

EREV YOM HAKIPPURIM

by Rabbi Dr. Meir Tamari

'The World exists by virtue of three things, Din, Emet and Shalom, as it is written, 'In truth, justice and peace shall you judge in your gates' [Zechariah, 8:16], (Mishnah Avot, chapter 1, mishnah 18) Just as this simply applies in general, so too, it applies spiritually to the three periods, Rosh Hashanah- Din. Yom Hakippurim- Emet, and Sukkot- Shalom.

Rosh Hashanah is Din since it is the rejection of the evil that could delay the abundance of kedusha from flowing both to the individual and to the klall.

Yom Hakippurim is Emet since that day is purity and holiness personified. Mussaf of that day is Moshe Rabbenu according to the Zohar; 'Emet and Chesed shall meet and merge, that is Moshe [emet] and Aharon [chesed]' (Shmot Rabbah, 5; Maharal, Netiv Haemet chapter 1, deals with it at length). Emet is everything that is constant while everything that is by chance or transitory or subject to change cannot be true since they apply only to a specific time or place. So a river that only flows intermittently is called 'a river that deceives, machziv'. Therefore, on Yom Hakippurim, through Emet, is revealed the whole merit of Israel, since they are eternal, pure and holy. Therefore that day is one of atonement and forgiveness for all of Israel's sins: 'The saiyar hamistaleach will carry them - that is, the sins- on the head of Eisav, even as Yaakov said 'and my brother Eisav is ish sa'ir'; and Yaakov- Ish Tam Tam that contains in it emet' (Bereishit Rabbah 65). Any sin or impurity is attached to Israel only through their contact with the gentile nations, even as it is written: 'but they mingled themselves with the nations and learnt their ways' (Tehillim 106:35) or through the evil of the nations that contaminates the spiritual air just as physical pollution brings illness and causes respiratory diseases.

Sukkot is Shalom and its mussaf is Aharon who brought peace to Earth and on High. It is a time of the unification of all of Israel's strengths and merits- 'Shalom and Emet meet'. The Arbah Minim hint at this, so some people will bring atonement for others and others will atone for them. The Sukkah that is the gematria of Hashem's Name unites Heaven and Earth. 'All of Israel are worthy of sitting together in one Sukkah' (Sukkah 27b); this would be impossible if they are divided because of their sins. This is only possible after Yom Kippur that is Emet cleanses Israel of its sins and of its shortcomings.

So we see that Din, Emet and Shalom are in effect in time these three periods- Rosh Hashanah and Sukkot,- and that the World depends on them. Shem Mi Shmuel Yom Hakippurim, 5679.

MOTZEI YOM HAKIPPURIM.

'Moshe was perplexed as to what caused two great zaddikim [Nadav ve Avihu] to sin, and had difficulty understanding why (Vayikrah 16:1) Hashem spoke about their sin being, 'Bekarvam'- when they drew close, and not Behakrivam'- their sacrificing. So Hashem answered Moshe that what caused them to sin was their great desire to do something that He had not commanded them but rather had commanded their father, Aharon' (Zohar, Part3, 60a).

It is necessary to see that the text in Aharei Mot explicitly states bekaravam, while in Shemini it says vayakrivu and in Bamidbar, behakrivam; at the same time, although the Zohar writes that their father was commanded, we know that they offered 'strange fire' that not even their father was commanded to do. Hashem explained to Moshe that their sin originated from their desire to draw close and its effect was the strange fire whereas Aharon was commanded to draw close. The Avnei Nezer said that when a person remains at a distance from Hashem out of fear and respect, and recognition of His Greatness, then evil thoughts and strange undesirable passions are unable to draw close to him nor to enter the areas of kedusha. The sons of Aharon tried in their ecstasy, to go beyond their spiritual levels and do that which, although their father was commanded, they were not, bekarvam.

It was because of the danger inherent in the ecstasy of entering Hashem's Presence that even the Kohen Hagadol was only permitted to do so on om Hakippurim, when the Sitra Acher is removed through the se'ir hamistaleach,. For the same reason, the lots on the two goats, were cast before the actual Avoda inside began, although practically speaking, it would have been alright to do so after the casting of the blood of the Par. [Elsewhere the Shem Mi Shmuel writes that that is the reason why the awe and the astonishment and spiritual ecstasy we experience when witnessing miracles is insufficient and has to be accompanied by our discipline and containment, otherwise we may be led by an excess of ecstasy to offer strange fire].

It is possible now to explain the difficulty of Chazal as to why Sukkot comes after Yom Hakippurim and not as should be in a historical perspective in Nissan (Tur, Orekh Chaim, section 625). Sukkot is cast in the mould of the Mikdash and our entry there is like , 'And the King brought me into His Chamber' . That entry is only possible for all of Israel, without any spiritual harm, after the sitra acher has been cast off through Yom Hakippurim.

Shem Mi Shmuel, Yom Hakippurim, 56737.

DEAR READER,

As this series of advanced Torah study is drawing to its conclusion, I would like to draw your attention to my new course on the Parshat Hashavuah with Abarbanel, starting Shabbat Bereishit on this web site.

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