

A KIDDUSH HASHEM

by Rabbi Label Lam

You shall observe My commandments and perform them; I am HASHEM. You shall not desecrate My holy Name, rather I should be sanctified among the Children of Israel; I am HASHEM Who sanctifies you, Who took you out of the Land of Egypt to be a G-d unto you ; I am HASHEM. (Vayikra 22:31-33)

What is the connection here between the requirement of making a Kiddush HASHEM-sanctifying the name of HASHEM and leaving Egypt?

The Sefas Emes writes, "When HASHEM took us out from Egypt with wondrous signs and by changing nature so the souls of the Children of Israel went out from their natural realm. Therefore they are capable of giving themselves over entirely to sanctify the Name of HASHEM in a way that goes beyond human nature.

This by itself is a sanctification of His Name, as it is written, "You are My witnesses, so says HASHEM!" (Isaiah 43:10) This testimony is not only verbally transmitted but rather the Children of Israel are themselves the living sign and testimony about HASHEM may his Name be blessed that He renews the world and conducts the natural universe since the Children of Israel cleave to him and they are able to transcend natural limits."

Here's an admittedly brutal account written by and about a real witness entitled "Fifty Lashes" by Chana Eibeshutz-Eilenberg and found in a Sefer about the Holocaust called Shema Yisrael;

"Courageously the boy kept his mouth shut. The murderous blows of the whip did not defeat him. He kept silent and bore his punishment proudly. We were counting the blows. Fifty, yes fifty lashes. But it was the stubenaltest who was defeated in the end.

When the lashes were all given, the boy still kept his pride and did not let a sound out from his mouth. The infuriated Nazi walked away, routed and ashamed. Later, as I lay on my bunk in the boys' block of Auschwitz, I saw the stubenaltest coming with a length of rubber hose in his hand, preparing to beat someone. I jumped up to see who it was going to be.

The stubenaltest ordered one of the boys to get down from his bunk. He came down and bent over, and the Nazi began to beat him. We counted the blows. The boy neither wept nor groaned. Twenty-five blows, forty...The Nazi flipped the boy over and beat him on his head, on his legs. A boy of fourteen, no more. And he made not a sound. When he had finished his course of fifty lashes, the Nazi stormed out of our block. We picked up the boy and saw a huge red mark stretching across his

forehead, the mark left by the rubber whip.

When we asked him what he was beaten for, he answered, "It was worth it. I brought my friends some Siddurim to pray from!" This courageous lad said no more. Without a sound he got up and climbed back into his bunk."

This overt form of Kiddush HASHEM manifests a profound sense of purpose that carries the individual beyond the physical realm. Delivering the Siddur is felt to be worth all the wicked blows. It makes known the reality of a Creator and a soul's intimate attachment to its Maker.

The Talmud concludes that one smack that a person gives himself inwardly is worth one hundred hits from without. (Brochos 7A) Consider a surgical strike that confronts some dark truth within done during this fifty day march back to Mount Sinai from Egypt again. It would be a private form but may not be less so of a Kiddush HASHEM. Text Copyright © 2005 by Rabbi Label Lam and **Torah.org**.