

Beit Hamidrash Hameir Laarets | Issue 151

**Tzav** | The Eternal Flame of the G-dly Spark

# MESILOT

## *Pathways to the Soul*

Illuminating teachings and insights on the weekly Parsha  
of **Rabbi Yoram Michael Abargel Zt"l**

From the weekly lessons of his son  
**Rabbi Yisrael Abargel Shlita**

# ...PATHWAYS TO THE SOUL...

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

From the Depths You Have Lifted Me Up . . . . .	1
The Battle of Amalek Against Israel . . . . .	6
And All Wickedness Will Go Up in Smoke . . . . .	10
Regarding the Burning of Chametz . . . . .	12
Man as a Small World . . . . .	13
The Tabernacle - A Complete Structure . . . . .	15
The Altar Symbolizes the Heart . . . . .	16
The First Three Commandments of Parshat Tzav . . .	17
Kindling the Fire in the Heart of a Jew . . . . .	17
An Eternal Flame . . . . .	19
The Kindling was Done by the Priests . . . . .	22
Fortunate Is One Who Seizes Opportune Times . . .	23
Studying the Laws of the Holiday . . . . .	24
Summary and Practical Applications . . . . .	25



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## Parshat Tzav

### From the Depths You Have Lifted Me Up

**Rabbi** Zalman Ruderman, shared the following story ("Between Fish and Song", Part 3, Page 36):

**He** had managed complex and successful business ventures and attained a respected status among his fellow Chasidim.

**He** had a son, about fifteen, clever and sharp-witted, but, unfortunately, lacking any desire to engage in Torah study.

**At** a certain point, he realized it was better to find an occupation for his son just to avoid idleness, for it is said that idleness leads to sin. 'He won't become a great Torah scholar,' the father thought to himself. And with great sadness, he decided to bring him into his business.

**The** son was happy with the offer and started working in his father's business. Here, his potential and cleverness became evident. His training period was

exceptionally short. With his sharp intellect, he quickly grasped the business operations and even the subtleties of negotiation and trade.

**Within** a few months, he became his father's right-hand man in all his complex business dealings.

**Unfortunately,** however, together with his meteoric rise in the business world, he declined and strayed in spiritual matters.

**The** father's hope was that the business would engage his son and leave no room for idleness and the shirking of responsibilities. However, it was only partially fulfilled.

**Indeed,** his son was very busy, but his frequent travels from city to city and his regular interactions with wealthy and influential people aroused in him the desire to shed his Jewish appearance and customs and be like all the nations.

**The** poor father witnessed his son's deterioration with sadness.

**He** tried to speak to his son gently and affectionately. 'Look how much good I have done for you,' he said, 'I brought you into my business and trusted you completely and now you are my senior partner'.

**Is** this how you repay me for all that I bestowed upon you ?'

**Initially**, the son made an effort to improve and to please his father, but as time passed, his heart hardened, and his feelings towards his parents and family faded. And day by day, he drifted even further from the proper path.

**Then**, the father decided that it was enough; he had to change his approach.

**The** father proceeded to threaten to disinherit his son from the business and all of his considerable wealth. But the son was not overly impressed by his father's threats. Knowing how vital he was to his father's business, he tended to believe that these were just empty threats.

**And** so ultimately, the father realized that his words were falling on deaf ears, and he gave up and resigned himself to the situation.

**With** a terrified heart, he watched his beloved son, whom he had raised and guided properly to the path of success, trample all that was sacred and dear to him.

**The** son's behavior continued to worsen, challenging his father's patience daily.

**When** it reached a point where his actions crossed all possible boundaries, the miserable father realized that dealing with his son was beyond his limited ability and he now required the intervention of greater forces.

**He** went to his Rebbe, the Tzaddik Rabbi Dov Ber, the 'Mitteler Rebbe' of Lubavitch.

**With** flowing tears, he presented his calamitous situation to the Tzaddik and begged for salvation.

**The** Rebbe listened carefully and sunk into deep thought for a long time.

**Occasionally**, the Rebbe would raise his eyes as if gazing far away, as though he was sailing off and peering into the soul of the wayward son.

**After** a long hour, the Rebbe focused his gaze on the brokenhearted father and said:

'A very hard 'shell' surrounds your son's soul. He has sunk to the depths, and it's not my custom to descend to such low depths.

**My** role is to speak the words of Chassidus and to revive souls, but not to deal with such hard shells.'

**The** miserable father looked at his Rebbe in despair, and a fresh stream of tears flowed from his eyes. 'Is all hope lost?' he whispered bitterly.

**The** Rebbe thought for a moment more. 'One should never lose hope,' he said. 'Never!'

**My** advice is that you travel with your son to the great Chassidic court of Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin.

**Tell** him I sent you to him, and I assure you that with his unique methods, he will succeed in saving your son.'

'**Maybe** I didn't explain myself properly,' the father added, despairing. 'But there's no chance in the world I'll be able to take my son with me to Ruzhin. Even to come here - where he would come with me occasionally - I begged and pleaded for him to come, and he laughed in my face. 'What do I have to do with your Tzaddikim!' he scoffed brazenly.

**How** can I possibly take him to Ruzhin?'

**Rabbi** Dovber looked compassionately at the miserable father and said: 'Listen to me and follow my advice

**You** know that in Ruzhin everything is conducted with a manner of 'royalty'.

**Rabbi** Yisroel of Ruzhin lives in a magnificent palace, and travels in a splendid carriage.

**Tell** your son, therefore, that you are heading to meet a great and

## Parshat Tzav - From the Depths You Have Lifted Me Up

successful businessman, with whom you wish to conduct business. He will surely be tempted and will join you. And when you reach Ruzhin, leave the rest to the righteous Rabbi Yisroel of Ruzhin.'

**This** plan suggested by his Rebbe worked. The rebellious son agreed to accompany his father on the journey to Ruzhin, for a meeting with this 'successful businessman'.

**Upon** arriving in Ruzhin, the son was greatly impressed by the grandeur of the Tzaddik's home.

**He** was convinced he had come to the home of one of the country's wealthiest men.

**I** will enter first,' said the father to his son, 'to preliminarily discuss the business terms with the man. Then, you will join us so we can sit together and finalize the details.' The son agreed to this plan, and the father entered the Tzaddik's presence alone. He unfolded his sorrowful story about his son who had strayed from the righteous path. When the Tzaddik heard the father's words and the severity of his son's situation, he sighed deeply from the depths of his heart.

For a moment, the father feared that even the Tzaddik of Ruzhin would withdraw from the matter.

**However**, when the father added that he had been sent by the Tzaddik Rabbi Dovber of Lubavitch, the expression on the face of the Tzaddik of Ruzhin changed to one of consent and agreement. 'Every Jew has a hold on repentance,' he said, 'one just needs to ignite the spark within him.'

**After** a while, the son was called to enter.

**But** upon seeing the radiant face of the Tzaddik, the son realized he had fallen into a 'trap', and he immediately understood that this was not about monetary transactions but about matters of the soul.

**For** a short moment, he wanted to turn on his heels and leave the house just as he had entered, but the Tzaddik's piercing gaze seemed to nail him to the spot.

**The** Tzaddik did not utter a word, but merely signaled to him to follow. The father remained in the living room, while the Tzaddik and the son entered the home's inner chambers.

**Together**, they walked on the plush and soft, expensive carpets, passing from room to room, until they reached a room adorned with several mirrors. The Tzaddik motioned for the son to look into the first mirror.

**The** son looked and before his eyes, as if rising from the depths of oblivion, appeared his own image as a young boy, adorned with side locks, his eyes exuding innocence and purity

**From** there, the Tzaddik took him to another mirror. Now the son saw himself on a stage wandering and searching in foreign fields, and the image reflected back at him radiated confusion and loss of direction

**In** the next mirror, the son saw himself committing one of his first and most serious transgressions.

**In** the fourth mirror, he saw a man himself fiercely indulging in worldly desires with gluttony and without reason.

**Finally**, upon reaching the fifth mirror, he was confronted with his current self, as he was in the present.

**Suddenly**, he saw himself to be in one of his most defiant and ugliest moments.

**A** deep shock seized him. To see his entire life's journey in one sequence, from his days in the cheder (Jewish elementary school) until now, enlightened his eyes and broke his heart.

**He** burst into bitter tears and prostrated himself on the floor at the Tzaddik's feet.

**'Give** me a path to repentance !' he cried out in broken sobs.

**The** Tzaddik did not rush to respond. Instead, he allowed him to cry out from the depths of his heart and wallow in his tears for another long hour. Only then, convinced that his cries were genuine and arose from the depths of his soul, did the Tzaddik acquiesce to the repentant son's pleas and instructed him to stand on his feet.

**For** a long time, the Tzaddik of Ruzhin secluded himself with the son, guiding him with a detailed path of rectifying his grave sins. Afterwards, he affectionately parted from him and from his father.

**Parshat Tzav - The Battle of Amalek Against Israel**

**In** the days and weeks that followed, the son entirely changed his ways. His return to the good was also reflected in his external appearance, which changed beyond recognition. As

he persisted in this effort over time, everyone knew that his repentance was complete.

**This** young man succeeded in rising from the depths of impurity to the lofty heights of purity.

**The Battle of Amalek Against Israel**

**In** the year 3403 to creation, the wicked Haman decided that the time had come to complete the process started by his Amalekite ancestors and forefathers

those of King Ahasuerus' empire.

**It** was about fifty years after the destruction of the First Temple.

**He** entered his chambers and began to engage in sorcery, eventually deciding that the most auspicious date for executing his sinister plan would be the 13th of Adar.

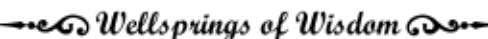
**Fifty** years had passed after that harsh event when the Jews were severed from the holy Temple, where they witnessed miracles and heard the words of the prophets.

**To** understand why he felt that this was the most appropriate time, we bring the words of the saintly Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak, the 'Rebbe Rayatz of Lubavitch':<sup>1</sup>

**Following** this destruction, the Jews were scattered and dispersed among various nations, some who treated them poorly, while others recognized their virtues and skills to benefit their lands, and they treated them well.

**In** the year 3385 to creation - in the midst of the Babylonian exile - the Jews were scattered across many countries, including

**In** the year 3392 to creation, Ahasuerus ascended to the throne.



1. Likkutei Dibburim (Part 3 - p. 527).



**Ahasuerus** was fickle by nature and quite arrogant, wise in his own opinion, and easily angered. He embodied a mixture of good and evil, wisdom and foolishness, all together, as our sages say (Megillah 12a): 'He was a wise king, and he was also a foolish king.'

**During** the reign of his father, Darius, and also at the beginning of his own reign, Jews had good occupations and livelihoods in their countries.

**With** time - for various reasons, as well as business and social connections - the Jews distanced from the Torah and mitzvot and immersed themselves in worldly life.

**They** pursued luxuries, Shabbat became a regular day, Kashrut was taken lightly, and family life - family purity - became coarsened.

**In** those times, the Jews forgot that they were the chosen people and started to take lightly the selection of G-d - 'Who chose us from all nations and exalted us above all tongues' and started

living secular lives, mundane as all the other nations.

**Mordechai** the Jew and Malachi the prophet, spoke at length to the hearts of the Jews and warned them that G-d would not tolerate such life and would punish them severely for it.

**Mordechai** the Jew and Malachi the prophet explained to the Jews that if G-d, heaven forbid, poured out His wrath upon them and their families, their friendships with nations of the world would not help, nor their great wealth.

**They** clarified the words G-d spoke in the Torah sections of rebuke.

**Unfortunately**, the obstinate hearts of the Jews did not allow them to properly heed these faithful words, and despite Mordechai being one of the important figures of the king's court, his words did not help

**Ahasuerus** waged a great war against various countries and conquered them. The Jews of Ahasuerus' kingdom greatly assisted in his victory and were highly regarded. They received

**Parshat Tzav - The Battle of Amalek Against Israel**

various honors and were given important roles in the government.

**Among** the people Ahasuerus appointed to high positions in his government was a man of lowly origin, a barber and a bathhouse attendant, named Haman, the son of Hamdatha, a man of great ambition, of passionate pride, and a pathological liar who succeeded in becoming one of Ahasuerus' top advisors.

**When** Ahasuerus returned from the battlefield crowned with great victory, he held grand feasts for all his subjects, to which his Jewish subjects were also invited by royal invitation.

**The** royal instructions were to treat every guest well and to provide the best in food and drink.

**The** feasts of forbidden food, accompanied by wild revelry, further corrupted the Jews, and

despite the approaching redemption from the Babylonian exile - as per the prophecies of the prophets of Israel<sup>2</sup> - the Jews did not want to hear of it and scoffed at it with great insolence.

**Their** outstanding military achievements, combined with the royal awards of gratitude, intoxicated them. They settled in the most beautiful palatial buildings and 'the life of freedom and liberty' found favor in their eyes: without Shabbat, without Kashrut, without mikvah, without tefillin. They enjoyed their physical life to the fullest.

**They** rejected all moral teachings in a most disgraceful manner, and 'every man did what was right in his eyes'.

**The** wealthy were confident in their wealth and did not appreciate the Rabbis and Torah scholars, and caused them to suffer.

— *~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~* —

2. As Jeremiah prophesied, saying: 'For thus said the L-rd: After seventy years complete in Babylon, I will remember you and perform My good word toward you, and return you to

this place. For I know the thoughts that I think about you, says the L-rd, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.'

(Jeremiah 29:10-11).

**Five** years had passed from the day Ahasuerus punished his wife Vashti with death, and Esther was crowned queen. In accordance with Mordechai's command, no one knew her nation of origin or of her birthplace.

**For** five years, a large part of the Jews in King Ahasuerus' countries lived lives of wealth and happiness, in luxury and freedom, without Torah and observance of the commandments, desecrating the Shabbat and holidays, eating non-kosher foods, living like other nations, and desecrating the proper Jewish morals.

**Haman**, seeing the spiritual state of the Jews, rubbed his hands in delight, 'Now is the perfect time', and he began to weave his evil web.

**The** incredibly rapid chronology of the events that followed is recorded in 'Seder Hadorot' (Year 3404):

**On** the 13<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, Haman wrote letters,<sup>3</sup> and after two days, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, Esther entered the king's chambers, and on the following day, the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, Haman was hanged.

**Seventy-three** days later, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of Sivan, Mordechai wrote throughout the kingdom royal edicts to repeal Haman's decree, and ten months later, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of Adar, Haman's ten sons were hanged.

**A** year later the Megillah was written by Mordechai and Esther.

**Thus**, we find that the Jews succeeded within a day and a half to rise from the depths of the evil decree to the great heights of salvation.

**About** this, in our talk below.

**Let** us first pause for a moment and add an important point.

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*~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~*

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**3.** As it is said: 'And the scribes of the king were called on the first month, on the thirteenth day, and wrote all that Haman had commanded unto the king's messengers, and to the governors over every province, and to the rulers of

every people; to every province according to its script, and to every people in their language; in the name of King Ahasuerus it was written, and it was sealed with the king's signet ring.' (Esther 3:12).

## And All Wickedness Will Go Up in Smoke

**The** Seder night at the house of the great Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak, 'The Seer' of Lublin, was an exalted experience for anyone fortunate enough to participate.

**Dozens** of stories were told and passed down from generation to generation, and the storytellers never tired of retelling them.<sup>4</sup>

**From** the many accounts that have been preserved about conducting the Seder night in the presence of the 'Seer,' we will bring

the story of Rabbi Moshe Yair Weinstock (Kodesh Hilulim - Page 105):

**The** Seer of Lublin yearned for the Messiah's redemption and coming throughout his life. He engaged in abundant prayers and supplications, and his yearnings and longings never ceased for a moment.

**One** year, as the month of Nissan approached, he began particular heavenly actions to hasten the redemption. He started

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...*~* **Wellsprings of Wisdom** *~*...

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**4. The** following story was shared by Rabbi Avraham Zaida ('The Rabbi, the Leader, and the Doctor' - Page 266):

**Rabbi** Shmuel Heller, who served as a rabbi in Safed, became famous as a tremendous genius in Torah and additionally was an expert doctor who knew to remedy many illnesses.

**It** was a wonder: When did he have time to study medicine? Rabbi Shmuel never answered this.

**On** one occasion however, he revealed from where he acquired his knowledge of human anatomy, and shared:

**My** father was a follower of the Seer of Lublin, and when I was a child, my father

took me to Lublin, and I was privileged to participate in the Seder on Passover night held at the house of the Seer of Lublin.

**The** Seer sat and read the Haggadah, and when he reached the section: 'with great awe - this refers to the revelation of the Shechinah', great awe and fear fell upon me.

**I** felt all my limbs igniting in a flame that cannot be described and I fell under the table in a spell.

**I** saw the body of the Seer illuminated in a flame of fire, his body was purified and transparent, and before my eyes were revealed the inner workings of the organs of the Seer, and in those moments, I was gifted with the wisdom of medicine.

to perform specific unifications and intentions to bring the coming of the Messiah closer.

**Knowing** the difficulty of this task, he asked three Tzaddikim to assist him in this endeavor: the 'Holy Jew' of Peshischa, the great Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac of Kaliv, and the great Rabbi Nachum of Chernobyl, and they agreed to participate with him.

**From** the beginning of the month of Nissan, the Seer began his heavenly preparations, which peaked during the chametz burning.

**At** that time, he intended to burn and eradicate all wickedness with fire. "For the wicked will perish; the enemies of the L-rd will be like the meadow grass of the fields; they will vanish—like smoke" (Psalms 37:20).

**In** Kaliv and Chernobyl, they also focused their battle against the kingdom of wickedness.

**Then** came the main stage of the battle, conducting the Seder night.

**As** the Seer intensified his preparations for the Seder night, his holiness and purity reached unprecedented heights.

**None** of his disciples could recall such a lofty and exalted Seder.

**The** Seer sat by the table, his face glowing, and all the participants felt that the supreme light, the light of the Divine Presence, was shining on him in all its splendor.

**The** Seer connected the spiritual world with this world and raised this world to purify it, refine it, and lift it from the dust of its lowliness.

**The** Seder night ended, and on the face of the Seer were seen signs of sorrow: alas, we failed.

**The** forces of impurity erected tremendous obstacles and managed to confuse the Seder nights with the other righteous leaders.

**At** the house of 'the holy Jew', a quarrel broke out between his mother and his wife, Rebbetzin Sheindel.

**At** the Tzaddik of Chernobyl's house, the Afikoman was stolen and not returned to him.

**And** the Rabbi of Kaliv had recited the Haggadah in Hungarian.

**Parshat Tzav - Regarding the Burning of Chametz**

**And** we lost that rare opportunity, and until the writing of these lines, we still have not been redeemed.

**And** as is known, every action of the Tzaddikim has a

source, and it is incumbent upon us to know this source.<sup>5</sup>

**For** the idea that the time of burning the chametz is suitable for eradicating wickedness, we find a source as well.

**Regarding the Burning of Chametz**

**In** a discourse by Rabbi Pinchas of Koritz of blessed memory (Imrei Pinchas HaShalem, Part A - Page 71), he said:

**Haman** the wicked was the essence of Chametz.

**On** the 13<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, he sent his letters to annihilate and kill the Jewish People.

**In** that generation lived the great and righteous men of the Great Assembly, and when they

...*~* **Wellsprings of Wisdom** *~*...

**5. The** Talmud brings the following tale (Sanhedrin 11a):

**Rabbi** Judah the Prince sat and expounded to his students.

**In** the middle of his discourse, he smelled a strong odor of garlic, and requested: "Whoever ate garlic should please leave." Rabbi Chiya stood up and left, followed by everyone else.

**The** next day, Rabbi Shimon, the son of Rabbi Judah, met Rabbi Chiya and asked him: "Were you the one who caused discomfort to father yesterday?"

**Rabbi** Chiya replied: "G-d forbid, it was not I who ate garlic, but I left so that

everyone would leave and it would not be known who it was, and the one who did eat it would not be embarrassed."

**And** the Talmud asks, from where did Rabbi Chiya learn to act this way? And it answers, from Rabbi Meir, as in a certain incident with a woman who came to the study hall of Rabbi Meir...

**And** the Talmud continues to ask, and from where did Rabbi Meir learn this sensitivity? And it answers, from Shmuel Hakatan, who learned it from Shichaniah ben Yecheil, who learned it from Joshua, and Joshua learned it himself from Moses.

heard about the decree, their eyes filled with tears of emotion: 'Thank you, merciful Father in Heaven, that Haman published the letters on the eve of the search for Chametz.'

**'They** certainly knew the inner significance of burning Chametz, and immediately that evening (of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan), they searched for Chametz. It is known that before the burning, it is necessary to place ten pieces of Chametz to be found and burned, and they correspond to the ten powers of impurity, and by burning them, they are burned and annulled from the world'.

### **Man as a Small World**

**The** Raavad wrote in his commentary on Sefer Yetzirah (Chapter 1, Mishnah 1): You must know that everything that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created in His world, He created in man, as it is said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26).

**All** this, so that from the revealed, one can contemplate the mysteries of wisdom, as it is said: "from my flesh shall I see G-d" (Job

**And** the following day (the 14<sup>th</sup> in the morning), during the burning of the Chametz, when they threw the Chametz into the blazing fire, they cast along with it the spiritual likeness of Haman and it was burned in the fiery furnace - "The fire consumed the wicked" (Psalms 106:18) and two days later (on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nissan), his body was also destroyed; Haman the wicked was hanged on the tree.

**After** bringing the source for the actions of the Seer of Lublin, we begin with this week's Torah portion.

19:26), meaning the organs were arranged and inscribed in man down to every detail. Therefore, 'from my flesh shall I see G-d.'

**And** we explain:

**One** of the reasons for creating man was so that he should recognize how the Holy One, blessed be He, governs His world.

**Indeed**, it is not the simplest of things since our physical body covers and hides all spiritual reality.

## Parshat Tzav - Man as a Small World

**Therefore**, He created man in the same form as the higher worlds are built. Thus, when man contemplates his soul and body, he can understand how the higher worlds are constructed and how they behave.

**There** is much to expand on these matters, but we will focus on one point:

**The** Holy One, blessed be He, wanted every complete existence to be composed of 613 parts. And when this is so (meaning all 613 parts are united), such an existence is called a 'complete stature.'

**Several** existences are complete spheres, and three of them are the Torah, the Tabernacle, and man.

**The** Torah comprises 248 positive commandments and 365 negative commandments, which are 613.

**Man**, too, is composed of 248 limbs and 365 sinews.

**And** when a person fulfills the 248 positive commandments and is careful not to transgress any of the 365 negative commandments<sup>6</sup> - his body

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### *~ Wellsprings of Wisdom ~*

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**6. Regarding** this Rabbi Israel Yaakov Klapholtz related (All the Stories of the Baal Shem Tov, Part 3, p. 47):

**The** traveling carriage stopped with a screech near one of the houses, from within it a pale doctor sprang out and ran in a panic to the house.

**The** examination concluded and the doctor raised his hands: "It is hopeless, nothing can be done".

**It** was precisely at those moments, by divine providence, that the holy Baal Shem Tov passed by, and one of the patient's friends approached him and asked him to come visit the patient.

**The** Baal Shem Tov entered, looked at the patient, and then said: "Cook for him a beef soup, and give it to him to drink, and with G-d's help, he will recover."

**And** so it was, the patient drank from the soup and began to recover, until after a few days he was completely healed.

**The** doctor grabbed his head and thought: "Beef soup?! What's the connection?!" And he traveled to the Baal Shem Tov.

**"Rabbi**, in the examination I conducted, I found that this man's tendons were completely damaged, to such a degree that they could not be healed. I am curious to know how did you heal him?"



Parshat Tzav - The Tabernacle - A Complete Structure

becomes a chariot and a sanctuary for the holy Torah.

**Now** we move on to discuss the Tabernacle.

## The Tabernacle - A Complete Structure

**Rabbi** Moshe Wolfson wrote the following:<sup>7</sup>

**The** entire creation is a complete structure consisting of '248 limbs and 365 sinews', which parallels the Torah, the blueprint of the world, and is composed of 248 positive commandments and 365 negative commandments.

**As** written in the holy Zohar, The Tabernacle, too, was a complete structure, similar to the whole of creation, and the form of the Tabernacle is similar to the form of the world.

**Therefore**, we learn the laws of the Shabbat from the labors of the Tabernacle, for the labors that were present in the Tabernacle undoubtedly mirror those actions that were present in the creation of the world.

**It** is thus evident that the Tabernacle itself was composed of 613 parts, which also correspond to the various parts of the Torah.

**In** more detail, within the Tabernacle, there were two general aspects: the Tabernacle structure itself and the vessels within it.

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*Wellsprings of Wisdom*

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**The** Baal Shem Tov explained:

**"You** inspected the patient physically while I perceived him spiritually. For there are 248 limbs and 365 tendons in a person, and corresponding to them, there are 248 positive commandments and 365 negative commandments.

**When** a person sins, G-d forbid, the limb or tendon corresponding to the sin is damaged. And when many negative

commandments are transgressed, many tendons are damaged, and the blood does not flow through them, and the person is in danger.

**Therefore**, I spoke to the soul of the patient to accept upon itself repentance, and when it accepted it, the limbs and tendons were repaired, and he was healed".

7. Likutei Emunat Itecha - Purim (page 187).

**Parshat Tzav - The Altar Symbolizes the Heart**

**The** righteous Rabbi Naftali Tzvi of Ropshitz wrote: The Tabernacle vessels each symbolize a person's limbs.

**The** Torah details and expounds at length the creation of these vessels so that we learn and study how to repair our

limbs and the entire structure, from the specifics of each vessel, to the associated limb or organ.

**Only** after the Torah taught us about the Tabernacle and its vessels did it begin to instruct us in the Book of Leviticus how to use the vessels.

**The Altar Symbolizes the Heart**

**The** Great Ben Ish Chai wrote:<sup>8</sup>

**The** copper altar was square, thirty-two cubits in length by thirty-two cubits in width, and corresponds to a person's heart.

**"The** heart of a person is considered like the altar upon which the fire and wood of the offering were arranged."

**This** explains why King David evoked the heart when he spoke about the sacrifices offered on the altar.

**As** is written: 'The sacrifices of G-d are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, G-d, You will not despise' (Psalms 51:19)

**This** is also the reason that the details of the sacrifices in the Torah begin with the verse 'Vayikra' from where we learn about Moses' humility,<sup>9</sup> because the main effect of the sacrifice and the ensuing atonement is achieved precisely through humility and the contriteness of heart together with the sacrifice that was offered on the altar.

—*~* **Wellsprings of Wisdom** *~*—

**8.** 'Od Yosef Chai' - Sermons (Tzav).

**9. As** explained by the Baal HaTurim (Leviticus 1:1):

**'The** small 'aleph' in 'Vayikra' indicates that Moses was greatly humble and did

not wish to write except 'Vayiker', as if G-d had spoken to him merely in a dream as written by Balaam, as if he had only seen G-d by chance, but G-d told him to write 'Vayikra' with an 'aleph'.

## The First Three Commandments of Parshat Tzav

**In** the first section of Parshat Tzav (Exodus 27:20 - 30:10), we are commanded regarding three mitzvot (of the 613 commandments):

**Positive** Commandment 131  
- The mitzvah of removing the ashes (verse 3).

**Following** this we are commanded “A perpetual fire shall be kept on the altar, it shall not be put out” (verse 6).

**In** this verse, there is one positive and one negative commandment:

**Positive** Commandment 132  
- To kindle a fire on the altar every day.

**This** means to place wood on the altar in the morning and between the evenings. The Talmud (Yoma 21b) states that even though fire descended from Heaven onto the altar to consume the offerings, there is a mitzvah for the kohanim (priests) to additionally bring fire on their own.<sup>10</sup>

**Negative** Commandment 133 - Not to extinguish the fire upon the altar.

## Kindling the Fire in the Heart of a Jew

**We** have explained that the heart of a Jew corresponds to the altar.

**Just** as there are these three commandments related to the altar, there are also corresponding actions in the heart of a Jew.

**The** positive commandment of lighting a fire on the altar - although fire descended from heaven onto the altar, there was still a mitzvah for the Kohanim to bring fire and additional wood.

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**And** Moses out of great humility requested that it be written smaller than the other 'alephs' in the Torah, and that is how he wrote it.'

**10. Rabbi** Shimon Moshe Diskin wrote (Ohel Yehoshua - Masat HaMelech, page 101):

**It** seems that the positive commandment of this perpetual fire is only that there should be fire on the altar, but there is no specific measure for this. As long as the fire has not been extinguished, this positive commandment has not been nullified.

## Parshat Tzav - Kindling the Fire in the Heart of a Jew

**Similarly**, within the innermost core of the heart of every Jew there is a pure and holy spark connected to above by the thick ropes of love.

**Even** a person who sins and transgresses, G-d forbid, his many sins only tarnish and defile the external aspects of his soul, not the innermost point within his heart. In that inner place, sin has never left a mark, and it is forever intact and pure.

**Regarding** this innermost, pure point it is said, 'And your people are all righteous' (Isaiah 60:21), meaning that even though from the perspective of his external actions, it does not appear at all that he can be called 'righteous,' with regard to the innermost point within his heart which has never sinned, he certainly can be called 'righteous.'

**And** this is what is stated, 'He who dwells among them in the midst of their impurity' (Leviticus 16:16). This comes to express that in the midst of all the blemishes and impurities caused by a person's deeds, there is an innermost, pure

point that remains untouched and perfectly united with G-d.

**In** the innermost part of every Jew's heart, he believes in G-d with complete faith and is even willing to sacrifice his life for this belief.

**This** is as expressed in the holy words of the Tanya (Chapter 18): 'Even the simplest among Israel, who is guilty of the most heinous sins, would cast himself into the burning furnace in sanctification of G-d's name.'

**Every** Jew loves G-d from the depths of his heart and desires to cleave to Him and His Torah. However, the evil inclination confuses and misleads him, inducing him to transgress, and he allows himself to be led astray by planting within his heart the spirit of folly. As our Sages have said (Sotah 3a): 'A person does not commit a sin unless a spirit of folly enters into him.'

**However**, this is not his true desire.

**The** holy and G-dly spark, pure and unblemished, is the fire that descends from above, however

there is the fire from below that we are commanded to bring.

**And** just as every day there was the service to remove the ashes from the altar, so too we must uncover the inner recesses of the heart of every Jew, where there is an unquenchable fire, and even though externally it may be covered with ashes, when awakened even lightly, the ashes can be removed.

**As** the Ben Ish Chai said:<sup>11</sup>

### An Eternal Flame

**Rabbi** Yoram Abargel once related the following (Imrei Noam, Tzav - Article 4):

**In** our Parshah, it states: "A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out" (Leviticus 6:6).

**From** this verse, we learn the positive commandment that there must always be a perpetual fire on the altar (Maimonides - Laws of Tmidin and Musafin 2:1).

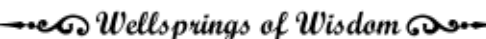
**For** this purpose, a special arrangement of wood was

**If** the intention of the verse was to command kindling a fire only on the altar, it should have been written: 'A perpetual fire shall be kept on the altar and shall not be extinguished.' But since it wrote, 'A perpetual fire shall be kept *above* the altar,' it also refers to the heart that is above the altar.

**The** altar already exists within the hearts of the Jewish people, and the commandment is to enliven the fire within the heart...

placed atop the altar, apart from the large arrangement on which the offerings were brought and apart from the smaller arrangement of wood from which they took fire for the daily incense offering.

**This** special arrangement would burn continuously without any interruption. Its entire purpose was to fulfill this positive commandment of having a perpetual fire on the top of the altar without cessation (as in



11. 'Od Yosef Chai' - Sermons (Tzav).

**Parshat Tzav - An Eternal Flame**

Maimonides above, and in accordance with Rabbi Yossi in Yoma 45a).

**In** the Jerusalem Talmud (Yoma 4:6), our Sages added that we learn from what is stated here, "A fire shall always be burning," that even if the priests are ritually impure, and therefore cannot offer other sacrifices, they must still kindle this fire on the altar so that there is no interruption in its burning, and it should be "an eternal flame."

**And** it is explained there that even when the Jews traveled in the desert for forty years, they were meticulous in preserving the continuous burning of this fire, and they would protect it with a copper cover during their sojourn from one location to the next so that it be shielded and not be extinguished by the wind, and the like.

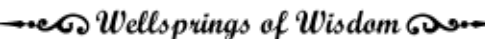
**In** this mitzvah, there is a wonderful lesson to apply to the service of G-d:

**The** Lubavitcher Rebbe of sainted memory, explained in one of his discourses<sup>12</sup> that the altar alludes

to the heart of every Jew, and the fire of the altar alludes to the fire of love burning in the heart of every Jew to the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is said: "Its flashes are flash of fire, it is a flame of G-d" (Song of Songs 8:6).

**Sometimes**, a person goes through periods of difficult trials and various spiritual falls, and the fire of love for G-d, His holy Torah, and His commandments seems to diminish until it appears that it is completely extinguished, G-d forbid. Therefore, the Torah comes and commands: "A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out." Even during times of spiritual descent, and even in a state of impurity, and throughout all the travails and journeys a person experiences in their lifetime, they must always ensure that the fire of love for the Creator should always burn, even if it becomes small, and see to it that it does not go out completely, G-d forbid.

**The** Baal Shem Tov writes ('Keter Shem Tov', Letter 217-2):



"**Even** when one falls from his level, he should cling to the Creator, blessed be He, with a small thought... and from that smallness, greatness will come. Just like with embers, if even one spark remains, it can be fanned until it becomes a great bonfire.

**Conversely**, if there is not even a small spark, one cannot fan a fire. Thus, if one does not always cling to Him, with a small thought, his soul will completely extinguish."

**His** holy words teach us that a person must always hold on to the Creator, blessed be He. Even at a time when he has fallen from his level and is in a state of 'small-mindedness' and his heart is as dull as stone, he should not abandon his place in holiness, G-d forbid, and should not sever himself from his attachment to the Creator, blessed be He, for then, G-d forbid, the fire of his soul will completely extinguish.

**Rather**, he should always hold onto the Creator, blessed be He, even with the slightest bit, and by virtue of that very slight amount, he

will merit to rise from his lowliness and return to his original level.

**Therefore**, even if at times, it is difficult for a person to engage in Torah study with toil and effort due to the dullness of his heart and the smallness of his understanding, he should at least engage in a simpler study of the Torah.

**And** if even this is difficult for him, he should at least skim the letters of the holy Torah even if he does not understand a single word.

**And** if even this is difficult for him, he should at least engage in fulfilling the Commandments and acts of kindness - the main thing is to be connected to holiness in any situation even slightly, and not to completely sever himself, G-d forbid.

**This** is the divine service alluded to in the verse: "A fire shall always burn on the altar; it shall not be extinguished."

**This** is also alluded to in the verse that extols the greatness of every Jew: "He couched and lay down as a lion, and who shall rouse him up?" (Numbers 24:9).

## Parshat Tzav - The Kindling was Done by the Priests

Meaning that even when a Jew is spiritually bent over and even knocked flat on the ground, and is in a state of "smallness of intellect" and his heart is splintered to a thousand shards, even then, he truly is a lion and

has the strength to hold on to his connection with the Holy One, blessed be He, and even from that smallness of intellect, he will be revitalized, and return to his initial spiritual level.

**There** is another point here...

### The Kindling was Done by the Priests

**The** commandment of kindling the fire on the altar was given to the priests.

**This** teaches us that even if sometimes a person feels that they lack the strength to ignite the fire within and feel as if they are trapped in a desolate space without air and life, a heavy burden fills their heart, and they experience the desire to 'disappear' again and again, they must know that there is a solution, and they need to come to 'the priest' who will kindle the fire within.

**For** this matter, 'the priest' is a term for a righteous person. A righteous person has the power to ignite the fire within the Jewish people.

**And** as we saw at the beginning of our conversation, Rabbi Yisrael

of Ruzhin succeeded in elevating the young man from the depths of impurity to the highest chambers of purity in one ascension, and as we also encountered with the power of Mordechai the Jew and Queen Esther.

**The** reason they had this power and ability is that they didn't need to create an altar and fire from anew; it already exists within the heart of every Jew and they need only to kindle the fire.

**We** will add another point:

**Sometimes**, a person merits connecting with a living righteous person in this world - how fortunate is he !

**But** not everyone merits this, and there are many Jews who do not merit connecting with a living



righteous person, and for them, the solution is to connect with righteous individuals who have already departed from this world.

**When** a Jew merits and studies the book of a righteous person, and during the study, awakens in their heart love for

the righteous person and faith in the righteous person, they merit to connect and bond with the righteous person, who in turn influences upon them an abundance of holiness.

**We** will add another detail to the above.

### **Fortunate Is One Who Seizes Opportune Times**

**We** have found another way:

**Most** of the days of the year are weekdays, days when we need to struggle with our inclinations and bodily desires.

**But** there are times of will, days when there is a special light that affects the soul, and by the power of this light, a Jew can ignite the fire within.

**The** thirty days between Purim and Passover are precisely such days capable of this effect.

**As** quoted in 'Imrei Noam' (Passover - Article 3):

**It** is explained in the holy books ('Chesed L'Avraham,' 2:57) that in order for each and every one of Israel to

merit the immense light that descends to the world on Passover night, and there be no impediment due to their sins, the Holy One, blessed be He, performs a great kindness for the Jewish people.

**Thirty** days before Passover, He begins to remove from each one of Israel the chambers of impurity that they have fallen into due to their evil deeds, and He purifies them each day during these days, cleansing them from one of thirty sins so that on the night of Passover, each one of Israel is found clean and pure from all sin, like an angel in truth, and free from his evil inclination, fit to receive the holiness of the Passover holiday.'

**Parshat Tzav - Studying the Laws of the Holiday**

**Similarly**, Rabbi Chaim Mordechai from Nadvorna wrote:<sup>13</sup>

**'Behold**, it is already known from my father, Rabbi Aharon Leib from Premishlan, that the days from Purim and until Passover are days of purifying the soul, like a sick person to whom the doctor gives healing medicines to cleanse their stomach before giving him the medicine for his healing so that the stomach can receive the medicine and hold onto it.

**Likewise**, the Matzah that is eaten on Passover is called the 'food of healing' (Zohar Tetzaveh 183b), and it is the primary the healing of the soul, but

beforehand, it is necessary to purify the chambers of the soul and prepare them so that they can receive the healing and retain it, and this action is done during the days between Purim and Passover.

**Therefore**, one who is cautious and desires to take advantage of these days should not waste them, and in addition to the general preparation for Passover, one should not neglect this spiritual preparation and prepare the chambers of their soul so that they be able to receive the holiness of the Matzah so that the holy influences remain within them after Passover and throughout the coming days...

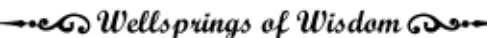
**Studying the Laws of the Holiday**

**Purim** falls out exactly thirty days before Passover. This is the time to begin preparing for Passover, as required by Jewish law stated in the Shulchan Aruch:<sup>14</sup>

**The** early sages ordained in the times when the Holy Temple stood,

that the scholars begin to publicly expound on the laws of the festival thirty days before the festival, and from Purim onward, they should expound the laws of Passover.

**This** ordinance was not abolished from the people of Israel



13. 'Dvar Chaim' vol. 2 p. 191

14. Shulchan Aruch HaRav (Orach Chaim 429).

even after the Holy Temple was destroyed, and in these generations... It is a mitzvah for every individual to study the laws of the festival prior to the festival, until he becomes proficient in them and knows the practical application of the deeds that must be done.'

"**Great** is study, that leads to action" - to start this study with practical action, to give Passover support for those in need, so that they can celebrate the Passover festival in a kosher and joyful manner. It is the Jewish custom to

begin distributing the money a while before Passover (starting thirty days before the festival, on the day of Purim).

**This** matter is connected to Purim, as mentioned earlier, that the commandments of Purim are all related to the unity of the nation of Israel, down to material things like 'sending portions of food to one another and giving gifts to the poor,' which is the theme of the Passover support.'

**May** the L-rd grant us the ability to take advantage of these days as best possible.

## Shabbat Shalom !

### Summary and Practical Applications

**A.** Each and every member of the people of Israel has a holy and pure spark within them, connected to the Blessed Creator through the bonds of love. Even if a person sins and transgresses, the power of their sins can only affect and defile the external aspects of their soul, but not the innermost point in their heart, which remains forever intact in its holiness and purity.

**B.** A person, even if their external actions may not appear righteous, their pure inner point in the heart, which has never sinned, can surely be called 'righteous.' Despite all the imperfections and impurities an individual accumulates, there exists an untainted inner point that remains completely whole with the Holy One, blessed be He, that dwells within the heart of a Jew.

**C.** Sometimes, during a person's lifetime, they go through difficult periods of severe trials and various spiritual falls. Due to this, the flame of love for G-d, His Torah, and His commandments diminishes in their heart and may seem to extinguish completely, G-d forbid.

**That** is why the Torah gives the instruction: 'A continuous fire shall burn upon the altar; it shall not go out.' Even during times of spiritual decline, impurity, and all the challenges one faces in life, a person should always ensure that the fire of their love for the Creator does not extinguish completely, G-d forbid, but always keeps burning, even if it is only a small flame.

**D.** In order to encourage a person to kindle this fire in their heart, we provide three pieces of advice: 1. Stay connected to the realm of holiness. 2. Connect with righteous individuals. 3. Utilize opportune moments of illumination throughout the year, especially the thirty days between Purim and Passover.

**E.** Staying connected to the realm of holiness - Even if a person falls from their spiritual

level, they should remain attached to the Creator with even the smallest thought.

**Therefore**, even when it is difficult for a person to engage in Torah study with diligence due to the narrowness of heart and limited understanding, they should at least engage in Torah learning of a simpler nature. If that is also challenging, they should at least chant the letters of the Holy Torah, even if they do not understand a single word. If that is difficult as well, they should engage in acts of G-d's Commandments and in charity; the main thing is to remain connected to the world of holiness, even in a minimal manner.

**F.** Connecting to righteous individuals - Sometimes, a person is fortunate to connect to a living righteous person. However, not everyone merits such an opportunity; many Jews do not have the chance to connect to a living, righteous person.

**The** solution is to connect with righteous individuals who have already departed from this world.

**When** a Jew is fortunate to study the teachings of a righteous person and awaken love and faith in that righteous person, they connect and bond with that righteous individual, and the righteous person imparts their holiness upon them.

**G.** Utilizing opportune moments - Most days of the year are mundane days when we need to contend with our inclinations and bodily desires. However, there are some opportune moments, days when a special light shines upon the soul, and by virtue of this light, a Jew has the ability to kindle the fire within.

**The** thirty days between Purim and Passover are precisely such days; therefore, one should not let these moments go to waste.

**In** addition to preparing for Passover materially, one should not neglect the spiritual preparations, preparing the vessels

of their soul to receive the holiness of the commandments. Then the positive influences and holiness remain within them after Passover and throughout the following days.

**H.** To prepare oneself to receive the light of Passover primarily involves studying the laws of the holiday.

**Every** individual is obligated to study the laws of Passover before the holiday, becoming proficient in them and knowing all the practical details.

**The** first law is the requirement to provide the poor with their Passover needs so that the poor can celebrate the Passover holiday with joy and a good heart. According to the known principle that 'learning is not the main thing, but action', we must strive first and foremost to fulfill this commandment properly and fully.





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20<sup>th</sup> of Adar II, 5784



City	Candle Lighting	Shabbat Ends	Rabbeinu Tam
New York	6:11 pm	7:22 pm	7:43 pm
Miami	7:18 pm	8:11 pm	8:49 pm
Los Angeles	6:55 pm	7:51 pm	8:25 pm
Montreal	7:01 pm	8:05 pm	8:33 pm
Toronto	7:23 pm	8:26 pm	8:55 pm
London	6:11 pm	7:22 pm	7:43 pm
Jerusalem	6:41 pm	7:32 pm	8:18 pm
Tel Aviv	6:38 pm	7:29 pm	8:14 pm
Haifa	6:38 pm	7:29 pm	8:13 pm
Be'er Sheva	6:38 pm	7:29 pm	8:13 pm

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*From the Words of*

**HaRav Yoran Abargel zt"l**

*One who desires righteous children, should invest consistently in their prayers.*

*Prayers and fear of Heaven are mainstays, after which Torah study will be blessed. A person will not be driven away from Heaven for not having learned the tractate of Chullin. Nor will a person be driven away from G-d's glory for not having learned the order of Kodashim.*

*One will be thus be driven for being careless with prayers.*

*No excuses will be accepted in this regard.*



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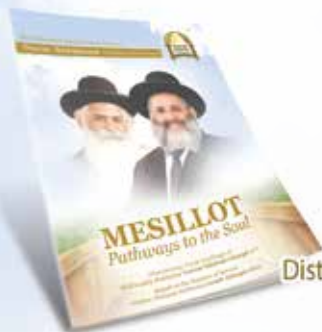
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