort, Hashem will help us drive out our inner Canaan and ultimately extend our borders of Kedusha to create a 'greater Israel' within our lives as well.

May the effects of our spiritual settlement draw down blessings to Holy Land with true peace and security with the coming of Moshiach when Eretz Yisroel and its Kedusha will spread to encompass the entire world.

Learning about and learning from the Beis Hamikdash

Shechting in the north - the strength to climb higher

The holiest sacrifices, the Kodshei Kodoshim, had to be slaughtered in the northern side of the Azarah. This was the area extending from the northern wall of the Mizbeach to the northern wall of the courtyard and from the wall of the Ulam to the eastern wall of the courtyard.

In this area there were 24 rings fixed to the floor where the Korbanos would be slaughtered. There were also poles and tables on which the Korbanos were skinned, washed and cut into pieces.

In Jewish thought, the north translates to the left side. Kabbalistically, the left side is connected to the aspect of Gevurah.

Gevurah is usually associated as being the source of Dinim and negativity. But in its source, Gevurah refers to powerful G-dly light. Gevurah itself means strength. In its holy manifestation, Gevurah is a passionate, fiery love.

Gevurah is also associated with elevation from below to above (in contrast to Chesed which is a flow from above to below). This is also related to the strength of Gevurah; Just as it is more difficult to climb up than it is to come down, all elevations need the extra strength and effort of Gevurah.

Sacrifices are a service of spiritual elevation. In order to rise up they require the strength of Gevurah. This is why they were slaughtered on the north side.

In the absence of the Beis Hamikdash, our davening replaces the Korbanos. Davening, like the Korbanos is a process of elevation. As we climb our way up the rungs of the ladder of prayer, we need the passionate strength of Gevurah to infuse our davening with fiery Chayus so that our davening will carry us up to the greatest heights.

~ Based on Sefer Hamaamarim Kuntreisim volume 1 p 543-544 and Hilchos Beis Habechira 5:13-14

Walking around the Mizbeach ledge

Around the Mizbeach was a ledge called the Sovev. The Sovev, which means to surround, went all the way around the Mizbeach.

When the Kohanim would apply the blood from the sacrifices to the walls of the Mizbeach, they would climb up the minor ramp on the eastern side of the main ramp to reach the Sovev. They would walk counter-clockwise around the Mizbeach along the Sovev to place the blood on the sides of the Mizbeach. On completing the circuit they would descend via another minor ramp.

The Mishna describes this process in the following words; He would ascend the ramp (Alah BaK-evesh) and turn to the ledge (Ufanah LaSovev). He would come to the south-east corner (uva lo lekeren Dromis Mizrachis), then to the north-east (Mizrachis Tzefonis), then to the north-west (Tzefonis Maaravis) and then to the south-west (Maaravis Dromis).

Playing on the meaning of these words, the Alter Rebbe explains that hidden in this Mishna is a guide for our Avodah – spiritual service.

Ascending the ramp refers to elevating oneself spiritually, rising above worldly materialism. When a person raises themselves up they turn to the 'Sovev', looking and reflecting on what is happening around them.

They then come to 'Dromis Mizrachis', becoming spiritually warmer (Dromis - the south, is associated with warmth) and more spiritually illuminated (Mizrachis is related to the term Zoreach – to shine).

They then come to 'Mizrachis Tzefonis', so that the light (Mizrachis) of their soul illuminates even their Yetzer Hara and animalistic self (the Gemara refers to the Yetzer Hara as Tzefoni).

Through this one arrives at 'Tzefonis Maaravis'. When one refines their animal soul (Tzefonis) this generates a great spiritual sweetness and pleasure for Hashem above (Maaravis is related to the word Areivus meaning sweetness).

~ Sefer Hasichos 5701 p 87 quoting a Maamar from the Alter Rebbe. Zevachim chapter 5

Removing the ashes of negative emotions

The first Avodah that was done each day in the Beis Hamikdash was Terumas Hadeshen. A Kohen, selected by lottery, would go up onto the Mizbeach and take a panful of ashes. He would bring the ashes down the ramp and place them on the side of the Mizbeach where it would become absorbed on the floor of the Azarah. In addition to the Terumas Hadeshen, the Kohanim would remove the excess ashes from on top of the Mizbeach and take them to a designated pure place outside of the camp.

The ashes are the residual that remains after the Korban has been burned. The choice parts of the Korban would burn and ascend on High. The ashes that remain are the Pesoles, the 'waste' that remains below.

There are two types of Pesoles. One type we must distance completely and remove from our camp. This type of Pesoles cannot be elevated. The other type of Pesoles has some good quality in it that can be refined and elevated and incorporated into the side of Holiness.

In Avodah, these two types of Pesoles are Merirus and Atzvus; bitterness and depression. One has to serve Hashem with joy. Therefore, both Merirus and Atzvus, being negative emotions, are considered as Pesoles; undesirable states of mind.

But there is a difference between them. Merirus is feeling bad about one's self and spiritual standing in a way that leads to resolve to change and active steps to grow. There is a positive element within Merirus that ultimately leads a person back to Simcha. Atzvus is an overwhelming feeling of lowness that leads to despondency and giving up.

Merirus, like the ashes placed by the side of the Mizbeach that remain within the Azarah, can be elevated and used as a tool in our service of Hashem. Atzvus, like the ashes that were taken out of the camp, must be removed entirely from our experience.

~ Based on Maamarim Kuntreisim volume 1 page 545

