יד ניסן תשעו April 22, 2016

פסח

To receive the light

On the night of Pesach we receive a tremendous spiritual light. However, we need to be prepared for it since otherwise we can’t obtain it. This is comparable to one who puts 200 grams of content into a 100 gram container as thiscauses the container to burst.

The story is told of a Gadol who davened to have יראת שמים like that of the Rambam. After his Tefila was accepted, he davened again. But this time, he davened to rescind what he originally asked for,because he wasn’t able to handle it, as he nearly went crazy.[[1]](#footnote-2)

To receive this light we need to prepare ourselves. This idea is illustrated in the Gemara that relates- the early pious ones would prepare themselves an hour before davening[[2]](#footnote-3) as they needed to prepare their bodies to receive the spiritual light.[[3]](#footnote-4)

The KoznitzerMagid[[4]](#footnote-5) explains that Pesach is different than other YomimTovim since we receive all the light at once. Thisis because on Pesach we skip levels[[5]](#footnote-6) as usually we need to initiate first and then Hashem takes us further whereas on Pesach Hashem initiates.This is just as he did on Pesach by taking us from Mitzrayimeven though we didn’t deserve it. Although the light comes regardless, we need to make ourselves into a vessel in order to receive it. A comparison is made to an abundance of sunlightthat is outside asit can only enter if the window is opened. If we prepare ourselves properly, then when that light comes on Pesach,it can enter us!

Change the channel

It is known that in Mitzrayim, we were on the 49th level of impurity.Through the Sefira, we cleanse ourselves until we reach the 50th day- Shavuos.[[6]](#footnote-7)However, to reach the 49 levels of holiness we first need to remove the 49 levels of impurity. This is likened to a hole that is 49 feet deep as in order to build it 49 feet above ground, first you need to reach ground level. As a result, we should have 98 days of Sefira (49 multiplied by 2)?

The following analogy is given: one standing on an electrical line in New YorkCity can give power to millions of people. However, if he makes a mistake he can be killed in an instant since there is tremendous voltage there. On the other hand, one who fixes an electric outlet has now given power for an electrical appliance to work. Conversely, if he makes a mistake, there may be some sparks and the like but nothing too dangerous happens. So, the amount of power one is dealing with is how much of an affect it can have to empower or destroy.[[7]](#footnote-8)

This concept is known as זה לעומת זה[[8]](#footnote-9) as the amount of power there is on one side is the same as on the other. The following are some of the many places we see this idea.

1)A sin in EretzYisrael is worse than one in חוץ לארץ; outside the land of Israel, as EretzYisraelis holier. The converse is also true-a Mitzva is greater in EretzYisrael.

2) A Jew can spread more impurity when he dies than a non-Jew as Chazal teach that we can be מטמא באוהל in contrast to the non-Jews.[[9]](#footnote-10)

3) The Gemara teaches that the remedy for one who speaks Loshon Hara is to be engaged in Torah.[[10]](#footnote-11)Since he used his speech negatively, he should now use it for Torah, for positive.[[11]](#footnote-12)

4) With this concept, we can grasp why one who does תשובה מאהבה,his willful sins are counted as merits-זדונות נעשו כזכיות.[[12]](#footnote-13)

5) The Gemara[[13]](#footnote-14) tells us that one who is born during the hour of Mars will be a man who spills blood. However, this person can be a killer or one who is a מוהל or שוחט as it can be channeled.

In theTefila after Sefira we say (NusachSefard)that Hashem commanded us to count Sefiraכדי לטהרנו מקלפותינו...; in order to purify us from the shells of impurity,as we need to channel that impurity for holiness.[[14]](#footnote-15)By removing impurity from within us, we automatically increase our purity. This follows the concept of סור מרע ועשה טובas when one removes the bad, inevitably he is doing good.[[15]](#footnote-16)For this reason, there are only 49 days of Sefira since with each day we remove a level of impurity thereby channeling it towards holiness. Consequently, when we reach Shavuos we have removed the levels of impurity as well as having attained all the levels of holiness.

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1. The same is with us that our body with its desires contradicts the spiritual light. However, with toil we break that barrier. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Brachos 30b.With toil we can obtain it and as it saysכל מילתא דלא רמיא עליה אינש לאו אדעתיה; anything that is not incumbent upon a person is not on his mind (Shavuos 41b). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The Gra points out that it saysהיו שוהין שעה אחת **ומתפללין** כדי שיכוונו לבם.... The word מתפלליןseems out of place as it should really be at the end of this phrase, meaning after the preparatory hour they would daven. He therefore explains it to mean that during the preparatory hour itself they would daven that during ShemonaEsrei they should be able to direct their hearts to Hashem. Likewise, before we begin ShemonaEsrei we recite ה' שפתי תפתח וגו'. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. AvodasYisroel, Pesach [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Indeed,פסח means to skip as in ופסח ה' על הפתח. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Since Yosef would be ruler in Mitzrayim- ערות הארץ, it was therefore necessary for him to go through the test withאשת פוטיפר. Just as Yosef went through that, we also needed to go through ערות הארץand the 49 levels of impurity before becoming the nation of Hashem. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. See TzidkasHatzadik 248. Another analogy given to grasp this concept is the following: one who walks down the street and bumps into someone won’t cause too much damage. However, if he is riding on a bike and collides with someone, that can cause injury. How about if he is driving a car and crashes? That can kill people. Even worse is one who is flying a plane that crashes as that can kill many more.The reverse is also a true as walking can get you to your destination. Riding a bike can get you there even quicker. Driving a car can get you as well as others there in even less time. Of course, a plane is faster than them all by far. Again we see that in proportion to the object, is how constructive or destructive it can be. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Koheles 7:14. SeeChagiga 15a, TzidkasHatzadik 150 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Baba Metzia 114b, Rambam in HilchosTumasMeis 1:13. If there is a container that contains honey and one that contains garbage, the one with honey will have many more flies and insects. Similarly, a Jew who is filled with holiness that dies now has a vacancy. So, the forces of impurity gather to connect to this person and derive pleasure from the sweetness (OhrHachaim, Bamidbar 19:2). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Eruchin 15b [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. SeeTzidkasHatzadik 234. The Pasuk(Vayikra 5:4)לבטא בשפתים להרע או להיטיב; expressing with his lips to do harm or good, can also be understoodthat one’s speech can be used for good or bad. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Yoma 86b.This is in line with הפכת מספדי למחול לי; you have changed my lament into dancing (Tehillim 30). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Shabbos 156a. See PeninimMishulchanHagra, Shelach 14:18. When the Yetzer Hara for immorality was removed, they couldn’t find a freshly laid egg. They didn’t daven that the Yetzer Hara should only be for his wife but not for another woman because פלגא ברקיעא לא יהבי; heaven doesn’t grant half (Yoma 69b). This is in line with our concept.A metaphor to help us grasp this is the following: one who has a problem with his kidney and gets it removed, removes the danger. However, he also doesn’t possess the positive functions of the kidney. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. This is hinted to in (Vayikra 23:15)וספרתם **לכם**; count Sefira, as לכם are the first letters of **כ**די **ל**טהרנו **מ**קלפותינו. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. Tehillim 34.This can be compared to a candle as the more waste that is removed from the candle, the better it lights. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)