

BILVAVI

פסח 017 פסח שני

Essential Revelation of Pesach Sheini

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Essential Revelation of Pesach Sheini

There Is No Such Thing As Being 'Distant' From Hashem

Regarding the *mitzvah* to bring the offering of “*Pesach Sheini*”, the Torah says that anyone who became “defiled” [due to contamination from a human corpse] or anyone who couldn’t make it to Jerusalem for the festival of Pesach because he was on a distant road and couldn’t make it on time it, was allowed to bring the Pesach offering on the day on the 14th day of the month of *Iyar*.¹

What does it mean that the person was found on a “distant road” [and thus couldn’t make it]?

The *Gemara* says that if Adam wouldn’t have sinned, he would have entered into a day that is entirely Shabbos.² Thus, in a sense, ever since the sin of Adam, mankind is found on a very long, “distant road”, far away from the purpose of Creation, and this “distant road” has lasted so far for thousands of years. At the giving of the Torah, the effects of the sin were removed from mankind³, and we would have entered into Eretz Yisrael immediately, if not for the sin with the golden calf. Thus, ever since the sin of Adam (and later by sinning with the golden calf), we have been greatly distanced from our purpose.

Pesach Sheini reveals that even though you are found on a path that is far from the purpose of Creation, or even if your soul has become “defiled” (as the Torah says, that *Pesach Sheini* is for those who have either become defiled from a corpse, or who weren’t able to make it to Jerusalem for the festival, because they were far away), this distance or defilement is only temporary. The defilement which we are found in, and the distance which we have been placed in, can only last for the duration of the current era, which is called the *shis alfin*, the “6,000 years”.

Although sin has made man defiled and it has distanced man from Hashem, and our spiritual light became dimmed from this, Hashem still did not take away completely our light. Eventually, we will get to our goal – it is just that we have been temporarily distanced. The nations of the world think that Hashem has abandoned the Jewish people. This is what Pharoah, Haman and other enemies of the Jewish people thought, and that is why they thought they could destroy us. But in truth, Hashem has not abandoned us; although we appear that the Jewish people are found on a “distant road” far from Hashem, the distance is not actually a distance – for we are really very close to reaching [our purpose, which is our ultimate level of closeness with] Hashem.

¹ *Bamidbar 9:10*

² *Talmud Bavli: Tractate Sanhedrin 38a*

³ *Shabbos 88a*

There are really two attitudes which deter one from reaching his purpose: Either because a person feels “defiled” in his soul, due to the effects of sin; or because one feels as if he is on a “distant road”, far away from Hashem.

However, the *Gemara* says that “There is a barrier of iron that separates between the Jewish people and Hashem.”⁴ A person can be very close to his purpose in life (closeness and attachment with Hashem), but it is just that he is separated by the “barrier of iron” – meaning that the “barrier” itself creates a distance between him and Hashem. But this is not an actual distance. It is just a “barrier” that has been placed in between us and Hashem, and our work is merely to remove this “barrier”! So our ‘distance’ from Hashem is not a real distance. There is simply a “barrier” in the way which is preventing us from drawing close.⁵

Pesach Sheini reveals the spiritual light that whether a person is separated from Hashem due to the “barrier of iron” which has created from his sins, or whether he is on a “distant road” far away from Hashem, this barrier or distance does not create an actual separation between man and Hashem.

The Path of Mesirus Nefesh (Self-Sacrifice) Which “Bypasses” All Barriers

The root of this spiritual light was first revealed with the deaths of Nadav and Avihu who showed that there is no wall between souls and Hashem. The sage Rebbi⁶ said about Eliezer ben Dordaya that he reached his entire share in the World To Come in one moment [through repentance].⁷ Elazar ben Dordaya reached this through his *mesirus nefesh*, his willingness to give up his entire soul [for truth]. This shows us that what can normally take 6,000 years – the entire path of spiritual progress and rectification which we are currently in – can really be reached in one, single moment: through *mesirus nefesh* !!

This was essentially the path that Nadav and Avihu revealed [when they entered in the Holy of Holies to bring their offering on the inauguration day of the *Mishkan*, out of their great desire to experience the greatest closeness with Hashem]: that in one moment, we can go from distance to closeness [to Hashem]: by way of *mesirus nefesh*.

The very long and distant path that we have taken for these last 6,000 years can entirely be “bypassed”, in one moment - if we reveal *mesirus nefesh*. This was the revelation of *Pesach Sheini*: that what seems like a “distant road” – a hint to this 6,000 year period we are in – in one moment, it can all become a path that is very close [to Hashem].

Spiritual defilement of the soul (*tumah*), which is caused by sins, and being on a “distant road” from Hashem, are different causes for the “barrier of iron” that separates the Jewish people from Hashem. But when we reveal the perception that sin, spiritual defilement, and distance doesn't

⁴ *Berachos 32b*

⁵ *Editor's Note: Refer to the Rav's Reaching Your Essence (chapter 5)*

⁶ *Rabbi Yehudah HaNassi*

⁷ *Avodah Zarah 17a*

actually hold us back from reaching closeness to Hashem, this is the great *tikkun* (repair of souls) for the entire Creation.

Nadav and Avihu, in their deaths, reached a very great and awesome *d'veykus* (attachment) in Hashem. Normally, death is the most severe form of spiritual defilement (death is called the “grandfather of *tumah*/defilement”, but in the case of Nadav and Avihu, death brought the greatest *d'veykus* possible [for in their deaths, their souls integrated with Hashem].⁸ At death, although the body is returning to the earth, the soul sees the *Shechinah*. Death reveals a new sense of G-dliness to a person.

Summary & Conclusion

Thus, on a deeper level, those who couldn't bring the *korbon pesach* because they were defiled, or because they were on a distant road, are commanded by the Torah [in the times of the *Beis HaMikdash*] to bring a second *pesach* offering, on the day of *Pesach Sheini*, to show that there is really no such thing as being completely distanced from Hashem. In the truer, higher dimension of reality, there is nothing that actually divides between us and Hashem ! In other words, when one is in a state of defilement of the soul, which is caused by sins, or if he is seemingly on a “distant road” that seems “far away” from Hashem, he is really only a very short distance away from Hashem – for in actuality, we are really close to reaching Him.

This is the deep implication of *Pesach Sheini*, which is rooted in the deaths of Nadav and Avihu, and this is also the path of Elazar ben Dordaya, of which Rebbi said, “There are those who merit their world in one moment.”⁹ For this same reason, the sage Rebbi viewed *Pesach Sheini* as a “festival that stands on its own”¹⁰, which, on a deeper level, implies that the perception offered by *Pesach Sheini* is a new revelation, a whole new dimension of a festival, for the Jewish people.



⁸ Editor's Note: As explained by the *Ohr HaChaim*, Nadav and Avihu merited *misas neshikah*, “death by the kiss of Hashem”, a sublime form of death which is experienced only by the greatest *tzaddikim*.

⁹ *Avodah Zarah* 17a

¹⁰ *Pesachim* 93a