



PROBING

BY RABBI NACHMAN (NEIL) WINKLER

Faculty, OU Israel Center

THE PROPHETS

Parashat Emor that we read this week dedicates the first perek to the laws of kedusha as they apply to the Kohanim. The obligation of the Kohanim to retain a state of tahara, a higher level of purity and sanctity, is understandable, given their stature as “attendants” of Hashem in His Mishkan. The selection of this week’s haftarah, the 44th perek in Sefer Yechezkel, mirrors that same theme, describing the higher level of sanctity that the Kohanim, serving in the Beit HaMikdash during the Messianic Era, would be expected to retain. In past years we have discussed the contradictions between the laws found in the Torah and those expounded by Yechezkel, contradictions that troubled Chazal as well, and we offered some possible solutions to those contradictions. This year, however, I would like to focus on the very opening of the haftarah and help illuminate the message of the navi by including the psukim that precede this haftarah itself.

The haftarah begins with the words “V’Hakohanim Halevi’im,” a somewhat curious expression, “the Kohanim who are

Levi’im”, curious because ALL Kohanim are from the tribe of Levi, as they are descended from Aharon, the son of Amram who was the grandson of Levi. Rather, this expression (found in the Torah as well), is meant to depict Kohanim who are more than “ritual” leaders. The Ibn Ezra explains that this phrase is used to describe those Kohanim, who were the Torah educators of the people, while R. Dovid Tzvi Hoffman claims that it is an expression used when underscoring the responsibility of the Kohanim to be spiritual leaders and not simply “ritual functionaries.”

So why is this an important point? Because earlier in the perek, Yechezkel HaNavi condemned the Kohanim who drifted away from their holy purpose and their elevated stature. They regarded themselves as being ritual functionaries and by dint of that and their ancestry, saw themselves as national leaders and, therefore, more important than the rest of Israel. In fact, throughout the books of Ezra and Nechemia—the books that depict the generations that arose soon after Yechezkel’s era, we read of how the Kohanim who should have served as models and educators for the people who had returned from the Babylonian exile, were the very ones who intermarried with the surrounding idolatrous nations. For this reason, the navi tells those Levi’im

Mazal Tov

to Rachel & Shmuel Stewart and family
on the birth of their first grandson

and Kohanim who “strayed” from Hashem and worshipped idols that they could not serve in the Temple as they once did. Rather, “they shall bear their sin” and not be permitted to “approach the holy places” and only guard the Beit Mikdash and attend to the people who come there.

HOWEVER, as our haftarah begins, the Kohanim from the house of Tzadok, those who remained faithful to G-d, those who retained a level of morality and sanctity despite what surrounded them, THEY would be the Kohanim who would serve Hashem and His people in the Holy Temple. Yechezkel defines for us what true sanctity is and what it would mean in the ideal world of “Y’mot HaMashiach”. As Rav Yissachar Ya’akovson illuminates for us, the parasha delineates the physical blemishes that would disqualify a kohen from serving in the Mishkan. In contrast, the haftarah delineates the MORAL blemishes that would disqualify the Kohen: the “ehrel lev”, one with an “uncircumcised spirit”, could not be included among the attendants of Hashem.

True Jewish leadership depends NOT on “yichus” or even on knowledge but on faithfulness to His G-d and to her people. The greatest of our g’dolim were not those who possessed the greatest minds-but the greatest hearts. Being one with your people and faithful to the Torah, suffering with your nation and consoling them, understanding their pain and soothing it- THAT defines true leadership.

So reminds us Yechezkel ■

בס"ד

Ben Zimra

REAL ESTATE

The best deals in Jerusalem

FOR RENT IN GANEI ZION Close to Old Katamon, in the modern complex, large 4 rooms, 95 sqm, shabat elevator, nice balcony, living room 40 sqm, good shape, master bedroom, parking **7,100 Nis/month**

GREAT INVESTMENT IN TALBIEH Beautiful 2 rooms, garden 30 sqm, renovated, quiet , rented 4000 nis/month, **1,680,000 NIS**



OLD KATAMON CLOSE TO THE SHTIBLEH Charming 3 rooms, stone building with elevator, nice balcony, spacious, bright, quiet, master bedroom, parking, Exclusive **2,690,000 NIS**

ARNONA Large 4 rooms, 120 sqm, stone building, elevator, sukkah balcony 20 sqm, quiet, parking, storage, Exclusive **2,800,000 NIS**

GERMAN COLONY In the luxury Gane Katamon Residence, great 3 rooms, 70 sqm, balcony, good shape, storageroom, parking, 3 directions, rare! Exclusive **2,950,000 NIS**

28, Kovshei Katamon Street, Jerusalem
Tel: 02.5633008 - www.ben-zimra.com

SHLOMO SEALING & ROOF

**Advanced sealing system
Repair of tiled roof**

- > **Licensed sealer**
- > **23 years of experience**
- > **Warranty on every job**

We specialize in sealing roof and building walls, constructing and repairing roof tiles, constructing and repairing drainpipes, sealing balconies, basements and pools. Our company uses only SII-certified approved by Ministry of Health.

Among our clients: the Jerusalem municipality, Bezeq, Ben Gurion Airport, house committees and more.

visit and consultation - no strings attached
FAIREST PRICE GUARANTEED!

Email: gagotshlomo@gmail.com
Shlomo: 050-266-9766
Office: 052-774-3343

