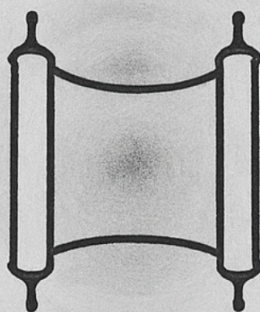


בס"ד

The Maggid of Mezritch

Parshas Tzav



Introduction

The Maggid of Mezritch reveals that even the simplest verses—whether about sacrifices or body parts—contain profound blueprints for spiritual life. In his teachings, every word of Torah becomes a map of the soul. Whether urging eternal devotion through the metaphor of the burning olah, or decoding the deeper meaning of the breast and thigh of the offering, the Maggid shows how thought, speech, and action all serve as vessels for Divine connection.

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Siman #108

Introduction

In this teaching on the verse "*Command Aharon and his sons, saying: This is the law of the burnt offering*", the Maggid of Mezeritch reveals a profound inner reading of the Torah's command. What at first seems to be about the physical *Korban Tamid* becomes, in his hands, a timeless call to spiritual discipline, fiery devotion, and the eternal relevance of Torah. Drawing from Chazal and the Zohar, the Maggid uncovers a deeper "loss" than mere money—and a higher altar than the one in the Beis HaMikdash.

Command Aharon and his sons, saying.	צו את־אֶהֱרֹן וְאֶת־בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר:
Rashi explains: "'Command' (צו) means nothing other than urging — immediately and for generations."	פִּירֵשׁ רַשִׁי: "אֵין צו אֶלָּא זְרוּז מִיָּד וּלְדוֹרוֹת.
Rabbi Shimon said: The verse requires extra urging in a place where there is financial loss, etc.	אָמַר ר' שִׁמְעוֹן: בְּיוֹתֵר צָרִיךְ הַכָּתוּב לְזַרְז בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁיֵּשׁ חֶסְרוֹן כִּסִּים וְגו':
But we must analyze: if it is meant simply, what is the urgency in offering two daily Tamid offerings?	וַיֵּשׁ לְדַקְדָּק: אִם הוּא כִּפְשׁוּטוֹ, מַה הַזְרוּז לְהַקְרִיב שְׁנֵי תַמִּידִין:
And what financial loss is there for all of Israel in offering two daily Tamid offerings?	וְמַה חֶסְרוֹן כִּסִּים הוּא זֶה לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַקְרִיב שְׁנֵי תַמִּידִין בְּכָל יוֹם:
Behold, the Musaf offerings are much more than the Tamid offerings — and there it should have said "Command" and "Urge"!	וְהֲלוֹא הַמוֹסָפִין הַרְבֵּה יוֹתֵר מִתַּמִּידִין, וְהִנֵּה לוֹמַר שָׁם "צו" וְ"זְרוּז":
Furthermore, what does "immediately and for generations" mean — behold, the Tamid offerings are destined to be nullified with the destruction of the Temple?	וְעוֹד: מַהוּ "מִיָּד וּלְדוֹרוֹת"? וְהֲלוֹא תַמִּידִין עֲתִידִין לִיבְטֹל בְּהַרְבֵּן הַבַּיִת:
And it is possible to explain according to what our Sages of blessed memory said: Whoever engages in Torah study is as if he brought all the offerings, as it is said: "This is the law of the burnt offering."	וַיֵּשׁ לוֹמַר עַל פִּי מַה שֶּׁאָמְרוּ רַז"ל כֹּל הַעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה כְּאִלּוּ הַקְרִיב כָּל הַקִּרְבָּנוֹת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "זֹאת תּוֹרַת הָעֹלָה".
And it is possible to say, by way of allusion, that this entire section — "Command Aharon and his sons, saying: This is the law of the burnt offering" — means urging, immediately and for generations.	וְאֶפְשֶׁר לוֹמַר עַל דְּרָדָה רַמְזוֹ כֹּל פְּרָשָׁה זוֹ: "צו אֶת אֶהֱרֹן וְאֶת בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר זֹאת תּוֹרַת הָעֹלָה", פִּירוּשׁ — זְרוּז מִיָּד וּלְדוֹרוֹת.
Because the Torah will never be nullified, for it will not be forgotten from his descendants.	כִּי הַתּוֹרָה לֹא תִבְטֹל לְעוֹלָם, כִּי לֹא תִשְׁכַּח מִפִּי זַרְעוֹ.
Therefore, He urged them to engage in Torah, which is the burnt offering that rises above all the sacrifices.	לְכַף זְרוּזִים שֶׁיַּעֲסִקוּ בַתּוֹרָה, שֶׁהִיא הָעֹלָה לְמַעְלָה מִכָּל הַקִּרְבָּנוֹת.

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And it states, and afterwards explains, about which Torah He urged them, and says: "It is the burnt offering upon its flame."

וקאמר, והדר מפרש על איזו תורה זרזם, ואמר: "היא העלה על מוקדה".

That is, it should be with fiery enthusiasm and cleaving to the Blessed Creator, and not Heaven forbid, merely lip-service.

ר"ל — שתהיה בהתלהבות ובהתדבקות הבורא יתברך, ולא שיהיה חס ושלום מן השפה ולחוץ.

For every word that is not uttered with awe and love does not rise upward, and it is not called a burnt offering.

כי כל מלה ומלה דלא נפקית בדחילו ורחימו, לא פרתא לעילא, ואינה קרויה עולה.

And what it says "on the altar" — this refers to the person, who is called an altar, as our Sages explained on the verse: "And the Lord G-d formed man of dust from the ground" — from where was he created? From the place of his atonement — from the altar of earth.

ומה שכתוב "על המזבח", הוא האדם, שנקרא מזבח, כמו שאמרו רז"ל על פי הפסוק: "וייצר ה' אלקים את האדם עפר מן האדמה" — מהיכן נברא? ממקום כפרתו — מן מזבח אדמה.

And it says "all night," meaning all the days of a person's life in this world, which is likened to night — until the morning.

ואמר "כל הלילה", ר"ל כל ימי חיי האדם בעולם הזה שהוא דומה ללילה — עד הבקר.

There should be a fire — meaning Torah, which is called fire — burning within him, with great enthusiasm and cleaving to the Blessed Creator.

יהיה אש — היא התורה הנקראת אש — תוקד בו, בהתלהבות גדול ובדבוק הבורא יתברך.

And at the end of the section: "A continuous fire... shall not be extinguished" — not even for a moment, rather he shall fulfill: "And you shall meditate upon it day and night."

ובסוף הפרשה: "אש תמיד... לא תכבה" — אפלו "רגע אחד, רק קינים: "והגית בו יומם ולילה".

And this truly requires great urging — immediately and for generations — because it will never be nullified, as mentioned.

ונהו באמת צריך זרז גדול — מיד וידורות — כי לא תתבטל, כנזכר.

And about this, Rabbi Shimon said: The verse especially needs to urge, etc.

ועל זה אמר רבי שמעון: ביותר צריך [הכתוב] לזרז [כו].

For Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai follows his opinion, who said: If a person engages in sowing at the time of sowing, etc.,

כי רשב"י לטעמיה דאמר: אם יעסוק האדם בגרע 'בשעת הזריעה וכו'.

When will his Torah be accomplished? Rather, he should engage in Torah, etc.

'תורתו אימתי נעשית? אלא יעסוק בתורה וכו'.

And this is certainly a great financial loss — to withdraw from all worldly labor and make Torah his profession.

ונהו ודאי חסרון פיס גדול — שיבטל מכל מלאכת העולם הזה, ויהיה תורתו אמנותו.

[NOTE Summary:

The Maggid begins by questioning the urgency in commanding the daily Tamid offerings. If the Torah uses the word "Command" to indicate urgency in cases of financial loss, what loss exists in this simple, twice-daily

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communal offering? He answers by moving the focus from physical offerings to Torah study. The command, "*This is the law of the burnt offering,*" alludes to the Torah itself, which—unlike sacrifices—will never be nullified. Therefore, the urgency is not for korbanos, but for learning Torah with *fire*—with love, awe, and deep cleaving to Hashem.

The Torah must burn within a person like a continuous flame. Just as a burnt offering is consumed entirely, so too must one's Torah learning consume him with inner fire and sincerity. The verse says "*on the altar*"—which refers to the person himself, who must become an altar, a site of spiritual elevation. The phrase "*all night until morning*" alludes to the entirety of a person's life in this world, which is like nighttime, with the "morning" being the World to Come. Thus, a Jew must keep this flame of Torah burning continuously, day and night, throughout his life. This *does* require great urging—for it entails real sacrifice: giving up material pursuits in favor of spiritual immersion. This, says the Maggid, is the true financial loss that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai refers to—and the true korban that rises highest.

Practical Takeaway:

A Jew must not be satisfied with cold, intellectual Torah learning. He must become an *altar*—a vessel for the fire of Torah. This means studying with passion, sincerity, and a sense of connection to Hashem. It also requires sacrifice: prioritizing spiritual growth over material gain. The Torah's eternal flame depends on this kind of inner fire.

Chassidic Story:

One winter night, a young disciple came to the Maggid of Mezritch, complaining of difficulty staying awake to learn Torah with true warmth and concentration. The Maggid opened the window and pointed to a distant cabin across the snowy field. "Do you see that light?"

The student nodded.

"That is the blacksmith's forge," said the Maggid. "Even now, in the dead of night, the fire is still burning. He stays up, not for Torah, but for his livelihood. Should a Jew not keep his own fire burning for something eternal?" **END NOTE]**

Siman #109

The breast of the waving and the thigh of the offering.

חֲזֵה הַתְּנוּפָה וְשׂוֹק הַתְּרוּמָה.

The explanation is: it is called "breast" (חזה) because seeing, which is wisdom, extends until the chest (חזה),

פירושו: פי לכה נקרא "חזה", משום שהראיה —
שהיא חכמה — נמשכת עד החזה

and from there are the thighs; only, the chest is something external —

— ומשם הני ירפים, רק שהחזה הוא דבר חיצוני

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therefore, it is the Aramaic translation (Targum) of seeing.

לכך הוא תרגום של ראייה.

And in truth, all the limbs are connected to speech,

ובאמת, כל האיברים שייכים לדיבור

and sometimes the hands express something — like winking with the eyes or gesturing with the fingers, etc.

ופעמים הידים מראין דבר, כמו "קורץ בעיניו".
"ומראה באצבעותיו" וכו'

But the thighs relate to action, for one must lift the feet to walk.

אבל השוקים הם השייכים לעובדא, שצריך להרים רגליו ללכת.

Therefore, it says: “the breast of the waving” — that is, "תנו"ף" (motion of the mouth),

לכן אמר "תנוה התנופה", כלומר: תנו"ף" פ"ה

as it is said: from thought comes speech — “Abba founded the daughter.”

כמו שנאמר: שמהמחשבה בא הדיבור — "אבא יסד ברתא".

And this is called “black fire upon white fire,” and through this comes speech.

זוהו נקרא "אש שתורה על גבי אש לבנה", ועל [גדין] זה בא הדיבור.

[NOTE Summary:

The verse speaks of “*the breast of the waving and the thigh of the offering.*” The Maggid explains that the *chazeh* (breast) is connected to *re'iyah* (seeing), which is a function of wisdom (*chochmah*) and extends down to the chest. This is why “chazeh” is also the Aramaic word for seeing—it represents perception and contemplation, though on an external level. The thighs, on the other hand, correspond to action—since they move the feet and enable forward motion. But the Maggid teaches that all limbs are ultimately connected to the power of speech. Just as eyes can wink and hands can gesture, all parts of the body reflect inner communication.

This is the deeper meaning of “*the breast of the waving*” — *tenufah peh* (a movement of the mouth): that from the inner world of thought arises speech. This process, in the language of the sages, is described as “*Abba founded the daughter*” — *chochmah* (father) giving rise to *malchus* (speech). It is the mystical image of *black fire on white fire* — the fire of thought and speech rising from one layer to another. In this union, perception, speech, and action are all part of the Divine structure of man.

Practical Takeaway:

Every part of the body—thought, speech, and movement—is part of a holy system. The mind sees, the mouth expresses, and the body acts, but they are all unified in their source. When you speak or move, remember: your body is not random—it is a reflection of inner wisdom. Use your limbs as vessels of holiness, letting your actions and words express the depth of your inner perception.

Chassidic Story:

A student once asked the Maggid how to bring his speech and deeds in line with his inner thoughts. The

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Maggid responded with a simple gesture—he waved his hand, tapped his chest, and whispered: “When your thought reaches your heart, and your heart moves your limbs—then your limbs will speak.”

The student looked puzzled. The Maggid smiled and said, “The Torah speaks of the *breast* and the *thigh*, of *waving* and *offering*. It teaches us that when you align wisdom with action, and speech with heart, even your body becomes an altar.”

END NOTE]