

Parshat Emor
Leviticus 22:17-23:22
Ezekiel 44:15-31
luke 14:25-33

Teaching & Mindset

I am.

Those are two of the most powerful words. They encompass EVERYTHING! Those words have a great power to destroy

I am ugly
I am unworthy
I am not enough...

OR they have the power to build!

"I am Adonai"
"I am your inheritance"
I am worthy.

As i've thought about what that means...i've also thought about how G-d made us in his likeness. We may not be perfect but we are enough.

I see the effects of negative self-image on a daily basis. I have to find ways to be a motivational speaker and help my students rewrite the narrative that plays out in their minds. This week in particular, I had noticed that one of my students significantly decreased on one of his tests/scores. Less than he had had at the beginning of the year. I called him over and asked, "Hey! What's going on? Why do you think your score went down so much?" As I asked the question, i knew that it had nothing to do with his ability...but EVERYTHING to do with his mindset. Of course he didn't say what the issue really was... so cue #bestmotivatingteacher mode!

I told him that i'd noticed in the past couple of weeks (with testing etc...) that he seems to really believed a lie... that he isn't good (smart, etc...) enough. I said, "Your brain is smart...and trusting. So when you tell your brain that it isn't _____ enough, it believes you. It takes effort to fight those thoughts and to keep at it! (I wrote it on a sticky note) Everytime you look at yourself in the mirror...look at this sticky note and say it aloud... "I am ENOUGH!"! Half the battle is believing in ourselves...and if you give up...your brain

gives up! You are one of the brightest students that I have known ...so stop giving up on yourself and change your thinking! You CAN do this!"

THank you Mr. Falker plot summary

As the day and week progressed, what do you think I noticed? (Pause)

He began to work harder to really focus and check his work. He began to believe that he could accomplish whatever he was asked to do. His narrative began to change!

I'm an elementary school teacher and mom. One of my most important roles is not just teaching actual information... but rather teaching and instilling a strong sense of self and self-love. Yes I teach my students and Liev about math and science and Roanoke (my favorite part of the year)... but really what i'm doing is giving them the tools to be able to become independent... to create a narrative in their minds and lives that they are capable.

In this week's portion, we read about the rules in leviticus...that if you pay close attention and your eyes and ears don't gloss over (#guilty) you can catch the bit at the end:

'When you harvest the ripe crops produced in your land, don't harvest all the way to the corners of your field, and don't gather the ears of grain left by the harvesters; leave them for the poor and the foreigner; I am *Adonai* your God.'

In ezeziel it's talking about HaShem being the priests inheritance.

"This shall be their inheritance: I am their inheritance: and you shall give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession.

And finally in Luke we read about discipleship and the cost of laying down one's life to follow the L-rd.

So what's the narrative being played out here? How can we use it to tweak or change our mindset? How can we learn something new about HaShem and ourselves and rewrite the script that we've been reading?

Michael Hillel had this to say,

This week's haftarah portion, Ezekiel 44:15–31, relates to the parashah in that it contains regulations for which the priests would be responsible. Among the restrictions and limitations

described, two verses are probably more important than all the other ritual requirements in the passage. Hashem, speaking through Ezekiel, gives this charge to the priests:

They will teach My people the difference between the holy and the common and explain to them the difference between the unclean and the clean. In a lawsuit, they will stand to judge, and judge in accordance with My ordinances. They will keep My laws and My statutes in all My *moadim* and keep My *Shabbatot* holy. (44:23–24, TLV)

Notice it says “They will teach”, not “they will minister”, or “they will mediate”, both of which are priestly responsibilities. ...Priests are to *prepare* the people of Israel and *correct* them so they walk the correct way. [it's not just about learning facts and information...but about a mindset!]

Maybe the prophet understood the future adage, *Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.* Only instead of a fish, the priests were to teach the people of Israel how to discern right from wrong, and what is moral and ethical from what is not.

The relationship Hashem wanted with his people was never intended to be one-sided or to be a spectator sport where the people watched the priests do their thing.

So much so that Hashem gave Israel a Day-Timer, so to speak, with specific meeting times throughout the year to meet with him and to serve as a reminder of his care and grace on their behalf.

Some of the rules and regulations seemed to separate the kohanim from the common people, especially in their function as priest and mediator. However, as teachers, guides, and judges, the kohanim were one with the people. They had to learn Hashem's ways so that they could teach Israel. Being a teacher, then like today, comes with its own special set of problems. A teacher's life and practice are often scrutinized and inspected for shortcomings. In his letter to the Messianic believers in the Diaspora, where learning the ways of the Lord would be a bit more difficult due to foreign rule, culture, and society, James wrote, “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, since you know that we will receive a stricter judgment” (3:1 TLV).

Teaching is not to be avoided but teachers need to realize that they are responsible not only for the material being taught, but also for the lives in which they are investing. Look, for example, at Yeshua's training of the Twelve. They did not come to class a couple hours a day and then go off to work or play or whatever. For approximately three years the Twelve did seemingly everything together with Yeshua— not only learning the Master's words but experiencing his life and habits as well. His charge to them was to follow him (Mark 1:17), to learn from him, to emulate him.”

What false narratives are you believing? What are you teaching yourself and reinforcing in yourself that isn't helpful not only to you...but to all those around you? Our G-d is one of great possibilities... just look at all he has done not only in your life...but in the history of mankind! And think about what He accomplished through Yeshua! Are we not also sons and daughters of the most high? Are we not capable of greater things even than Yeshua?

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.” (John 14:12)

So you see... you ARE ENOUGH! You are:

Capable
Kind
Intelligent
Confident
Courageous
Beautiful
Resilient
Strong
Fierce

You. Are. Enough!

This may come across as totally campy... but you know what? That's ok! Sometimes we need campy...and to feel silly doing something. Sometimes it takes closing the world's opinions out of our minds and hearts in order to learn something valuable (the priests did it...)

So i will lead and you can repeat after me:

I am capable
I am Kind
I am Intelligent
I am Confident
I am Courageous
I am Beautiful
I am Resilient
I am Strong
I am Fierce
I am Enough!

Part of teaching is learning the lessons first...or at least simultaneously!

Michael Hillel continued...

“We are each a teacher to someone, possibly even without our knowledge. Within our sphere of influence, there are people that desire a closer relationship with the Lord but do not know how to get it or maybe maintain it. There are others who, knowing of our faith, think we are a bit *meshuga*, while at the same time they are curious about why we are doing what we are doing. Some folks need the intensity of Marine Basic Training, while others just need a gentle guide or a soft word to learn what they need next.

Are we up to the task of *teaching his people*?”

I dare you to challenge your narrative

I dare you to rewrite your script...

I dare you to really believe in what HaShem said... and in yeshua... that you ARE enough.... That you are beautifully and wonderfully made. That he has picked you...all of us to follow him because he KNOWS us...and sees that we are enough!

Be courageous and know that HaShem has made you...for times like these... he has made you unique and you are enough! Don't be afraid to teach...to love... to inspire others. Be not afraid of greatness because G-d made you an ambassador for His love.

<https://www.umjc.org/commentary/2017/9/18/the-blemished-and-the-whole?rq=emor>

<https://www.umjc.org/commentary/2018/5/1/back-to-basic-training>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=leviticus+22%3A17-23%3A22&version=CJB>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezekiel+44%3A15-31&version=ESV>

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke+14%3A25-33&version=ESV>

<http://rabbisacks.org/?s=emor>

<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/self-esteem-worksheets/#adults>