

Shiur L'Yom Shishi¹

[Friday's Study]

READINGS: **Torah Metzora:** Leviticus 15:19-33
 Haftarah: Malachi 4:4-6
 B'rit Chadasha: Romans 1:26-32

Whoever touches her shall be tamei until evening.

[Leviticus 15:19(b)]

Today's Meditation is Isaiah 64:6;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is Petition # 3, *S'lach* [the Petition for Forgiveness]

V'ishah – And a woman ... **ki-tiheyeh zavah dam yihyeh zovah biv'sarah** – when she has a bloody discharge issuing forth from her flesh ... **shiv'at yamim tihyeh v'nidatah** – for seven days she is to be/stay apart Leviticus 15:19a.

Earlier in the *Kedusha* Discourse the Holy One got up close and personal with the male members of the Covenant Community about substances that issue forth from the organs and orifices of our reproductive systems. He wants us to be fully aware that, if our 'vessels' are not stewarded humbly and used honorably, what they produce can introduce dangerous levels of *tumah* into the world. Now the focus of is shifting to the feminine members of the Covenant *Mishpachah*. The Holy One is about to get just as frank with girls and women about the substances that issue forth from their reproductive organs and orifices as he was with boys and men.

The Holy One has no gender preference. He designed, created, blessed, and diligently watches over every man, woman, and child. He loves and values us all. He is an equal opportunity Creator, Supporter, Sustainer, Advocate, Life Coach, and Provider. He does not deem men superior, or more important than women – or vice versa. He has a Plan to retrain girls and boys, women and men, to actually join forces and work together for glorious ends – instead of competing for inglorious awards the way the poison fruit of the tree of knowledge has taught them to do. His Plan is radical. It is for men and women to respect and nurture each other as bone of bone and flesh of flesh, grow in unity, and ... well ... do *the stuff Kingdoms are made of*.

The Stuff Kingdoms Are Made Of

As we discussed previously, each time a man discharges *shik'vat-zara* there is a new hope in the earth – a bright new hope that the Creator's prophetic pronouncement **P'ru ur'vu** [*i.e. Be fruitful, and multiply!*] will be fulfilled. The release

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of *shik'vat-zara* by one of the male members of the Covenant Community means that there is suddenly potential for a new human being in the image of the Holy One – a new source of *light for the nations* and *salt for the earth* – to be formed. But that is just the beginning of the story. Though *shik'vat-zara* is powerfully creative, the Holy One has designed creation such that it takes much more than just the release of this DNA-containing liquid to bring about the reproduction of human life. Indeed, *shik'vat-zara* is only about one half of the puzzle. If it issues forth from the man in any context but one, it's great potential will bear no fruit whatever – and just contaminate everything it touches. The life-reproducing cells it contains will die, and the life force the Holy One programmed into the *shik'vat-zara* will be forever snuffed out.

The realms of life and death therefore meet each time *shik'vat-zara* is released. The portal between the two realms opens. Either life will be the result – or death. And, as we learned in yesterday's study, that is why everything *touched by shik'vat-zara* immediately becomes *tamei*.

The Partnering of Man with Woman - And With the Holy One!

In the Garden of Eden the Holy One ordained that it was *lo tov* – i.e. not the highest, most mature form of good - that man should 'be alone'. He therefore took a part of Adam, reconfigured it, and gave it back to him in a form we know as 'female'. The Holy One made it where the male and the female representations of mankind both have to join, cooperate, and co-labor in a very intimate way for there to be reproduction.

What is the woman's part in the process of reproduction? As the body of a man is fearfully and wonderfully made, so is the body of a woman. Every month both of the ovaries of every woman of child-bearing age produce something very similar to the seed of man that is carried in *shik'vat-zara*. These are called *ova*, or 'eggs'. These are released from the ovaries into the fallopian tubes, and carried toward the uterus. During this period, the woman's uterus is secreting a rich supply of mucous, to facilitate the reception and transmittal of a man's seed and to provide an atmosphere conducive to merging of the man's seed and the woman's ova. If a man's *shik'vat-zara* is released into the woman through sexual intercourse around the time this is all happening, conception of a new human life will occur – and a baby will start to develop.

If conception does not occur, the Holy One has programmed the woman's body to deal with that contingency as well.

The Author of Second Chances

The Holy One has so programmed the body of the human female that, if no

conception occurs within a limited ‘window of opportunity’ in time, the unfertilized egg produced by the woman’s body quickly begins losing its life-creating ability and “dies”. The Holy One then causes the woman’s body to pour out large quantities of blood into her uterus. This powerful flood of blood washes out both the woman’s dying egg and the special mucous lining that was produced in her uterus to provide a place conducive for impregnation. That which did not bear fruit is thus washed away – to provide for another opportunity later.

The flow of blood, mucous, and uterine tissue out of the woman usually takes place over a three to seven day period. The process of cleansing and restoring the uterus by dislodging and discharging unproductive/unfruitful tissue is called *menstruation*. It is messy, and involves cramping and pain. During this period the woman can get moody and hard to live with. She can withdraw. She can pull away. That is why she is called a ‘*niddah*’ – i.e. a *wanderer*. But though physically unpleasant and emotionally taxing, the process is not a punishment. It is instead a process of renewal. Every aspect of the process has been lovingly designed by the Creator to accomplish the cleanse the removal from the woman’s body of unproductive “dead” matter, on the one hand, and to simultaneously prepare her inmost being for the next opportunity to conceive and participate in the Divine **P’ru ur’vu** Plan next time around, on the other hand.

As the man is fearfully and wonderfully made, so is the woman. As the man has been given organs capable, once the man reaches ‘puberty’, of producing *shichavat-zera* – a fluid containing the male life-force of reproduction, so has the woman been given organs which are, once she reaches puberty, capable of producing another form of *zera* – the ‘*her seed*’ which is mentioned by the Holy One in Genesis 3:16. This latter form of *zera*, produced deep within the female body, represents the female life force of reproduction. This latter form of *zera* is, however, only produced by the female’s organs once a month.

For a new human life to be formed out of the union of a man and a woman the male-life force of reproduction must be released into the reproductive organs of the woman, which are in her ‘private area’, and must while still alive and strong come in contact with and unite at a cellular level with the female life-force of reproduction. The uniting of the two seeds, inside the body of the woman, is called *conception*. It does not happen every time. There is nothing automatic about it. It requires a miracle of the Holy One.

The Song of the Niddah

We are all familiar with the great Biblical ‘songs of the women’ – i.e. the *Ashirah Chorus/Song of the Sea* [Exodus 15], the *Song of D’vorah* [Judges 5], the *Song of*

Chanah [I Samuel 2:1 ff], and the ‘*Magnificat*’ sung by Miryam [Luke 1:46 ff]. There is something deep in the feminine side of the human soul, it appears, that responds to challenging situations with inspired melody and powerfully cathartic song. Imagine the Holy One called forth such a response from the feminine side of the human soul in relation to the trauma of ‘*non-conception*’ that is associated with the onset of menstruation. Perhaps it would go something like this:

*My soul cries out . . .
to the life that could have been – but is not.
to the child I will never carry;
for the miniature ‘me’ I will never know.
to the fingers and toes I will never count; to the face I’ll never see;
to the eyes that will never stare into mine –
or gaze in wonder at a flower, a sunset, a waterfall, or a star;
to the little hands that will never grip my finger -
or reach out for me in the night;
to the nose I’ll never nuzzle;
to the forehead I will never kiss goodnight;
to the ears that will never hear me say ‘I love you, sweet child’;
to the sleepy Modeh Ani I will never hear whispered at sunrise;
to the laughter I will never hear ring out from the room down the hall;
to the wedding I will never plan;
to the scraped knee I will never bandage; to the tears I will never dry.
to the fears I will never calm with a hug, a ‘shhhh’, and a lullaby;
unto you, precious one whomever was, my soul cries.
Oh what adventures we could have shared.
Oh what a life you could have lived. Alas, it is not to be.
So I will go on – but I will not forget.
And I will try to love – and laugh with –
your would-have-been brothers and sisters a little bit more,
in remembrance of you.*

Tell your daughters, dear ones. Remind your wives, Covenant men. Life is precious. *They* are precious. Every opportunity to recreate life is to be treasured, cherished, and stewarded with tender, loving care. Encourage meditation – and the writing of a sweet ‘*Niddah*’ Song’ - during each menstruation. Teach them to use the Holy One’s precious gifts of emotion and creativity to take the edge off the pain, the blood loss, the inconvenience, and all the blustery gales and floodwaters of the hormonal hurricane.

Why Does the Creator Want Us To Associate a Niddah With Tumah?

Just as everything the *shik’vat-zara* of a man touches becomes *tamei*, so everything the female’s ovum touches becomes *tamei*. In both cases – the spilling of *shik’vat-*

zara and the issuance of blood and unproductive tissue from a *niddah* - the realms of life and death have collided. A doorway has been opened between the two. Important issues hang in the balance. A ‘danger zone’ of spiritual health has been entered. A *hormone hurricane*, as it were, has made landfall in the home. Pain and discomfort have *shattered the shalom* and *challenged the joy* of the home. Stress has been elevated, and emotion, attention, mood, attitude, and motivation have all been adversely affected. Because of the combination of these factors with the blood flow, life simply cannot proceed as ‘business as usual’ under such circumstances. While everyone involved can be strong, put on a semi-smiling mask of normality, and pretend nothing is going on, that is simply not the case. Wisdom dictates that a heightened state of alert and awareness is appropriate. Hence, Torah tells us:

V'ishah ki-tiheyeh zavah dam

When a woman has a flow of blood

yihyeh zovah bivsarah

that issues forth from her body.

shiv'at yamim tiheyeh v'nidatah

For seven days she is to be tamei because of her menstruation,

v'chol ha-nogea bah yit'ma ad ha-arev

and anyone touching her shall be tamei until evening.

V'chol asher tish'kav alav b'nidatah yit'ma

As long as she is in her menstrual state, she lies upon becomes tamei,

v'chol asher-teshev alav yit'ma

and anyone sitting on it likewise becomes tamei.

[Leviticus 15:19-20]

The fact that a woman has a monthly flow of blood and tissue - *i.e.* that she is a ***niddah***² [menstruant] does not mean she has breached the Covenant. It does not mean that she is in any way “unclean” in a modern moralistic sense. It does, however, mean that ***something worthy of special attention has happened*** - *i.e.* that *the Holy One has begun the process of renewing her capability of producing life in the next cycle of the moon*. Since the Holy One has begun this wonderful process, and is faithfully at work renewing His promise of fruitfulness for the woman and her God-ordained husband again, a special “acknowledgment” period for acknowledgment of the Holy One’s covenant kindness is prescribed by Torah. This special acknowledgement period begins with the first sign of blood and tissue from the woman. From that point, she is to count off - like *counting the omer* - seven days. During this period, the woman is to regard herself as ***tamei***-- whether she is

² The Hebrew *niddotah* is derived from the verb root *nadad*², meaning to *wander*, to *distance one’s self*, or to *pull away*.

physically bleeding or not. What does this '*tamei*' designation mean?

As we discussed in Monday's Study, unfortunately most English Bibles translate the Hebrew word *tamei* as 'unclean' or 'impure'. The idea is not that human beings experiencing a *tamei* event such as *niddah* become either "dirty" or "sinful" thereby. To be in a *tamei status* merely means that one has entered a state of *spiritual transition*, which makes getting out of our routine, and paying extremely close attention to, and following, the Holy One's instructions, very, very important to that person's spiritual well-being. It is a state of high spiritual alert. It is a state requiring enhanced physical, emotional, and spiritual security. It is a state likely to generate strong negative emotions – and thus is a state calling for the exercise of extreme vigilance – and devoting extra time to prayer, meditation, thanksgiving, and contemplation on the gift and purpose of life. As Shaul said: ***Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are good news, if there is any virtue, and if there is anything about which to praise – MEDITATE ON THESE THINGS. Philippians 4:8.*** After composing the *song of the niddah*, as referenced above, why not give these 'targeted thought' games a try?

The *niddah* is at a crossroads where the spiritual dimensions of light and darkness are intersecting each other, and where spiritual worlds we cannot see with natural eyes are bumping into each other. Major issues hang in the balance. Responsibilities of 'Tabernacle participation' are suspended - as is the case with any person who is *tamei*. In light of what is going on in the *niddah*'s body, tabernacle participation is simply unnecessary and superfluous. After all, the process at work in the *niddah*'s body is itself a sanctification - a setting apart - for her. She is, during her seven-day period of *tamei* status, not to be touched intimately *at any level*; for her husband to engage in intimate contact of any nature with her during this period would be totally inappropriate and insensitive to what the Bridegroom-King of Heaven is doing in and for her.

Think about it – ***the niddah's capacity to produce life is being renewed by her Maker.*** She is exclusively His, not her husband's, during this period of time. For her husband to interfere, and inject himself into the process, would be to dishonor the Holy One and to show disrespect both for his wife and the Covenant.

This, of course, necessitates both the participation and cooperation of the man. It is a monthly test of whether the Holy One is or is not Lord of the home and of the marriage relationship. Depending on how the human being navigates at the point of intersection, you see, the portal that intersection provides ***may*** lead the human **away from the Holy One** (the way it did with Chava in the Garden of Eden) – or

may bring the human closer than ever to the Holy One (the way He intended).

Why All the Fuss? What's the Big Deal?

Our secular world considers the Holy One's instructions and protocols for the *niddah* to be foolish. It casts them aside as an inconvenience and bother. It does not see how the issue of blood from a woman when she fails to conceive as she was designed to do should be considered important – or have any effect on a woman's activities – or those of her husband – at all. The *niddah* experience is therefore not celebrated by our society, but hated. It is the subject of crude jokes. The philosophy of the world appears to be “this too shall pass” – deal with it as best you can, and *by all means don't let it slow you down or cramp your style*. After all, our secular world is only about pleasure, thrills, work, and socialization. Acknowledging, respecting, getting in tune with, and being thankful for the rhythms and redemptive works the Bridegroom-King is doing in a woman's body is not even on the radar of the secular world.

Both the perspective of the Holy One – and of people who recognize how blessed they are to be in covenant with the Creator of the Universe - is altogether different. The Holy One's redemptive plan for mankind and Creation involves boys and girls, men and women, knowing *who they are*, and *why they were created male or female*. His plan involves people learning to trust Him, and acknowledge and begin to cooperate with His creative design for their bodies and bodily processes. He wants to interact with His human partners in covenant most intimately not through public religious services or sacraments, but through the simple natural processes He designed into human life. He wants to know us – and be known by us - in real ways, in real time.

By acknowledging the Holy One as Lord of all our bodily processes, and marveling at His goodness and creativity in connection with even the most mundane things of life, perhaps we can finally enter into realms of spiritual knowledge and experience that transcend “religion”. Perhaps then we can finally get to the essence and quality of relationship with our Maker for which we were created and to which we are being called.

When Something Goes Really, Really Wrong - The Tzavah

Parsha *Metzora* also deals with the *tzavah* - a woman who has a flow of blood or discharge of tissue or fluid *outside or beyond the Torah-prescribed period of niddah*. This situation is different because the blood flow we are talking about with a *tzavah* is an *abnormal flow* of blood. Such a blood flow means that something is going on in the woman's body and/or spirit with potential life-threatening (for her life and for her ability to participate in creating life) consequences.

Torah tells us that the ***tzavah*** is *tamei* with the same restrictions of a *niddah* for the entire period of time the excessive bleeding or discharge is occurring, and for a seven-day period immediately following the cessation of bleeding or discharge (whenever that may be). On the eighth day after her abnormal flow of blood ceases, like the *niddah on the eighth day after her normal flow of blood and tissue begins*, the ***tzavah*** is to present to the Holy One (now, through Messiah Y'shua) her ***korban olah*** (approaching the altar to make a total dedication of body, soul and spirit) and her ***korban chata't*** (approaching the altar to be cleansed from sins, in order to begin her normal activities of life anew, without “baggage” from the past). This does not mean her *tzavah* condition was brought about by sin, but merely that she does not want to take the baggage of any past sins with her into her “new” (renewed) life. She like a virgin bride with no spot or wrinkle wants to wear a white gown into her husband's bedchamber – which, of course, is symbolic of the Holy One's Heavenly *Mish'kan* – the place prepared for her.

The Task of the Redeemed – Separating Things that are Tamei from Things that are Tahor

One final thing. The last verse of the parsha summarizes for the Holy Community in which the Manifest Presence of the Holy One physically dwells the basic principle of *separateness*. The Holy One says:

you are to keep B'nei Yisrael separate (Hebrew *natzar*, set apart, like a Nazirite)
from things that will make them tamei,
so that they will not die in a tamei state
for defiling my dwelling place which is among them.”

In the absence of the *Holy One's Manifest Presence* from our community (May that Presence return to us, and soon!) there is little danger of physical death whether or not the provisions of today's aliyah of Torah are honored or not. But that does not affect the continued applicability of *the torah of family purity* – which after all are *not about escaping death but are instead about honoring the Holy One, recognizing His wonderful grace and renewing, and respecting what He is doing in the beloved and precious women in our lives.*

Matters of family purity are not matters of “law” – they are matters *of the heart*. Do not approach them – or any other aspect of Torah – legalistically. Open your hearts to Him and listen for Him to speak to you of the spiritual realities these instructions of Torah are attempting to convey. And resolve to walk with the Holy One as His covenant partner through whatever processes and *mitzvot* He may lead you. Lean on Him. Learn from Him. He is calling you. He will show you what you need to do to make His Word meaningful and productive of good in your life, in your marriage, and in His Creation.

Who Will Take This Challenge? Who Will Carry This Torch?

The protocols of the Ultimate Extreme Bridal Makeover relative to the touchy area of human sexuality have now been revealed. We have read and meditated at some length upon the Beautiful and Wise Words the Holy One has – out of love for His Creation - spoken in His Own Voice concerning these problematic issues. We have been given a bird's-eye view of His Glorious Plan to rescue human sexuality from the domain of darkness and animalistic urge, and to put it – and family life in general - back on a path that will lead real men and real women into abundant life, supernatural health, wholeness of body, mind, soul and spirit, and *steadfast, functional, lasting shalom*.

The challenge has been delivered. The torch is ready to be handed off from Divine Hands to human ones. The eyes of the Holy One now run to and fro throughout the world, seeking for the young man – or the old one – who will break free of the lies of the world and the confusion of society about sexuality. The Ruach HaQodesh rushes from home to home across the world calling young women – and matriarchs-in-training – to walk in the Bridegroom-King's purity, find life in His Words, and hold fast to His Ways.

Who will *sh'ma*? Who will respond to the Bridegroom-King's call? Who will put on and wear the Kingdom's beautiful garments? Who will adopt - and model to an incredulous world - the Holy One's wise plan of Covenant-honoring sexuality? For the sake of the Bridegroom-King and His Grand Plan of Redemption for Mankind and Creation, will YOU do it? For the sake of your own *bayit shalom* – and that of your soul-mate or future soul-mate – will you catch the Holy One's vision of true purity? Will you choose to let the Holy One guide you through the obstacle course of of pathological obsessions with sexuality and steer you away from secular society's addiction to false ideas and forms of sexual expresssion? Or will you, as do the multitudes to their destruction, just continue to wallow in and consider 'normal' the animalistic perversions of human sexuality that the media, the arts, and decadent Western Culture have been promoting for millennia?

The Voice of the Bridegroom-King is calling: ***Lech Lecha!*** Who is up for the great adventure? Who is listening? Who is hearing? Who is wiling let the Words of the Holy One transform his thoughts, attitudes, perspectives, speech, and behaviors relative to his sexuality into something that offers the world hope for the future rather than ever-deepening chains of bondage? Is it you, Beloved? Are you the one – or will He have to look for another?

Questions For Today's Study

1. In the opening verses of today's aliyah the Holy One discusses the *niddah* and the *zavah* – i.e. a woman with an abnormal issue of blood.

[A] What does Torah say the woman with a regular monthly issue of blood?

[B] What does Torah say about a woman with an abnormal issue of blood?

[C] What is involved in a *niddah* becoming *tahor* again?

[D] What is involved in a *zavah* becoming *tahor* again?

[E] Why do you think the Holy One wants people who engage in acts of sexual intimacy to take some “time out” and go on “spiritual high alert”? [Hint: Read Genesis 1:27-28 and 2:20-25]

2. In verses 25-30 of chapter 15, Torah discusses the *zavah*. Read Matthew 9:18-22.

*While he told these things to them,
behold, a ruler came and worshiped him, saying,
"My daughter has just died,
but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."
Yeshua got up and followed him, as did his talmidim.
Behold, a woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years
came behind him, and touched the tzitzit of his garment;
for she said within herself, "If I just touch his garment, I will be made well."
But Yeshua, turning around and seeing her, said,
Daughter, be glad! Your emunah has brought you wholeness.
And the woman was made whole from that hour.*

[A] Why did the woman want to touch Y'shua's garment?

[B] What part of Yeshua's garment did the woman touch? [Hint: See Malachi 4:2]

[C] Did the woman violate the Torah?

[D] What offering was the woman in the story required by Torah

3. Turning to the Haftarah reading for today, the prophet Malachi is about to conclude his message. This is his final declaration on behalf of the Holy One:

*Remember the Torah of Moshe Avdi [Moses My servant]
Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel,
with the statutes and judgments.
Behold, I will send you Eliyahu ha-navi [Elijah the prophet]
Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Holy One.
And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,
And the hearts of the children to their fathers,
Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."*

[Malachi 4: 4-6]

[A] What does the Voice of the Holy One, speaking through Malachi, enjoin us to ‘remember’?

[B] In Strong’s Concordance and Gesenius’ Lexicon, look up the Hebrew verb our English Bibles translate as ‘remember’ in this verse. What is the Hebrew verb, and what actions does it involve?

[C] According to the Holy One, what will be the assigned function for which He will send us *Eliyahu ha-navi* [i.e. Elijah the prophet] in the latter days?

[D] Who are the ‘fathers’ [Hebrew, *avot* – meaning *patriarchs*] that the Holy One is talking about? Read the first blessing of the *Sh’monah Esrei* [Amidah] prayer – called the ‘*Avot*’. A version of this blessing is available on line at http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Prayers/Daily_Prayers/Shemoneh_Esrei/Avot/avot.html

4. Our B’rit Chadasha reading for today is Romans 1:25-28. Shaul of Tarsus is speaking about those who have chosen to follow their own fleshly appetites and lusts instead of sh’ma-ing the Voice and the Torah of the Holy One. Shaul says:

*[They] exchanged the truth of God for the lie,
and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator,
who is blessed forever. Amen.*

*For this reason God gave them up to vile passions.
For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.
Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman,
burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful,
and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.
And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,
God gave them over to a debased mind,
to do those things which are not fitting.*

[A] Shaul says those who choose to turn away from the way of the Holy One in order to indulge their own fleshly appetites and lusts have made an exchange. What did they give up – and what did they choose to take in its place?

[B] What aspects of ‘creature worship’ [i.e. valuing things/people/places more than one values the Holy One and His Torah] have you either engaged in or seen others engage in?

[C] Shaul also says that those who engage in acts of same-sex passion have made an exchange. What have they given up, and what have they chosen to take in its place?

[D] Shaul further states that those who choose not to focus their mind and thoughts on the Holy One and on doing what His Torah instructs us to do choose instead a ‘debased mind’. Read Proverbs 9:10. Then go to Strong’s Concordance and Thayer’s Lexicon and look up the Greek words that our Bibles translate as ‘mind’ and ‘debased’ [KJV ‘reprobate’], respectively, in this passage. Write those words on your paper and write a short summary of what having a *debased mind* means.

*May we learn, this time through Sefer Vayikra,
to fully appreciate what it means for the Holy One to be Lord –
over our homes, over our clothes, over our speech, over our behavior,
and even over all the functions of our bodies.*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Isaiah 64:6

*We are all like an unclean thing,
And all our acts of righteousness are like menstrual rags;
We all fade as a leaf,
And our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*