

Shiur L'Yom Chamishi¹

[Thursday's Study]

READINGS: *Torah Metzora:* **Leviticus 15:16-18**
 Haftarah: **Malachi 4:1-3**
 B'rit Chadasha: **Romans 1:24-25**

They are to make mikveh in living water, and will be tamei until evening.
[Leviticus 15:18(b)]

Today's Meditation is Genesis 38:8-10;

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

V'ish ki-tetze mimeinu shichvat-zara – And when a man releases the seed of human reproduction Leviticus 15:16a.

'Be fruitful, and multiply', the Creator said [Genesis 1:28a] - and it was so. Ever since the Holy One spoke these words over Adam, by Divine design, when any human being's body reaches a certain maturity level, his or her hypothalamus and pituitary glands kick into gear – and the result is absolutely stunning. It starts with pulses of something scientists call GnRH², followed by FSH³ and LH⁴ hormones. In males, testosterone soon starts to flow, and Sertoli and Leydig cells begin to form. This perfect storm of chemicals and cells team up to fuel a chain reaction that reverberates through the person's whole body, soul, psyche, persona, and personality. His facial features and muscles undergo a series of subtle transformations. His appetite increases. His vocal cords lengthen, causing his voice to deepen. Hair begins to grow in places on his face – and ultimately on other parts of his body - where before only bare skin was present. And before he knows it he begins to feel urges – and an inclination toward aggressiveness – that he has never felt before. It won't go away any time soon; decade after decade it will continue. There will be ebbing and flowing, but these urges and surges will dramatically affect him – and the world around him – for the rest of his life. In connection with this Divinely-instituted system, the seed of human reproduction, from which will be birthed generation after generation after generation of humankind, and hope after hope of tikkun and redemption, becomes alive and active

In females, after the GnRH, FSH, and LH start to flow, the primary contributor to the process is estrogen instead of testosterone. This means the process involves a

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² *GnRH* is an acronym for 'Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone'.

³ *FSH* is an acronym for 'Follicle Stimulating Hormone'.

⁴ *LH* is an acronym for Luteinizing Hormone.

lot less in the way of facial hair and muscle growth, but includes a pretty impressive series of female-specific physical changes designed by the Creator to prepare the female to effectively serve Creation as a Masterfully designed, highly functional vessel of conception, gestation, birth, and nurture. Once the process begins, a repeating pattern sets in, and begins to dramatically affect the woman and around who lives or works around her. This process, too, lasts for decades – throughout the woman’s entire assigned ‘window of reproductive capacity’.

So it was designed to be; and so it will be. Ah, but with this brilliantly engineered process, and the wonderful capacity for *tikkun olam* – i.e. *fixing the world* - it brings, comes a ton of responsibility and accountability. Along with the potential to use this new empowerment to do the will of the Creator and be a blessing to the world, you see, also comes the power to cause untold amounts of *harm, toxicity, and suffering*.

Beware the ‘Village’ People

Contrary to the popular mantra of modern day Marxists, it doesn’t *take a village* to raise a child. All it takes is a loving father and mother, following the instructions of the Holy One as written down for us in Torah. But *if the loving father and mother do not train a child in how to approach sexuality, make no mistake - the village will*. And let’s face it - the village we are talking about does not know the Holy One, nor does it care one whit what He thinks. The village we are talking about is the ‘voice of a stranger’. The village we are talking about has an agenda – and a plan for your children and mine – 180 degrees opposite from the Holy One’s Divine plan and destiny for our children.

With these things in mind, I offer this study. If you do not feel your children are ready for it - and you know your children better than I - please limit their study and your discussion today to reading the text of today’s haftarah and B’rit Chadasha aliyot. But please do not let shy away from this subject matter forever. You do not want to let your children head off into the world at age 13, 16, 18 . . . or 30, without making absolutely sure they know what the Holy One has to say – in Leviticus 15 as well as elsewhere - about the precious, but potentially hazardous, gift of sexuality with which He entrusted them.

Precious – But Volatile. Handle With Extreme Care!

As Shaul of Tarsus told his friends in Thessalonica and Corinth:

This is the will of God - for your kedusha

[i.e. for consecration to and non-interruption of the higher use for which you are set apart];

that you abstain from sexual experimentation

[Grk. porneia – i.e. voyeurism and the dark energy fueled acts and practices associated therewith].

*Each of you must learn how to possess his own vessel in kedusha
and in kavod [i.e. kingdom responsibility, gravitas, beauty, splendor, honor, and glory] –
not being driven by passion and lust
like the people of the nations/cultures who do not know God.
[I Thessalonians 4:3-5]*

*Flee sexual experimentation
[Grk. porneia – i.e. voyeurism and the dark energy acts and practices associated therewith].
Every other kind of breach of Covenant that a human can commit
affects things external to his body,
but each breach of Covenant founded in porneia/voyeurism/sex drive
also constitutes a sin against one's own body,
and do you not know that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit
who is in you, and you are not your own?
[I Corinthians 6:18-19]*

Every son or daughter of the Covenant should be taught from infancy that his or her sexuality – and that of everyone he or she meets - is a precious, valuable, potentially very beautiful, but definitely a ‘Handle With Care’ gift from his or her Creator. Those outside the Covenant, on the other hand, do not understand – and cannot appreciate - the Creator’s wise and glorious plan regarding the propagation and generation-by-generation proliferation of the human species – therefore they do not know understand or appreciate – much less know how to steward – either their own sexuality or the sexuality of anyone else. They are taught from infancy to consider humans no more than animals – just camels, donkeys, and dogs who go crazy in the throes of ‘heat’. Hence, those outside the Covenant tend to think of *porneia* – i.e. *voyeurism and the dark energy fueled sexual acts and practices associated therewith* – as completely normal, indeed healthy and ‘natural’. The people of the nations, having no bigger vision for sexuality than a few fleeting moments of nerve ending stimulation, you see, are completely confused. They are toxically narcissistic toward sexuality. They are simultaneously paranoid toward and schizophrenic about *porneia*. They worship at its bloody altar like deranged lunatics; they sacrifice their own lives – and their children - to it. They build their entertainment and marketing industries around it. They design, sell, buy and wear clothes in ways that promote it. They deface their bodies with tattoos and piercings - in honor of it. They promote every perversion of it in the interest of *self-indulgence* and *sensual pleasure*; but then, when their *porneia*-influenced interactions do not turn out exactly the way they envisioned, they get all offended, cry foul, and everyone around them tears up and screams out self-righteously, for the benefit of the camera, in most cases, ‘*Me, too! Me, too!*’

As a result, the flesh markets of our nation’s schools, entertainment options, and internet offerings are by no means the place for sons and daughters of the

Covenant – the best and brightest hope of the world for a future filled with wisdom, joy, abundance, and *shalom* - to learn about human sexuality. In regard to human sexuality, as well as all other areas of life, we as people of the Torah absolutely must embrace – and insist on - a *more excellent way!* We must not blindly accept, much less cast our children into, any of the world’s folly - in regard to sexuality or otherwise. We cannot just look at Hollywood, Bollywood, Bourbon Street, and Miami Beach and say ‘tsk, tsk’; We must offer – and model for the world to see - a *clearly superior alternative.* We must offer a beautiful, wholesome, healthy, joyful paradigm of sexuality. Our gender is never something about which to fret, worry, obsess or indulge an identity crisis; it is just one beautiful and essential part of the ‘tool kit’ given to us by our Creator at the instant of conception in order to enable us to do the part He has assigned to us to bless the world. It is not a preference; it is an assignment. It is not a product of ‘natural’ evolution, subject to modification by choice; it is a spiritual empowerment to be embraced, then used as and only as, when and how and only when and how, directed. For us, neither gender nor sexuality are primarily, or even significantly, matters of biology; they are, instead, matter of Covenant. They are not a subject for debate by politicians nor study by scientists; they are instead just two of the brushes passionate lovers of God use to co-create beautiful works of artistry with Him.

As sons and daughters of the Covenant, consecrated to His Plan and Service, we must offer the world a higher vision, a higher purpose, a higher standard, a higher discipline, and a higher example in the area of human sexuality. We must be more wise about it, more responsible around it; and more calm, joyful, and comfortable with it. We must show the world that there is far more joy, more life, more hope, more delight, more pleasure, and more fulfillment when sexuality is done the Creator’s Covenant Way, for the Creator’s Grand Redemptive Purposes, rather than in the world’s perverse ‘whatever melts your butter’ ways, for totally selfish, animalistic purposes.

We as a counterculture movement in the earth really need to get this ‘sexuality’ thing right. We need to grow up, settle down, and model a ‘better way’ to the peoples and nations of the earth. In most cases, however, this isn’t happening. In most cases we have – and our children are – naively either overreacted as if we were afraid of something, or gone all prudish as if we were above all that sort of thing, or just let ‘nature take its course’. As a result, all too often sons and daughters of the Covenant have blindly followed the world’s disastrous approaches to and expressions of sexuality- with predictably disastrous results. We sigh, and wink, and say ‘hormones are powerful, you know!’ But did not the Creator of the Universe create hormones? Is not He, the Creator, far more

powerful than they, the creation? Isn't it about time we tapped in to the greater power source – which is available to us all 24/7/365 just by getting into the Holy One's Presence, and by studying, meditating on, and walking in His beautiful, wise, and empowering Words? Isn't it about time we let the Holy One instruct us how to offer far more enjoyable, safe, and successful potential mate discovery and interaction options than any other culture of the world employs? Isn't it about time we who know the Holy One, and spend time in His Presence, started offering and modeling artistically superior, and more Covenantally responsible, options of:

1. entertainment;
2. education;
3. art;
4. literature;
5. song;
6. sculpture;
7. clothing design;
8. socialization;
9. potential mate-search;
10. courtship;
11. betrothal;
12. marriage;
13. child-rearing; and
14. generation nurturing?

Isn't it time we took the lead in all of these areas, instead of merely complaining about, condemning, and then surrendering to and reluctantly walking in the footsteps of the ungodly cultures around us? Isn't it time we started believing – and acting like - we have good news, and a better way, for the world – instead of judgment, condemnation, and secret collusion?

I think it is indeed time. And I suspect, Dear Reader, that if you are still reading this study, you think it is time as well.

Every Journey Begins With Just One Small Step

The *Rabbi's son* studies were actually conceived of, written, and first used as homeschool lessons for the Rabbi's son's children. Their initial use was in homes, by real-life families. Gradually the news of their availability and unique approach to Torah and life spread to home-based study groups and Torah-appreciative fellowships. Because of how they started, however, one of the main objectives of these studies will always be to provide a curriculum for ordinary fathers and mothers who love the Holy One to use to assist them in doing, and training the members of their household to do, what the Betrothal Covenant requires, namely

to:

*. . . Teach [the Torah's instructions for living] faithfully to your children;
Speak of them as you sit in your houses and as you walk along the way;
when you lie down and when you rise up.*

[Deuteronomy 6:7]

Some feel that whatever Deuteronomy 6:7 may say, the topics addressed in Leviticus 15 – topics directly related to the human reproductive processes - are too graphic and explicit to constitute proper topics for them to discuss with young children. Perhaps they are – especially for the very young or immature child. Every parent is entitled to his or her own opinion on that matter, especially as it relates to his or her children. Once upon a time, however, most families either raised or lived around animals. If you have ever been around animals, well . . . let's just say they are not bashful. They breed very openly – no matter who - of what age – happens to be around. If you put a stallion, a bull, a ram, a billy or a male dog, in a field or pen with a mare, a cow, a ewe, a nanny, or a female dog at the right time, they are going to put on a show of which a child cannot help but take notice. Any child over two is going to immediately start asking questions and drawing conclusions. Putting your parental hands over the child's eyes cannot make them unsee that kind of thing. In modern suburbia there may or may not be as many animals mating publicly in your front yard, but there will be, in just about every house, electronics store, and restaurant, televisions, computer monitors and smartphone screens broadcasting images of human beings engaged in the same kind of behaviors in which domesticated animals have engaged in during mating season for centuries. In the twenty-first century the purveyors of media are not big on promoting innocence; they have learned the axiom that 'sexuality sells' – and they are not one bit shy at all about utilizing that marketing technique.

I personally believe that the reluctance of parents to have healthy, age-appropriate discussions about sexuality with children, at least when the children have reached an age where they have social interaction with other children, is less about the children's benefit and more about the parent's comfort and convenience. I find it interesting that parents think nothing of allowing their babies to crawl and their toddlers to play in a room where the television - or computer/smart phone screens - are on, constantly broadcasting the entertainment media's sexually suggestive messages. We shrug off the fact that our young ones see sexual messages in ads on billboards as we drive down the road, and on the covers of the magazines on the counter near the checkout stand at the grocery store – not to mention in the previews shown on the 'big screen' if we dare take our little ones to see a movie at the local cinema. We even have come to accept as commonplace explicit news reports about politicians and/or priests who engage in sexually perverse conduct. Yet, for some reason, we cringe at the thought of talking about sex *from the*

Creator's perspective and from an *Avrahamic covenant-fulfilling viewpoint* in front of our children. Do we really think it will injure – rather than help - our children to let them see, read, study and discuss with us what the Holy One has to say in *Sefer Vayikra* about human sexuality? While I acknowledge having mixed feelings about the matter, and agree that this issue is one each parent has to decide, I personally believe that, in most cases, the time has come to “get real” with our children early, however uncomfortable it may seem at first. Each parent should of course choose the age at which these subjects are brought up for discussion, and how far the discussion goes. But in making this choice we should keep in mind that ‘other information’ is out there to differing degrees, depending upon each family’s lifestyle and internet, television, and other media access. Do we not want our children to grow up knowing more about God’s perspective on sexuality than the sick, distorted perspective our society portrays in its tv shows and commercials, internet postings, billboards, magazines, social media, and daily news reports?

As we have discussed earlier, the Hebrew people have traditionally begun the education of children with the book of Leviticus. From age 3 - or at most age 5 - Hebrew children learned the very things you and I are reading in today’s aliyah – including the fact that the Holy One has instructed us to fulfill our sexuality solely in the context of a lifelong exclusive union, and how and when to engage in sexuality and/or refrain from sexuality, within that context. Our forefathers and sages knew, you see, that our Bridegroom-King wants our covenant walk together through this world to consist of far, far more than a *God-in-a-box belief, sacrament, and synagogue system*. He wants to make our lives beautiful – inside and out. He wants to make us vessels of shalom, hope, and joy. He wants us to model wisdom, fruitfulness, and harmony in all contexts. He wants to make our words wise, our movements meaningful, and our touch healing. He wants to make our faces shine – with the light of His Countenance – not just when we are doing ‘religious stuff’, but when we are engaging in life – including the hormonal, the intimate, and the reproductive aspects of it. He wants to teach us how to make – and keep – every aspect of – and every activity in which we participate within - our tents and tabernacles lovely. He wants to make us oaks of righteousness. He wants to *awaken us to* and then *empower us for* a passionate, purposeful, joyful, fruitful, selfless, unoffendable, holy, and wholly inspiring lifestyle. *Selah!*

The Holy One knows, however, that in order to get us where He wants us to go, His Extreme Bridal Makeover protocols are going to have to get intense. He wants to talk about what His call to *become holy as He is holy* means in relation to some of the most private issues of human life. Alas, we still have a long way to go. He is therefore about to initiate a very frank discussion with us – a discussion that at

first might make us a bit uncomfortable. He is not willing to let us sweep any of the real issues we need to face while on this planet under the rug. He will not relent until we are fully engaged and united with Him and His Ways on a full 24/7/365 basis. He knows they are going to have to be embarrassingly practical. He is, however, not one bit nervous. Nor is He apologetic. He knows that the protocols He is about to lay out for us are exactly what we need, individually and as a nation, if we are going to fulfill our assigned purpose on earth. Since for Him failure is not an option, well ... ready or not, here His most intense protocols of Kedusha come! I can almost hear Him saying: “I can make you beautiful and holy as I am beautiful as holy - **do you trust Me?**” Well ... do we? *Are we mature enough to handle this level of intimacy?* Take a deep breath, dear one. Put your hand in His. Look into His Eyes, and say with as much conviction as you can muster “Okay - *let’s do this!*”

The Power to Generate New Life – The Torah of Shikavat-zera

The Holy One created different aspects of Creation to reproduce in different ways. Grasses reproduce in a certain way. Trees reproduce in another. Different kinds of animals reproduce in a multitude of different ways. But all human beings that the Holy One created – of whatever race or tongue – reproduce the exact same way. The Holy One designed all human reproduction to be effectuated by something that in Hebrew is called *shikavat-zera*. In some English Bibles this phrase is translated ‘seed of copulation’. Literally however it means ‘dormant [i.e. latent, full of potential]— seed’.

The Hebrew word *zera*⁵ is first used in Genesis 1:11 to describe what grasses, herbs, and trees produce in order to reproduce themselves. In English we call this ‘seed’. The Hebrew word *shikavat*⁶ is first used in Exodus 16:13 to describe what the dew does on the ground in the morning. It falls on it, spreads over it, seeps into it, and provides life regenerating water to it. The word is derived from the verb root *shakab*⁷, meaning to lay down, or make oneself prone – i.e. to rest, to sleep, or to copulate.

What does *shikavat-zera* have to do with Torah? The Holy One says:

V'ish ki-tetze mimeinu shich'vat-zara
And when a man sends forth a flow of shichavat-zara
V'rachatz b'mayim et-kol-besaro
then he is then to immerse his entire body in a mikvah
v'tamei ad-ha-arev

⁵ Zera is *zayin, resh, ayin*. Strong’s Hebrew word #2233, it is pronounced **zeh'-rah**.

⁶ Shikavat is *shin, kaf, veit, tav*. Strong’s Hebrew word #7902, it is pronounced **shee-kaw-baw'**.

⁷ Shakab is *shin, kaf, beit*. Strong’s Hebrew word #7901, it is pronounced **shaw-kawb'**.

and he will be *tamei* until evening.

V'chol-beged v'chol-or asher-yihyeh alav shichvat-zara

If any cloth or leather gets any shichvat-zara on it,

V'chubas b'mayim v'tamei ad-ha-arev

it is then to be immersed in a mikvah and [it] will remain tamei until evening.

[Leviticus 15:16-17]

Each time a male discharges *shikavat-zera* there is a new hope that the Holy One's prophetic pronouncement ***Be fruitful, and multiply!*** will be fulfilled and a new human being in the image of the Holy One – a new source of *light for the nations* - - will be formed. It is this introduction of human reproductive fluid – *shikavat-zera* - into the world about which today's Torah speaks to us. Though *shikavat-zera* contains the essence of man – and is powerfully creative – it takes more than just its release to reproduce life. *Shikavat-zera* is only one half of the puzzle. If it issues forth from the man in *any context but one* it will bear no fruit. What is worse, the life-reproducing cells of *shikavat-zera* start to die almost immediately upon leaving the man's body, putting the life force which the Holy One programmed into that *shikavat-zera* in danger of being forever snuffed out. The realms of life and death therefore meet each time *shikavat-zera* is released. The portal between the two realms opens. Either life will be the result – or death. A danger zone has been encountered - and the Serpent lies in wait for you at the crossroads. That is why Torah tells us that everything *touched by shikavat-zera* immediately becomes *tamei*.

Shaul told his friends at Thessalonica:

this is the will of God, your sanctification [i.e. your being made holy as He is holy]

that you should abstain from fornication;

that each of you should know how

to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor

not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God.

[I Thessalonians 2:3-5]

With his young charge Timothy, Shaul got even more specific, instructing him:

... be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use,

and prepared unto every good work.

Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faithfulness to covenant,

and shalom, with them that call on the Holy One out of a pure heart.

[II Timothy 2:21[b]-22]

Let's commit to do sexuality the Holy One's way – or not at all. There is nothing *tov* [i.e. good, delightful, beautiful, productive of good, delight, and beauty] about a man exercising the gift of sexuality outside the realm of the Holy One's holy and beautiful plan. Males of the human species need to understand, therefore, that sexual activity – for kingdom purposes or for selfish purposes – always starts with

[a] the operation of the *mind* and [b] the wandering of the *eyes*. Men respond to visual stimuli. Once their eyes have seen something or someone that activates the baser instincts, men have choices to make. They can choose to let their minds seize upon what their eyes have seen, and let fleshly urges engage, and then let their thoughts wander to places they should not go and situations that can only lead to *tumah*. OR they can resist the temptation. Yes, they can. Yes, YOU can. You just have to discipline yourself to say ‘no’ to the wandering of both the eye and the mind. Letting our eyes wander into toxic, impure, animalistic ways will always yield *tumah* in one form or another. Toxic, impure thoughts about sexuality, if not displaced immediately with pure, holy, Kingdom, covenant-consistent thoughts, always fuel toxic, impure desires. Toxic, impure desires fuel toxic, impure advances. Toxic, impure advances often lead to toxic, impure contact. And once the ball starts rolling downhill, the Holy One, His Great Redemptive Plan, and the glorious destiny He has planned for the people engaged in the toxic, impure contact, get forgotten. At that point the serpent takes over the wheel, and drives the process toward the edge of the cliff at breakneck speed, chuckling gleefully all the way. Toxic, impure discharges are often the *least harmful* of the tragic results that can flow from the runaway train of sexuality gone berserk. And what does a toxic discharge signify? It signifies a train wreck. It testifies that an organ – and a precious gift – that was designed to bring life into a covenant home, in proper season, in order to fulfill the ‘seed’ promise of the Avrahamic covenant, has been allowed instead to become a vessel for spreading the *tamei* realm of fragmentation, soul-ties, conflict, separation, perversion, and destruction into every relationship and interaction the Holy One planned for redemption and the release of His glory. Even yet, the Holy One is merciful. Even yet His thoughts and instructions are only about the man’s redemption and restoration. He does not judge the man for his depravity of thought or behavior. He sets forth instead a protocol for healing, for cleansing, and for a restoration of wholeness.

Have you departed from the Holy One’s glorious plan for your sexuality? If so, please take that departure seriously. But you do not have an accuser in the Holy One. The issue to the Holy One - and to the Redeemed Community - is not how badly you have behaved, or how much damage you have done. The issue to the Holy One and the Redeemed Community is what you will do from this point forward. Will you let the Holy One train you to control your thoughts – and set a guard over your eyes? Will you let the Holy One train you to keep your contacts with other people pure – thinking of others as daughters or sons of the Most High, with destinies far too great to be polluted by animalistic sexual activities with you or anyone else? Will you let Him train you to look upon and think of all males of the species as brothers and all females of the species as little sisters? Will you, in the power and purity of the Ruach HaQodesh, start to take responsibility not only for

your own purity and wholeness, but for the purity and wholeness of everyone with whom you come in contact? If you will co-labor with the Holy One in this regard, He can make you *tahor* – no matter what you have done before. Be real, dear one - and become truly free!

***Whatever You Do, Whether in Word or in Deed,
Do it in the Character and Attributes of
and for the Sake of the Lord Y'shua,
Expressing Thanksgiving to God the Father In the Course Of It.***

[Colossians 3:17]

The verse quoted above – Colossians 3:17 – applies to all aspects of life, including expressions and activities of sexuality. If the Holy One is to be honored, if His Covenant advanced, and if His Kingdom expanded, there is to be no seduction. There is to be no fornication. There is to be no exploitation of ours or another human being's organs or capacity for sexuality for a personal agenda of either pleasure or power. There are to be no 'one-night stands'. There is not even to be any self-indulgent exploration. To the Holy One, kicking the sexual desire train into gear is not a game in which His People can participate. He offers them something much better, much more fulfilling, more delightful – and more healthy. He wants us to know – and let the world know – that sexuality is not child's play. It has consequences. It sends forth destructive shock waves. It establishes baselines and expectations. It always revs up the appetite for something more, something darker, something more novel, something more indulgent, and something more dangerous. It comes with strong emotions. It generates spiritual soul ties. It is not adult entertainment. Outside of a lifetime commitment made beforehand and formalized in such a way that breaking it has serious consequences, there is to be no testing of what feels good or pleases one's self or one's mate and what doesn't. If the Holy One is truly to be honored, and His Covenant and His Plan of Redemption for the world is to be truly respected, outside the context of an established marriage the people of the Holy One are to have no involvement in anything that even smacks of sexuality. We are not to do anything – or watch anything, or listen to or read or wear or take off anything – that will kick-start either our own fleshly curiosity about or appetite for sexual expression or that of any other human being. For us to do so would be to defraud at multiple levels. First, it would defraud the Holy One, who gave us the precious gift of sexuality for Covenant and Kingdom purposes, not satisfaction of curiosity or pursuit of a personal pleasure agenda. Secondly, to do so would defraud ourselves – *i.e.* our true identity as sons and/or daughters of the Kingdom. Once the 'cat' of sexuality is out of the bag, it can never be put back in. We were designed for one kind of sexual expression – the holy, Covenant-advancing, God-honoring kind. To the Holy One, to our mate or future mate, and to the child[ren]

we are supposed to bring into the world, we are to devote 100% of our sexuality - as we devote to them 100% of every other aspect of our lives.

There is absolutely no shame or “dirtiness” in the union of a husband and a wife [Genesis 2:25; see also Hebrews 13:4]. But there is indeed shame – and great potential harm - in any other form or context of sexual expression.

L’Chayim – To Life!

The release of *shikavat-zara* is never to be taken lightly. Every time it happens, the man’s life force – the most precious gift he has received from the Holy One - has been released. What will – or could have – come of it? This should cause the man – and the woman he was with – to reconsider why they are alive. Why does the Holy One continue to give them breath and strength? Why does He still believe they can co-labor with Him in the Grand Redemptive Plan for mankind and Creation? Why does he allow the honor of carrying forth their bloodline and DNA into another generation? How and in what context and circumstances does He envision them doing so? How can they do so most effectively, efficiently, and honorably?

What results each time a man expels *shikavat-zera* will be one of two things. It will either be joyful fulfillment of the Holy One’s Covenantal instruction to ‘multiply, or it will be an irrelevant and selfish waste of both the precious fluid and the man’s seed of life. Each time a release of *shikavat-zara* occurs, therefore, it is important for the participants to take some time away from normal activities and social interactions. This is not a time for ‘business as usual’. It is a time to pray, to meditate, and to seek clarity and focus regarding where life is supposed to go from here. It requires some time – until the next sundown. It requires some water, hopefully both physical and spiritual. And it requires some recommitment to the Holy One, His Covenant, His Ways, and His Wonderful Plan.

Questions For Today’s Study

1. 1. In verses 16-18 of the 15th chapter of Leviticus the Holy One discusses the flow of “*shikavat-zera*” [literally, “resting seed”, but referring to seminal fluid] as something that makes a man enter a period of *tamei*.

[A] What does Torah say the man from whom seminal fluid flows should do to become *tahor*?

[B] What is the woman involved to do to become *tahor*?

[C] 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. List the elements of the process the Holy One has instructed us to follow to return to a *tahor* state each time after releasing *shik'vat-zara*.

3. In today's haftarah the prophet Malachi looks forward to, and describes, the 'day of YHVH'. Here is what he says:

*For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven,
and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble.
And the day which is coming shall burn them up,"*
Says the Holy One of hosts, *"That will leave them neither root nor branch.
But to you who fear My name
the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His wings;
And you will go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves.
You will trample the wicked; for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet
on the day that I do this,"* says the Holy One of hosts
[Malachi 4:1-3]

[A] The Hebrew word translated as 'oven' in verse 1 is the Hebrew noun *tannur* - *tav, nun, cholem vav, resh*; Strong's Hebrew word #5216. It is derived from the familiar Hebrew word for lamp [i.e. *ner*]. *Tannur* is first used in Genesis 15:3. Do you see any correlation between the *tannur* of Genesis 15:3 and the *tannur* visualized by Malachi?

[B] The Hebrew word translated as 'wings' in verse 2 is the Hebrew noun *kanfot* – *kaf, nun, feh, cholem vav, tav*. It is derived from the verb *kanaf*, meaning *to cover – especially to cover in order to conceal or hide*. What exactly are the 'wings' that Malachi is referring to in this verse?

[C] According to verse 4, who will be empowered in the Day of the Holy One – and what will they be assigned to do?

4. In today's reading from the B'rit Chadasha Shaul explains the continuing dominion of the realm of uncleanness over mankind. In speaking of fallen man, Shaul says:

*Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts,
to dishonour their own bodies between themselves,
Who changed the truth of God into a lie,
and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator,
who is blessed for ever. Amen*
[Romans1:24-25]

[A] What does Shaul say the Holy One gave fallen men up to?

[B] What kinds of uncleanness [i.e. *tumah*] do the hearts of men lust for?

[C] What does Shaul say that immersing in *tumah* results in men doing to their bodies?

[C] What are those who choose to immerse themselves in *tumah* doing to the truth of God? Who are they worshipping?

*May you be made **tahor** from every spot and wrinkle,*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Genesis 38:8-10

And Yehudah said to Onan,

“Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother.

But Onan knew that the heir would not be his; and it came to pass,

when he went in to his brother's wife,

that he emitted [his shik'vah-zara] on the ground,

lest he should give an heir to his brother.

And the thing which he did displeased the Holy One;

therefore death came to him also.