

# *Shiur L'Yom Sheni<sup>1</sup>*

[Monday's Study]

READINGS:     ***Torah Emor:***                     Leviticus 21:1-24  
                  ***Haftarah:***                         Ezekiel 44:15-16  
                  ***B'rit Chadasha:***                 I Peter 2:4-5

*Speak to the kohanim, the sons of Aharon ...*

[Leviticus 21:1]

Today's Meditation is Psalm 112:1-4;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is Petition No. 6, *B'racha [Blessing]*

*Vayomer Adonai el-Moshe* – Then the Holy One said to Moshe ... ***emor el-ha-kohanim b'nei Aharon*** – declare to Aharon's sons, the 'priests' ... ***v'amarta aleihem*** and say to them ... ***l'nefesh – for a nefesh*** [i.e. a soul – i.e. a living breathing person] ***lo-yitama be'amav*** – you are not to become tamei/take on tumah among your people. **Leviticus 21:1.**

This is a week of climactic prophetic 'excellence' declarations. There is a Divine order that the Holy One will follow in making these pronouncements. First He will identify and call His appointed *messengers*. Then He will issue instructions to the forerunners who are to blaze the trail so that the masses can follow. Finally, the Holy One will turn His attention to the pilgrims and prodigals who will walk on the trail thusly blazed. That will include every man, woman, and child in the Camp of the Redeemed– and the message will be: *Where the forerunners lead, we are all to follow*. It is just a matter of times, seasons, and accepting the responsibilities that come with each.

## *Follow In the Steps of the Forerunners*

In *Emor's* opening lines the Holy One lays out some important instructions for Moshe to speak prophetically over ***the kohanim, the sons of Aharon***. These instructions are *Phase I instructions* – for forerunners. The Holy One's plan is to use the prophetic empowerments inherent in these instructions to transition/elevate/graduate the two surviving sons of Aharon – *Elazar* and *Itamar* - from *one spiritual level* (the level of ordination, the very beginning of service as “friends of the Bride”) to *another, more responsible, level* - a level that is closer to the fulfillment of their purpose.

What is the purpose of these instructions? As the Kingdom's appointed forerunners step into higher realms of Covenant consecration, dedication, commitment, and

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service the Holy One is opening up to them, their passion, energy, and beauty is supposed to inspire and draw others into that realm as well.

If the forerunner be lifted up, he will draw all men unto himself. All in good time, of course.

### ***The Inspiring Example of the Kohanim, the sons of Aharon***

The faces we imagine we see – and at the *p'shat* level actually *do* see – as we read these opening lines of parsha *Emor* are the bright young faces of Aharon's sons Elazar and Itamar. At the beginning of the era of the *Mish'kan's* operation they served as apprentices of their father and elder brothers. But they are apprentices no longer. They are now the torchbearers of the tribe of Levi. They are now the harbingers and models of enhanced *kedusha*. Of them and those they raise up in later generations to take their place the Holy One will say:

*My Covenant was with him of life and peace;  
and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.*

*The Torah of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips:  
he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.*

*For the lips of the kohen should keep knowledge,  
and they should seek the Torah at his mouth:  
for he is the messenger of the Holy One of hosts.*

[Malachi 2:5-7]

We can look at the instructions/prophetic empowerments that the Holy One speaks over Aharon and his sons in today's and tomorrow's aliyot in two ways. We can judge them '*just for kohanim*', and thus irrelevant for everyone else [including most of us]. Or we can keep in mind that although initially the priesthood of the 'holy nation' consisted only of Aharon and his sons this was intended as a *temporary situation* - a 'training period' for the bride-to-be and all people redeemed by the Holy One were intended to become *kohanim*.

As we have discussed, the Holy One prophesied in Exodus 19 that He would one day make from the mixed multitude He redeemed from bondage a '*kingdom of priests*'. And with this understanding we can look at the Holy One's instructions to '*the priests, the sons of Aharon*' in a totally new light – as a part of our destiny and purpose in life. After all, are we in this kingdom, or are we outside of it? Are we for this kingdom, or are we against it. Are we part of this kingdom - or are we strangers to it? When Messiah taught us to pray "*May Your Kingdom Come*", just what kind of kingdom did you think He was talking about?

### ***Instruction No. 1: L'Nefesh Lo Yitama B'amav***

The first thing the Holy One asks Moshe to *emor* [speak, declare, prophesy] this week

is: *L'nefesh<sup>2</sup> lo-yitama b'amav...*<sup>3</sup> You may have noticed that I have introduced that phrase without attempting to translate it into English. The Hebrew phrasing is somewhat obscure. The meaning of *lo yitama* is 'you are not to make yourself tamei or do not take tumah [uncleanness] upon yourself'. The prepositional phrase at the end of the verse – *b'amav* – means 'with or among people'. The translational problem comes from the opening phrase - *l'nefesh*. That phrase seems out of place. What is exactly is the 'nefesh' that the Holy One is talking about/warning us concerning?

The *lamed* ['l' sound is a Hebrew prefix meaning *to, unto, of, or for*]. The Hebrew word *nefesh* is usually translated 'soul'. The most famous usage of this word in Torah is found in Genesis 2:7 where we are told that after the Holy One breathed into Adam's nostrils the *nish'mat chayim* [i.e. panting of life, as is done by a woman in the throes of childbirth], Adam became a *nefesh chayah* [literally, *living breather*]. It is pretty clear, therefore, that *nefesh* literally means *that which/who breathes* – i.e. the *innermost being or center of all life-processes*. It is often translated as 'soul'. See, e.g. Genesis 2:7, Genesis 12:5, 13, Genesis 17:14, Genesis 19:20, Exodus 12:4 and Exodus 30:12. Therefore the phrase '*l'nefesh*' literally means '*for one's life, or one's life processes*'. A logical extension would be '*for the sake of life, or for the good of life-processes*'.

Traditional texts however have chosen translate the Hebrew phrase '*l'nefesh*' as found in Leviticus 21 as '*for the dead*', '*for the death*', or '*for the (dead) body*'. To me that is more than a little puzzling. *Breathing* is at the essence of the word *nefesh*. And I have a word for you - dead people – dead bodies - *do not breathe*. The word *nefesh* is all about *life* – why would the Holy One turn it on its head and make it refer to the *exact opposite* – i.e. death? It boggles my mind. And it is not like it is difficult to find a Hebrew word that really means *dead person or corpse*. The logical word meaning just that is *met* [*mem, tav*], and that specific word is used in Scripture many times. See e.g. the multiple references to the *body* of Sarah contained in Genesis 23, all referring to her body/corpse as a *met*. Hence translating the phrase '*l'nefesh*' in Leviticus 21 as '*for a dead body*' as most English translations [and, for that matter, many Hebrew Torah commentators do] is more than a little *problematic*.

So in these studies, while I will make reference to death from time to time in

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<sup>2</sup> *Nafash* [*nun, feh, shin*] is a verb root meaning to *draw breath, to refresh oneself*.

<sup>3</sup> The leaders of B'nei Yisroel are responsible to see that not even one "*nefesh*" becomes defiled. When one lowers himself to the level of the common man, "*b'amov*," with the intention of teaching him to better himself, he should be careful to not defile his own soul, "*l'nefesh lo yitamo*," during this encounter.

connection with the *lo yitama* instruction of Leviticus 1, I will not confine my comments to situations involving death. *Tamei* status comes in many ways – contact with a corpse [in Hebrew, a *met*] is only one such way. I will proceed under the premise that the point the Holy One is making is that due to the holy nature of the responsibilities of the *kohanim* in the *Mish'kan*, for the sake of their own lives they should be very careful not make themselves *tamei* through *any kind of dealings with people*. Why does the Holy One think preserving *tahor* status is so important for the representatives of His Kingdom on earth? What is the big deal? Let's dig a little deeper, shall we?

### ***Dealing with Things that Have the Capacity To Defile and Profane***

Two *states-of-being* which the Holy One has in *Sefer Vayikra* repeatedly indicated that He is concerned about for those who serve as His “priests” on earth are the states of *defilement/fragmentation* [*i.e.* being made *tamei*<sup>4</sup>] and of *profanation* [*i.e.* being made *chol*<sup>5</sup>]. As we have discussed in previous studies, there are on earth two horizontal axes – on one end is the *tahor* – that which we interact with on earth, in the natural world, which is moving, without interruption or distraction, toward fulfillment and completion. On the other end is the *tamei* – that which we interact with on earth in the natural world that is *interrupted, distracted, spiritually fragmented, and potentially lethal* to us. That which is *tamei* is not necessarily *evil* – it is merely *dangerous*. Interaction with the *tamei* puts us at a crossroads, a place of potential *fragmentation, distraction and interruption*. Interaction with the *tamei* thus necessitates for us a state of spiritual “high alert” in which ordinary religious activities should be suspended and we can focus on dealing with the danger zone emanating out from the intersection of our lives with the domain of Darkness, Death, and Disintegration.

As we have learned from previous studies there are also two vertical axes of Creation that correspond to the horizontal axes of *tahor* and *tamei* which were discussed in the preceding paragraph. While the *horizontal* axes consist of things we interact with in *the natural world*, the *vertical* axes consist of things we interact with in *the overarching spiritual world*. That in the overarching spiritual world with which is safe for us to interact is classified as *kadosh* – usually translated as ‘holy’. The term refers to and describes that which has been wholly set apart to the Holy One, and which is uniquely His – a *garden enclosed* for Him. The opposite vertical axis of the spiritual realm is the *chol* – usually translated as ‘profane’, or

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<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew word our English Bibles translate as “defiled” is *tamei*.

<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew word our English Bibles translate as “profaned” is *chol*.

‘common’, and referring to something thought up by, initiated by, directed by, and serving the interest of *man* – not the Holy One. The ancient verb root [*chalal, chet, lamed, lamed*] literally means *to begin a blasphemous or abominable thing or activity*. The first Biblical example of something *chol* is found in Genesis 4:26, where we are told that – in beginning the spiral which led to the flood, men ‘first began [*chalal*] to call upon the name of the Lord’. This does not mean that men started to pray. It means instead that *they started to engage in self-directed, self-focused, religious activity*. It means that men sought to *manipulate the spiritual realm* to their own advantage and for their own glory. It means that they did not submit to the will of the Holy One, but sought to find their own focuses, their own ways, and their own concepts of good and evil, right and wrong. It means they did things of and in their own flesh and called what they created the work of God.

It is wise to heed the ‘law of the first instance’, Beloved. The first instance of the use of any word in Scripture describes the seed form – the basest essence - from which all subsequent usages of the word emanate.

In this context consider that another usage of the verb *chalal* is found in Genesis 11 to describe the ‘Tower of Babel’ project. Do you now see that the ‘*let us make a name for ourselves*’ mentality of the residents of Babel is in fact what lies at the root of everything that is *chol*? Why? What is wrong with the desire to ‘*build a tower that reaches to Heaven*’? It’s simply this: The Holy One has established Creation in such a way that *He* is to be the initiator and director of all man’s spiritual activities. According to the Great Redemptive Plan the mission of redeemed man is to *respond to the Divine Voice* and *conform to His creative and prophetic words*. He is to be the *maestro*, we the instruments. He is to be the *potter*, we the clay. *He is to be the scriptwriter, we the players on the stage. It is all to be of Him, by Him, for Him, through Him, and unto Him.* We are to reflect His Light, not shine with our own. Hence absolutely anything that *man* initiates - however good a thing may look to fallen human eyes or how spiritual it may sound to fallen human ears - is *chol*. However well-meaning a thing may be or appear, if it is conceived by the mind of man it will inevitably *distract man from that which is kadosh*. If a man allows himself to confuse that which is of man for that which is *kadosh*, that which is *chol* will *wastefully consume his spiritual energies*, will *choke off the flow of Divine Revelation*, will *exhaust the reservoir of spiritual passion*, and will invariably *lead to first the building - then the burning - of a pathetic bonfire of wood, hay, and stubble*.

One must look very carefully at every spiritual or religious activity to determine if it is in essence *kadosh* or *chol*. That which is *chol* is jealous toward, and therefore

always mimics and disguises itself as, something from the realm of the *kadosh*. That is why deception is so widespread – and why the ‘*man of Torah-lessness*’ will deceive so many. Most of the spiritual things that our society holds in esteem are in reality, *chol* – because instead of being responsive to the Holy One’s call and prophetic word they seek to manipulate God into doing man’s will, and glorify man, his learning, his musical and oratorical talents, and his philanthropy, while merely paying lip-service to God. Torah is of the Holy One, from the Holy One, and initiated, directed, and taught by the Holy One, and is thus *kadosh*. Man’s religious organizations, programs, and ‘services’, on the other hand - at least to the extent the Holy One’s Torah is not their center point and focus - are *chol*. They *waste the spiritual passion* of the people and *distract and divert them from their purpose and destiny*. They keep the people in a perpetual state of need and dependence.

The Holy One called the *kohanim* to be a dividing line of demarcation and distinction between the *tahor* and the *tamei* and between the *kadosh* and the *chol*. One of the chief functions of the Biblical ‘priest’ is to not only recognize the difference, but to teach the difference between these realms to the people.

The Holy One’s true *kohanim* – those faithfully serving as *friends of the Holy One’s Bride-to-be* – simply have *too much to do* to get involved in things that will interrupt their mediation between B’nei Yisrael and the Holy One. And beginning new or abominable things – things not set forth in their ‘job description’ - will, as Nadav and Avihu discovered, result in death. What does death represent? It represents the separation of human being from the breath of the Holy One that gives us life. So no funerals for *kohanim* – except in relation to very close family members. Why?

### ***The Holy One’s Radical Way of Dealing With Death And Bereavement***

Perhaps in light of the way the Egyptian culture glorified and obsessed over death, burial, and the ‘afterlife’ the Holy One did not want the funerals of His People to become “religious performances” presided over by ‘professional clergy’. Perhaps He really did not want the death of his *kedoshim* transformed into an emotionally charged religious service. Perhaps He wanted ordinary people – relatives and truly close friends of the deceased - to come together and care for the bereaved, and to help the bereaved make the transition back into life. After all, elaborate religious affairs in conjunction with funerals have always been a *pagan practice*. It is altogether to be expected that the Holy One did not want His people to emulate such practices. Instead of following familiar patterns set by pagans, is it possible that He wants His People to deal with death in a way that would bring glory and

honor to *Him*, and to *Him alone*, and even further set His people apart from the rest of the world?

***Are You Willing to Let the Dead Bury Their Dead,  
And to Forsake All and Follow the Messiah?***

Understanding the instructions of today's aliyah regarding *kohanim* and how they were not to grieve like others throws light upon Yeshua's response to the young man who asked to "first let me go and bury my father." **Matthew 8:21**; see also Luke 9:59. The Master said (Hebrew, *emor*): **Follow me** [Hebrew *achar halak* – walk intimately with Me, trusting in Me, and leaning on Me for on all aspects of life] **and let the dead bury their own dead.**" **Matthew 8:22**. The young man in question is referred to as "another disciple" in verse 21. But you must look back to verse 19 to see whose disciple he was. In verse 19 we are told that "a teacher in the 'law' [i.e. the Torah]" – that is, *a rabbi with disciples of his own* – came to Yeshua and said "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Who were the teachers of the Torah? According to Leviticus 10:10 it was the duty of the *kohanim* to:

**... teach B'nei Yisrael all the decrees  
the Holy One your God has given through Moshe.**

Yeshua replied that He had no place to lay his head. **Matthew 8:20**. It was then that the young man came forth and said "*Lord, first let me go and bury my father.*" **Matthew 8:21**. So who was this young man, and what was he saying to Yeshua? The traditional interpretation – based upon purely Western logic – is that this young man was saying he really wanted to become Yeshua's disciple, but his father had just died, and he needed to attend his father's funeral before "joining up" with the Master's wandering, open-air yeshivah classroom. But look closer - with *Torah-enlightened eyes*. The Hebrews have always referred to teachers of the Torah as "fathers." I believe that what is happening is that the "father" this young man wanted to "bury" was not his real father, but this rabbi – the "teacher of the law" of verse 19, who was in the process of "dying" to his own "ministry" and becoming a Talmud of the Master. The young man was not offering to be Yeshua's disciple – but was trying to convince Yeshua – and/or his current rabbi – that now was not the time for this teacher to leave his "ministry", because he (the young man) would grieve over the loss.

I believe this young man was out of fear of losing his rabbi to Yeshua trying to put a "guilt trip" on the rabbi so the rabbi would reconsider. Yeshua replied – probably to the teacher of the law, a *kohen* who would understand such a remark in light of Leviticus 21, as much as to the young man, **Follow me, and 'let the dead bury their dead.'** A *kohen* such as this teacher of the law would know that

contact with the dead – if it was not truly a closer relative – was inconsistent with the Holy One’s plan for his life. But only one who understands that each son or daughter of the Covenant has an assigned post-resurrection purpose and assigned level of impact on the world be content to let the dead – i.e. those oblivious to the post-resurrection purpose and ministry unto the Holy One – bury and mourn the lifeless physical shell of those they consider to be ‘their’ - instead of the Holy One’s - dead.

### ***What Message Does The Way You Present Yourself To the World Speak?***

The higher level of personal *kedusha* to which we are called begins with what we do – and don’t do – with three parts of our bodies: the hair the Creator gave us to cover our heads, the fuzz He gave us to cover our faces and tender areas, and the outer layer of skin that He gave us to cover, protect, and act as a toxin filter for our inner organs, systems, and connective tissues. Did you ever notice that the Bible contains a lot of references to *hair*? We all remember the story of *Shimson* [Samson] and Delilah, in Judges 16, No? How about the story of the demise of David’s son Absalom in II Samuel 18? And are we not all familiar with the vow of the *Nazir* [nazarite] not to cut his hair? What is it about hair? The Hebrew word that our English Bibles translate as hair is *se’ar*<sup>6</sup>. It comes from a verb root conveying a picture of a *tempest* or *blustering storm*.

In today’s aliyah we read the following instructions of the Holy One relative to the appearance of the *kohanim*:

***Lo-yikreichu<sup>7</sup> korchah b’rosham***

*No cutting is to be made from their heads*

***ufe’at zekanam lo yegaleichu<sup>8</sup>***

*Let them not shave the edges of their beards/chins*

***uvivsaram lo yisreitu saratet***

*and not to pierce their skin.*

**[Leviticus 21:7]**

Three specific actions relative to appearance are thereby brought under Divine directive. The first two relate to hair – the third relates to skin. The point should be

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<sup>6</sup> Se’ar is *sin, ayin, resh*, Strong’s Hebrew word #8181, pronounced *say-awr’*.

<sup>7</sup> This and the next word in the text, *korchah*, are both forms of the Hebrew verb *karach, kuf, resh, chet*, Strong’s Hebrew word #7139. This is the first Biblical usage of a verb from this root.

<sup>8</sup> This is a form of the Hebrew verb *galach, gimel, lamed, chet*, Strong’s Hebrew word #1548. The first usage of this verb in the Torah is found in Genesis 41:14, where it is used to describe what was done to Yosef’s beard in order that he – a Hebrew prisoner - might be made presentable before the mighty Pharaoh of Egypt.



clear. Every hair on our head – like every organ, appendage, membrane, covering, and cell of our bodies - is now supposed to be submitted and surrendered to the Holy One. Everything about our bodies, inside and outside, belongs to and should reflect the glory of our Bridegroom-King. Our skin and our hair are not to conform to the fashion customs of the self-indulgent foreign cultures among which we live. They are instead to testify to the world of the unique calling of our King upon our lives. If we are to honorably represent the Holy One to the world, *every act of cutting, trimming or shaving the hair* of our head, beard or body is to be submitted/surrendered to His Instructions. And we are not to even consider piercings or tattoos – as there is simply no way that those things can either bring honor to our Bridegroom-King or successfully promote His kingdom.

Kingdom diplomats ... are you listening? What does your current way of presenting yourself to the world say about *whom you worship*, about *which kingdom you serve*, about *whose will you value*, and about *what you consider your mission on earth to be*?

***Lo Yikreichu.*** The first thing the *kohanim* are instructed concerning the way they present themselves to the world is ***lo yikreichu***. The Hebrew verb used in this phrase is *karach*<sup>9</sup>. This verb describes the different phases of transforming something from a rough and/or unkempt state to a smooth and/or neatly clipped state. With regard to the hair on a person's head, it describes every action from trimming to shaving. What is the point? If we have been redeemed and brought into the Avrahamic Covenant, every hair on our head belongs to the Bridegroom-King. It is no longer ours to *coiffure* according to our tastes or whims. It is now to be subject solely to His purposes.

What does the Bridegroom-King care about how we wear our hair, you ask? Remember, as we discussed in our studies on parsha *Tazria*, human hair is designed by the Holy One to function as an organ of spiritual discernment. Our hair is designed to function for us, in a spiritual sense, the way antennae function for insects. In its natural state, our hair is brilliantly formulated to be sensitive to the realm of the *kadosh* [*i.e.* flowing in the energy that emanates from the Holy One and fuels everything that goes on in the Heavenly courts of the King] on the one hand, and to the presence of *tumah* [*i.e.* uncleanness; a force of fragmentation/disharmony/conflict] on the other hand. As *kohanim* one of our most basic tasks is to know and teach the

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<sup>9</sup> This is a form of the Hebrew verb root *karach*, *kuf*, *resh*, *chet*, Strong's Hebrew word #7139. This is the first Biblical usage of a verb from this root.

distinction between that which is *tamei* and that which is *tahor*<sup>10</sup>. Hence, every act of cutting, trimming, or shaping the hair on our head potentially affects our ability to accurately discern and maintain the distinctions between the realms we are called to deal with. We are to do with our hair only what the Holy One directs. There are circumstances under which the Holy One specifically tells us to shave the hair on our heads<sup>11</sup>. Outside those circumstances, the hair of a *kohen*'s head is to grow long like Shimshon's [*i.e.* Samson's].

The point for all of us should be clear. Every hair on our head – like every organ, appendage, system, and cell of our bodies - is now supposed to be submitted and surrendered to the Holy One. As Yeshua taught: ***even the very hairs of your head are all numbered***. Luke 12:7. So ... what does your current hairstyle say about *whom you worship*, about *which kingdom you serve*, about *whose will you value*, and about *what you consider your mission on earth to be*?

***Lo yegaleichu***. Next, the Bridegroom-King instructs Moshe to tell his brother and his sons: ***lo yegaleichu***. The Hebrew verb at the heart of this phrase is *galach*. The first usage of this verb in the Torah is found in Genesis 41:14, where it is used to describe what was done to Yosef's beard in order that he – a Hebrew prisoner - might be made presentable before the mighty Pharaoh of Egypt. The point of this Divine instruction is that if we are to accurately and honorably represent the Holy One to the world, *every act of shaving the hair* of our beard or our body is to be submitted/surrendered to the Holy One.

***Lo yisreitu***. Finally, the kohanim are told ***lo yisreitu***. The Hebrew verb used in this phrase is *seret*<sup>12</sup>. It means to pierce, puncture, or make an incision in the skin. The skin of a *kohen* is designed to reflect the majesty of the Holy One. It is not to be *pierced or cut* for cosmetic purposes, in the interest of 'self-expression', or out of un-surrendered emotions or fleshly appetites. It is because:

***Kadoshim yihyu l'Eloheihem***  
*They are to be holy ones unto their God,*

***v'lo yechaleilu shem Eloheihem***  
*and are not to profane their God's name.*

***ki et ishei Adonai lechem Eloheihem hem makrivim***  
*Since they present to the Holy One fire offerings, bread for drawing close to God,*

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<sup>10</sup> See Leviticus 10:10-11: *You are to distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes that the Holy One has spoken to them by the hand of Moshe.*

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Leviticus 14:8, and Numbers 6:18.

<sup>12</sup> *Seret* is *sin, resh, tet*. Strong's #H8296, Pronounced *seh'-ret*, it means to pierce, puncture, or make an incision.

### ***V'hayu kodesh***

*they must remain holy –*

*i.e. infused with kedusha energy, inspiration, laser focus, and empowerment.*

Each member of our bodies – including our hair and our skin – belongs to and should reflect the glory of our Bridegroom. Our bodies are not our own. We are to look the part of, and wear the unadulterated, uncorrupted uniform of, the King we represent.

### ***Does it Really Matter to the Holy One Who I Choose to Join My Flesh With as a Lover or Entwine My Life With as a Mate?***

The secularists in the world try to tell us that the mating rituals of the human species are, and should be, like the mating of animals, driven solely by primal urges. Judging solely by prevailing divorce and infidelity rates in our society they seem at first glance to have a valid point. But this is not the way the Holy One intended it to be. We have brought this upon ourselves. How, you ask? We have brought this upon ourselves by allowing the Godless moguls of Hollywood and the atheists of the National Education Association to hypnotize us while they brainwash our children. Every time we set our children in front of the television or movie screen, or send them to a public school, we offer them up as human sacrifices on the altar of secularist religion. We ourselves wield the slaughter knives – the TV remote controls, checkbooks, and school district tax payments – which the secularist propagandists have been using now for decades to bleed the spiritual life - and suck every drop of holiness - out of our children's souls.

The message of the secularists used to be less offensive but just as dangerous. That message used to be that what is truly important and exciting in life was *romance*. Boy meets girl, they fall in love, etc., etc., etc. It was charming. It was intoxicating. It seemed so innocent – so almost [but not quite] 'right'. Alas, the romance propaganda was just the teaser. Once we allowed ourselves to be hypnotized by that message - once we bought into it - the secularists took the plan to poison the world with propaganda to the next level. No longer is romance the 'nirvana' of Hollywood – now what is being promoted is blatant, rampant, animal-like sexuality. If you aren't dressing, talking, and behaving in a sexually stimulating way, and constantly seeking sexual stimulation, the secularist message declares, then you are *nothing* and *nobody*. The animals now run the zoo. The inmates now run the asylum.

All too often parents have fallen for this lie hook, line and sinker. From the earliest of ages, our children are bombarded from all sides with sexually suggestive media

– from billboards along the highway to television commercials and programs to movies and video games. We dress up our young women like prostitutes and our young men like gigolos, and send them to school dances, to concerts, to fraternity and sorority parties, to singles bars, to student centers, on ‘dates’, so on. But the Holy One calls out to us that there is *another way*. The Holy One is not asking by whom you are *most infatuated*. He is calling you to inquire of Him who is your *besheret* [soul mate]. If we are truly emissaries and ambassadors of *His kingdom, our sexuality – along with every other aspect of our person – belongs exclusively to Him*. And if it is His He claims it *exclusively for His purposes*. Hence the Holy One instructed Moshe to tell the *kohanim*, the sons of Aharon:

***Ishah zonah vachalalah lo yikachu***

*An adulterating/sex-promoting woman they are not to marry*

***v'ishah grushah me'ishah lo yikachu***

*And a woman divorced from her husband they are also not to marry.*

***ki-kadosh hu l'Elohim***

*For he is to be holy unto God.*

***V'kidashto ki-et-lechem Eloheicha hu makriv***

*You are to set him apart to approach/draw near to his God*

***kadosh yihyeh-lach ki kadosh***

*He must be holy, since I am holy*

***ani Adonai mekadishchem***

*and I am the Holy One who makes you holy.*

It is time for the people of the Most High God to awaken from the post-hypnotic state under which Hollywood and the National Education Association has controlled people for so long. It is time to throw off the yoke of *secular propaganda*. It is time to take back our eyes from looking upon perverse things, and our ears from listening to them. It is time to take back our minds from obsessing over romance, sensuality, and sexuality. It is time to take back our purity. It is time to take back the holiness of our Bridegroom-King. It is time to take back our marriages, our homes, and our children. It is time to do things the Holy One's way - '*l'nefesh*' – for the sake of life and the life force!

### ***Questions For Today's Study***

1. The subject matter of today's aliyah - the first thing Moshe is to *Emor* - is the special *call to purity* which characterizes a priestly life - whether a Levitical priest (a *kohen*) [Leviticus 21], a priest after the order of *Tzadok* [Ezekiel 44:15-16], or a disciple of Yeshua [a Melchizedekian priest] [I Peter 2:2-5]. Are you listening? Let there be Light!

[A] Why do you think there are there different rules for ‘priests’ than for other people?

[B] List all the “special” rules for *Kohanim* that you find in today’s psukim.

[C] List all the “special” rules for the *Kohen Gadol* [the High Priest] that you find in today’s verses.

[D] What persons were physically disqualified from performing priestly functions in the *Mish’kan*?

2. In verses 8 and 21 of Leviticus 21 the NIV refers to the *korbanot* (surrogates of approach as called for by Covenant protocols) as the “*food of ... God*”. Look at these verses in some other translations. What do you think is the meaning of these phrases?

3. Read Ezekiel 44:1-14 to get a background on why a special group of Kohanim is commissioned in our Haftarah passage today.

[A] State your explanation of why the line of Tzadok was “set apart” from the other priests.

[B] Look up *Zadok* in Smith’s Bible Dictionary. What was the circumstance where B’nei Zadok were “set apart” or distinguished themselves?

4. The haftarah for parsha *Emor* begins at verse 15 of Ezekiel chapter 44. Here are verses 15 and 16, directly transliterated and translated from the Hebrew.

***V’ha-kohanim ha-Levi'im b’nei Tzadok***

*But the Levitical priests, the son of Tzadok,*

***asher shameiru et-mishmeret mik’dashi***

*who kept the charge of My sanctuary*

***bit'ot b’nei-Yisra'el me'alay hemah***

*when the children of Israel went astray from Me,*

***yik'reivu elay l'sharteni***

*they will come near to Me to minister to Me;*

***V'ameidu lef'nei l'hak'riv li chelev v'dam***

*and they will stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood*

***ne'um Adonai Elohim Hemah yavo'u el-mikdashi***

*says the Holy One God. They will enter My sanctuary,*

***V'hemah yik'reivu el-shulchani l'sharteni***

*and come to My table, to minister to Me,*

***v'shamru et-mish'marti***

*and they will keep My charge.*

[A] List each of the special privileges the Holy One says He will bestow

upon the descendants of Tzadok.

[B] From which of Aharon's sons was Tzadok descended?

5. In the B'rit Chadasha reading for today, Kefa speaks to us as follows:

*... coming to him, a living stone,  
rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, precious.*

*You also, as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house, to be a **holy priesthood**,  
to approach the Holy One through spiritual korbanot  
acceptable to the Holy One through Yeshua the Messiah.*

**[I Peter 1:4-5]**

[A] How are you and I like "lively stones" [KJV]? Look up the words "lively" and "stones" in Strong's. Write those Greek words and their definitions.

[B] What are the "spiritual sacrifices" [KJV] we are to offer up? [Hint: see Romans 12:1-21, Hebrews 13:10-17, Ephesians 5:1-20, Philippians 2:12-16, and Romans 6:13,19].

*May the Words of Torah burst forth over His People this day  
as a sunrise bursts forth over the earth,  
and may we become, at last, recognizable as Priests of Our God.*

***The Rabbi's son***

## ***Meditation for Today's Study***

Psalm 112:1-4

*Blessed is the man who fears the Holy One - who delights greatly in his mitzvot.  
His seed will be mighty in the land.*

*The generation of the upright will be blessed.  
Wealth and riches are in his house.  
His righteousness endures forever.*

*Light dawns in the darkness for the upright,  
For the Gracious, for the merciful, and for the righteous.*