

5785 – Exodus 27-30 – Tetzaveh (You shall command)

THE SUPERFICIAL COAT¹

Make an altar for the burning of incense; make it of cedar wood ... and cover it with gold ... (Exodus 30:1-3).

All the vessels in the Sanctuary required immersion, except for the Golden Altar and the Copper Altar ... because they were coated (Talmud, Chagigah 26b).

During the three annual pilgrimage festivals of Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot, when the entire community of Israel would come to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, the vessels of the Temple were exposed to contact with many individuals, including some who might not be well-versed in the complex laws of ritual purity. So following each festival, all the Temple's vessels were immersed in a *mikveh*, to cleanse them of any possible contamination by a visitor who might have been ritually impure.

The law is that "wooden vessels that are used only in a fixed place are not susceptible to contamination."⁽¹⁾ The two altars of the Tabernacle—the indoor "Golden Altar" and the outdoor "Copper Altar" which were used only in their fixed places, were made of wood and covered with gold or copper. This is the meaning of the above-quoted law that the altars did not require immersion after the festivals "because they were coated": although a metal vessel could become impure under such circumstances, since the metal of these altars was only a coating, it was "nullified" (*bateh*) in relation to their wooden bodies, and they were thus immune to contamination.

BODY AND SOUL

The laws of the Torah always have more than one meaning. The Torah, as the human being it comes to instruct and enlighten, consists of both a "body" and a "soul." **Every law, story, or saying in Torah also has a deeper, spiritual import; every legal technicality also addresses the inner world of the human soul.**

The Tabernacle is more than a physical edifice dedicated to the service of G-d; it is also the model after which we are to build our own lives as "sanctuaries" that house and express the divine. In commanding the Children of Israel to build the Tabernacle, G-d says to Moses, "They shall

make for Me a Sanctuary and I shall dwell amongst them" (Exo 25:8). Our sages point out that the Hebrew word *betochom* ("amongst them") **literally means "within them"**: in effect, G-d is saying that He desires a dwelling "within each and every one of them."⁽⁴⁾ This is why the Torah describes the various components and vessels of the Sanctuary in such detail,⁽⁵⁾ as they each represent another of the faculties and attributes that comprise the human being.⁽⁶⁾

INCORRUPTIBLE SACRIFICE

Therein lies the deeper significance of the law regarding the altars' immunity from impurity.

The other vessels of the human "sanctuary," representing a person's various intellectual and emotional faculties, may, at times, become tainted by negative influences. But the "altars" of the soul, the soul's capacity for selfless devotion and sacrifice for its Creator, are not susceptible to contamination.

In the words of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi² in his *Tanya*³:

In the majority of cases, even the most deficient and sinful Jew will sacrifice their life and suffer the harshest tortures rather than deny the one G-d ... as if it were utterly impossible for them to deny Him ... This is because of the divine essence that is embedded in each soul's faculty of chochmah (wisdom), which is beyond any graspable or understood knowledge ...⁽⁷⁾

This inner core of purity is not always visible or readily accessible. The glitter of material life, or, conversely, the despair of poverty and hardship, may obscure the soul's intrinsic commitment to G-d. But these encumbrances, be they of "copper" or "gold" are mere coatings on the soul's altar-coatings that are "nullified" before the incorruptible well of sacrifice within.

(1) See discussion in Talmud and commentaries, Chagigah 26b-27a.

(2) The Copper Altar existed only in the "Tabernacle," the portable sanctuary built in the desert that was the forerunner of the Temple in Jerusalem. In the Holy Temple, the outdoor altar was built of stone.

(4) *Reishith Chochmah* (The Beginning of Wisdom), *Shaar HaAhavah* (Gate of Love [of HaShem]), chapter 6; *Shaloh*, *Shaar HaOtiot*, *Lamed*.

(5) Thirteen chapters in the book of Exodus—more than one-third of the book—are taken up with the details of the Sanctuary's construction.

(6) See the essay, "Model Home," pp. 221-231 above. Also see *Derech Mitzvotecha*, pp. 172-174.

(7) *Tanya*, chapter 18.

1 Yanki Tauber, *The Inside Story, Exodus*, (Meaningful Life Center), pp. 264-266.

2 Shneur Zalman of Liadi, (1745-1812) commonly known as the Alter Rebbe or Baal Hatanya, was a rabbi and the founder and first Rebbe of Chabad, a branch of Hasidic Judaism. He wrote many works and is best known for *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, *Tanya*, and his *Siddur Torah Or*, compiled according to the *Nusach Ari*.

3 The *Tanya* is an early work of Hasidic philosophy, by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Hasidism, first published in 1796. Its formal title is *Likkutei Amarim* (Collection of Statements) but is more commonly known by its first word (*tanya*), which in Aramaic means "it has been taught" ...The *Tanya* is composed of five sections that define Hasidic mystical psychology and theology as a handbook for daily spiritual life in Jewish observance.

1. *During the three annual pilgrimage festivals of Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot, when the entire community of Israel would come to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, the vessels of the Temple were exposed to contact with many individuals, including some who might not be well-versed in the complex laws of ritual purity.*

a. Deuteronomy 16:16-17 (cf., Exo 34:21-24)

¹⁶**Three times a year all your men must appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose: at the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks and the Festival of Tabernacles.** No one should appear before the LORD empty-handed: ¹⁷Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you.

b. Acts 18:18-21

¹⁸Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sisters and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchreae because of a (Nazirite) vow he had taken. ¹⁹They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰When they asked him to spend more time with them, **he declined.** ²¹But as he left, he promised, "I will come back if it is God's will." Then he set sail from Ephesus.

YLT—but took leave of them, saying, **'It behoveth me by all means the coming feast to keep at Jerusalem,** and again I will return unto you—God willing.' And he sailed from Ephesus,

c. Acts 20:16

¹⁶Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus to avoid spending time in the province of Asia, for **he was in a hurry to reach Jerusalem,** if possible, **by the day of Pentecost.**

d. Perhaps Paul's commitment toward the Holy Days could best be summed up in a quote from Acts 18:21: **"I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem."**⁴

Some question whether this verse is valid because it is not found in some texts. **(Could the omission be because it offers such strong support for the validity of Holy Days?)**

However, no one questions the validity of Acts 20:16, which mentions Paul's determination to be in Jerusalem for Pentecost. He had intended to be there for Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, but circumstances required him to keep them locally (Acts 20:1-6). **That made him even more determined to be in Jerusalem**

for the next Holy Day—the Day of Pentecost.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary candidly admits, "Having been unable to get to Jerusalem for Passover, Paul remained at Philippi to celebrate it and the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread" (Vol. 9, p. 507).

2. *The Torah, as the human being it comes to instruct and enlighten, consists of both a "body" and a "soul."*

a. "Body," "soul," and "spirit" are Greek concepts. Hebrew contrasts the "inner self" and "the outer appearance" or "what one is to oneself" as opposed to "what one appears to be to one's observers." The inner person is "*nephesh*," the outer person, or reputation is "*shem*."

b. Matthew 23:27-28

²⁷Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. ²⁸In the same way, **on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.**

3. *The Tabernacle is more than a physical edifice dedicated to the service of G-d; it is also the model after which we are to build our own lives as "sanctuaries" that house and express the divine.*

a. John 2:13-22

¹³When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Yeshua went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. ¹⁵So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts ... ¹⁶To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!" ¹⁷His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me" (Psa 69:9). ¹⁸The Jews (CJB: Judeans) then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" ¹⁹Yeshua answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." ²⁰They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" ²¹But **the temple he had spoken of was his body.** ²²After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Yeshua had spoken.

1) Colossians 2:9

⁹For in Messiah all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form ...

⁴ <https://www.ucg.org/watch/beyond-today/virtual-christian-magazine-april-may-2006/why-would-apostle-gentiles-keep-jewish>

b. 1Corinthians 3:16-17

¹⁶Don't you know that **you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?** ¹⁷If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

CJB, KJV, MIT, NAB, NAS, NIRV, NJB, NKJ, RSV, YLT—and that **God's Spirit lives (or dwells) in you?**

c. 1Corinthians 6:19-20

¹⁹Do you not know that **your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit**, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰you were bought at a price ... honor God with your bodies.

4. *Our sages point out that the Hebrew word betochom ("amongst them") literally means "within them": in effect, G-d is saying that He desires a dwelling "within each and every one of them."*

a. Genesis 41:37-39

³⁷The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials. ³⁸So Pharaoh asked them, "Can we find anyone like this man, **one in whom is the spirit of God?**" ³⁹Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you.

b. Exodus 31:1-4 (Cf., Exo 35:31)

¹Then the LORD said to Moses, ²"See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, ³and **I have filled him with the Spirit of God**, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts—⁴to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze ...

c. Numbers 27:16-20

¹⁶"May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over this community ... ¹⁸So the LORD said to Moses, "Take Joshua son of Nun, **a man in whom is the spirit, and lay your hand on him.** ¹⁹Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the entire assembly and commission him in their presence. ²⁰**Give him some of your authority so the whole Israelite community will obey him.**

d. Deuteronomy 34:8-12

⁸The Israelites grieved for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, until the time of weeping and mourning was over.

⁹Now **Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom** because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁰Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face ...

e. Judges 3:7-10 (cf., Jud 6:34; 11:29)

⁷The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD ... ⁸The anger of the LORD burned against Israel so that he sold them into the hands of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram Naharaim ... ⁹But when they cried out to the LORD, he raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, **who saved them.** ¹⁰**The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war.** The LORD gave Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel ...

f. Judges 14:5-6 (cf., Judges 14:19; 15:14)

⁵Samson went down to Timnah ... suddenly a young lion came roaring toward him. ⁶**The Spirit of the LORD came upon him in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands** as he might have torn a young goat ...

g. 1Samuel 10:1-11

¹Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, "Has not the LORD anointed you leader over his inheritance? ... ⁶The **Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power**, and you will prophesy with them; and **you will be changed into a different person** ...

⁹As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God changed Saul's heart ...

¹⁰**When they arrived at Gibeah**, a procession of prophets met him; **the Spirit of God came upon him in power, and he joined in their prophesying.** ¹¹When all those who had formerly known him saw him prophesying with the prophets, they asked each other, "What is this that has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"

1) 1Samuel 11:1-6

¹Nahash the Ammonite went up and besieged Jabesh Gilead ...

³Just then Saul was returning from the fields, behind his oxen, and he asked, "What is wrong with the people? Why are they weeping?" Then they repeated to him what the men of Jabesh had said. ⁶When Saul heard their words, **the Spirit of God came upon him in power**, and he burned with anger ...

h. 1Samuel 16:13-14

¹³So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and **from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power.** Samuel then went to Ramah.

¹⁴Now **the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him.** ¹⁵Saul's attendants said to him, "See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. ¹⁶Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can

play the harp. **He will play when the evil spirit from God comes upon you, and you will feel better.**"

i. 2Chronicles 15:1-4

¹**The Spirit of God came upon Azariah son of Oded** (the prophet).

²He went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you. ³For a long time Israel was without the true God, without a priest to teach and without the law. ⁴But in their distress they turned to the LORD, the God of Israel, and sought him, and he was found by them.

j. Psalms 51:10-12

¹⁰Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. ¹¹Do not cast me from your presence **or take your Holy Spirit from me.** ¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

k. Isaiah 32:14-20

¹⁴The fortress will be abandoned, the noisy city deserted; citadel and watchtower will become a wasteland forever, the delight of donkeys, a pasture for flocks, ¹⁵**till the Spirit is poured upon us from on high**, and the desert becomes a fertile field, and the fertile field seems like a forest. ¹⁶Justice will dwell in the desert and righteousness live in the fertile field. ¹⁷The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. ¹⁸**My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.** ¹⁹Though hail flattens the forest and the city is leveled completely, ²⁰how blessed you will be, sowing your seed by every stream, and letting your cattle and donkeys range free.

l. Isaiah 44:1-3

¹"But now listen, O Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen.

²This is what the LORD says—he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, O Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. ³For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; **I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring**, and my blessing on your descendants.

m. Ezekiel 11:1-5 (cf., Ezek 37:1ff)

¹Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the gate of the house of the LORD that faces east ... ²The LORD said to me, "Son of

man, these are the men who are plotting evil and giving wicked advice in this city ... ⁴Therefore prophesy against them; prophesy, son of man."

⁵Then **the Spirit of the LORD came upon me**, and he told me to say: "This is what the LORD says ...

n. Ezekiel 39:27-29

²⁷When I have brought them back from the nations ... I will show myself holy through them in the sight of many nations. ²⁸Then they will know that I am the LORD their God, for though I sent them into exile among the nations, I will gather them to their own land, not leaving any behind. ²⁹I will no longer hide my face from them, **for I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel**, declares the Sovereign LORD."

o. Joel 2:27-32

²⁷Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the LORD your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed. ²⁸And afterward, **I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.** ²⁹Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

³⁰I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ³¹The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. ³²**And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved;** for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the survivors whom the LORD calls.

p. Scripture employs various prepositions to explain our relationship with the Holy Spirit. In John 14:17, (Yeshua) contrasts "with" and "in," distinguishing the Spirit's distinct operations among the disciples. Let's explore these prepositions: with, in, and upon.⁵

When (Yeshua) announced that the Spirit was already with them but would soon be in them, He drew a significant line between "Spirit with" and "Spirit in." The Spirit was already "with" them, shaping their present reality, likely pointing towards the forthcoming Pentecost.

So how did the Spirit "dwell with" the disciples? The first clue is in (Yeshua's) preceding words, explaining that the disciples already knew the Spirit, but the world did not. They had already experienced the Spirit, who had moved in their hearts, leading them to believe in (Yeshua). They had seen the Spirit's presence and power

operation in (Yeshua), Who was with them. They had also exercised His power to some extent, casting out demons (Luke 10:17). Yet, this relationship would evolve significantly post-Pentecost.

From Pentecost onwards, there was a transformative shift from the Spirit “with you” to the Spirit “in you.” This “in” speaks of a unique and glorious union between the Holy Spirit and the born-again human spirit:

“But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” (1Cor 6:17).

This union was unlike anything experienced by the prophets of the (Hebrew Bible). A monumental shift had occurred in the Spirit's role in the lives of God's people. The Spirit now dwelt permanently in their hearts; more importantly, He operates from within them *as them*—one with them.

Furthermore, **the Spirit UPON has its distinct implications.** In the (Hebrew Bible), prophets, priests, and kings had experienced this. For example, the Spirit mightily came upon Samson (Judges 16:6). The emphasis here is on the Spirit's power working through someone to accomplish a specific task. Even post-Pentecost, the Spirit still “comes upon” believers but now emanates from within (Acts 1:8).

1) If a “monumental shift” has occurred, it has to do with the transition from the “former days” to the “latter” (*i.e.*, “last days” and to Joel's prophecy regarding the outpouring of God's Spirit “on all people”—NOT the creation of a Church.

2) Acts 10:36-38

³⁶You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Yeshua Messiah, who is Lord of all. ³⁷You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—³⁸how **God anointed Yeshua of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power**, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because **God was with him**.

3) So, which “person” of the Godhead indwells Believers—the “Spirit” or the “Son” (*i.e.*, the Messiah)?

a) John 14:20

²⁰On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, **and I am in you**.

b) John 17:26

²⁶I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that **I myself may be in them**.”

d) Romans 8:6-17

⁶The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; **⁷the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.**

⁸Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

⁹**You**, however, **are controlled** not by the sinful nature **but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you**. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah, he does not belong to Messiah. ¹⁰But **if Messiah is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness**. ¹¹And if the Spirit of him who raised Yeshua from the dead is living in you, he who raised Messiah from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

¹²Therefore, brothers, **we have an obligation**—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. ¹³For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death **the misdeeds of the body**, you will live, ¹⁴because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶**The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children**. ¹⁷Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and **co-heirs with Messiah**, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.