

Shiur L'Yom Chamishi¹

[Thursday's Study]

READINGS: ***Torah Kedoshim:*** Leviticus 20:1-8
 Haftarah: Ezekiel 20:27-44
 B'rit Chadasha: I Peter 1:13-14

Sh'mar all my decrees and all my instructions for living, and asah them.

[Leviticus 20:8]

Today's Meditation is Psalm 119:173-174;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is Petition # 5, *Rofei* - the Petition for Healing

V'el-B'nei Yisra'el tomar – And you are to tell B'nei Yisrael ... ***Ish ish miB'nei Yisra'el umin-ha-ger hagar b'Yisra'el asher yiten mizar'o la-Molech*** – a man, if a man, either of B'nei Yisrael or a foreigner sojourning in/with Yisrael gives any of his children to Molech ... ***mot yumat*** - death, surely death will ensue! Leviticus 20:2a.

The Holy One has been showing us what Kingdom-of-Heaven-Scented love consists of and how it brings health and life in real-time situations involving real people. Now it is time for Him to show us what life looks like and consists of on the 'other side' – wherever there is a dearth, draught, or failure-to-launch of Kingdom-Scented Love. He is about to reveal to us, in stark detail, what areas of darkness our Divine love language counterculture will be up against. If we are going to become his *goy kadosh* – i.e. *holy nation/people group* – and His kingdom of priests as well as His *am segulah*, we need to know what the people around us are facing, how they are trying to cope, and how toxic it has made them. Gird up your loins, Beloved – the Holy One is about to take us for a short walk on the dark side. Open your eyes wide – and open your heart in the deepest way.

We are, after all, servants of a Glorious King. We are called and empowered to serve as faithful witnesses of a Grand Redemption. We are emissaries of a Great Kingdom. We are carriers of really, really Good News. But the world around us is a mess. We don't need to be blinded by any Pollyanna's Rose-Colored glasses. Our assignment – to model our Great King's ways to the world - is going to be challenging. We are going to have to learn to gird up our loins, put on our armor, and wade off into some pretty intimidating war zones. We are going to come face to face with some well-entrenched monsters. We need to have our heads on straight – and our hearts fixed on the goal. We need to have our eyes wide open. This is not a job for either the weak of stomach or the faint of heart. We need to understand that our calling is not to sit in coffee shops debating theological

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principles. We have not been incorporated into the Avrahamic covenant, given the precious gifts of life and inspired speech, and assigned separate spheres of influence for that kind of low-to-no impact nonsense. We are here to radically change the world. We are not here to manipulate people into praying a prayer, agree with a doctrinal statement, memorize and recite on cue a creed, rally around a flag or religious symbol, or join and fund an institution of religion; we are here to awaken the dead, give triage to the wounded, rescue those who are trapped by enemy fire, lead the blind, the lame, the weak and the fearful through the foul-smelling smoke of the spiritual battlefield, amaze the cynic, excite the bored, inspire the wounded, and redeem those who have been held captive so long they don't know any other kind of life.

We are not here at such a time as this to play religious games. The stakes – for ourselves and the world – are far too high. Our calling is therefore extremely *real*, intensely *practical* - and *oft-times very controversial*. We are called to have a *redemptive, restorative, and transformational effect* on the people and places to which the Bridegroom-King sends us. We are not a called to be 'believers' – we are real-time *shalom asah-ers, freedom bringers, righteousness models, wisdom counselors, life coaches, and joy spreaders*. We are not called to practice a religion; we are called to glorify a King and co-labor with Him to expand His Kingdom. We are called to change the atmosphere everywhere we go - in real ways, in real-life situations, in real time. And rarely – indeed, very, very rarely, and in carefully limited contexts, pursuant to the wisest of Heavenly protocols – that means we are going to be called upon to do that which is best for the world even though it is not enjoyable either for us or the individuals directly involved. This does not by any means define our mission – but it does compose one component part of it. Whatever our Bridegroom-King is doing in a given situation, that is what we are to be doing as well. We even have a part to play in His discipline.

The Holy One chooses to start this discussion with the dark perversion, common in the world around us, of *sacrificing children to Molech*. He will wind up covering many kinds and faces of perversion that we will have to face. But this one is His chosen 'icebreaker' to the understanding that just because everyone around us is engaging in and approving a perverse activity does not mean it is wholesome, healthy, wise or to be accepted by us as either '*normal*' or '*just pagans being pagans*'. Within the boundaries of the holy territory of Eretz Yisrael we have a responsibility – as the Holy One's *adat* [witness thron] – to confront such perversion, and its practitioners, head on. For the first time in the *sefer* of *Vayikra* our Bridegroom-King is about to break the news that when we as a Redeemed Nation live both [a] in the land of Promise and [b] in the abiding Manifest Presence

of the Holy One, part of our co-laboring with our Bridegroom-King is from time-to-time going to involve participating in His disciplinary processes in regard to certain people within our sphere of influence. There are levels and phases to His discipline. We need to know them.

But ... Molech?

Culture shock! The Holy One takes us from the ecstasy of the love protocols of the Kingdom of Heaven to the agonizing state of people whose lives are so sick that they offer up their children to a make-believe fire god². Talk about a quick transition from the Beauty Realm to the ‘Real World’! That, of the course, is the point. The stunning literary juxtaposition the Holy One employs is 100% intentional. The Holy One has just ‘wowed’ us by downloading the ‘love’ chapter’ of Torah – describing in delicious detail the world-changing, bondage-breaking lifestyle He has called us to live and model. Now He wants us to be able to contrast that blessed lifestyle – a lifestyle of Kingdom love and Covenant mercy - with the most perverse messes the rest of the nations of the world have to deal with. We are called to provide a *counterculture* option. We are to offer hope and shalom. We are to call people out of the darkness into His Glorious Light. But the challenge is real. The darkness is real – and perverse. He wants us to understand why not only calling and leading people out of that darkness – sometimes at risk of our own lives - is so very, very necessary. He wants us to understand exactly how depraved and dangerous the predominant cultures of this age are. He wants us to know the horrible things those cultures do to people’s minds, hearts, and families – not to mention their *souls*. Our King intends to put our boots on the ground in the midst of some very, very real – and sometimes extremely dark and perverse – situations. We are called to ‘do no harm’; but we need to understand that there are other people in the world that are doing more harm than we can even imagine. We have to be able to know what to do when souls are at risk. Sometimes what He wants us to do will not look like ‘love protocols’ to the people on the receiving end of our actions. But we are not here to please them. Our job is to co-labor with the Holy One as He wreaks redemption. We just have to make sure that our motivating factor is always *Kingdom-Scented love* for our fellow man, that our agenda is always healing and restoration, that the process we follow are always consistent with the Torah, and that our implementation of His redemptive strategies is always

² During Solomon’s reign an idolatrous image of the Ammoni national god Molech was erected just outside Jerusalem. The image was supposedly made of hollowed out brass, in the inner portion of a cult of pagan priests kept a hot fire burning at all times. The image supposedly had the face of a calf and had arms/hands that were locked in a reaching out position. The blasphemous image was supposedly used by some backslidden Hebrews as well as some foreigners for human sacrifice. In order to gain some hoped for favor or advantage, the parent would bring a baby, usually a firstborn son and give it to one of the pagan priests. The priest who received the infant would then place it into the arms/hands of the image, whereupon the infant would ultimately perish from the heat and flames.

effectuated in a calm, trustworthy way that affords as many opportunities of *teshuvah* as possible.

The Holy One thinks that how we nurture, raise, train, and protect children are really, really important matters. He sees the level of destructive toxicity introduced into the world by a parent giving over his or her child to Molech as so high that He it belongs in the realm of absolutely unacceptable.

But wait. Exactly who – or what - is *Molech* really? And why, for Heaven’s sake, would any father or mother ever give Molech - or any one or any thing else beside the Holy One for that matter - his seed/offspring? It does not compute. It is absolute *madness*. And yet, believe it or not, it is happening every day.

The verb root of the Hebrew noun our English Bibles transliterate as ‘*Molech*’ in this passage is *malach* – *mem, lamed, kaf sofit*. It means *to assume a throne and reign over people – i.e. to set priorities and standards for other people, and to issue and enforce as a king*. It means *to take up a place of honor and to claim the ultimate form of human rights and privileges and decision-making power affecting human lives within allotted territories*. As Yul Brynner’s ‘King of Siam’ character in the musical ‘*The King and I*’ put it, *to malak* means to take upon oneself the power to say to other people ‘*When I say sit, you shall sit. When I see kneel, you shall kneel, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera*’.

Now perhaps you can begin to see the scope of the problem that the Holy One is addressing. If instead of doing with our ‘seed’/offspring what the Holy One has instructed us, we choose to ‘give over’ [Hebrew *natan*, meaning to willingly surrender to another’s influence and authority] our children to any ‘king’ figure – or indeed to any concept, culture, philosophy, organization, or ideology – we have abandoned the Holy One and the most essential element of the Covenant. For us and our household, we have stepped off onto a slippery slope. It always starts with what seem to our human eyes to be little things. We ‘give over’ our children over to the entertainment industry – i.e. to the Molech agent/wanna-be kings that reigns on Madison Avenue and the Molech agent/wanna-be kings that reign in Hollywood. We let these Molechim order our children to sit when they say sit, kneel when they say kneel, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. Then we ‘give over’ our children to institutions of cultural indoctrination – i.e. the day-care centers, schools, sports teams, and religious institutions that we view as socially acceptable to our peer group. We thereby turn them over to the Molech wanna-be’s that reign in the governmental capitals and institutional boardrooms in question. Then all too soon we ‘give over’ our children to a series of peer groups consisting of immature, flesh-obsessed, narcissistic Molech agent wanna-be’s who cannot wait to influence and manipulate

them for their own selfish purposes. Eventually, after all the above, we give our children over to what by now has become the ultimate Molech agent wanna-be – themselves.

This is the continuum. Once a parent steps off the Bridegroom-King’s pathway to life, health and peace, it is all a matter of degree. There is, however, a point of no return. And that comes, in the Holy One’s eyes, only when a parent ‘gives over’ his offspring to the ultimate Molech, i.e. the bloodthirsty, pound-of-flesh demanding fire god of the Ammoni. This is the same unclean spirit called *Chemosh* by the Moavi, called Ba’al by the Kena’ani, called Zeus by the Greeks, called Jupiter by the Romans, and called Ha-Satan or Lucifer by the Bible.

The Holy One has long-term vision and perspective. He sees the events of our lives in *fluid motion*, not as a random collection of *still images*. He sees the ultimate end from every simple beginning. He does not simply see a seed – He sees a sprout coming forth from that seed, sees a stem producing leaves coming forth from that sprout, sees branches producing fruit coming forth from that stem, and sees ever expanding reproduction until the seed with which the whole process started has morphed into forest – whether for the healing of the nations or for their further poisoning.

***The Root of the Problem is Not A God Named Molech –
It is A Heart Who Has Known the Holy One and His Wonderful Ways
Choosing Instead the Pathway of Zannah [i.e. Harlotry/Adulteration]***

The Holy One concludes His warnings about anyone who would give over his offspring to Molech by saying: ***I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry [Hebrew zannah] with Molech.*** Leviticus 20:1-5. The essence of harlotry – in Hebrew, *zannah* – is the use of another human being for totally selfish purposes. When Shechem took advantage of Ya’akov’s daughter Dinah, and ‘had his way’ with her, Ya’akov’s sons said: ***ha-chezonah ya'aseh et-achoteinu*** – i.e. “Should he treat our sister like a harlot?” Human beings are precious to the Holy One. Each is unique, and each is full of immense potential – potential that needs to be inspired, nurtured, cultivated and lovingly stewarded to maturity. The recognition, awakening, and stewarding of precious human potential is a large part of the calling of the Redeemed Community. Human beings are therefore never to be used selfishly by us, as if they were here for us. Unlike the rest of the nations, we are not to ever let ourselves view any person as an object. People are not here for our enjoyment or to serve us. Neither the minds, wills, hearts, or body parts of any other human being are ever to be considered by us as a ‘means to an end’ – whether that end be pleasure, power, conquest, self-satisfaction, or financial gain.

Similarly, we are never to surrender ourselves to anyone other than our

Bridegroom-King. We are not to yield our minds, our hearts, our bodies, or any of our members to anyone or anything else. The ultimate form of such an adulterous surrender would be to serve or worship Molech. But every breach of covenant that we see described in Torah in ultimate form as a *mot yamut* level offense always starts in seed form. It starts in our mind. The ‘law of our mind’ takes over, and it begins to attach itself like an embryo in our will/heart. We embrace it. We nurture it. Like a cancer it grows inside us, and soon we find ourselves talking about it – jokingly at first. But if it is not stopped, it will eventually find its way into our conduct. That is why Yeshua taught that murder is present in seed form in all angry reactions, all name-calling, and all accusations, and that adultery is present in seed form in every leering glance. See **Matthew 5:21-30**; see also **James 1:14-15**.

What does the sin of worshipping of/serving foreign gods like Molech look like in ‘seed form’? What is its ‘initial’ phase? In Exodus 34, while Moshe was hidden away in the cleft of the rock, watching all the goodness of the Holy One pass by, the Holy One said:

You are to worship no other god, for the Holy One, Whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God; lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and one of them invites you and you eat of his sacrifice. and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods. You are to make no molded gods for yourselves.

[Exodus 34:14-17]

The Holy One intends for us to seek guidance and directions, knowledge and insight into the future, and discernment of spirits *only from Him*. He intends for us to do this through prayer, through reading, studying, and meditating upon, and walking out the instructions of Torah as well as the rest of Holy Writ in the footsteps of Messiah. He makes Himself available to us 24/7/365. His mercies are new every morning. He literally provides us everything we need for life and godliness. **II Peter 1:3³**. As the Psalmist said: *How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings. They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures. For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.* Psalm 36:7-9.

Our natural response to His goodness and His love for us should be to delight in Him – and cling to Him – and turn away from the voice of a stranger. We need to wake up to some spiritual realities in this regard. We need to realize that seeking to satisfy our curiosity or appetite for either power or knowledge from any source

³ **II Peter 1:3** says: *His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue*

other than intimate communion with our Bridegroom-King is totally incompatible with our new Redeemed identities. How can we love the Holy One our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength if we are seeking pleasure, occult knowledge or power, and strategies for increasing influence, power, romance and/or wealth from His enemies? How can we even think we love our neighbor if we are using the dark arts to control and manipulate them into doing what we want them to do? We have to know that we simply cannot be in covenant with the Holy One and conspire/collaborate with His enemies at the same time. We have to choose which side we are on. And lest we have any tinge of temptation to choose consorting with His enemies as our path, the Holy One warns us from the outset that such a choice will not turn out well for us or anyone concerned. Hence He says:

V'ha-nefesh asher tifneh el-ha-ovot

And the soul who turns to mediums and familiar spirits,

v'el-ha-yid'onim liznot achareihem

to prostitute himself with them

v'natati et-panai b'nefesh hahi

I will set My face against that soul

v'hichrati oto mikerev amo

and I will cut him off from his people.

[Leviticus 20:6]

The Holy One wants us to know that He regards the pollution of the land of Israel with the ‘dark arts’ as a very serious threat to His Grand Redemptive Plan. We are supposed to be representing Him to the world; we are not supposed to be seeking, believing, or spreading propaganda put out by His enemies. He has too much invested in us as a kingdom of *kohanim* and a *goy kadosh* to just sit back and let that kind of destructive sedition happen. He promises to get personally involved for the protection of the Land, the People, and the Mission. If a man or woman prostitutes his/her soul – *i.e.* his/her mind, his/her will, and his/her emotions – to either wizards or familiar spirits, He will intervene. He will kick into operation however many phases of Divine discipline it takes to root out the poison.

He has not put us on earth to hold religious meetings and play religious games. He wants us to know that the stakes – for ourselves and the world – are far too high for such folly. We are called to have a *redemptive, restorative, and transformational effect* on the people and places to which the Bridegroom-King sends us. We are not called to be ‘believers’ – we are real-time *shalom asah-ers, freedom bringers, righteousness models, wisdom counselors, life coaches, and joy spreaders*. We are not called to practice a religion; we are called to glorify a King and co-labor with Him to expand His Kingdom. Rarely – indeed, *very, very rarely* – and then only in

carefully limited contexts, and pursuant to the wisest of Heavenly protocols, we may be called upon to do that which is best for the world even though it is not enjoyable either for us or the individuals directly involved. *Those who bless you I will bless*, the Holy One told Avraham; but He also told Him: *'Those who curse you I will curse.'* The judicial actions of judgment and vengeance belong solely to the Holy One; but in Eretz Yisrael, we as a community, acting through the Sanhedrin, are from time-to-time charged with the responsibility to execute and enforce our King's Decrees. This is not to be done in anger; nor by individual vigilantes or bloodthirsty mobs. It is to be done through a legal system replete with checks, balances, and due process protocols. But it is to be done – as He directs. This level of participation in Divine Discipline does not by any means define our Covenant mission – but it does, from time to time, as He directs, compose a relatively small part of it.

Why Divine Discipline? Because That Is That an Essential Element of both Good Ecosystem Management and Kingdom-Style Love?

The Holy One created mankind. He knew exactly what He was getting into when He gave Adam and Chava – and you and me - free will. He was not shocked when the first humans chose the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life over the more excellent way that He offered. He is never surprised, taken aback, or left speechless when we do the same thing. He never becomes outraged. He never sulks. He has no panic button. He has no backspace key. He never lashes out in anger. He is never vindictive. He is not the least bit depressed. He has absolutely zero appetite for human suffering. He gets no thrill at all out of the thought of spilling human blood. He cares for all men deeply. Too deeply to let us destroy ourselves – or each other – and do nothing about it.

Our Bridegroom-King is constantly singing sweet songs of deliverance over each of His children as well as Creation as a whole. A wise and loving Father, He knows a thing or two about how to discipline sons and daughters. He knows what level of discipline each and every one of His children requires. He knows exactly what quantity of compassion – and how much cattle prodding, arm twisting, and ear pulling – each one of us needs to enhance our responsiveness to His restorative touch. He knows what will get our attention. He knows what will pull us closer – and what will cause us to pull further away. Because of this, He remains 100% confident that the grand adventure that He has in mind for mankind in general, and for each of us in particular, is going to turn out just fine in the end – as long as we do not harden our heart. He knows how to work all things together for good for those who love Him, who are called according to His Purpose.

Of what, then, does the Heavenly Father's discipline consist? It has many phases,

stages, and layers, of course. In each case those phases, stages and layers are strategically designed for the unique case presented. But whatever its phase, stage, or layer, all Divine discipline always involves the Holy One applying the least amount of force necessary to the most sensitive areas in order to accomplish *prodigal retrieval* as effectively and efficiently as possible. Its objectives are always *awakening, conviction, redemption, return, and restoration.*

Divine Discipline Protocol, Level I:

The Setting of His Face

Against Those Who Turn Their Path Away from the Covenant

Human beings are designed to live in the Light of our Creator's Shining Countenance. We are programmed to thrive in His Presence, under His watchful, approving eye – as He *blesses us and keeps us, makes His Face shine upon us, lifts His Countenance upon us, and gives us shalom.* As Ya'akov said: ***“I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”*** Genesis 32:30. And as David said: ***“When You said, “Seek My face”, My heart said to You, “Your face, O Holy One, I will seek”*** [Psalm 27:8] and ***“As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, and set me before Your face forever.”*** Psalm 41:12. See also Psalm 67:1: ***“God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us, Selah!”*** And consider also: ***Make Your face shine upon Your servant, and teach me Your statutes*** [Psalm 119:135] and ***“In the light of the King's face is life, and His favor is like a cloud of the latter rain.*** Proverbs 18:15. See also Daniel 9:3: ***“I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.”***

We flourish when and to the extent – and only when and to the extent – we remain *al-p'nei* [i.e. face to Face] with the Holy One. With the Holy One's Face comes His Favor, His Voice, His Words, and His Breath. Think about that for a moment. Now perhaps you can see why seeking His Face – and all that comes with it – is so important for us. So, any time we start taking steps away from His Presence, what we are really doing is depriving ourselves of the most valuable thing in the Universe – the Light of His Face. Out of love, the first phase of discipline that the Holy One invokes therefore is simply what He calls *setting His Face against us.* Since the pathway upon which we have embarked is leading away from His Presence, the further we go from Him and His pathway the dimmer the Light of His Countenance gets. The farther we go from His Presence and the Light of His Face, the less Divine illumination we enjoy, and the more darkness we experience. The Light of our Bridegroom-King is ever behind us, ever inviting our return, ever calling us back to His Presence and to the beautiful pathways of life, health, and *shalom* that He has established for us. We should respond and return. But if we do not, what comes next?

What is the effect of walking in increasing darkness? At first a person just experiences what skiers call ‘flat light’. That means a dim, hazy level of light that does not permit depth perception. You don’t see obstacles and dangerous drop-offs ahead until you are right on them. Unable to avoid these obstacles and pitfalls, you lose the sense of controlled movement. You slip. You stumble. You begin to lose confidence. Or at least you should. How you respond is up to you. The Light of our Bridegroom-King’s Face always illumines and clearly marks off the way back to His Presence. But it will never illumine the way forward into rebellion. It will never facilitate us in running away from our covenant identity, mission, and destiny.

As Sh’lomo declared on behalf of the Holy One: *I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble. The path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. But the way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.* Proverbs 4:11-12 and 18-19.

If you choose to continue further down the pathway leading away from the Bridegroom-King’s Presence, therefore, you find that the Light of the Bridegroom-King’s Face becomes even more faint. You experience a sense of overwhelm and confusion. You get angry. You blame God. You blame the people around you. You blame your environment. You blame your parents. You blame your lovers and friends. You even blame yourself. But through it all, in the midst of all your blaming, you continue doing the very things that got you in the mess in the first place. You keep repeating the same behaviors and hoping for different results. When it does not seem to be working, you resolve to try harder. But trying harder to do the wrong things does not ever help; indeed, it just makes things worse. You keep running into obstacles you did not see coming. You keep falling into the same traps. About the time you think you have regained your equilibrium and are about to make some progress you get blindsided again. This time you don’t just stumble – it knocks you off your feet. You hit hard. You gasp for breath. You bleed. You bruise. You ache. You scream. This is where the script calls for you to think about your father’s house, home, and bread, dear prodigal. But unfortunately, let’s say you choose another way.

If instead of going back to the Light of Father’s Face you decide to continue on the same bearing at which you departed the Garden path, you become like one of those about whom Yeshua spoke: *Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather light, because their deeds are evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.* John 3:19-20.

Once you begin seeking the darkness instead of running to the Light, you *quit giving thanks to the Holy One*. You *stop meditating on His Words of Life*. Your internal light therefore is reduced to an ash-covered ember, visible to no one except the Holy One. You stop acknowledging the Holy One as your One and only King. You begin to resent Him. You marginalize Him. You scoff at His Ways. You embrace the serpents' thoughts concerning Him – that He is only trying to keep you from knowing what you want to know, seeing what you want to see, feeling what you want to feel, doing what you want to do, and becoming what you want to be. You willingly start serving other gods. It starts with self-will, of course, but also proceeds quickly to expand to entertainment, romance, sensuality, philosophy, ideology, cause, Mammon and hate.

Having neither the Light of the Holy One's Countenance nor any significant glow from your own internal lamp results in the opening of a door to conversations with spirits that hover around uncleanness. The darkness surrounding you invites visitations from dark forces. As darkness becomes more and more pervasive around and in you, you find yourself entertaining, and ultimately making deals with, unclean spirits. Bit by bit, piece by piece, you surrender authority over your soul – *i.e.* your mind, your will, and your emotions - to the dark energy of the unclean spirits you hang around. You find yourself seething with anger all the time - and you have no idea why. As you are slowly being poisoned by the toxic juices of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you start becoming hypocritical and self-righteous – and you are the only one who cannot see it. You start applying ever higher moral, ethical, relational and performance standards to the people in your spheres of influence – as well as those outside of them, especially in the media realm - even as you simultaneously apply lower and lower moral, ethical, relational, and performance standards to yourself. Your conversation degenerates into self-serving *serpent-speak* – *i.e.* sarcasm, cynicism, accusation, blame, condemnation, deflection, misinformation, projection, and incitement. You start to experience ever-more-drastic mood swings. Your behavior becomes addictive, as you look for anything that will comfort and pleasure your flesh – or at least make you forget your higher calling. You spend money on all the wrong things. You simultaneously indulge self-pity – and inordinate human compassion. You simultaneously embrace self-hatred – and prejudice towards other races, economic classes, nations, regions, and all groups other than your own. You alternatively surrender to rage, to fear, to sadness, and to the futile search for *nirvana* – the demonic mirage of a perfect state of being. This deep, foreboding level of darkness is known as *spiritual blindness*. And when the blind lead the blind ... well, you know how that turns out, don't you?

The Holy One is not deterred. He says: *They have turned their back to Me, and not their face; but in the time of their trouble they will say, 'Arise and save us.'* Jeremiah 2:27.

Divine Discipline Protocol, Level II:
Karat [Being Cut Off from One's People]

If for whatever reason a person refuses to respond to Phase I of the Holy One's discipline, the Holy One does not give up on him or her. He just resorts to Phase II of His great prodigal-retrieval plan. This phase of the disciplinary process is called *karat* – i.e. *cutting off/pruning back*. Our English Bibles refer to this type of divine discipline as a person being 'cut off from his people'. Like everything associated with the Kingdom, it comes in stages. And every stage is strategically designed to bring about the critical goal of *prodigal retrieval*, and is therefore released in carefully measured doses in order to attain maximum results with the least possible amount of actual harm to the prodigal.

At first, the person cuts himself off from others. Think about it. The people he previously associated with – i.e. 'his people' – were the ones with whom he used to share the Light of the Bridegroom-King's Countenance. When he decided to leave the well-lit pathway of the King, he necessarily had to leave the people who remained on that pathway. They continued to bask in the Light; he wandered off into the darkness. He thus started the process of *karat* by cutting himself off from his people. This is the first level of *karat* – the level that is totally self-inflicted.

After all, as the prophet Amos astutely observed: *Can two walk together unless they be agreed?* Amos 3:3. Once a person starts walking away from the King's Countenance he begins to find less and less subject matter for conversations with those who are still basking in that Light. What can they talk about? All those in the Light want to talk about is the King, His Goodness, and His Ways. That has lost interest to the prodigal. What then can they say to one another? What can they do together? Being around 'his people' is suddenly just too uncomfortable for the prodigal to handle. Iron sharpens iron, and he is convinced he is quite sharp enough. He wants to run wild. He does not want wise counsel. He does not want correction. He most certainly does not want conviction. He therefore cuts himself off from 'his people'. He finds new associates - i.e. people who are running away like he is, and people who will talk about the kind of things he now wants to talk about. He finds himself drawn to people who share his opinions – and the unclean spirits that inhabit those opinions. He finds people with whom he can spout off about sensuality and sexuality, politics and religion, philosophy and ideology, entertainment and illusion, money and power, and morality and cause.

The problem is that none of the new people the prodigal finds to talk to and walk

with actually inspire him. None feeds his zest for life. None really fills any of the ever-expanding holes in his soul. They just keep disappointing him. And he keeps disappointing them as well. They are all looking for inspiration – and life, and love – in all the wrong places. They are all chasing a mirage. They are all living out Ecclesiastes' *vanity of vanities* nightmare. And each of them has an entitlement mentality that both feeds into and feeds off of their narcissistic tendencies as well as those of their new 'associates'.

And so, eventually, all the new, pathological cronies leave the prodigal – or he leaves them. They are all too toxic in thought, speech, and behavior to tolerate for long. So, the prodigal retreats into himself and his world of corrupted thought and emotion. He goes through withdrawal syndrome. He self-identifies as 'rejected', 'misunderstood', and 'mistreated'. He adopts a victim mentality. He becomes addicted to toxic substances and behaviors. He yields his will as totally as he knows how to the unclean spirits that have made themselves at home in his mind, his heart, and his members.

Because such a person toxifies everything around himself – with glares, words, anger, depression, fear, and judgment – he has to be removed from that which is holy. Considering himself to be exiled emotionally, he is sent into exile physically. This is designed to awaken him to his true identity – like it did the prodigal son. But this is up to the individual. Sometimes the individual in exile just gives up, and gives in. Sometimes he accepts exile as his lot – instead of as just one phase in a long journey to restoration. And if the individual persists, and joins the pagans around whom he now finds himself in dishonoring the Bridegroom-King's Name and Ways at levels that constitute *to'ebah* [*i.e. abomination*], the Holy One will reluctantly assign him to the final, and phase.

Divine Discipline Protocol, Level III:

***The Mot Yamut* [*i.e. Death, surely death will ensue*] Decree**

The death consequence does not play a large part of the revelation stream of Torah at all. But it does play a part. The role of *mot yamut* is miniscule in comparison to the overarching role of Divine love, blessing, empowerment, mercy, forgiveness, and atonement, but it serves a critically important purpose nevertheless. This particular phase of Divine discipline is, however, reserved for the ultimate, incurable, and intolerable level of *tumah* that mankind can introduce.

The idea of death as a consequence of extreme human misconduct that reaches the level of being totally incompatible with the Divine Redemptive Plan was first introduced in the Garden of Eden. The Creator told Adam: ***Mikol etz-hagan achol tochel*** [*i.e. of every tree of the garden you may eat freely*], ***ume'etz ha-da'at tov v'ra lo tochal mimeinu ki beyom acholcha mimeinu mot tamut*** [*but of the tree of the*

*intimate, experiential knowledge of good and evil you are not to eat, for in the day that you eat of it - mot tamut (you will die)*⁴. Genesis 2:16-17.

Think about the extreme level of toxic effect the human conduct about which the Holy One warned Adam would lead to *mot tamut* (you will die) consequence actually released into the world. Man went from a Garden of Eden level existence, of constant, sweet fellowship and intimate co-laboring with our Creator, to a fallen state of self-absorption, pathological covering-up, hiding our true selves, and blaming others for our problems. Do you see it? Adam and Chava did not just eat a piece of fruit like you and I do. They opened a portal of uncleanness, corruption, and destruction into human experience that is far more destructive than every volcano, tornado, typhoon, or earthquake the earth has ever experienced put together and multiplied exponentially. Now you understand the level of extreme toxicity and negativity that *mot yamut* involves, dear ones.

Even yet, the *mot tamut/mot yamut* form of Divine discipline is progressive. Death does not occur all at once. Just as it was for Adam and Chava, *mot yamut* turns out to be a progressive form of dying. It comes in stages. And until the last and final stage, it is reversible.

Do you know the stages of death, dear ones? The Holy One knows them well. What usually begins the dying process is *separation from life support*. The Holy One's Breath is to the human being's spirit what the ventilator is to the body. His Presence is the human spirit's dialysis machine. His Community is the human spirit's IV pump. His Torah is its feeding tube. When these are removed – or as happens more frequently – ripped out by the person himself in an outburst of negative emotion - the human spirit begins to die.

The second stage of death is *acceptance of palliative care only*. When all a person wants is *pain relief* – i.e. a way to escape reality through ingestion of substances and circumstances that cloud the mind – death becomes inevitable. As long as we can feel pain, the Holy One can talk us through it and put us back on the road to healing. If we refuse to listen to Him, however, and instead insist on medicating or escaping the pain, we cut off any possibility of healing communication.

The third stage of death is *losing one's appetite for what previously was enjoyable*. Food and drink ceased to be received with thanksgiving. Visits from and interactions with family members and friends are received without acknowledgement, without joy, and without meaningful, coherent efforts at participation.

⁴ The Hebrew phrase *Mot tamut* means 'you will die' The Hebrew phrase *mot yamut* means 'he will die'.

The fourth stage of death occurs when *necrosis begins to set in, affecting major organs*. The kidneys – which process toxins, waste from cellular degeneration, and unusable water out of the bloodstream – are usually the first to suffer the effects of necrosis. For the human spirit, this means there is no cleansing and purification through confession, making *teshuvah, receiving and appropriating forgiveness*, etc. In the stage of necrosis, pockets of *tumah* begin to grow and fester. Eventually the *lungs* – i.e. our organs of respiration and inspiration – also begin to experience dysfunction, as do our *brains* and ultimately our *overburdened hearts*. We no longer function as intended. We proceed through life in fits and starts.

The fifth stage of death occurs when *the critical organs of life shut down and cease functioning altogether*. Our kidneys cease, and we simply accumulate and overdose on toxins. Our lungs shut down, the Breath of our Creator expires, and we ‘give up the spirit.’ Our heart stops beating, and we know longer feel anything. Eventually, all brain function as well ceases, and we lose the capacity to understand or respond, much less to regenerate.

Solemnly Accepting the Part the Holy One Has Called Us to Play in the Final Phase of Divine Discipline – Mot Yamut

Right after the Grand Theophany of Sinai, as the Bridegroom-King was teaching the Redeemed Community to think like He thinks, and walk in His perfect blend of wisdom and compassion, He revealed that part of being the people of God means having to have both the foresight and the courage to take radical corrective action against an out-of-control fellow man when the circumstances call for it. In His Kingdom, He advised at that time, a *mot yamut* responsibility on our part, exercisable by order of the Sanhedrin - arises whenever one of the following happens in ISRAEL (never in any other country on earth):

[a] a man intentionally decides to *strike another man in such a manner as to make the other man die* [Exodus 21:12];

[b] a man either *strikes or ‘curses’ his father or his mother* [Exodus 21:15, 17];

[c] a man *shanghais* [i.e. takes by force to be a slave] *another man*, and then sells him [Exodus 21:16];

[d] a man knows he has an animal with a history of attacking humans, and takes no precautions to prevent it from doing so again, resulting in another human death [Exodus 21:29];

[e] a man *copulates with an animal* [Exodus 22:19];

[f] a man *profanes the Sabbath* [Exodus 31:14-15 and 35:2].

The Creator knows that, whether we humans can see it or not, each of the above extreme actions of rebellion against the Divine Plan has the potential to open just as toxic a portal of uncleanness, corruption, and destruction into His Creation as

did Adam and Chava's dalliance with the serpent in the Garden. The One Who designed and created the world knows far better than humankind what is best - and worst - for the world He Created. He sees the end from the beginning. He sees the harvest from the seed. We are just going to have to learn to trust Him.

To the Holy One it never has been and never will be a matter of 'morality'. To Him it never has been and never will be a matter of 'right' or 'wrong', 'fair' or 'unfair', or 'good' or 'evil'. Those concepts are the pitifully weak product of the fallen human mind. Those are all *illusory concepts* - vain imaginations introduced to the human mind by the ingestion of the fruit of the tree of the *knowledge of* - you guessed it ... *good* and *evil*. To the Holy One the *mot yamut* decision is always a matter of maintaining *Divine balance* and the *forward momentum of the Grand Plan of Redemption*. To His Brilliant Mind it is always a matter of what is needed for the created order that He has so wisely established to continue and prosper, on the one hand, versus what has the capacity to cause His Creation to lose momentum, change direction, and self-destruct, on the other hand. To the Holy One *mot yamut* is all about essential *purpose, functionality, and practicality*. It is not that he downplays or discounts either the emotions or the individual suffering involved in *mot yamut* situations; it is just that He is far too wise and much too caring to let those transient and temporal things outweigh His long-term objective, which is to do what is best for His Beloved Creation. He is determined to always encourage that which promotes and put limits on that which sabotages His Wonderful Plan.

What does all this have to do with us? What does it have to do with the Avrahamic Covenant? Quite a bit, to our chagrin. Now that a Divine Betrothal has occurred at Mount Sinai; now that, through the Ultimate Extreme Bridal Makeover Protocols the Holy One is training us, along with thousands of other human families, to co-labor with Him to start reversing the effect of the Fall on Creation and to bring the hope of restoration to the world through love, joy, shalom, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness to Covenant, gentleness, and self-control; now the Holy One is finally ready to talk to us in detail about His least favorite part of the responsibility of running and lovingly stewarding the Universe. As He has called us to co-labor with Him in loving our neighbor and our enemy, so He is now ready to call us to take upon ourselves part of the distasteful responsibility of dealing calmly, collectively, and appropriately, with the most toxic forms of human misconduct. Being omnipotent, the Holy One could of course just take out the most toxic people on earth and the unclean spirits that motivate them. He could unleash floods, rain fire and brimstone, send fire from Heaven, and release earthquakes, tsunamis, bolts of lightning, etc. But those things all entail far more physical and emotional trauma and cause a whole lot more collateral damage than calling upon

people in Covenant with Him to establish a functional and responsible legal system to administer *mot yamut* as well as other, less drastic, modalities of in-flight course correction. His way is the latter. He is not angry. He is all about life. If others choose to be all about death, however, and carry it to the extreme of hardness of heart, He knows how to oblige them.

At Sinai, therefore, after the Divine Betrothal ceremony; after the painful lessons of the golden calf debacle were learned; after the erection, dedication, and inauguration of the Tabernacle; after the pattern of *kahan*-ing on behalf of the Holy One had been established in Aharon and his sons; after the deaths of Nadav and Avihu; after the introduction of the Ultimate Extreme Bridal Makeover protocols; after the Holy one has explained His Plan for Atonement for breaches of Covenant; after all these things the Holy One feels that it is time to reintroduce the *mot yamut* responsibility to His *am segulah*, His *kingdom of priests*, and His *holy nation*. Please take note, however, of the very limited context in which the Holy One introduces the responsibility of *mot yamut* to His Covenant people. As we have discussed previously, He chooses to kick off this new era of kingdom discipline responsibility by saying:

V'el-b'nei Yisra'el tomar ish ish mibenei Yisra'el

Whoever of the children of Israel

umin-hager hagar b'Yisrael

or of the strangers who dwell in Israel

asher yiten mizar'o la-Molech

who gives any of his seed to Molech –

mot yamut

he is to die.

[Leviticus 20:2]

The Holy One sees far more than we see. He knows what human ‘seed’ is for – and what fathers and mothers are designed to do with their offspring. He has made it very clear – we are, like Avraham, to ‘***teach/charge/enjoin [our] children and [our] household after [us], that they keep the way of the Holy One, to do righteousness and justice, that the Holy One may bring to Avraham what He has spoken to him.*** Genesis 18:19. Taking very seriously the precious Divine gift of stewardship of ‘seed’, parents are to ‘***dedicate/train a child up in the way he should go, in order that when he is old he will not depart from it.*** Proverbs 22:6. Parents are to ‘***teach [the instructions of Torah] to our children faithfully***’ Deuteronomy 6:7. That is the Divine Plan. That is the way He has designed the world to work. Generation by generation, that is how according to the Grand Redemptive Plan is to go forward.

Alas, this is not always the way parent-child relationships work. Parents do not always see their children as the precious gift from the Holy One that they are.

Parents do not always see the glorious potential for kingdom advancement He has programmed into their children. Parents do not always follow the Plan. And once parents start to deviate from the Plan, they - and their children, and their culture, and ultimately the world – find themselves on a slippery slope sliding – and sending their children tumbling - uncontrollably toward a great abyss. At some point on every slippery slope a *point of no return* is reached. The Holy One knows that point – we do not. And so, for the sake of the people themselves, for the sake of the nation, and for the sake of the Grand Redemptive Plan for all mankind and Creation, the Holy One reveals to His Covenant people exactly what that point of no return is. The point of no return for a parent is when he gives up his seed to some one, some thing, some system, some force, or some concept that the Holy One calls ‘*Molech*’.

Molech – Then and Now

Okay, our Bridegroom-King has gotten deadly serious. He thinks this is really, really important. He sees the level of destructive toxicity that is introduced into the world by a father or mother giving over his or seed to Molech as being so high that He instructs us to assign it to the realm of *mot yamut*. But wait. Exactly who – or what - in the world is *Molech*? And why, for Heaven’s sake, would any father or mother ever give Molech - or any one or any thing else beside the Holy One for that matter - his seed/offspring? It does not compute. It is absolute *madness*. And yet, believe it or not, it is happening every day.

The verb root of the Hebrew noun our English Bibles transliterate as ‘*Molech*’ in this passage is *malach* – *mem, lamed, kaf sofit*. It means *to assume a throne and reign over people – i.e. to set priorities and standards for other people, and to issue and enforce as a king*. It means *to take up a place of honor and to claim the ultimate form of human rights and privileges and decision-making power affecting human lives within allotted territories*. As Yul Brynner’s ‘King of Siam’ character in the musical ‘*The King and I*’ put it, to *malak* means to take upon oneself the power to say to other people ‘*When I say sit, you shall sit. When I see kneel, you shall kneel, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera*’.

Now perhaps you can begin to see the scope of the problem that the Holy One is addressing. If instead of doing with our ‘seed’/offspring what the Holy One has instructed us, we choose to ‘give over’ [Hebrew *natan*, meaning to willingly surrender to another’s influence and authority] our children to any ‘king’ figure – or indeed to any concept, culture, philosophy, organization, or ideology – we have abandoned the Holy One and the most essential element of the Covenant. For us and our household, we have stepped off onto a slippery slope. It always starts with what seem to our human eyes to be little things. We ‘give over’ our children over to the

entertainment industry – *i.e.* to the Molech agent/wanna-be kings that reigns on Madison Avenue and the Molech agent/wanna-be kings that reign in Hollywood. We let these Molech order our children to sit when they say sit, kneel when they say kneel, *etcetera, etcetera, etcetera*. Then we ‘give over’ our children to institutions of cultural indoctrination – *i.e.* the day-care centers, schools, sports teams, and religious institutions that we view as socially acceptable to our peer group. We thereby turn them over to the Molech wanna-be’s that reign in the governmental capitals and institutional boardrooms in question. Then all too soon we ‘give over’ our children to a series of peer groups consisting of immature, flesh-obsessed, narcissistic Molech agent wanna-be’s who cannot wait to influence and manipulate them for their own selfish purposes. Eventually, after all the above, we give our children over to what by now has become the ultimate Molech agent wanna-be – themselves.

This is the continuum. Once a parent steps off the Bridegroom-King’s pathway to life, health and peace, it is all a matter of degree. There is, however, a point of no return. And that comes, in the Holy One’s eyes, only when a parent ‘gives over’ his offspring to the ultimate Molech, *i.e.* the bloodthirsty, pound-of-flesh demanding fire god of the Ammoni. This is the same unclean spirit called *Chemosh* by the Moavi, called Ba’al by the Kena’ani, called Zeus by the Greeks, called Jupiter by the Romans, and called Ha-Satan or Lucifer by the Bible.

The Holy One has long-term vision and perspective. He sees the events of our lives in *fluid motion*, not as a random collection of *still images*. He sees the ultimate end from every simple beginning. He does not simply see a seed – He sees a sprout coming forth from that seed, sees a stem producing leaves coming forth from that sprout, sees branches producing fruit coming forth from that stem, and sees ever expanding reproduction until the seed with which the whole process started has morphed into forest – whether for the healing of the nations or for their further poisoning.

At this point in our studies it should be very clear that the Holy One intends for us to seek guidance and directions in situations and relationships, knowledge and insight into the future, and discernment of spirits only from Him. He intends for us to do this through prayer, through reading, studying, and meditating upon, and walking out the instructions of Torah as well as the rest of Holy Writ in the footsteps of Messiah. He makes Himself available to us 24/7/365. He blesses our socks off. His mercies are new every morning. He literally provides us everything we need for life and godliness. **II Peter 1:3**⁵. As the Psalmist David said:

⁵ II Peter 1:3 says: *His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue*

*How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God!
Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.
They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house,
and You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.
For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.*
[Psalm 36:7-9]

We are privileged, by virtue of the goodness of the Holy One, to know the joy of living in the Light of our Bridegroom-King's countenance. His Favor is evident to us. But what generates His disfavor? What activates His remediation? What causes Him to set His Face against a human being or nation?

The Setting of the King's Face Against A Soul or Nation

Among the practices common to other nations and peoples that are incompatible with the holiness of Eretz Yisrael are anything connected with the dark arts – *i.e.* the 'occult'. We are to have an 'occult-free' society. Just in case there is still any lingering question in our minds as to whether there is ever to be any exception to the 'occult-free' society He is calling us to form in the land, however, our Bridegroom-King also told us:

Al-tifnu el-ha-ovot v'el-ha-yid'onim
Give no regard to mediums and/or familiar spirits;

al-tevakshu letom'ah vahem
do not seek after them, to be defiled by them:

Ani Adonai Eloheichem
I am the Holy One your God.
[Leviticus 19:31]

Ovot [mediums] and *yidanim* [familiar spirits] are corrupting, polluting influences. They hold out the false promise of knowledge and power – but all they really give is *fragmentation of mind, heart, and soul* and a *point of entrance for unclean spirits into all those areas of our persona and relationships*. We cannot seek both the Holy One and wizards/familiar spirits. We cannot serve two masters. We learned in parsha Acharei Mot that we are to avoid both wizards [*ovot*] and familiar spirits [*yidanim*] like the plague.

Remembering the Essentials of Identity, Mission and Destiny In the Midst of It All

Ah, but the Holy One has focusing on the negative long enough. He will not end today's aliyah with anything negative. He will instead declare over us once more the simple beauty of His glorious plan for us to bring redemption to the world. Read these words carefully, dear ones –for they declare your identity, your mission, and your destiny:

V'hitkadishtem viheyitem kedoshim

Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy,

ki ani Adonai Eloheichem
for I am the Holy One your God

Ushmartem et-chukotai va'asitem otam
and you are to keep My statutes, and perform them:

Ani Adonai mekadishchem
I am the Holy One who sanctifies you.
[Leviticus 20:7]

Questions for Today's Study

1. Today's aliyah of Torah begins with the Holy One discussing an extreme situation – i.e. where one of the men in the Redeemed Community in Israel, or one of the foreigners who comes to Israel to reside with the Redeemed Community, gives up his 'seed'/offspring to Molech.

[A] In Strong's concordance and Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon, look up the Hebrew word our English Bibles translate as 'Molech'. Write the Hebrew word. What is the Hebrew verb root, and what does Gesenius say the essence of that verb root is in its pa'al or infinitive form?

[B] If a child was 'given up' to Molech, what happened to the child?

[C] What do you think might motivate a parent to 'give up' a child to Molech?

[D] The Holy One says that if any man gives up his seed/offspring to Molech *mot yamut* [i.e. he will die]. Who is to determine if a man is guilty of this abomination? Who is to carry out the *mot yamut* sentence? What is to be the instrumentality of death?

2. In today's aliyah from the *Kedusha Discourse* the Holy One also discusses how the Redeemed are to relate to the occult practices their pagan neighbors follow in order to obtain spiritual insight and/or power.

[A] How does the Holy One instruct us to obtain spiritual insight?

[B] According to Leviticus 20, verse 8, what is to be the source of any spiritual insight or power we are to seek or experience?

[C] The Holy One references two specific types of occult/pagan practices in verse 6 of Leviticus 20. Our English translations describe the first as '*turning to mediums*' and the other as '*turning to familiar spirits*'.

i. What is the Hebrew word our English Bibles translate as 'medium' in this passage? What is the verb root of that word, and what is the essence of that Hebrew verb? [In this regard, see Gesenius' notes on Strong's Hebrew word #3045].

ii. What is the Hebrew word our English Bibles translates as 'familiar

spirits' in this passage? [In this regard, see Gesenius' notes on Strong's Hebrew word #178]. What important Hebrew word lies at the heart of this word, and what is the essence of that root? [In this regard, see Gesenius' notes on Strong's Hebrew word #1].

3. In today's Haftarah the Holy One is speaking to His Covenant People through His prophet Ezekiel of what He will do with His People in the latter days:

*What you have in your mind shall never be, when you say,
'We will be like the Gentiles, like the families in other countries,
serving wood and stone.*

*"As I live," says the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand,
with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you.*

*"I will bring you out from the peoples
and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered,
with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out.
And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples,
and there I will plead My case with you face to face
just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt,
so I will plead My case with you," says the Lord GOD.*

*"I will make you pass under the rod,
and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.
I will purge the rebels from among you,
and those who transgress against Me;
I will bring them out of the country where they dwell,
but they will not enter the land of Israel.
Then you will know that I am the Holy One.*

*For on My holy mountain, on the mountain height of Israel,
says the Lord GOD, there all the house of Israel, all of them in the land,
will serve Me; there I will accept them,
and there I will require your offerings and the firstfruits of your sacrifices,
together with all your holy things.*

*I will accept you as a sweet aroma when I bring you out from the peoples
and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered;
and I will be hallowed in you before the Gentiles.*

*Then you will know that I am the Holy One, when I bring you into the land of Israel,
into the country for which I raised My hand in an oath to give to your fathers.*

*And there you will remember your ways and all your doings
with which you were defiled; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight
because of all the evils that you have committed.*

*Then you will know that I am the Holy One
when I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways
nor according to your corrupt doings,
O house of Israel," says the Lord GOD.*

[Ezekiel 20:32-44]

[A] What does the Holy One promise to do for – and to - those of His People

who rebel and transgress against Him?

[B] After the Holy One has done for, to, and with those who rebel and transgress what He said He would do, what does He promise to do for all His People, including those who previously rebelled and transgressed? For the sake of what will He do this?

[C] What three things does the Holy One say in this passage that He will do that will cause His Covenant People to know that He is the Holy One?

8. In the B'rit Chadasha reading for today Kefa [Peter] is speaking about holiness from a Hebraic perspective:

*Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober
and rest your hope fully on the grace that is to be brought to you
at the revelation of Yeshua the Messiah - as children of obedience,
not conforming yourselves according to your former lusts
as in your ignorance.*

[I Peter 1:13-14]

[A] Kefa gives several *mitzvot* in verses 13-14. List the mitzvot he gives, and explain in your own words what you think each means.

[B] The NIV translates the first *mitzvah* Kefa teaches in this passage as “*prepare your minds for action*”. This is a strained interpretation of the Greek wording, which literally means “*gird up your loins*”. The NIV translation loses something of the sense of *putting on garments of holiness*. Going back to our discussion of Leviticus 13:47-59, we know that what garments a person wears has a spiritual significance, because “clothes reflect the man”. With that kind of garment, according to Torah, were the priests to “gird up their loins”? [Hint: see Exodus 28:42-43]. Assume for a moment that Kefa was telling followers of *Mashiach* to put on this type of garment, what spiritual implications do you think that would have?

[C] Go back and read the following passages:

- i. Zechariah 12:1 – 14:11,
- ii. Ezekiel 34:9-31
- iii. Ezekiel 37:15-28,
- iv. Isaiah 59:20 – 60:22; and
- v. Isaiah 65:1-25

All these verses describe what the Holy One or His prophets prophesied/promised that would happen when Messiah comes in glory and establishes His earthly reign. With this in mind, describe what you think Kefa means by speaking in future tense of “*the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach*”?

[D] How would your approach to life, and the choices you make daily about what you spend time, money, energy, and passion upon, and what you talk about, do, and act like, if you rested your hope fully on the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Yeshua HaMashiach, as Kefa instructs us to do?

*May you be adorned in robes of righteousness,
a holy nation, a kingdom of priests,
clearly distinguishable from the society in which you live.*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Psalm 119:173-174

*Let Your hand become my help,
for I have chosen [and pursued with great passion] Your precepts
I long for Your Yeshua, Holy One,
and Your Torah is my delight*