

# מה שתשיב

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בס"ד

Rav Tzadok HaCohen of Lublin: Bo

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When commanding the Israelites to perform the Passover offering it says, “*And you shall take a bunch of hyssop and immerse [it] in the blood that is in the basin, and you shall extend to the lintel and to the two doorposts the blood that is in the basin, and you shall not go out, any man from the entrance of his house until morning.*” (Genesis 12:22)

The Israelites were not permitted to leave their houses because the holiness that had been created through the Passover sacrifice was bound to their homes. This concept is similar to the prohibition of sacrifices outside of the Tabernacle. (Leviticus 17:1-7)

In Egypt, even though the Israelite nation had been purified from the degradations of idolatry, they were only able to create holiness in their homes. When the Israelites crossed the Reed Sea the Torah says, “*Then the children of Israel came into the midst of the sea on dry land, and the waters were to them as a wall from their right and from their left.*” (Genesis 14:22)

The Midrash points out that the word for wall, חומה is written in the Torah without the vav (חמה) and may be read as הימה - anger. The prosecuting angel accused them of retaining their idolatrous Egyptian tendencies. The only thing that saved them was the Torah that they were going to receive at Sinai and prayer. (Mechilta Shelach chapter 6)

The word for sacrifice in Hebrew is *Korban* - קרבן related to the verb *L'Kareiv* - לקרב to bring close. Just as the sacrifices, brought us closer to G-d in the times of the Tabernacle and Temple, prayer can bring us closer to G-d today. However, unless our prayers generate a change in us, we may sanctify our synagogues, but we will not bring that sanctity with us when we leave.

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