

Shiur L'Yom Revi'i

[Wednesday's Study]

READINGS: ***Torah Sh'mini:*** **Leviticus 10:8-20**
 Haftarah: **II Samuel 6:12-16**
 B'rit Chadasha: **Acts 5:7-8**

*You are to keep separate the k'dosh [holy] from the chol [common],
and the tamei [unclean] from the tahor [clean]*
[Leviticus 10:10]

Today's Meditation is Ezekiel 44:15-24;
This Week's Amidah prayer Focus is *the Kadosh [Holiness]*

Vayedaber Adonai el-Aharon l'emor – i.e. And the Holy One spoke to Aharon, saying ...
Yayin v'shechar al-tesht atah uvaneicha itach – wine and strong drink you and your sons
are not to drink ... *b'vo'achem el-Ohel Mo'ed* - when you go into the Tent of Divine
Appointment Leviticus 10:8-9a.

Aharon's two oldest sons, Nadav and Avihu, are no more. First they started acting strangely, completely out of character. Then they spontaneously combusted before our eyes. Would this stop what the Holy One was doing? Would it ruin the day? The Holy One would not let it. He instructed Aharon not to grieve for his dearly departed sons the way other people – people outside the deep, intimate relationship with Him the Bible calls *ha-Brit* – i.e. the Covenant - grieve for their dead. Other people groups try to process the sense of loss that the death of a loved one brings intellectually - and that ultimately causes them to cave into the fleshly devastation of it emotionally. We must tread softly now. The death of loved ones hurts us every bit as badly as it hurts anyone; but we must not respond - or behave – as they do. They resist. They scream. They wail. They pierce, disfigure, and ink-stain themselves. They obsess. They spend outlandish amounts of money. They embrace cultural rituals. They lean on platitudes, ceremonies, and sacraments performed by clergy. They rage. We must not. We are supposed to be model a more excellent way. Do we not have assurances that they don't? Do we not have a sure, firm, eternal covenant with the Giver of Life? Does not the Holy One – the author of resurrection, Whose Presence brings hope and joy and *shalom* - dwell with us? Does not His wonderful Torah live within us? Do we not have a more effective source of comfort and solace than other nations? Do we not have a higher calling than other peoples? Do we not have a greater hope than other men?

Even so, it must be understood that the journey upon which the Holy One is about to

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lead us is not going to be one for the faint of heart.

Precious in the Sight of the Holy One Is the Death of His Holy Ones

We have seen over and over again how pagans ‘do death’. In places like Egypt, death is quite the expensive, extravagant, emotional affair. It is extremely self-indulgent. It is all about men, and how they feel – and none (other than the obligatory speaking of a few platitudes) about God. Hmmmn. Is this the way it is supposed to be for us as well?

The world’s university educated psychologists and grief counselors have been taught, and have now widely publicized, the ‘weaponized science’ theory that mourning requires five phases – first, *shock and denial*; second, *pain and guilt*; third, *anger and blaming others*; fourth, *bargaining*; fifth, *depression*. *Common-think* blithely accepts this as ‘normal’. The media and the clergy class have accepted this theory as immutable fact. Its validity – indeed is universal application - is never questioned. The ‘weaponized science’ behind it is never challenged. Everyone is just supposed to believe it – and act accordingly. But is all that really necessary? Is it possible that the ‘five phases’ are all just learned behaviors – behaviors that can be unlearned as easily as they were learned? Does our Covenant with the Creator of the Universe really not offer us a better way? Could our time to rethink the bereavement customs we have learned from the world? Is it time to reconsider the elaborate death rituals the nations have taught us are ‘normal’ – and seek a more excellent and honorable way of dealing with the loss of a loved one? Is it time to surrender to a more excellent way?

Aharon and his sons are our models – hence in the aftermath of Nadav and Avihu’s death the Holy One instructed them not to leave their assigned posts even for a moment. Nor were they supposed to show any physical signs of mourning or grief. Bereaved or not, stunned or not, in pain or not, these special chosen vessels of the Holy One were called to stay in the *kadosh* and *tahor* realm – and just keep right on doing the tasks they had been assigned to do. They were not to give in to the emotional trauma. They were not ‘check out’ on account of their grief. The stakes for the community – and for the priestly family itself – were far too high. And the healing they needed was not ‘time out’ or ‘time off’ anyway. What they needed instead was the healing refreshment of walking hand in Hand with the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Walking hand in Hand with Him means being where He is, communing with Him, and doing what He is doing. It means co-creating and co-laboring. There was *holy fire kindled from Heaven on the altar that had to be stewarded*. There was a morning and evening *tamid* [a special *korban olah* for the community] to be presented. There were seven lamps on the Menorah that had to be trimmed. There was *k’toret* [incense] to be burned on the golden altar to keep the ‘cloud covering’ of the people ever-present. There were ash deposits on the *mizbeach* [altar] that had to be removed.

But though these things needed to be done, the Holy One was by no means unmoved by or unsympathetic to Aharon's grief. In fact, He stepped out of protocol and paid Aharon a very personal visit.

A Poignant Moment of Personal Pain Results In a Break in Protocol

Ever since the theophany of Sinai when each of us recoiled in fear after hearing the richness, depth, and convicting power of the Divine voice, the Holy One has been dutifully confining Himself to following the protocol that we suggested. As we, the immature and fearful Bride-to-be requested, He has been communicating all He has to say through Moshe, the designated 'friend of the Bridegroom'. In today's aliyah, however, the Holy One is going to break the established protocol. He is going to *completely bypass Moshe* and *speak to Aharon* directly. Why did the Holy One choose this particular moment to break protocol? And what does this mean for us? Let's talk about that a moment, shall we?

Remember, first of all, that the day the Holy One broke protocol for Aharon was not just any day. It was the very day the charred bodies of Aharon's sons Nadav and Avihu were carried out of the *mish'kan* for burial. It was the day of Aharon's bereavement. And the Holy One wanted to speak directly to *Aharon as one Father to another*. In the aftermath of the most traumatic day of Aharon's life the Holy One *burst forth from the tidy little theological box the Redeemed Community had drawn for Him* - and He *invaded Aharon's personal tragedy* in a real, tangible and stunning way. He wanted to make sure Aharon would remember this day for something other than the tragedy of his sons' death.

Introducing the Ultimate Comforter

First of all, the Holy One fully understood Aharon's pain. He was moved with great compassion. And so, He stepped out of eternity, invisibility, and incorporeality, and paid a *bereaved father* a visit. Much as He had personally come to visit Avraham when he was recovering from his circumcision, thereby establishing for us a divine pattern of visiting and encouraging the infirm, so the Ultimate Compassionate One now comes to call on a grieving Aharon to establish for us a divine pattern of visiting and encouraging the bereaved.

What words of consolation and encouragement will the Holy One choose to speak to this grieving father in His moment of visitation? Well, let us just say that His thoughts are definitely not our thoughts and His ways are definitely not our ways. The Holy One does not reminisce nostalgically with Aharon about Nadav and Avihu as I would. He does not commiserate with him about how much these two young men were loved, how much promise each of them had, how many lives they touched in their short time on earth, or how much they will be missed. He does not even console Aharon with platitudes about any 'better place' to which the young men have gone. The Holy

One's intervention at such a time as this is, you see, not so much designed to give Aharon *sympathy* as it is to give him *perspective* – *perspective on his own, and his surviving sons' purpose, their shared calling, and their glorious destiny.*

I am sure that modern psychologists and grief counselors would not approve of either the Holy One's methodology or His message. But the truth is that Aharon has been chosen to serve as the Holy One's highest-ranking kingdom diplomat/ambassador on earth. The truth is that this day and every day Aharon is going to be responsible for modeling before those who come to the *Mish'kan* – the *embassy* of the kingdom of Heaven on earth – the *perspective, the priorities, and the culture* of the Heavenly kingdom. The truth is that now more than ever Aharon needs to hear and be sure of his diplomatic orders.

***The Privilege of Engaging in the Avodah of the Kingdom
Does Not Stop for Personal Tragedy - The Avodah is the Elixir of Life***

As the work of the Great High priest of Heaven in the true *Mish'kan* not made by human hands never ceases, so it was to be with the corresponding work of Aharon and his sons in the 'scale model' *Mish'kan* built on earth. The *Mish'kan* is a stage on which the Holy One's passion play is to be acted out on earth for men to see. Aharon and his sons are *actors* portraying on earth for an earthly audience the acts of an eternal drama written and first performed in Heaven.

The Holy One took the opportunity of Nadav and Avihu's deaths to spell out in specific terms, for the first time, the two-fold mission to which Aharon and his sons – now consisting of only Elazar and Itamar – have been set apart:

***You are to separate the holy from the common, and the tamei from the tahor;
and you are to teach the children of Yisra'el all the instructions for living
which the Holy One has spoken to them by Moshe."***

[Leviticus 10:10-11]

Now, Dear Reader ... *can we talk?* I cannot stress the importance of the words written above enough. The two instructions contained within the above-described calling constitute two separate but related elements of every *kohen's* [i.e. priest's] divine mission. You may be a descendant of Aharon or you may not. But the truth of the matter is that we are all called to be understudies of Aharon and his sons, waiting in the wings to begin to function as the kingdom of *kohanim* the Holy One is grooming us to be. These instructions thus constitute a very significant part – if not the most significant part – of our purpose, our Divine calling, and our destiny.

***The Two Fundamental Elements of Our Mission
As the Kingdom Of Heaven's Ambassadors To Planet Earth***

The first phase of a *kohen's* mission is to '*distinguish*' between competing realms of

spiritual and physical reality. First of all, our English Bibles tell us that the *kohanim of the Holy One* [i.e. His ‘priests] are called to learn from Him how to know the difference between and treat differently things/people/activities that are ‘holy’ [*kodesh*] as opposed to things/people/activities that are ‘common’ [*chol*]. But that is just level one of our ‘distinguishing/discernment calling. At a much deeper level, in connection with both the holy and the common of this world, the *kohanim* of the Holy One are called to know how to distinguish between and treat differently the ‘clean’ [*tahor*] and the ‘unclean’ [*tamei*]. And there is a very important second phase to the mission of the Holy One’s *kohanim*, designed to follow on the heels of the distinguishing phase. The second part of the mission is to *teach the children of Israel all the statutes the Holy One spoke through Moshe*. If we cannot – or choose not to – learn to distinguish in real time, in real life, between that which is holy and that which is common, and between that which is clean and that which is unclean, we simply will not be able to teach the Torah without admixture, adulteration, and alchemy, distortion, and dilution. We will create Towers of Babel and adorn them with stained glass images of scenes from the Torah. We will create golden calf systems and mis-label them ‘*Kadosh L’Adonai*’ [i.e. Holy unto YHVH].

This is important – indeed, mission critical. So let us look at these two aspects of our divine mission in a little more detail.

Calling # 1:

Establishing and Maintaining a Separation Between the *Holy* and the *Common* And between the *Tamei* and the *Tahor*

The first aspect of the priestly mission is to “distinguish” between two realms, kingdoms, or spheres of influence – the realm of the “holy”, and the realm of the ‘common’. This does not mean much to us in English. Let’s look at it Hebraically instead. In Hebrew this directive reads as follows:

Ul’hav’dil beyn ha-kodesh uveyn ha-chol
And you are to separate the holy from the common

uveyn ha-tamei uveyn ha-tahor
and the tamei from the tahor.

The word translated as ‘make a separation’, ‘distinguish’, or ‘make a distinction’ in this verse, is *hav’dil*. *Hav’dil* is imperfect imperative verb form derived from the Hebrew verb root *badal*². The first Biblical usage of this verb is found in Genesis 1:4, where it is used to describe what the Holy One did to mark off or divide the realm of light – the Divine Light that He created on the first day - from the realm of darkness.

Vayar Elohim et ha-or ki-tov
And the Creator saw that the light was good,

² *Badal* is *beit, dalet, lamed*. Strong’s Hebrew word #914, it is pronounced *baw-dawl*’.

V'yav'del Elohim beyn ha-ohr uveyn ha-choshech
and the Creator *badal* [divided] between the light and the darkness.
[Genesis 1:4]

The imagery of the Hebrew verb *badal* – namely *dividing, or establishing boundaries between dissimilar realms* - is woven throughout the Creation narrative. In Genesis 1:6 the Holy One establishes a firmament to *badal* the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens. In Genesis 1:14 He established lights in the heavens to *badal* the *day* [the period of the presence of Divine light upon the earth] from the *night* [the period of the absence of Divine light from the earth].

The imagery of this Hebrew verb is also an integral part of the *mish'kan* the Holy One told Moshe to build on earth. The veil in front of the ark is there to *badal* [divide, or establish boundaries] between the holy place and the holy of holies. **Exodus 26:33.**

According to Leviticus 20 at least one purpose of the Holy One's calling Israel out of the rest of the nations as His people was to make *badal* between them and the nations. **Leviticus 20:24**³. Consider that there are four different aspects of the world the Holy One has created, designed to be kept in perfect balance with each other. These four aspects compete with each other in the spiritual realm the way darkness competes with light, and the earth competes with the heavens [we call this latter phenomenon 'gravity'] in the physical realm. The four aspects that offset or compete with each other, are:

- [1] the *kodesh* [usual English translation = holy]
- [2] the *chol* [usual English translation = *common* or *profane*]
- [3] the *tahor* [usual English translation = *clean* or *ritually clean*], and
- [4] the *tamei* [usual English translation = *unclean* or *ritually impure*].

Genesis 1 tells us that the Holy One made *badal* between physical realms such as light and darkness, waters of heaven and waters of earth, and day and night, to balance them off from each other in such a way that those realms would not overlap each other and 'undo Creation', so to speak. Leviticus 10 tells us that the purpose and calling of the *kohen* is to make *badal* between the competing realms of *kodesh* and *chol*, *tahor* and *tamei*. This balance is necessary in order that those competing realms do not overlap each other and thereby 'undo' the Holy One's act of *recreation* – that process which we sometimes call by such names as *redemption, salvation, or deliverance*.

³ This Hebrew verb root is the source of the phrase *havdalah* [literally, the separating] – the name given to the traditional ceremony conducted in the Jewish home at the conclusion of the Weekly Sabbath or a *Festival*.

Let us look therefore at the four competing, perfectly balanced realms that Aharon and his sons [*as types and shadows of Messiah, and as prototypes for us*] are to keep separate. Imagine the four realms as the four quadrants made by the intersection of the perpendicular lines of the crosshairs of the scope of a rifle. The ‘target’ at which we are to aim our lives has both a *vertical axis* [the crosshair line that goes up and down], and a *horizontal axis* [the crosshair line that goes from side to side].

The vertical axis is the line between what is *kodesh* and what is *chol*. The horizontal axis is the line between what is *tamei* and what is *tahor*. Our task is not to let the lines become blurred. Let me explain what I mean.

Adjusting to the Holy One’s Vertical and Spiritual Axis – Making Distinction Between the Kodesh and the Chol

The first two elements that threaten the re-creative act of the Holy One if they get out of balance are the competing realms of the *kodesh* [holy] and the *chol* [*common, ordinary, and/or profane*]. Most people alive today do not even know that these two realms exist, much less what characteristics appertain to each. Most have no clue why the Holy One wants His Ambassadors to this world to make a ‘distinction’ between them. But the Holy One DOES want His closest associates to be experts at both discerning and relating appropriately to the things, people and activities that present the characteristics of these two realms.

Kodesh means ‘set apart’ – dedicated, consecrated, for the Holy One’s service only. The *mish’kan* was *kodesh*. Angels are *kodesh*. Torah is *kodesh*. To the extent human beings live a lifestyle of *sh’ma* responsiveness to the Holy One, forsaking all to live in accordance with His specific instructions, we are *kodesh*. *Kodesh* people, things, and activities are therefore those which can enter or go on in the *mish’kan* without *Nadav and Avihu-style* disaster breaking out, can participate joyfully and unselfishly in fellowship with and service of the Holy One in His Courts, and can hear, receive, walk in, and live out specific counsel from His Throne.

The opposite of *kodesh* is that which is *Chol*⁴. This word refers to anything that is not *kodesh* – to anything that is *man-initiated, man-designed, man-made, man-focused, man-powered, man-pleasing, and man-centered*. The tower of Babel, for instance, was *chol*. Earthly forms of government, society, ideology, and religion – however good or bad we may perceive them to be - are *chol*⁵. Philosophy, political

⁴ *Chol* is *chet, lamed*. Strong’s Hebrew word #2455, it is pronounced *khole*.

⁵ To fully comprehend this, please prayerfully look at the man-centered usages of *chahal*, the verb root of *chol*. In Genesis 4:26 we read that *man began [chahal]* to call upon the Name of YHVH. This *sounds like* a good thing – but it was not. Men were not responding to the Holy One – they were developing religions that attempted to recreate God in man’s image, for man’s purposes. Similarly, in Genesis 6:1, we read

theory, and theology are *chol*. Man-conceived religious practices, nowhere instructed by the Torah, are *chol*.

That which is *chol* is that which is un-Bridelike – *i.e.* anything that hinders a person in expressing and responding out of true, exclusive love for the Bridegroom. That which is *chol* is therefore always targeted for excision and removal in connection with the Ultimate Extreme Bridal Makeover protocols of *Sefer Vayikra*.

That which is *chol* cannot enter the *mish'kan*. That which carries fleshly attitudes and selfish priorities, agendas, and appetites has no place in the operation of the Courts, or in any aspect of the service, of the King. Anyone contaminated by that which is *chol* can only see and relate to the Bridegroom-King, if at all, from a distance, through a network of human intermediaries serving as lower-level agents.

Can These Two Realms Not Co-Exist?

If, when, and to the extent the Holy One's Manifest Presence and Communion ceased to be our goal or our focus, the *kodesh* and the *chol* can co-exist – indeed they do so all the time. This is the realm of most religion. It is only when the Holy One's Manifest Presence is a high priority and approaching Him for intimate fellowship is our deepest need and greatest delight that the realms of *kodesh* and *chol* become so diametrically opposed to each other that they absolutely must be recognized for what they are and carefully kept apart. When we are seeking to *follow Yeshua* instead of 'believe' in Him; when we are responding to a Divine call to *walk with our Creator* instead of talk about Him as if He was a theological concept, and when we are driven to actually *live out His life-instruction in real time* instead of engage in theological arguments about the Torah in class time, those are the instances in which the distinction becomes very, very important. *Man-initiated, man-designed, man-made, man-focused, man-powered, man-pleasing, and man-centered* mindsets, thoughts, attitudes, words, behaviors, and deeds are toxic to those who are trying to respond to the call to transcend religion and actually develop a functional, transformative relationship with the Holy One. That which is *chol* must therefore be recognized for what it is, and we need to direct and focus our energies, passion, and elsewhere – to that which is *kodesh*. This is why Yeshua taught: ***Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and its***

that men began [*chahal*] to multiply on the face of the earth and sire daughters. Sounds good again, right? But these were not just any daughters. The following verses make it appear that these daughters were *pecially bred* and *pecially trained* to seduce the 'sons of God'. This led the Holy One to say of men "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [*was*] only evil continually", and brought about the destruction of *the Flood*. Again in Genesis 9:20 we read of Noach, that he began [*chahal*] to be a husbandman, and planted a vineyard. Noach drank wine, became drunk, stripped, and was uncovered if not sodomized by his son Cham. See also Genesis 10:8, where we are told that Nimrod began to be [*chahal*] a mighty one in the earth. In each of these cases man independent of the Holy One initiates an action that seems good to him – and it inevitably leads to disaster.

righteousness, and all these things [i.e. the *chol* things] ***will be added to you.***
Matthew 6:33.

The moment *chol* things are allowed to infiltrate the realm, assume the priorities, and occupy the focuses the Holy One ordains for that which is *kodesh* they contaminate, corrupt, and destroy everything they touch. They overwhelm the delicate balance the Holy One has established between things in the world that are *kodesh* and things that are *chol*. And when that happens the intended flow and timing of the delicate processes of *tikkun* and *re-creation* [i.e. the processes modern religion has come to call ‘salvation’, ‘deliverance’, ‘redemption’, ‘sanctification’, and ‘glorification’] - which are what the Holy One has planned for His Creation in general and mankind in particular - are detoured and derailed. Enter the *kohen*. That is where ‘job one’ of the *kohen* kicks in. His assigned role is to stand in the gap between the *kodesh* and the *chol*. He is to clearly mark off the line separating the *kodesh* and the *chol* – and then do all within his power not let the *chol* realm cross over the line the Holy One has drawn for it.

But that is just the beginning. The Ambassadors the Kingdom of Heaven has appointed on earth then have other roles to perform in order that the Great Redemptive Plan may go forward without further delay.

Adjusting Our Life-Focuses to the Holy One’s Horizontal and Physical Axis – Making Distinction Between the Tahor and the Tamei

The other two competing aspects of Creation that the Holy One’s re-creative deeds have placed in delicate balance are the realms of the *tamei* on the one hand and of the *tahor* on the other. Let’s try to get an understanding of what these realms mean. I realize that it is not ‘light reading’. But it is very, very important, Dear Reader, if you want more than just a belief system – i.e. if you want to participate fully in the Ultimate Extreme Bridal Makeover protocols and be presented to the Bridegroom-King as a pure, spotless Bride without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing.

Understanding the Essence of the ‘Tamei’ Realm and The Dangers It Poses to our Mission and our Destiny

Tamei is *tet, mem, alef*⁶. The word is a derivative of the word meaning ‘whole’, well, or perfect. It basically means the opposite of that which is whole, well, and perfect. *Tamei* is the word Torah uses to describe the change in state Shechem effectively wrought upon Ya’akov’s daughter Dinah, still a child, when he – an adult – stalked, kidnapped and sexually molested her. We usually translate this descriptive word into English as ‘defiled’. By forcing himself upon and into Dinah what Shechem, however, what he actually did to her was to take away her

⁶ Tamei is Strong’s Hebrew word #2930. It is pronounced *taw-may*’.

wholeness, wellness, and perfection as a little girl protégé’, and make her *tamei*. Hebraically this means what we might consider in English as equivalent to *fragmented, fractured within, compromised in identity, mission, and destiny, and thus incapable of perfect completion* – at least without dramatic Divine recreation.

Dinah was not sinful or dirty in a physical sense. A little water washed all the physical evidence of the assault away. But inside she was different. She was forever changed. Because of Shechem’s selfish, perverse intrusion into her life, and the defiled state of will, mind, and emotion which resulted from the forced intermixing of her childlike soul, spirit and body with his perverse soul, spirit and body, she could never - absent Divine intervention of course - reach her full potential or purpose in life. When Shechem violated little Dinah he did not merely perform a physical act of self-gratification – he intertwined himself with her spiritually – even though she had been designed and destined by the Holy One to be one with someone else. He thereby injected himself into the relationship between Dinah and every one else – especially her father and her intended future spouse. Shechem *fragmented* Dinah. He *fractured her soul*. He *compromised her identity, confused her system of loyalties, perverted her purpose on earth, and derailed her destiny*. He took away *her wholeness*. He forced her into a *tamei* state. That does not mean she was not loved. That does not mean she could not be redeemed. But it does mean that what had happened to her needed to be recognized and dealt with appropriately.

Obviously, the Hebrew word *tamei* has been improperly – or at least inadequately - translated into English as merely ‘unclean’. In reality the modifier *tamei* does not refer to ‘uncleanness’ at all, at least in any way modern people understand that term. It refers instead to a state of *fragmentation* which renders it unable – temporarily at least - to reflect and participate in the Holy One’s plan to make all things *echad* [i.e. unified, complete, and whole].

If it helps you to understand what I mean, consider that *tamei* is the state Humpty Dumpty was in after he had the great fall. Remember? *All the king's horses, and all the king's men ?* Or if it helps you to understand the concept, think of Dinah’s soul after Shechem’s act as being like a Rubik’s cube with its squares all jumbled up instead of all in place. She now had a *conflict of loyalties, a contradiction of emotions, and a confusion of purpose*. She was now *drawn in different, mutually opposite directions*. For all you math majors out there, she was now no longer an *integer* [i.e. a whole number] but merely a *combination of fractions – fractions without even a common denominator*.

Pursuing the Healing Wholeness Inherent In that Which is Tahor

The opposite of *tamei* is *tahor*⁷ - *i.e. whole; not fragmented*. In our frame of reference – *i.e. after the expulsion from the Garden* - it means ‘*made whole*’ by the Holy One. It means *having one’s fragmentations fixed* by Divine intervention. The Holy One, you see, is *echad* [a unity, a complete whole with no fragmentation]. That which is drawing close to Him is in the process of *becoming unified, united, whole as He is*. Picture Humpty Dumpty if the Holy One touched and restored him. That is what it means to be *tahor*.

Just as the world of the *kodesh* is delicately balanced against and offsets and keeps in check the world of the *chol*, so is the world of the *tahor* delicately balanced against, and offsets, and keeps in check, the world of the *tamei*. Man acting in the spirit and realm of *chol* is a constant threat to that which is *tahor*. But the Holy One’s people, when acting in the spirit and realm of *kodesh*, pose an equal and opposite threat to release the Holy One’s power and turn that which is *tamei* into that which is *tahor*.

In the ordinary world in which we live the realms of the *kodesh*, the *chol*, the *tamei* and the *tahor*, intersect all the time. But the *mish’kan* was to be a different kind of place. The *mish’kan* was inhabited by the *Presence of the Holy One* – and therefore had to continually maintain a state of *kodesh* and *tahor* in order that the *Manifest Presence* would not leave. No element of the *chol* or the *tamei* realms could enter the *mish’kan*’s boundaries.

Aharon and his sons were to be the ones chiefly responsible for keeping up with this – keeping out the *chol* and the *tamei*, for the sake of the abiding of the Radiant Cloud of the Holy One’s Presence in the camp. And remember that all of this was supposed to serve as a visual aide – *i.e. a picture or shadow* – of the eternal truth of the priesthood of Heaven’s great High Priest. The point is that nothing *chol* or *tamei* can enter the Heavenly Throne Room of the Holy One. To the extent our lives become a living breathing *Mish’kan* on earth – a Temple of His Holy *Ruach* [breath/spirit] – nothing *chol* or *tamei* is to be a part of our lives either.

Calling #2:

Teaching the Torah to the Redeemed of the Holy One

The second aspect of the Divine Calling given to Aharon and his sons in today’s aliyah is the calling to teach the instructions for living set forth in Torah to the people the Holy One redeemed from Egypt, and to their descendants. Here is a direct transliteration from the Hebrew of this element of the priestly calling:

⁷ Tahor is *tet, hey, vav, resh*. Strong’s Hebrew word #2889, it is pronounced *tuh-hore*’.

Ul'horot et b'nei Yisra'el

You are also to teach the 'sons' of Yisrael/Ya'akov

et kol ha-chukim asher diber Adonai aleihem

all the instructions for living the Holy One has spoken to them

b'yad Moshe

through Moshe.

[Leviticus 10:11]

The specifics of this calling – the explanation of what exactly Aharon and his sons were to teach – can be found in Ezekiel 44:23-24, where the calling of the ***kohanim*** who will function in the time of the millennial Temple is set forth as follows:

*They are to teach my people the difference between the **kodesh** and the **chol**,
and cause them to discern between the **tamei** and the **tahor**.*

*In a controversy they are to stand to judge;
according to my ordinances they are to judge it:
and they are to **sh'mar** [guard, keep watch over, cherish and protect]
my laws and my statutes in regard to all my **mo'edim** [appointed times];
and they are to **make my Shabbatot** [Sabbaths] **holy**.*

***Keeping the Focus On Torah and The Redemptive Plan of the Holy One
Even In Moments of Personal Tragedy, Drama, Shock and Awe***

Even as the bodies of Nadav and Avihu are being removed from the camp to be buried Moshe refocuses the attention of Aharon and his sons on their Torah responsibilities – not their grief. Moshe instructs Aharon and his sons specifically and in detail on what parts of the *korbanot* surrogates through which approach to the Holy One was made on behalf of the Redeemed Community the priests are to eat, and when, and where.

As we have discussed previously, Aharon and his sons are not just “given” a portion of the surrogates brought by the Redeemed Community when drawing near to the Holy One according to the prescribed protocol. Aharon and his sons are not free to take the meat and/or grain to their tents or to sell them or barter them for other things they might desire – they are specifically told *to eat their portion of those surrogates, in the Mish'kan*. This is because the eating of the portion of the *korbanot* surrogates that is not consumed by fire is **a symbolic covenant act** – part of the essence of the service of the *kohanim*.

Remember, the *kohanim* are intermediaries between the Holy One and B'nei Yisrael. To B'nei Yisrael, they are *ambassadors/representatives of the Holy One*. If they eat of the *korbanot*, that means the Holy One – through His emissaries - is *accepting table fellowship* [the universally acknowledged declaration of peace and goodwill] with B'nei Yisrael. It is an accepted rule of human experience that *one eats only with those he considers one's friend, and with whom one desires to converse*. The eating of the

korbanot by the Holy One's appointed representatives thus constitutes *a vital act of kingdom diplomacy* - demonstrating to B'nei Yisrael that the Divine Bridegroom accepts *them* [not just their "offering", as pagan cultures expect].

Questions For Today's Study

1. With regard to the directions that the Holy One gave directly to Aharon and his sons, to open today's aliyah:

[A] What did the Holy One say to Aharon in verses 8-9, and why?

[B] What two purposes did the Holy One say, in verses 10-11, the Aharonic priesthood was to serve?

[C] In the course of what activities, and at what location, did the Holy One indicate that consumption of wine or other fermented drink was considered inappropriate for priests after the line of Aharon?

2. Even in the immediate aftermath of the death of Nadav and Avihu, Moshe focuses Aharon's attention on his responsibilities as 'friend of the Bride' [*kohen*]. He discourses with him in detail, at this seemingly inopportune moment, on what – and where and by whom – the 'priest's portion' of the surrogates brought by B'nei Yisrael to the *mish'kan* are to be eaten.

[A] Make three columns on your paper. In column one list the types of *korbanot* [offerings] Moshe discusses here.

[B] In column two list what parts, if any, of those *korbanot* the priests were to eat.

[C] In column three list the place(s) those parts were to be eaten by the priests.

3. Today's aliyah concludes with a rebuke given by Moshe to Aharon concerning something Aharon and his sons omitted to do on this their first day of service.

[A] What had Aharon and his sons forgotten (or neglected) to do that led Moshe to say they should have eaten the priests' parts of the *korban chat'at* [sinner's approach offering] in the courts of the *mish'kan*?

[B] What was Aharon's response to Moshe's rebuke?

[C] Does Moshe "drop" the issue and let Aharon "off the hook", or does Aharon convince Moshe that he was wrong?

4. In our reading today from II Sh'muel [Samuel] 6 the writer of the Biblical account says that David and the whole house of Israel brought the ark up from the house of Obed-Edom to Y'rushalayim [Jerusalem] with "*rejoicing*" [KJV "gladness"] and with "*shouts/shouting*", and the sound of *shofarot* [the sounding of multiple shofars].

*It was told king David, saying,
"The Holy One has blessed the house of Obed-edom,
and all that pertains to him, because of the ark of God.
David went and brought up the ark of God*

from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with joy.
It was so, that, when those who bore the ark of the Holy One had gone six paces,
he sacrificed an ox and a fattened calf.
David danced before the Holy One with all his might;
and David was girded with a linen efod.
So David and all the house of Yisra'el brought up the ark of the Holy One
with shouting, and with the sound of the shofar.
It was so, as the ark of the Holy One came into the city of David,
that Mikhal the daughter of Sha'ul looked out at the window,
and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Holy One, and she despised him in her heart.

[II Samuel 6:12-16]

[A] Look up the word “gladness” in Strong’s and Gesenius. Write the Hebrew word, in Hebrew letters with vowel markings, and in its English transliteration. Then explain the Hebraic concept in light of the “picture” you see in looking at the definitions/explanations of Gesenius with regard to the Hebrew word and its verb root.

[B] Look up the word “shouts/shouting” in Strong’s and Gesenius. Write the Hebrew word, in Hebrew letters with vowel markings, and in its English transliteration. Then explain the Hebraic concept in light of the “picture” you see in looking at the definitions/explanations of Gesenius with regard to the Hebrew word and its verb root.

[C] What is the significance of the TaNaKh’s advising us that David put on a ‘*linen efod*’ when he danced before the Ark?

[D] This passage tells us that David went before the Ark and *sacrificed an ox and a fattened calf* before the ark moved 6 paces. In what two ways was this a violation of Torah?

5. The Haftarah also says David was “leaping” and “dancing” [KJV] before the ark. Look up the words “leaping” and “dancing” in Strong’s and Gesenius. Write the Hebrew words, in Hebrew letters with vowel markings, and in their English transliterations. Then explain these Hebraic concepts in light of the “picture” you see in looking at the definitions/explanations of Gesenius with regard to these Hebrew words and their verb roots.

6. In today’s B’rit Chadasha reading Shefira, the wife of Hananyah, comes to see Kefa [Simon Peter] and the rest of Messiah’s inner circle, to carry out her part of the plot to curry favor from the leadership through a gift of money.

About three hours later his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in.
Kefa challenged her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much."
She said, "Yes, for so much."

[Acts 5:7-8]

[A] How long after the death of Hananyah [Ananias] did Shefira [Sapphira] come to see Kefa [Simon Peter]?

[B] What provision of Torah did Shefira violate?

[C] Write a diary of the days events from the perspective of a boy or girl who witnessed it.

*May you clearly distinguish between the holy and the common,
and may you demonstrate to all mankind the wisdom and beauty of Torah.*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Ezekiel 44:15-24

*But the Kohanim the Levites, the sons of Tzadok,
who kept the charge of my sanctuary
when the children of Yisra'el went astray from me,
they are to come near to me to minister to me; and they are to stand before me
to draw near to Me with the fat and the blood, says the Holy One GOD.
They are to enter into my sanctuary,
and they are to come near to my table, to minister to me,
and they are to keep my charge.*

*It will be that, when they enter in at the gates of the inner court,
they are to be clothed with linen garments; and no wool is to come on them,
while they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within.
They are to have linen tires on their heads, and are to have linen breeches on their loins;
they are not to gird themselves with [anything that causes] sweat.*

*When they go forth into the outer court, even into the outer court to the people,
they are to put off their garments in which they minister,
and lay them in the holy chambers; and they are to put on other garments,
that they not sanctify the people with their garments.
Neither are they to shave their heads, nor allow their locks to grow long;
they are only to cut off the hair of their heads.*

*Neither are any of the Kohanim to drink wine when they enter the inner court.
Neither are they to take for their wives a widow, nor her who is put away;
but they are to take virgins of the seed of the house of Yisra'el,
or a widow who is the widow of a Kohen.*

*They are to teach my people the difference between the holy and the common,
and cause them to discern between the tamei and the tahor.
In a controversy they are to stand to judge;
according to my ordinances are they to judge it:
and they are to keep my laws and my statutes in all my appointed feasts;
and they are to make my Shabbatot holy.*