

Potomac Torah Study Center

Vol. 11 #20, February 23-24, 2024; 14-15 Adar 1 5784; Tetzaveh; Purim Katan
Purim Katan is Friday 14 Adar 1; Shushan Purim Katan is Shabbat 15 Adar 1

NOTE: Devrei Torah presented weekly in Loving Memory of Rabbi Leonard S. Cahan z"l, Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation Har Shalom, who started me on my road to learning more than 50 years ago and was our family Rebbe and close friend until his untimely death.

Devrei Torah are now Available for Download (normally by noon on Fridays) from www.PotomacTorah.org. Thanks to Bill Landau for hosting the Devrei Torah archives.

Hersh ben Perel Chana, cousin of very close friends of ours, has been confirmed as one of approximately 240 initial hostages to Hamas in Gaza. The Wall St. Journal featured Hersh and his family in a front page article on October 16. Chabad, OU, and many synagogues recommend psalms (Tehillim) to recite daily for the safety of our people. May our people in Israel wipe out the evil of Hamas, protect us from violence by anti-Semites around the world, and restore peace for our people quickly and successfully – with the help of Hashem.

Tetzaveh is the only parsha from the beginning of Sefer Shemot through the end of Bemidbar in which the Torah does not mention Moshe's name – despite the entire parsha consisting of the same conversation from the beginning of Terumah, in which Hashem speaks to Moshe the entire time. While commentators have given numerous explanations for the unusual absence of Moshe's name, the most basic and obvious reason is that there was no need to identify a second time who was speaking to whom during a single uninterrupted conversation.

I am writing a few days after Hannah and I watched the deeply moving movie *Golda*, a recent film focusing on the events of October 1973, when the combined forces of several Arab countries attacked Israel simultaneously on Yom Kippur. Like the Hamas attack on the same secular date a few months ago, there was minimal advance notice. In 1973, Israel was aware of a likely attack, but Prime Minister Golda Meir obeyed pressure from the United States and did not attack until after the Arab armies opened fire. By delaying, Israel started with a significant disadvantage and sustained heavy initial losses. Indeed, during the first few days of the war, Israel came very close to losing.

After its initial success, Egypt followed by sending its army across the Sinai toward Israel and leaving Cairo essentially exposed. General Sharon discovered an unguarded narrow bridge to Egypt and sent Israeli troops forward toward Cairo. Against heavy odds, the attack worked, and Sharon was able to trap the Egyptian military between Israel and Cairo. Meanwhile, in a part of the war that was not a focus of the movie, Israel was able to secure the northern and eastern borders. Almost certain defeat became a major military victory.

Golda Meir made the major decisions in directing the war despite undergoing serious radiation treatments for cancer. Military experts cannot explain how Israel won this war, but religious Jews understand that God was helping Israel behind the scenes, and the victory was because of Hashem, with B'Nai Yisrael contributing our part working with God.

Now fifty years later, Israel is fighting Hamas, a vicious enemy with much more advanced weapons and a multi-billion dollar underground highway system with weapon stocks and hiding places in countless locations. Rabbi Dr. Katriel (Kenneth) Brander draws a parallel between the parsha and Israelis, both the IDF and Israelis still in our country. The

clothing for the Kohanim represents a melding of the physical and spiritual facets necessary for true redemption (see his Dvar Torah below). The IDF is a manifestation of this melding – many soldiers are bringing tzitzit, tefillin, and sefarim with them and asking countless sheilot (questions on religious practices) to the rabbinic authorities. Meanwhile, Jews back home in Israel are engaging in grass root initiatives of chesed and tefillah (prayers) to support the soldiers, hostages, and disadvantaged members of the community. (For example, countless thousands of Israelis had to leave homes near the borders and move to safer locations, so many Israelis, Jews out of the country with homes in Israel, and hotels have opened up their properties for the use of those who need housing.) Jews from other countries have sent substantial donations of money and various needed items to Israel, and there has been a substantial increase in the number of Jews making aliyah (moving to Israel).

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, z"l, related how he decided to become a Rabbi. He went to Brooklyn to meet the Lubavitch Rebbe and ask him whether he should go into economics or accounting. The Rebbe said that Moshe teaches us to bring forth the inherent leadership qualities within each of us and that Mr. Sacks should become a Rabbi and follow Moshe's teaching. The Rebbe inspired Rabbi Sacks, and Rabbi Lord Sacks repeated this story many times. Rabbi Eli Finkelstein focuses on the different strengths of Moshe and Aharon, as well as their brotherly love. We should follow the example of these holy brothers and use our different talents to make the world a better place.

Tetzaveh teaches us to explore our leadership qualities and work for tikkun olam, making the world a better place. Hamas interprets its religion as dictating that they should kill and maim non-Moslems, something that they have been doing enthusiastically starting on October 7. Forgive me for not understanding how so many people throughout the world consider Hamas to be the "good guys" and Israel the "bad guys" in this fight for survival of our country.

I believe that my beloved Rebbe, Rabbi Leonard Cahan, z"l, would have felt very comfortable with what I wrote this week. He always enjoyed discussing the legal sections of the Torah and finding exciting insights that are not obvious from reading the sections without delving into commentaries. Rabbi Cahan would have been extremely upset with Hamas and its invasion on the 50th anniversary of the Yom Kippur war. He would also have been fuming at the reaction of anti-Semites all over the world – but also proud of the response of so many Jews throughout the world. Times like now remind me how much I miss Rabbi Cahan and how much our friendship of half a century added to my life and whatever legacy I am building for my wife, children, and grandchildren.

Shabbat Shalom,

Hannah and Alan

Much of the inspiration for my weekly Dvar Torah message comes from the insights of Rabbi David Fohrman and his team of scholars at www.alephbeta.org. Please join me in supporting this wonderful organization, which has increased its scholarly work during and since the pandemic, despite many of its supporters having to cut back on their donations.

Please daven for a Refuah Shlemah for Hersh ben Perel Chana (Hersh Polin, hostage to terrorists in Gaza); Hershel Tzvi ben Chana, Reuven ben Basha Chaya Zlata Lana, Yoram Ben Shoshana, Leib Dovid ben Etel, Asher Shlomo ben Ettie, Avraham ben Gavriela, Mordechai ben Chaya, Uzi Yehuda ben Mirda Behla, David Moshe ben Raizel; Zvi ben Sara Chaya, Eliav Yerachmiel ben Sara Dina, Reuven ben Masha, Meir ben Sara, Oscar ben Simcha; Rena bat Ilsa, Riva Golda bat Leah, Sarah Feige bat Chaya, Sharon bat Sarah, Kayla bat Ester, and Malka bat Simcha, and all our fellow Jews in danger in and near Israel. B"H Eliezer Tzvi ben David Hillel (Givati infantry brigade, lead IDF force in Gaza) completed his called-up duty in Gaza and returned home safely. Please contact me for any additions or subtractions. Thank you.

Tetzaveh: Anywhere Else?

By Rabbi Label Lam © 5767

And these are the garments you shall make: A Breastplate, an Ephod, a Robe, a Tunic of a box-like knit, a Turban, and a Sash. They shall make these garments of sanctity for Aaron your brother and his sons to minister to Me. (Shemos 28:3-4)

...And you shall make for them Headdresses of splendor and glory. (Shemos 28:40)

And you shall make a Head-plate of pure gold and engrave upon it, engraved like a signet ring, "Holy to HASHEM!" (Shemos 28:36)

These are the eight glorious garments to be worn by the Kohen Gadol, the High Priest when performing the service in the Holy Temple. There is one area of "clothing" that is conspicuously absent from the Kohen Gadol's wardrobe. Can you guess? You got it! Shoes! Why? Amongst all the elaborate and decorative outerwear that adorns the Kohen Gadol, why do his feet remain bare?

Let us hearken back to a slightly earlier time when Moshe was shepherding the sheep of his father-in-law, wandering in the desert, and he turned to take note of the phenomenon of the burning bush. At that moment HASHEM spoke to Moshe and demanded of him, *"Take off your shoes from upon your feet because the ground that you are standing upon is holy!"* Why was he told to remove his shoes? The Ramban answers, *"because in places of holiness such as the Temple, even Kohanim may not wear shoes!"* That begs the question, *"Why are Kohanim, as Moshe at that moment, not to wear shoes?"*

In the Yalkut Shemoni there's a dispute about the original stature of Adam the First Man before he was diminished. One opinion says that at one time he reached from the earth to the heavens. Another opinion states that he stretched from one end of the world to the other end of the world, so that when he would lie down his head was in the east and his feet were in the west.

What is meaning of the discussion? I once heard from a great person an approach to this argument between the sages. It's a debate about the nature of mankind. People are curious and they love to travel to new and exotic places. This is consistent with notion that the Talmud Sanhedrin states, that the dust that was used to form Adam was gathered from all over the world. Man has a connection to all over the planet. Therefore there exists in the hearts of men this insatiable appetite for adventure – to move horizontally about the world, even mentally, imaginatively wondering about events in distant lands. This is a basic description of one dimension of human nature.

Then there is another type of man. He has no desire to budge from his place. Maybe he wandered enough and came to understand, as the phrase says these days, *"been there -- done that."* Such a person discovers the real limitless adventure in life is not horizontal like the snake moves but vertical like Yaakov's ladder planted here on earth while ever striving for the heavens. That is a different type of person altogether.

When Moshe discovered that *"burning bush"* his horizontal journeying ceased and he became anchored to that place. When one removes their shoes it expresses a commitment to remain here. This is where it is happening! This is hallowed ground! Perhaps the same can be said for the Kohen. Shoes are for travelers in sideways direction. A golden plate that declares, *"Holy to HASHEM"* is for one whose head is reaching for the heavens.

I heard directly from the mouth of Rabbi Shimshon Pincus ztl that once while on a flight from America to Israel the plane made a stopover for a brief period in London. When the connecting flight was ready to continue, he was deeply involved in Davening Mincha. In spite of all the announcements, “now boarding...” , “last call for flight #...” he continued to remain steadfast and focused on his prayers. As a result, he missed the flight. This created a load of logistical problems for him to get another flight and then catch up with his luggage. When asked why he allowed that to happen, he replied, “*I was talking to HASHEM! Why would I want to be anywhere else?*”

<https://torah.org/torah-portion/dvartorah-5771-tetzaveh/>

Parshat Tetzaveh: The Unity of the Gemstones

By Rabbi Dr. Katriel (Kenneth) Brander © 5784 (2024)

President and Rosh HaYeshiva, Ohr Torah Stone

Upon the heart of the Kohen Gadol, the high priest, lay the *Choshen*, displaying twelve gemstones meant to represent each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Each stone, like each of the tribes and each one of us, had its own color, character, and temperament, highlighting how God embraces and celebrates our unique differences. Some shine like rubies, others are tough like diamonds – but we all stand beloved before God as the high priest carries us, in all our variety, upon and within his heart.

The two final gemstones, representing the tribes of Yosef and Binyamin, were the *Shoham* and *Yashpeh*, traditionally identified as onyx and jasper)Shemot 28:20(. These stones, placed side by side in the *Choshen*, meet again elsewhere in Tanach, in a vision of the Messianic age. The prophet looks ahead to the bright future of the Jewish people, when the tempest-tossed nation will settle firmly upon the ground, with towers built of ‘*Kadkod*’ and gates of shimmering gemstones)Yishayahu 54:11-12(.

‘*Kadkod*,’ it seems, is a precious stone, but its identity is somewhat unclear. The Talmud Baba Batra 75a, noting this ambiguity, claims that the uncertainty about the *Kadkod* has roots in a debate between two Talmudic sages, and perhaps even in a debate between the ministering angels Michael and Gabriel. There in the heavens, the angels quarrel over the true identity of the *Kadkod* – is this just another name for *Shoham*, or for *Yashpeh*? Suddenly, God is asked to settle this geological debate. Hashem states: *Kadkod* is ‘*kadein v’kadein*,’ ‘like this and like that.’ In other words, the *Kadkod* is a melding of both the *Shoham* and the *Yashpeh* stones, a mixture of jasper and onyx together.

What is so significant about the identification of the *Kadkod* to the point where, in the Talmudic story, God is called upon to settle the debate?

In his commentary to the Talmudic story, R. Shmuel Eidels)Maharsha(draws our attention back to the representation of Yosef and Binyamin in the *Choshen*, the final two stones *Shoham* and *Yashpeh*, respectively. The synthesis of these two stones, Maharsha argues, reminds us of a deeper synthesis upon which the ultimate redemption lies: the partnership between the physical and the spiritual.

In rabbinic literature, the two characters Yosef and Binyamin reflect two components necessary to bring about the Messianic age: the physical salvation of the Jewish people, along with the spiritual uplifting of society.

Yosef is tasked with tending to the physical and financial needs of his brothers. The *Shoham*, the stone of Yosef, represents the responsibility to ensure the physical sustenance of our people. Indeed the idea of a Mashiach ben Yosef, a messiah from the tribe of Yosef is one who, like his forebear Yosef, ensures that the physical and material infrastructure for the Jewish people is developed.

The tribal inheritance of Binyamin includes the section of the Beit Hamikdash containing the Holy of Holies. Binyanim, and its representative *Yashpeh* stone, represents the pursuit of our spiritual rejuvenation, through their connection to those hallowed grounds, the very site of “God’s place” in this world.

God advocates the admixture of *Shoham* and *Yashpeh*. For it is the combining of the physical and the spiritual facets that are necessary for true redemption, recognizing that each is necessary to ensure the emergence and development of our ultimate redemption.

It is nothing short of a miracle to live in this generation, to be witness to and to participate in the melding of *Shoham* and *Yashpeh*, the combination of physical and spiritual advancement that propels us towards redemption. We live at a time when we have a Jewish state with soldiers on the front lines protecting us from harm. They are bringing tzitzit, tefillin, and sefarim along with them to their bases, tanks, and armored personnel carriers. They are sending countless *sheilot*, halakhic questions, to their respective rabbinic authorities to ensure they conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the dictates of the Torah. These past few months have seen numerous grassroots initiatives emerge throughout Israel and the Diaspora in both the physical and spiritual realms, from food collection to clothing distribution and from tzitzit tying to recitation of Tehillim. We are seeing the synthesis of our physical and spiritual needs come to life, paving the way towards the redemption we so eagerly await.

May the *Shoham* and the *Yashpeh* continue to join together into *Kadkod*, and may God save us, physically and spiritually, from all those who wish to do us harm.

* Ohr Torah Stone is a modern Orthodox group of 32 institutions and programs. Rabbi Dr. Shlomo Riskin is the Founding Director, and Rabbi Dr. Brander is President and Rosh HaYeshiva. For more information or to support Ohr Torah Stone, contact ohrtorahstone@otsyny.org or 212-935-8672. Donations to 49 West 45th Street #701, New York, NY 10036.

Special note this month from Rabbi Dr. Brander: Just this week, Ohr Torah Stone's emissaries at the University of Leeds in the UK, Rabbi Zecharia and Nava Deutsch, received heinous threats to their safety, as well as that of their two small children. In addition, the Hillel House on the campus was vandalized and graffitied with abhorrent antisemitic slogans. . . . Thousands of our students and alumni are serving on the frontlines of the war in Gaza and the North, as well as in positions around the globe working to confront hatred of Jews and the State of Israel. . . . Your continued support and friendship are so vital to our efforts, and take on even greater meaning at this unprecedented time. . . [see above for how and where to donate.]

**Tetzaveh --The Rosh Yeshiva Responds:
Helping Secular Israelis Celebrate Valentine's Day**
by Rabbi Dov Linzer
President and Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah

"And Aharon shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goes into the holy place, for a remembrance before the Lord continually.")Shemot 28:29(

QUESTION - Jerusalem

In the community where I grew up it was very clear that Valentine's Day was a Christian holiday that Jews did not celebrate. However, here in Israel the commercial influence is great and the 14th of February is now celebrated by many chiloni Jews as *Yom Ahavah*, a "Day of Love." I would wager that most do not know anything about the origins of the day. Since the war broke out, I have at times volunteered to provide things for the southern refugees that are housed in Jerusalem hotels. The social worker has told me that it would lift up their spirits to have a Valentine's Day party and requested we buy things along that theme)roses, heart shaped chocolate etc(. Is this permitted?

ANSWER

Given that we are dealing with people who have suffered trauma and for whom morale and lifting their spirits is a real issue of psychological health, I feel pushed to find a path to permits this.

The halakhic issue at stake here is that prohibition of *bi'chukoteihem*, following in the ways of the Gentiles. The position of Rema YD 178:1(, following Maharik responsa 88(, is that this prohibition applies only to something that is practiced among the non-Jews and)a(has an element of sexual promiscuity or)b(a practice that is done for no obvious reason)a chok(. Maharik stresses that the problem with this second category is that since the practice serves no purpose, the only reason a Jew would be adopting it is because he wants to be like the Gentiles, and would not be a problem if the practice was serving a purpose and was not being adopted for the purpose of mimicking. In contrast, Rema writes that the problem here is that such a practice might originally have come from something avoda zara related, and that that, in itself, makes it a violation, regardless of the reason it is being practiced.

That being said, many poskim cite Maharik's reason, even in cases that are connected to religious practice — for example, Rivash responsa 188(permits going out to the graves to pray every morning of shiva, even while acknowledging that was adopted from Muslim practice. Similarly, the practice of spreading branches in the shul on Shavuot is permitted because it can be connected to the theme of the day, despite the parallels to)and possible origin in(the practices of Palm Sunday)see SA OH 494:3 and MB 10(.

All of this would be good reason to permit in our case, but we must acknowledge that a Valentine's Day party is not just a matter of cultural borrowing, but of actually celebrating the day itself, which is a much more serious concern. But I do think that the realities in Israel make a big difference. As you note, in Israel, it not at all experienced as participating in a Christian, but rather a Jewish/Israeli one. Israelis have certainly "made it their own" — with a Hebrew name giving it a totally different identity — and it can be seen as cultural borrowing, not mimicking, just like the other cases which the poskim allow.

Given the circumstances, then, it would be permitted to help these people celebrate Yom Ahavah.

* President and Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, Bronx, NY.

<https://library.yctorah.org/2024/02/ryrtetzaveh/>

Aharon's Leadership

By Rabbi Eli Finkelstein *

There is a debate among Biblical commentators as to when the Mitzvah of building the Mishkan was given. Although the plain text places God's description of the Mishkan before Chet HaEgel, Rashi, through the concept of *Ein Mukdam U'Muchar BaTorah*, "there is no chronological order to the Torah," explains that the Mishkan was introduced by God after the sin, to testify that God had forgiven Israel. On the other hand, Ramban holds that the order of the Torah is the chronological order of events, and that the command to build the Mishkan was given to Moses before the Chet HaEgel, as a continuation of the Revelation at Har Sinai.

There are various lessons we can learn from each perspective – for example, about the purpose of the Mishkan, or about the nature of forgiveness. But a question still lingers. If, according to Rashi, the command to build the Mishkan was given after Chet HaEgel, why is it written in the Torah before that event?

Rashi provides us with no answer, and while there are various approaches to this question, let us look through the lens of our Parasha, by discussing Aharon's role as Kohen Gadol, and one of the key figures of Chet HaEgel. In this week's Parasha, Aharon's role as Kohen Gadol is introduced:

“And you shall bring Aharon your brother, and his sons with him, to you, in order to serve Me as Kohanim – Aharon, Nadav and Avihu, Elazar and Itamar, the sons of Aharon.”)Shemot 28:1(

According to Rashi's opinion, the introduction of Aharon as Kohen Gadol only happened after Chet HaEgel. This matters because Aharon's participation was crucial in the events of that national sin. He was the one who told the Israelites to gather their gold, and he was the one to fashion the idol itself. If we had read that before God appointed him as the Kohen Gadol, we would have been shocked. Why would God make someone who had failed at leadership in a time of crisis such an important leader of the people?

But we only read of Aharon's sin after his appointment. Perhaps the placement of Aharon's role before his mistakes, then, teaches us about Aharon's leadership and leadership in general. Leadership is not a single lane road. Leaders exist in different ways, and leaders can act in different ways. God appoints Aharon as the Kohen Gadol because, as an Ohev Shalom and a Doresh Shalom, a lover and pursuer of peace, Aharon can help people connect to God in a way that Moshe perhaps could not. But when Aharon is asked to step into the role of Moshe at Sinai, he cannot stand up to the people in the same way as Moshe. Even after that sin, Aharon is still fit to be Kohen Gadol because the skills of that leadership are different from the skills he needed at Sinai.

We understand exactly how good of a role Aharon plays as Kohen Gadol in Sefer Bamidbar. After the events of Korach's rebellion, when the people rebel and God sends a plague, it is Aharon who took the incense to the people, and it is he who *“stood between the dead and the living”*)Bamidbar 17:12(to stop the plague. As Sforno points out there, Aharon did the opposite of what God commanded him – instead of separating from the people, Aharon put himself in the midst of the people. It was that, in addition to the incense, that saved the people. Moshe, with light permeating from his face causing him to separate his face from the people, perhaps could not have placed himself in the midst of the people in the same way that Aharon could.

The Torah, through its placement of Aharon's role as Kohen Gadol in Parashat Tetzaveh before his failure at Chet HaEgel in Parashat Ki Tisa, comes to teach us that we each have a place in which we can excel, where we can lead and work to change and improve God's world. Just like Aharon's success as a Kohen Gadol is independent of his failure with Chet HaEgel, we should find where we can emphasize our skills, and help others in our own way.

* Assistant Rabbi at Moses Montefiore Anshe Emunah Hebrew Congregation in Baltimore, MD. Semicha, Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, 2021.

<https://library.yctorah.org/2024/02/tetzaveh5784/>

Living Up To Our Uniforms: Thoughts for Parashat Tetsaveh

By Rabbi Marc D. Angel *

People wear uniforms...athletes, police, firefighters, surgeons, clergy. Graduates don caps and gowns. Marching bands have their uniforms. Top hats and tails, formal gowns, business attire...each uniform is meant to define a particular role or a particular occasion. When people dress casually so that they think they are not wearing uniforms...they are wearing casual uniforms! The way they dress is meant to reflect their conformity with or rebellion from the current fashions.

The Torah goes into great detail about the uniform of the priests of the Mishkan, and especially about that of the High Priest. The latter's garments were quite impressive and were meant to evoke *“honor and glory.”* When Israelites entered the Mishkan, and later the Temples in Jerusalem, they witnessed a priesthood with elaborate costumes.

Uniforms serve a functional purpose. They indicate to outsiders what roles the uniform-wearers are playing. But uniforms also serve a psychological role. When we see someone dressed in a particular outfit, specific emotions arise within us.

Our moods and behaviors are influenced by the uniforms; in a sense, the uniforms are symbols of roles that evoke emotional responses from us.

When Israelites entered the Mishkan or Temple precincts, they witnessed priests performing the various services. When they saw the High Priest in his fancy regalia, they not only knew that he was the High Priest; they also felt the *"honor and glory"* that was associated with him. They had a Pavlovian reaction: here is a man who stands close to God, who represents us in our relationship with the Divine.

How did the High Priest feel as he wore his distinctive uniform? Ideally, the special clothing would have evoked within him a heightened feeling of reverence and responsibility. He knew that everyone who saw him thought of him in lofty terms; he had to live up to their high expectations. The priestly uniform was not merely intended to impact on the Israelites, but on the priest himself. He had to live by the highest standards, to live up to the uniform he wore.

However, there may have been)and there were!(High Priests who did not live up to their uniforms. Rather, they somehow came to feel that the uniform served as a camouflage. Instead of the uniform inspiring greater piety and integrity, it was a place to hide. They wielded authority by virtue of their external costume, not by virtue of who they were.

When the priesthood's authority depended on vestments rather than on personal piety and integrity, then the public lost respect for the priests and for all that the priesthood was supposed to represent. The Temple service, as many of our Prophets lamented, became a hypocritical sham. Priests went through the specified rituals and offerings, but the feeling of the presence of God was lacking. The priests became functionaries, not religious personalities who could teach and inspire. The Israelites' religious leadership had become a group of uniforms, empty suits.

Whatever our particular uniform and our particular roles in life, it is essential that we not allow ourselves to become costumes rather than genuine, honest people. Just as clergy desecrate religion when they do not live up to their uniforms and their callings, so everyone undermines personal integrity when they depend on play-acting and costumes to impress others.

The great 20th century teacher and literary critic, Lionel Trilling, wrote of *"the satisfaction with the thing that looks like the real thing but is not the real thing."* People are too often satisfied with false images and do not demand the *"real thing."* But wise people see through the falsehoods and the play-acting. Eventually, most people will come to demand the *"real thing,"* at least so we must hope.

Do we demand the *"real thing"* in others? Do we live up to our own uniforms, up to our roles in life, up to our potentialities? Do we demand the *"real thing"* in ourselves?

* Founder and Director, Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals.

The Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals has experienced a significant drop in donations during the pandemic. The Institute needs our help to maintain and strengthen our Institute. Each gift, large or small, is a vote for an intellectually vibrant, compassionate, inclusive Orthodox Judaism. You may contribute on our website jewishideas.org or you may send your check to Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals, 2 West 70th Street, New York, NY 10023. Ed.: Please join me in helping the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals during its winter fund raising period. Thank you.

<https://www.jewishideas.org/living-our-uniforms-thoughts-parashat-tetsaveh>

Genuine Love: Thoughts for Parashat Tetsaveh

By Rabbi Marc D. Angel *

Commentators have noted the unusual fact that the name of Moses does not appear in Parashat Tetsaveh. This is in sharp contrast with his brother Aaron whose name recurs frequently in this Torah portion. Since this Parasha focuses on the garments to be made for and worn by Aaron as he assumes his role as High Priest, it is reasonable to suggest that the Torah wished to highlight Aaron and draw attention away from Moses.

Some have suggested that Moses himself wished to keep his name out of this section in order to pay full homage to his brother. In his humility and genuine love for his brother, Moses chose to cede the stage entirely to Aaron. This example of brotherly love harks back to an earlier story in the book of Shemot.

When the Almighty first called on Moses to go to Egypt to lead the Israelites, Moses demurred. He was a humble shepherd who did not feel worthy of the enormous responsibility of leadership. Moreover, Moses may have thought that his older brother Aaron had a better claim to lead the people than he did. Aaron, after all, lived among the Israelites and knew their situation first hand. Moses had been living for many years in Midian. How would Aaron react when he learned that God chose Moses rather than him? God reassures Moses that Aaron would see Moses *“and rejoice in his heart.”* Aaron was such a fine human being that he fully rejoiced in Moses’s success. He was not envious, not insulted, not feeling bad for being passed over.

Just as Aaron’s love for Moses was selfless, so Moses’s love for Aaron was also selfless. Each of them willingly and full heartedly rejoiced in the success and honor of the other. They didn’t let their egos get in the way.

Genuine love is a special gift. It requires the ability to identify fully with the beloved. The Hebrew word for love, *ahavah*, derives from the root meaning *“to give.”* A loving person is a giving person. Imperfect *“love”* is when one is really interested in one’s own pleasure and advantage, when one is more interested in taking than in giving.

In order to love selflessly, one must have inner confidence. One with a weak sense of self has trouble loving because his/her ego intrudes. Interest in bolstering one’s own ego detracts from the ability of sharing love fully with another.

It is very difficult to give a full and generous compliment. People want to protect their own egos. When they compliment others, they feel a threat to their own frail sense of self. The compliment and [inner thoughts] go like this: you’ve done well [but I can do better]; you’ve achieved something great [but not as great as what I have achieved]; you are loveable [but not as loveable as I am]; you are beautiful, smart, successful [but you have many shortcomings too.]

People with weak egos constantly seek validation and recognition. They want their pictures and names in the newspapers. They make outrageous statements, or dress outrageously, or do outrageous things so that they will be noticed. They don’t want to share the limelight because they fear that they will be eclipsed by others.

Moses and Aaron set examples of selfless love. They genuinely rejoiced in each other’s success. Their egos and self-interest did not factor into their mutual respect and commitment.

In demonstrating their respect and love for each other, they thereby demonstrated their own greatness of spirit. They set a model worthy of emulation.

* Founder and Director, Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals.

<https://www.jewishideas.org/article/genuine-love-thoughts-parashat-tetsaveh>

Titzaveh: I Needed to Tell You

By Rabbi Mordechai Rhine *

When the journey to build a Mishkan (Sanctuary) began, Hashem declared that they should build it *“Li -- For Me,”* as to say that Hashem needed the Mishkan. The Medrash compares it to a king who married off his beloved daughter and asked the young couple to create a guest room so that he could visit. Similarly, Hashem declared, *“I gave the Jewish people My beloved Torah. Build me a place so that I can come visit.”* Hashem wanted a Mishkan so that He will be invited into our lives and have Nachas from us.

In contrast, in this week's Parsha, Titzaveh, when Hashem gives the Mitzva of the Menorah in the Mishkan, the description is *“Eleicha -- For you.”* The Talmud (Shabbos 22) explains that on a level, Hashem doesn't need the Menorah. After all the whole world is illuminated by Him. The purpose of the Menorah is as a testimony that Hashem dwells with the Jewish people. This refers to the Ner Maaravi, the western lamp of the Menorah, which miraculously continued burning even after the other lamps burned out.

The Ohr HaChaim explains that there were sceptics who said that even if the Jewish people can create a Sanctuary for a short period of time, will it really be a long-term relationship? The special light of the Menorah represents the eternal light of Israel. Not only is Hashem eternal; the Jewish people are also eternal. Our flame will never be extinguished.

The difference of wording between building the Mishkan and the Mitzva of Menorah is because the Mishkan was *built “for Hashem,”* so that He would reside among us. But the Mitzva of Menorah is for us. Hashem knows well that our relationship is eternal. He is not the one with doubts. But because we need that visual, He gave us this Mitzva of light, representing the eternal light of the Jewish people.

On some level it is like the couple who came to a Rabbi with their marriage issues. The wife complained that her husband never gave her compliments. The husband retorted: *“When we got married 15 years ago, I told you that I love you. If anything changes, I will let you know.”*

Hashem knows that our relationship is strong. But he also knows that we need nurturing. So, he gave us the Mitzva of Menorah, *“Eleicha, For you,”* the Jewish people. Hashem declares with confidence that He is good with the relationship. He wants us to know that and feel that way too. Therefore, he gave us the Mitzva of Menorah.

During the week after Kristallnacht (November 1938), the Nazis called upon the leaders of the Jewish communities to force them to assess the damage and destruction that the Nazi thugs did to hundreds of shuls. In one community the local police chief ordered the shul President to go with him to assess the damage. They stood on the street in front of the destroyed shul where the Nazi's relished the evil destruction. Then, on closer examination, the police chief noticed that a decorative light still burned in the front of the shul. He realized that the Nazi inspired and orchestrated pogrom had not fully cut electric power to the shul. With intensity he asked the shul President what that light was. The President recognized the Ner Tamid, the symbolic eternal light that burned in front of the Aron, a light that was wired off the power grid, on its own battery power. He replied, *“Sir, that is the eternal light of Israel. It will never be extinguished.”*

Indeed, the Jewish people have met many challenges over the generations. But the light of Israel is eternal. Hashem knows this well. But we sometimes need a reminder, an inspiration. For that He gave us the Mitzva of Menorah. It is the light of miracles, the light of Jewish continuity.

With best wishes for a wonderful Shabbos!

* Rabbi Mordechai Rhine is a certified mediator and coach with Rabbinic experience of more than 20 years. Based in Maryland, he provides services internationally via Zoom. He is the Director of TEACH613: Building Torah Communities, One family at a Time, and the founder of CARE Mediation, focused on Marriage/ Shalom Bayis and personal coaching.

Tetzaveh – Remove the Grudge You Never Had

by Rabbi Yehoshua Singer * © 5782 (2022)

When Hashem begins instructing Moshe in the making of the priestly garments, there is an unexpected phrase. Hashem says to Moshe, *“And you should bring Aharon your brother close to you and his sons with him to make them priests for Me.”* (Shemos 28:1) In what sense was Moshe to draw Aharon close to him?

The Medrash Rabbah explains that when Moshe came down from Har Sinai and saw the tragedy of the Golden Calf, he gazed upon his brother Aharon and saw Aharon banging on the calf with a hammer to fashion it. The Medrash tells us that Aharon had taken the lead role in fashioning the form of the calf in order to be in a position to delay the completion of the calf, hoping that Moshe would return before the calf was fully completed. Moshe, though, did not realize this at first and suspected Aharon of being a full partner in the creation of the Golden Calf. Moshe, therefore, had a measure of ill will in his heart towards Aharon. It was this ill will that Hashem was addressing now by saying, *“Bring Aharon your brother close to you.”* Hashem was telling Moshe to remove the ill will he felt towards Aharon because Aharon's intentions were entirely pure. (Shemos Rabbah 37:2)

The idea that Moshe should be holding any ill will towards Aharon over the Golden Calf is extremely difficult to understand. There is a Torah obligation to judge people favorably. When dealing with a righteous person who has an established track record of going above and beyond, that obligation applies even when it seems obvious that the person had done wrong. Aharon certainly deserved the benefit of the doubt. Indeed, the Torah tells us that Moshe immediately asked Aharon what the nation had done to force his hand and Aharon explained himself. (Shemos 32:21-24) Aside from this obligation, Moshe certainly trusted his older brother and wanted to believe in his innocence. Moshe held a tremendous love and respect for his older brother. Our rabbis teach us that when Hashem first asked Moshe to lead the Jewish people out of Egypt, he asked Hashem to send Aharon instead, because he didn't want to lead over his older brother. He was willing to forgo all of the great spiritual heights and the unique relationship which G-d had with him and the great merit of being called Moshe Rabbeinu – Our teacher – Moshe would have given all that up in order not to hurt his older brother. (Medrash Tanchuma Shemos 27) Moshe's closeness with Aharon was as close as brothers could be. The Medrash tells us also that when Moshe anointed Aharon and he saw the oil dripping down Aharon's beard, Moshe felt such joy for Aharon that it was as though the oil was flowing down Moshe's own beard. (Even though this was after Hashem told Moshe to draw Aharon close, Moshe certainly must have had deep feelings for Aharon beforehand to be able to reach such a depth of closeness so quickly.) (Vayikrah Rabbah 3:6)

Our rabbis teach us that the Torah uses extreme language when dealing with great people to highlight minor emotions. (See Rambam on Bereishis 29:31) It would seem that this principle applies here, as well. Certainly Moshe did not have strong feelings against Aharon, and he deeply believed – and wanted to believe – in Aharon's innocence. Nonetheless, deep within Moshe's heart was a memory of a shocking first impression from that moment when he saw Aharon appearing to be fully involved in the Golden Calf. That painful memory had left its imprint and Moshe still felt a twinge of angst deep within towards Aharon. It was this twinge that Hashem was instructing Moshe to remove. As great as their love was, it was not as complete as it could be. Hashem wanted their love for each other to be as complete as was humanly possible.

This Medrash is a powerful insight into *v'ahavta l'rei'acha kaocha* -- *“Love your friend as yourself.”* No matter how deep our love for another Jew is, Hashem wants us to strive for more – to see the good in others and see beyond their flaws. The mitzvah is to truly aim to love another as completely as I love my own self.

* Savannah Kollel; Congregation B'nai Brith Jacob, Savannah, GA. Until recently, Rabbi, Am HaTorah Congregation, Bethesda, MD. Rabbi Singer will become Rosh Kollel next year.

Tetzaveh by Rabbi Herzl Hefter *

]Rabbi Hefter did not send a new Dvar Torah for Tetzaveh. Watch this space for further insights from Rabbi Hefter in future weeks.[

* Founder and dean of the Har'el Beit Midrash in Jerusalem. Rabbi Hefter is a graduate of Yeshiva University and was ordained at Yeshivat Har Etzion. For more of his writings, see www.har-el.org. To support the Beit Midrash, as we do, send donations to America Friends of Beit Midrash Har'el, 66 Cherry Lane, Teaneck, NJ 07666.

Creativity is Next to Godliness By Rabbi Haim Ovadia * © 2023

In the last chapters of the book of Shemot, we read of women and men who were endowed with a divine spirit of wisdom, intelligence and knowledge and who were responsible for the creative craftsmanship required for the detailed construction of the tabernacle. If these words resonate with our perception of creation, it is because the bible uses the same terminology for both:

In Genesis we find the divine spirit hovering over the abyss at the dawn of creation, before the formation of heaven and earth.

In the book of Proverbs 3:19:20(the Creator's intellectual tools of the trade are identical to those of the builders of the tabernacle.

God established the earth by wisdom, He founded the heavens by intelligence, by His knowledge the depths burst apart.

What about craftsmanship? When discussing the categories of work forbidden on Shabbat, the Talmud states)Yom Tov 13:2(:

The definition of the work forbidden on Shabbat is derived from the type of work involved in the construction of the tabernacle, and since the Shabbat itself is a reminder that the world was created by God, who rested on the seventh day, the equation is complete: God ceased craftsmanship on the seventh day, and so did the builders of the tabernacle, but during the other six days both Creator and craftsmen were engaged in the same type of activity.

By giving us a detailed account of the construction of the tabernacle and the roles of the spinsters, weavers, carpenters, jewelers and goldsmiths, the Torah teaches us that creativity is the Image of God. Just as the whole creation speaks of the might and wisdom of the Creator, so does every creative insight of the human being. Whether crafting words, threads or stones, inventing gizmos and apps, taming nuclear power or decoding the secrets of the DNA, the creative, inventive and ever-curious mind mirrors and emulates God.

Weaving, Language and Creation

A beautiful Midrash compares the creation of the universe to an ongoing act of weaving by God, from two spools, one of fire and one of snow, which keep expanding on an infinite heirloom)any association with or similarity to actual facts and

findings of cosmology is not coincidental! (Another Midrash explains that the creation of mankind culminated with the gift of language or, a statement with which modern science concurs, albeit in a somewhat different phrasing: “*language created Homo sapiens*”) Martin Nowak, *Homo Grammaticus, Natural History*, 12/2000, p. 44. The two Midrashim artfully entwine and interweave the concepts of creation and language with those of creativity and weaving, because using our verbal skills correctly is a form of art. Just as the seemingly meaningless threads join in the hand of a master weaver to display patterns, images and stories so the human mind fabricates language, letters to words, words to sentences.

“We think of our lives - and of stories - as spun threads, extended and knitted or interwoven with others into the fabric of communities, or history, or texts... words that connect weaving with storytelling: text, texture and textile, the fabric of society. Words for disintegration - fraying, frizzling, unravelling, woolgathering, loose ends. A storyteller or a listener can lose the thread... The processes of cloth-making are knitted and knotted into our brains, though our houses no longer have spindles or looms.” A.S. Byatt, *The Guardian*, 6/20/2008.

The metaphors and connotations of language, garment making and creativity can be positive or negative. The positive ones include the first reference to cloth-making, by the Creator Himself (Gen. 3:1), the love-invested hand-knitted sweaters from grandma, the personally embroidered korachas (Syrian Talet bags) and the famous TED conferences, whose acronym stands for Technology, Education and Design, or in other words: inventiveness, language and creativity. On the negative side, the Hebrew word for clothes (בגד) is derived from the same root as treason, and throughout history deception, promiscuity and witchcraft were associated with women engaged in weaving or spinning yarn to the extent that in the 16th century, King Louis XIII of France banned the making of lace.

Why was there such fear and resentment of the craft? Because creativity represents a power which cannot be contained or controlled, it is a manifestation of the free spirit of mankind and of the uniqueness of each human being. Tyrannical, oppressive regimes sought therefore to eliminate, quell or control linguistic, as well as artistic, creativity.

In contrast, the Torah speaks volumes of the importance of creativity and of harnessing our talents to the advancement of spirituality, one of whose manifestation is the aesthetic experience. It does so by delegating the most sacred role, the creation of the fabrics which will envelop, protect and clothe the holy tabernacle, the symbol of the dwelling among humans of the Divine Providence, to the wise women who spun the magnificent yarns of blue, royal purple, crimson and white

Bring Back the Tinkerer

Alongside the women, the undisputed stars of the 450 verses dealing with the fabrication and construction of the tabernacle are the artisans. The names of Operation Tabernacle's masterminds are symbolic: Bezalel ben Uri is the one under God's wings, son of light, and Oholiab ben Ahisamach is supporter and companion, the one who dwells at the Father's tent. These men led a team of creative designers, tinkerers and craftsmen, who, as mentioned before, emulated God's creation by using their God given talents.

While the Torah encouraged creativity, which in ancient time was acquired by apprenticeship and hands-on experience, it is a sad reality of modern society that most of our schools lack any serious program or incentive for young minds to develop such skills and talents, not just in elementary and high schools, but in higher education institutions as well.

Take for example the case of NASA, which recruited many new young engineers several years ago, only to be encountered with a weird mental block plaguing these graduates of the leading schools in the country, a block which rendered them incapable of solving problems. A comprehensive study comparing the problem solvers with the non-solvers found that the problem solvers used to tinker and work with their fingers as kids. The problem solvers, in contrast, triggered many areas of their brains and established a line of communication between the abstract and the physical world. The extremely sophisticated knowledge that the theoretical engineers digested was two-dimensional, ethereal and

impractical, based on books alone and not fully engaging the tremendously flexible power of the human brain. As author David Eagleman explains, there are many possible solutions to any given problem, a fact that those who tinker learn more easily than theoretical scientists *)Incognito: The Secret Lives of the Brain(*.

Outside of NASA, how often does a person need the services of a tinkerer or hold an object made by one? An iPhone user tinkers constantly, and other devices are inspired by a tinkerer. Steve Jobs, the adopted son of a mechanic, who grew up taking apart appliances and then cars, admired the beauty and the elegance that go beyond the utilitarian purpose of an object, and eventually became the man who has revolutionized four industries.

In his book *Free to Learn*, Peter Gray describes the Sudbury Valley School, the visionary school founded in the late 60's by Daniel Greenberg, in which students ages 4-19 have free access at all times to workshops and materials of all kinds. This approach has allowed thousands of students to develop their skills and artistic talents, and provided them not only with a solid profession but also with joie de vivre and peace of mind. One of them, Tom, speaks of his experience at the school)pp. 107-109(:

"I was in sixth grade and I was doing anything I could do to rebel against the system...]in[Sudbury Valley there was nothing to rebel against... so we just played..."

Tom fell in love with the Plasticine workshop where he would work with a friend from morning till night, making models of towns with hotels and saloons, vehicles, factories, people, tanks and weapons. Today he is a master machinist and invents high-tech industrial machines.

The state of creative education, especially in our Jewish schools, makes one wonder. If God had commanded us to build the tabernacle today, would we be capable? Would our kids be capable? Do we nurture and encourage the natural artistic talents with which God endows us or do we limit and force our knowledge and learning style into set frames and boundaries?

The Torah commands us to be creative in any way and form possible, because our home, our family, our lives, are the eternal tabernacle in which a Divine spark is lit, and we must build and craft it, just like the builders of the tabernacle: with wisdom, intelligence and knowledge, imbued by the divine spirit and urged to engage in a thoughtful and life-transforming craftsmanship.

Shabbat Shalom.

Suggested readings: *The Element*, by Sir Ken Robinson; *Free to Learn*, by Peter Gray; *Steve Jobs*, by Walter Isaacson, pp. 1-85; *Incognito: The Secret Lives of Our Brain*, by David Eagleman; and *Spinning Fantasies*, by Miriam B. Peskowitz.

* Torah VeAhava. Rabbi, Beth Sholom Sephardic Minyan)Potomac, MD(and faculty member, AJRCA non-denominational rabbinical school(. **New: Many of Rabbi Ovadia's Devrei Torah are now available on Sefaria.** The Sefaria articles include Hebrew text, which I must delete because of issues changing software formats.

Dvar Torah from Rabbi Ovadia this year come from an unpublished draft of his forthcoming book on Tanach, which Rabbi Ovadia, who has generously shared with our readers. Rabbi Ovadia reserves all copyright rights to this material.

All Jews Mourn and Celebrate Together

By Rabbi Moshe Rube *

Billy Joel sings in his eponymous song, "The Stranger":

*Well, we all have a face
That we hide away forever
And we take them out and show ourselves
When everyone has gone
Some are satin, some are steel
Some are silk and some are leather
They're the faces of the stranger
But we love to try them on*

In other words, we all play different roles in the stage of life whether it be spouse, parent, child, boss, worker, congregant and/or rabbi. Each one requires us to don different behaviours to excel in each one.

Kabbalistic thought metaphorically calls these different roles we don as "*clothing*." It even refers to God as wearing different "*clothing*" depending on the role He plays. As we pray on the High Holidays, God can be "*Avinu Malkeinu*," our father and/or our king.

The clothing worn by the priests as described in our Parsha this week symbolises the Kohen's role as a representative of the Jewish people. Take for instance, the choshen which is the breastplate the High priest wears bearing the 12 Jewels with the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. When the Kohen performs the sacrificial service, he takes the entire Jewish people with him.

As our Sages state, we become the priests of the Temple every week when we perform our Shabbat service on behalf of the Jewish people in our community. In other words, we don the clothing of community representation. They even state that the Gabbais take on the role or clothes of Moses as they are the ones arranging everything so that God's word can be heard.

So in honour of our Torah portion, we thank all those who wear the "*clothing*," i.e., take on the roles of community representation. And of course we thank our Gabbais for being our 'Moses' on Shabbat.

Shabbat Shalom.

* Senior Rabbi of Auckland Hebrew Congregation, Remuera)Auckland(, New Zealand. Formerly Rabbi, Congregation Kneseth Israel)Birmingham, AL(.

Rav Kook Torah Tetzaveh: Raising a Constant Flame

Not just any oil was suitable for use in the Temple Menorah. The Torah stipulates that the oil be particularly refined, made from hand-crushed olives, so that it will "*raise up a constant flame*")Ex. 27:20(.

Why does the Torah use this unusual phrase, "*to raise up the flame*"? Why not say simply "*to kindle the flame*"?

Proper Oil and Wicks

The Sages explained that this phrase indicates that the lights of the Menorah must burn easily and naturally, necessitating that only the finest oil and wicks be used. The oil must be pure, produced from types of oil that are easily absorbed, and the wicks must be made from a material that burns smoothly. With such high quality oil and wicks, the flame will "*raise itself up*" and will not need to be fiddled with.

For Sabbath lights, the Sages similarly required that the oil come from a substance that is absorbed easily, and the wicks be made from a material that burns smoothly. 'Those wicks and oils that the Sages disqualified from use on the Sabbath may also not be used in the Temple')Shabbat 21a(.

Elevating Body and Soul

Rav Kook explained that there is a deeper significance to this rule. The goal of the Sabbath is to perfect the individual, and the requirement for easily lit wicks and oil contains an important lesson about the path to spiritual growth.

If the body is overwhelmingly drawn toward physical pleasures, the intellect will not succeed in guiding it. One may become skilled in some craft, or gain proficiency in certain areas of wisdom, but wisdom will not reside in the heart. The overriding attraction to material pursuits will interfere with the illumination of the intellect.

Our body is like a wick. It must be refined so that it does not resist the light, but rather works together with the soul. Only then it will be illuminated easily and evenly. This is the essence of the Sabbath: a day set aside for harmonious living, so that we may naturally grow in holiness and true service of God.

The oil is a metaphor for the human intellect. The mind also needs guidance; not every intellectual pursuit leads to ethical and spiritual growth. Cases abound of brilliant individuals who led amoral, even corrupt lives. Just as the oil of the Menorah must be of a type that is readily absorbed by the wick, so too, we should immerse ourselves in a wisdom which provides practical guidance toward proper living. Such is the wisdom of Israel — the Torah.

Lights of the Individual and the Nation

The Sabbath day promotes the spiritual growth of the individual. But what about the spiritual growth of the nation? What if the nation seeks to amass wealth and power, regardless of any injustices perpetrated along the way? Unfortunately, this is a common phenomenon: the individual aspires to justice and goodness, while his country ruthlessly pursues its objectives.

The heritage of the Jewish people, however, is different. Our national aspirations are at one with our individual aspirations. Both are rooted in God's law from Sinai. Both the individual and the nation pursue the same goals of justice and kindness. This is the significance of the association made between the Sabbath lights and the Temple Menorah, connecting the aspirations of the individual and the nation. Both Sabbath and Temple lights require oil and wicks that burn smoothly and easily. The Torah of the nation, like that of the individual, must guide its actions effectively, and not be limited to abstract philosophical inquiry.

Raising Itself Up

The Sages further explained that flame needs to be constant, a light that "*raises itself up.*" What does this mean? Our impetus for seeking justice and good should be based on intrinsic, natural motives. This is accomplished by purifying the body through the sanctity of practical mitzvot, and the mind through the light of Torah study. Then we do not require artificial assistance to avoid evil. Our enlightened conscience will naturally lead us to the proper path.

)Sapphire from the Land of Israel. Adapted from *Ein Eyah* vol. III, p. 57 on Shabbat 21a.(

<https://www.ravkooktorah.org/TETZAV62.htm>

Tetzaveh: Who Is Honoured? (5770, 5777)

By Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, z"l, Former Chief Rabbi of the U.K.*

Tetzaveh is the only sedra from the beginning of Exodus to the end of Deuteronomy, that does not contain the word "Moses." ** For once Moses, the hero, the leader, the liberator, the lawgiver, is offstage. Instead our focus is on his elder brother Aaron who, elsewhere, is often in the background. Indeed virtually the whole sedra is devoted to the role Moses did not occupy, except briefly – that of priest in general, High Priest in particular.

Why so? Is there any larger significance to the absence of Moses from this passage? The commentators offered many suggestions. One of two offered by R. Jacob ben Asher (1270-1340, author of the code known as the Tur), relates this week's sedra to an event at the beginning of Moses' leadership: his encounter with God at the burning bush (Ex. 3-4). Moses repeatedly expressed reluctance to undertake the mission of leading the people out of Egypt. Finally we read:

But Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it." Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses and He said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you. You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do." Ex. 4:13-15

The Sages say that it was this hesitation on the part of Moses that caused part of his role – as potential High Priest – to be taken from him and given to his brother. R. Jacob ben Asher concludes that Moses' name is missing from Tetzaveh "to spare him distress" on seeing Aaron acquire the insignia of priesthood that might have been Moses' own.

Without negating this or other explanations, there may be a more fundamental message. As I have mentioned before, one of the recurring themes of Genesis is sibling rivalry, hostility between brothers. This story is told, at ever-increasing length, four times: between Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph and his brothers.

There is an identifiable pattern to this set of narratives, best seen in the way each ends. The story of Cain and Abel ends with murder, fratricide. Isaac and Ishmael – though they grow up apart – are seen together at Abraham's funeral. Evidently there had been a reconciliation, though this is told between the lines and spelled out in Midrash, not directly in the text. Jacob and Esau meet, embrace and go their separate ways. Joseph and his brothers are reconciled and live together in peace, Joseph providing them with food, land, and protection. Genesis is telling us a story of great consequence. Fraternity – one of the key words of the French revolution – is not simple or straightforward. It is often fraught with conflict and contention. Yet slowly, brothers can learn that there is another way. On this note Genesis ends.

But it is not the end of the story. There is a fifth chapter: the relationship between Moses and Aaron. Here, for the first time, there is no hint of sibling rivalry (some developed later – Bamidbar ch. 12 – but was resolved by Moses' humility). The brothers work together from the very outset of the mission to lead the Israelites to freedom. They address the people together. They stand together when confronting Pharaoh. They perform signs and wonders together. They share leadership of the people in the wilderness together. For the first time, brothers function as a team, with different gifts, different talents, different roles, but without hostility, each complementing the other.

This is conveyed by the Torah in two striking phrases. The first is in the passage already cited above. God says to Moses: Aaron "is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you." How different this is from the tense encounters between brothers in Genesis. Aaron, we may have thought, might have many reasons not to rejoice on seeing Moses return. The brothers had not grown up together. Moses had been adopted by Pharaoh's daughter and raised in an Egyptian palace. Nor had they been together during the Israelites' sufferings. Moses, fearing for his life after his assault on an Egyptian taskmaster, had fled to Midian.

Besides this, Moses was Aaron's younger brother, and it was he who was about to become leader of the people. Always in the past, when the younger had taken something the elder might have believed belonged naturally to him, there was

jealousy, animosity. Yet God assures Moses:

"When Aaron sees you, he will rejoice". And so he did" Ex. 4:27

The second intimation is contained in a strange text, tracing the descent of Moses and Aaron:

Amram married his father's sister Jochebed, who bore him Aaron and Moses. Amram lived 137 years. . . It was this same Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said, "Bring the Israelites out of Egypt by their divisions." They were the ones who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt about bringing the Israelites out of Egypt. It was the same Moses and Aaron. Ex. 6:20,26-27

The repeated phrase, *"It was this same,"* is emphatic even in translation. It is all the more so when we note two peculiarities of the text. The first is that the phrases, though at first they sound identical, in fact place the names of the brothers in a different order: the first phrase says *"Aaron and Moses,"* the second, *"Moses and Aaron."* Even more striking is the grammatical oddity of the phrase. Both times, the third person singular is used.

Literally, they read: *"He was Aaron and Moses," "He was Moses and Aaron."* The text should have said, *"They"* – all the more so since the pronoun *"they"* is used in the middle of the passage: *"They were the ones who spoke to Pharaoh."*

The unmistakable implication is that they were like a single individual. They were as one. There was no hierarchy between them: sometimes Aaron's name appears first, sometimes Moses.' On this there is a wonderful Midrash, based on the verse in Psalms 85:11 (*"Loving-kindness and truth meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other."*)

Loving-kindness – this refers to Aaron. Truth – this refers to Moses. Righteousness – this refers to Moses. Peace – this refers to Aaron. Shemot Rabbah 5:10

The Midrash brings proof-texts for each of these identifications, but we understand them immediately. Moses and Aaron were quite different in temperament and role. Moses was the man of truth, Aaron of peace. Without truth, there can be no vision to inspire a nation. But without internal peace, there is no nation to inspire. Aaron and Moses were both necessary. Their roles were in creative tension. Yet they worked side by side, each respecting the distinctive gift of the other. As the Midrash goes on to say:

"And he kissed him"]the brothers kissed when they met[– This means: each rejoiced at the other's greatness." Shemot Rabbah ad loc

A final Midrash completes the picture by referring to this week's sedra and the vestments of the High Priest, especially the breastplate with its Urim and Tumim:

"His heart will be glad when he sees you" – Let the heart that rejoiced in the greatness of his brother be vested with the Urim and Tumim. Shemot Rabbah 3:17

It was precisely the fact that Aaron did not envy his younger brother but instead rejoiced in his greatness that made him worthy to be High Priest. So it came to pass – measure for measure – that just as Aaron made space for his younger brother to lead, so the Torah makes space for Aaron to lead. That is why Aaron is the hero of Tetzaveh: for once, not overshadowed by Moses.

"Who is honoured?" asked Ben Zoma (Avot 4:1). *"One who honours others."* Aaron honoured his younger brother. That is why Moses (not mentioned by name but by implication) is told in this week's sedra, *"Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron, to give him honour and splendour"* (Ex. 28:2). To this day a Cohen is honoured by being first to be called up to the Torah – the Torah that Aaron's younger brother Moses gave to the Jewish people.

The story of Aaron and Moses, the fifth chapter in the biblical story of brotherhood, is where, finally, fraternity reaches the

heights. And that surely is the meaning of Psalm 133, with its explicit reference to Aaron and his sacred garments: *“How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron’s beard, down upon the collar of his robes.”* It was thanks to Aaron, and the honour he showed Moses, that at last brothers learned to live together in unity.

** Jed. note: The first sentence includes a common error. The correct statement is that Tetzaveh is the only sedra from the beginning of Exodus to the end of Sefer Bemidbar that does not include Moshe’s name. A few sedras in Devarim also do not include Moshe’s name.[]

<https://rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation/tetzaveh/who-is-honoured/> Note: because Likutei Torah and the Internet Parsha Sheet, both attached by E-mail, normally include the two most recent Devrei Torah by Rabbi Sacks, I have selected an earlier Dvar. Note: footnotes have not been preserved for this Dvar Torah.

Tetzaveh: Inner Moses: Life Lessons From the Parshah

By Yehoshua B. Gordon, z"l * © Chabad 2024

The Torah portion of Tetzaveh is always read in proximity to the 7th of Adar, which marks Moses’ birthday as well as his yahrtzeit. Interestingly, Moses’ name is absent throughout this parshah — the only one from the time of his birth until the end of the Book of Numbers.

Why?

The answer lies in an examination of the story of the Golden Calf. While Moses was atop Mount Sinai, the people committed the terrible transgression of rejecting G d and creating a calf-shaped statue which they then worshiped. When G d informed Moses of the people’s sin, instead of storming down the mountain and yelling, *“I’ve had it with you people! I’m out of here!”* Moses began to fiercely defend the people, passionately taking up their case.

“Listen, let Me destroy these people,” suggested G d. *“They’re no good. Let Me create a new nation out of you. Your descendants will be the new Jewish people.”*

Now, imagine if G d appeared to a rabbi today and said, *“Listen, I have come to the conclusion that all the Jewish people and all the congregations besides yours are wrong. You’re the only one who knows what you’re doing. I’m going to go with you only.”* Many rabbis would likely be thrilled!

But what did Moses do? He flatly rejected the proposition. He said, *“G d, I refuse to be part of this operation unless You forgive the people ... I’m so serious about this that if You do not forgive them, erase me from Your entire book, the book of Torah!”*

When a tzaddik, a completely righteous person, makes a statement, it must be fulfilled, at least to some degree. So when Moses said, *“Erase me from the Torah,”* even though it was a conditional demand, and even though G d did, in fact, forgive the people, Moses’ words had to be fulfilled. Thus his name is omitted from the parshah of Tetzaveh.¹

This fierce defense of the people is unique to the character of Moses. He was the unwavering leader, devoted beyond any possible expectation, way above the call of duty. Moses, the greatest prophet and teacher of all time, was also the best friend the Jewish people ever had.

Bridging Heaven & Earth

Moses’ connection to the Torah is so profound that it is called *“Torat Moshe”* — *“the teachings of Moses.”*² Moses took the Torah from Heaven — from G d who descended onto Mount Sinai — and gave it to us.³ He was the bridge from heaven

to earth.

Following the Giving of the Torah, Moses spent 40 years teaching Torah — hence his title, “*Moshe Rabbeinu, Moses, our Teacher*.” The people of that generation were known as the “*Generation of Knowledge*.” Moses was the greatest teacher who ever lived, and their knowledge of Torah was therefore exceptional. With all their needs taken care of by G d in the desert, they did not have to go to work; rather, they spent their days studying Torah. And what was Moses doing? He was teaching them.

Comparing Moses to his brother, Aaron, reveals their opposite roles: Aaron, the High Priest, elevated the offerings of the Jewish people, presenting them to G d. Aaron helped the Jewish people with a connection to G d that was instigated from below and directed to above; he uplifted them through the service in the Tabernacle.

Moses, on the other hand, helped the Jewish people establish a connection with G d that went from above to below. He took the Torah from on high and brought it down to us.

From the Water

What does Moses mean? Surprisingly, it is of Egyptian origin.

When Princess Bithiah, Pharaoh’s daughter, discovered a basket floating on the Nile River, she opened and found Moses, from whom spiritual light emanated. Touched by compassion, she took him in and saved his life. Raising him as her own son, she named him Moses, saying, “*For I drew him from the water.*”⁴

Let’s take a deep dive, so to speak, into the idea of Moses being “*drawn from the water.*”

According to the teachings Chassidism, which are based on Kabbalah, there are two worlds: the covered world and the revealed world.

The ocean symbolizes the covered. The Talmud notes that everything on dry land also exists in the sea — plants, animals, an entire world. In the ocean, however, everything is hidden beneath the water. Since we cannot see it, it is called the “*covered world*,” or the “*world of concealment*.” In contrast, the revealed world is our physical world, the world of dry land.

Moses was not of our world — he was from the world of concealment. That is why he radiated light. He was from a higher realm, more angelic than human. He is associated with the “*water*” world. Princess Bithiah drew him out of the water because he’s a “*water creation*,” i.e., a heavenly being. With such a lofty source, Moses was very uncomfortable in the world of revelation. He was more at home in heaven than he was on earth; more comfortable in the water, so to speak, than he was on dry land.

No Big Deal

This distinctive quality — being more celestial than terrestrial — enabled Moses to nourish and instill faith in G d within the Jewish people. He is called “*Raya Mehemna*,” which can be translated as the “*faithful shepherd*” or “*shepherd of faith*.”

In the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses declares, “*And now, O Israel, what does the L rd your G d, ask of you? Only to fear the L rd, your G d.*”⁵ The Talmud famously questions, “*Only to fear G d? Is fearing G d a small matter?*”

For a human being, fearing G d does not come naturally. It’s easy for us to fear hurricanes, earthquakes, the IRS, and the FBI, but fearing G d is no small feat. Acquiring “*fear of Heaven*” requires diligent effort, as explained by the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad, in Tanya.

Why, then, does the verse say, “*What’s demanded of you is nothing more than fear of Heaven*”? Is fear of Heaven no big

deal? The Talmud answers, “Yes, for Moses, it’s not a big deal.” For Moses, with his unique nature, fearing G d was natural.⁶

But wait a minute — this answer leads to an even bigger question! When Moses says, “All G d wants is that you fear him,” he is addressing all of Israel, every Jew. How does it help to know that for Moses it was easy? For everyone else, it was a huge deal!

The answer, says the Alter Rebbe, lies in the fact that there is a Moses in every generation. To acquire fear of G d one must connect to the Moses of their generation.⁷

In his discourse Ve’atah Tetzaveh (based upon the opening words of this week’s Torah portion), the Rebbe explains that in the same way Moses was the leader of his generation, Mordechai led the generation during the Purim story, and the Previous Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, led his generation. The Previous Rebbe was so dedicated to his generation that he boldly refused to back down in the face of opposition — the Soviets, the Nazis, the raging assimilation in America — even risking his own life and the lives of his disciples.

Not only is there a Moses in every generation, but there is also a Moses in every Jew. The soul of the Jew — the neshamah — comprises five levels. Two levels — “chayah” and “yechidah” — are subconscious and the source of our faith. The highest level of the soul is the aspect of Moses — the faithful shepherd and the shepherd of faith.

By tapping into the yechidah, every individual can become a Moses. Moses teaches us to bring forth the inherent leadership qualities within each of us — the Moses within.

Now we can understand the Talmud’s answer: Is fear of G d no big deal? Yes, for Moses — the Moses within each of us — it’s no big deal!

True Leadership

Rabbi Dr. Lord Jonathan Sacks, of blessed memory, the former Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, addressed the gathering at “770,” the Chabad headquarters of Chabad in N.Y., during the week of shiva observance following the Rebbe’s passing on the 3rd of Tammuz, 1994.

Reflecting on his personal experience, Rabbi Sacks spoke about coming to the Rebbe as a young student and having his life transformed. “I have met many leaders,” he told the audience. “Do you know what great leaders do? A great leader creates followers. The Rebbe is the only great leader I met who creates not followers but leaders! The Rebbe inspired me not to sell myself short but to be a leader.”

That is precisely what a Moses does — bringing out the inherent leadership qualities within us.

The primary beneficiary of our leadership is ourselves. When we believe in ourselves, maximize our potential, and acknowledge that our past accomplishments are not enough, we motivate ourselves to achieve more.

When individuals reported their achievements to the Rebbe, he invariably encouraged them to do more. “That’s great,” he would say, “but don’t be satisfied with that; go out tomorrow and do more.”

We must strive to become the leaders we have the potential to be and actively work to transform the world — because we can.

Activating Our Inner Moses

A young man, a member of a Chabad community in Western Europe, would disappear once a month. Nobody knew where he went or what he did. Despite becoming increasingly inspired by and involved in Jewish observance, he always wore a troubled expression.

One day, he confided in his rabbi: *"Rabbi, I'm very conflicted. I must tell you where I go during my monthly disappearances. I have a relationship that I'm not proud of, a relationship with a non-Jewish woman. I know that the Torah forbids it, but I can't end it! It's killing me. I'm conflicted. I don't know what to do."*

The rabbi, feeling empathetic but uncertain how to advise the struggling man, said, *"I really don't have an answer for you. But I can tell you who does — the Rebbe. So I recommend you go to New York, visit the Rebbe, and ask him what to do."*

At first, the man was reluctant, but his conflict got the best of him. He traveled to New York and briefly told the Rebbe his story. He was fully prepared for the Rebbe to proverbially *"hit him over the head with a frying pan,"* because how else could a rabbi respond to such a confession? Anticipating a stern response, the man braced himself for rebuke.

Instead, the Rebbe looked at him with warm, loving eyes, and said, *"My friend, I am envious of you. All of us are searching, always trying to find out what is expected of us. What does God want from me? What should I be doing now? What is my purpose? I envy you because you know exactly what you need to do. You have a test before you and know exactly what is expected."*

This is Moses — bringing out the quality of leadership within each one of us, uplifting and reminding us, *"Whatever it is you're facing in life, you know exactly what to do; tap into the Moses within you."*

Let us commemorate the birthday and yahrtzeit of Moses — the greatest teacher who ever lived — by internalizing the message of Tetzaveh, the one parshah that omits his name. May we all become the leaders we have the potential to be, and may we merit to welcome the era of Moshiach, when we will be reunited with all of our great leaders, beginning with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, with Moses at the forefront, may it happen speedily in our days. Amen.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Baal Haturim to Exodus 27:20.

2. Malachi 3:22.

3. Avot 1:1.

4. Exodus 2:10.

5. Deuteronomy 10:12.

6. Talmud, Berachot 33b.

7. Tanya ch. 42.

* Rabbi Yehoshua Gordon directed Chabad of the Valley in Tarzana, CA until his passing in 2016. Adapted by Rabbi Mottel Friedman from classes and sermons that Rabbi Gordon presented in Encino, CA and broadcast on Chabad.org. "Life Lessons from the Parshah" is a project of the Rabbi Joshua B. Gordon Living Legacy Fund, benefiting the 32 centers of Chabad of the Valley, published by Chabad of the Valley and Chabad.org.

https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/6318040/jewish/Inner-Moses.htm

Tetzaveh: Meeting G-d
by Rabbi Moshe Wisniefsky *

Meeting G-d

It is there [in the Tabernacle] that I will convene with the Israelites; it will thus be sanctified with My glory.)Ex. 29:43(

Without discounting the value and importance of personal, private prayer, the Torah places great emphasis as well on communal prayer. The Sages teach us that *“the Holy One, blessed be He, never spurns the prayers offered communally.”*

Thus, the Tabernacle served as the venue for both directions of communication between G-d and the Jewish people: G-d conveyed His messages to the people there)through Moses(, and the people gathered there to offer up their prayers to G-d.

This dual function has continued in the synagogue: We gather there both for communal prayer and for communal study of the Torah)which is how we can hear G-d’s messages to us nowadays(. Indeed, both in English and Hebrew, the words *“synagogue”* and *beit keneset* mean *“house of assembly.”*

Continuing this theme at home, as well, it is appropriate to designate a fixed place for both prayer and Torah study, in order to help us keep in mind that communication with G-d is a two-way street: He speaks to us through the Torah just as surely as we pour out our hearts to Him in prayer.

— from *Daily Wisdom* 3

May G-d grant a decisive victory over our enemies.

Rabbi Yosef B. Friedman
Kehot Publication Society

* Insights from the Rebbe.

Chapters of psalms to recite for Israel to prevail over Hamas and for the release of remaining hostages. Recite these psalms daily – to download:

<https://mail.yahoo.com/d/folders/1/messages/AKMWqg80kU-LZSgctgRwuPHhxuo>

Booklet form download:

<https://mail.yahoo.com/d/folders/1/messages/AKMWqg80kU-LZSgctgRwuPHhxuo>

To receive the complete D’Vrai Torah package weekly by E-mail, send your request to AfisherADS@Yahoo.com. The printed copies contain only a small portion of the D’Vrai Torah. Dedication opportunities available. Authors retain all copyright privileges for their sections.

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Sponsored by Ari & Esther Jacobs in memory of:
Ari's mother Doris Jacobs, a"h, (Dubbah Freida bas Yehoshua)
whose yartzeit is 14 Adar
and Esther's mothers Anita Bogopulsky, a"h,
(Yocheved bas Tzvi) whose yartzeit is 17 Adar

Volume 30, Issue 29

Shabbat Parashat Tetzave

5784 B"H

Covenant and Conversation

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, z"l

Dressing to Impress

Tetzaveh, with its elaborate description of the "sacred vestments" which the Priests and the High Priest wore "for glory and for splendour," seems to run counter to some fundamental values of Judaism.

The vestments were made to be seen. They were intended to impress the eye. But Judaism is a religion of the ear more than the eye. It emphasises hearing rather than seeing. Its key word is Shema, meaning: to hear, listen, understand and obey. The verb sh-m-a is a dominant theme of the book of Devarim, where it appears no less than 92 times. Jewish spirituality is about listening more than looking. That is the deep reason why we cover our eyes when saying Shema Yisrael. We shut out the world of sight and focus on the world of sound: of words, communication and meaning.

The reason this is so has to do with the Torah's battle against idolatry. Others saw gods in the sun, the stars, the river, the sea, the rain, the storm, the animal kingdom and the earth. They made visual representations of these things. Judaism disavows this whole mindset.

God is not in nature but beyond it. He created it and He transcends it. Psalm 8 says: "When I consider Your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which You have set in place: what is man that You are mindful of him, the son of man that You care for him?" The vastness of space is for the psalmist no more than "the work of your fingers." Nature is God's work, but not itself God. God cannot be seen.

Instead, He reveals Himself primarily in words. At Mount Sinai, said Moshe, "The Lord spoke to you out of the fire. You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice" (Deut. 4:12). Elijah, in his great experience on the mountain, discovered that God was not in the wind, the earthquake or the fire, but in the kol demamah dakah, the "still small voice."

Clearly, the Mishkan (the Tabernacle), and later the Mikdash (the Temple), were exceptions to this. Their emphasis was on the

visual, and a key example is the Priests' and High Priest's sacred vestments, bigdei kodesh.

This is very unexpected. The Hebrew for "garment," b-g-d, also means "betrayal," as in the confession we say on penitential days: Ashamnu bagadnu, "We have been guilty, we have betrayed." Throughout Genesis, whenever a garment is a key element in the story, it involves some deception or betrayal.

There were the coverings of fig leaves Adam and Eve made for themselves after eating the forbidden fruit. Jacob wore Esau's clothes when he took his blessing by deceit. Tamar wore the clothes of a prostitute to deceive Judah into lying with her. The brothers used Joseph's bloodstained cloak to deceive their father into thinking he had been killed by a wild animal. Potiphar's wife used the cloak Joseph had left behind as evidence for her false claim that he had tried to rape her. Joseph himself took advantage of his Viceroy's clothing to conceal his identity from his brothers when they came to Egypt to buy food. So it is exceptionally unusual that the Torah should now concern itself in a positive way with clothes, garments, vestments.

Clothes have to do with surface, not depth; with the outward, not the inward; with appearance rather than reality. All the more strange, therefore, that they should form a key element of the service of the Priests, given the fact that "People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7).

Equally odd is the fact that for the first time we encounter the concept of a uniform, that is, a standardised form of dress worn not because of the individual wearing them but because of the office he holds, as Cohen or Cohen Gadol. In general, Judaism focuses on the person, not the office. Specifically, there was no such thing as a uniform for Prophets.

Tetzaveh is also the first time we encounter the phrase "for glory and for splendour," describing the effect and point of the garments. Until now kavod, "glory," has been spoken of in relation to God alone. Now human beings are to share some of the same glory.

Our parsha is also the first time the word tiferet appears. The word has the sense of splendour and magnificence, but it also means beauty. It introduces a dimension we have not encountered explicitly in the Torah before: the aesthetic. We have encountered moral beauty, for instance Rivka's kindness to Avraham's

servant at the well. We have encountered physical beauty: Sarah, Rivka and Rachel are all described as beautiful. But the Sanctuary and its service bring us for the first time to the aesthetic beauty of craftsmanship and the visual.

This is a continuing theme in relation to the Tabernacle and later the Temple. We find it already in the story of the binding of Yitzchak on Mount Moriah which would later become the site of the Temple: "Avraham named the place 'God will see.' That is why it is said today, 'On God's mountain, He will be seen'" (Gen. 22:14). The emphasis on the visual is unmistakable. The Temple would be about seeing and being seen.

Likewise, a well-known poetical prayer on Yom Kippur speaks about Mareih Cohen, "the appearance of the High Priest" as he officiated in the Temple on the holiest of days:

Like the image of a rainbow appearing in the midst of cloud...

Like a rose in the heart of a lovely garden...

Like a lamp flickering between the window slats...

Like a room hung with sky blue and royal purple...

Like a garden lily penetrating the thorn-weeds...

Like the appearance of Orion and Pleiades, seen in the south...

These lead to the refrain, "How fortunate was the eye that beheld all this." Why was it that specifically in relation to the Tabernacle and Temple, the visual prevailed?

The answer is deeply connected to the Golden Calf. What that sin showed is that the people could not fully relate to a God who gave them no permanent and visible sign of His presence and who could only be communicated with by the greatest of Prophets. The Torah was given to ordinary human beings, not angels or unique individuals like Moshe. It is hard to believe in a God of everywhere-in-general-but-nowhere-in-particular. It is hard to sustain a relationship with God who is only evident in miracles and unique events but not in everyday life. It is hard to relate to God when He only manifests Himself as overwhelming power.

In memory of Miriam Dreeben, a"h
(Miriam Bat Chaim Yirmiyahu Halevi)
20 Adar

By Sari & Russell Mayer, Avi, Atara, and Arella
on the occasion of the 40th yahrzeit
(11 Adar Aleph) of Sari's father,
Dr. A. Abba Walker, z"l
(Avraham Abba ben Shlomo)

So the Mishkan became the visible sign of God's continual presence in the midst of the people. Those who officiated there did so not because of their personal greatness, like Moshe, but because of birth and office, signalled by their vestments. The Mishkan represents acknowledgement of the fact that human spirituality is about emotions, not just intellect; the heart, not just the mind. Hence aesthetics and the visual as a way of inculcating feelings of awe. This is how Maimonides puts it in *The Guide for the Perplexed*:

In order to raise the estimation of the Temple, those who ministered therein received great honour; and the Priests and Levites were therefore distinguished from the rest. It was commanded that the Priests should be clothed properly with beautiful and good garments, "holy garments for glory and for splendour" (Ex. xxviii. 2) ... The Temple was to be held in great reverence by all. (*Guide*, Book III, ch. 44)

The vestments of the officiants and the Sanctuary/Temple itself were to have the glory and splendour that induced awe, rather as Rainer Maria Rilke put it in the *Duino Elegies*: "For beauty is nothing but the beginning of terror, which we still are just able to endure." The purpose of the emphasis on the visual elements of the Mishkan, and the grand vestments of those who ministered there, was to create an atmosphere of reverence because they pointed to a beauty and splendour beyond themselves, namely God Himself.

Maimonides understood the emotive power of the visual. In his *Eight Chapters*, the prelude to his commentary on tractate *Avot*, he says, "The soul needs to rest and to do what relaxes the senses, such as looking at beautiful decorations and objects, so that weariness be removed from it." Art and architecture can lift depression and enliven the senses.

His focus on the visual allows Maimonides to explain an otherwise hard-to-understand law, namely that a Cohen with a physical blemish may not officiate in the Temple. This goes against the general principle that *Rachmana liba ba'i*, "God wants the heart," the inner spirit. The exclusion, says Maimonides, has nothing to do with the nature of prayer or Divine service but rather with popular attitudes. "The multitude does not estimate man by his true form," he writes, and instead judges by appearances. This may be wrong but it was a fact that could not be ignored in the Sanctuary whose entire purpose was to bring the experience of God down to earth in a physical structure with regular routines performed by ordinary human beings. Its purpose was to make people sense the invisible Divine presence in visible phenomena.

Thus there is a place for aesthetics and the visual in the life of the spirit. In modern times,

Rav Kook in particular looked forward to a renewal of Jewish art in the reborn land of Israel. He himself, as I have written elsewhere, loved Rembrandt's paintings, and said that they represented the light of the first day of creation. He was also supportive, if guardedly so, of the Bezalel Academy of Art, one of the first signs of this renewal.

Hiddur mitzvah – bringing beauty to the fulfilment of a command – goes all the way back to the Mishkan. The great difference between ancient Israel and ancient Greece is that the Greeks believed in the holiness of beauty whereas Judaism spoke of *hadrat kodesh*, the beauty of holiness.

I believe that beauty has power, and in Judaism it has always had a spiritual purpose: to make us aware of the universe as a work of art, testifying to the supreme Artist, God Himself.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

When Absence Proves Love

And you shall command the children of Israel... And you shall bring forth your brother Aaron and his sons together with him... And you shall speak to all of the wise-hearted." (Exodus 27:20–28:3)

Often what you really have is that which you give away, what you most profoundly say is what you leave unsaid when you wisely decide not to respond, and the most commanding presence is felt most keenly when that presence is not around. An example of the third phenomenon is to be found in the Torah reading of Tetzaveh, the only portion since the opening of the book of Exodus wherein Moses' name does not appear even once! Why not?

The Midrashic answer suggests that Moses initiated his own absence. When the Israelites sinned by worshipping the golden calf less than six weeks after the divine revelation at Sinai, God's anger reaches the breaking point (as it were) and he makes Moses the following offer: "And now leave Me alone as my anger shall burn and I will destroy them, and I shall make of you a great nation." (Exodus 32:10)

God suggests that He wipe Israel, no longer worthy of His benevolence, from the pages of history by starting a new nation, a new branch, from the loins of Moses himself.

Others in his shoes might have taken up God's offer, but Moses refuses to increase his own glory at the expense of the nation. The climax of his brilliant argument is an emotional ultimatum: God must forgive the people.

"... If not [says Moses], blot me, I pray you, out of Your book which You have written." (Exodus 32:32)

God responds to Moses' pleas. But Moses' expression of identification with the people, Moses' selfless willingness for himself to be obliterated as long as his nation prevails, is

Likutei Divrei Torah

eternalized by the fact that in one portion of the Torah, Tetzaveh, the master prophet's name is "missing in action."

But on an even deeper level, is there a further significance to the fact that the "blotting out" of Moses' name occurs specifically in Tetzaveh?

Even a quick glance reveals that our portion is almost entirely devoted to the priesthood. Chapters 28 and 29 deal extensively with all the garments that the priests are commanded to wear, particularly the High Priest, as well as the sacrifices that shall be brought to "sanctify the priests." In fact, Tetzaveh is often called *Parashat Ha-Kohanim*, the portion of the priests.

Without a temple, the priest's public role is severely limited. One area, though, where his presence is still felt (particularly here in Israel and among Sephardim even in the Diaspora) is the daily priestly blessing during the repetition of the morning Amida: at the conclusion of the blessing for peace, the priests, attended to by Levites, stand before the congregation and invoke the biblical blessing: "May God bless you and keep you..." (Num. 6:24). Before intoning these words, they recite the following blessing: "Blessed are You Lord, our God, king of the universe, who has sanctified us with the holiness of Aaron, and has commanded us to bless His people with love."

The final words in the blessing – "with love" – raise certain questions, since kohanim, or descendants of the High Priest Aaron, are fairly typical people. Some are as sweet as cherry ices in July, and some are as cold as Alaskan ice cubes, but most change in accordance with their mood upon awakening. How can we measure the love-quotient felt by Mr. Cohen when he ascends the bimah for the blessing? How can we legislate the emotion of love which the priests are apparently expected to feel?

The first answer lies in the very nature of the priesthood, in how the Bible legislated the priestly class's means of livelihood. It's often said that if you ask a typical entrepreneur, "How 's business?" if he says, "great," it means that he is doing well and his competitor is facing bankruptcy; if he says, "good," that means it's a good market for everyone, he's doing well and so is his competitor; and if he says, "terrible," then that means he's facing bankruptcy but his competition is earning a lot of money. Gore Vidal was once quoted by Hilma Wolitzer in the *New York Times* for his poignantly honest observation: "Whenever a friend succeeds a little, something in me dies."

Enter the kohen. If there is one person who disagrees with Mr. Vidal, it would have to be a member of the priestly class who served in the Temple, received no portion of land to till or business to develop, and who made his living by tithes given him by the Israelites: 1/40, 1/50,

1/60 of their produce depending upon the generosity of the individual donor. And since the tithe was a percentage of the crop, the better the farmer makes out, the happier the kohen would be. To modify the Vidal quote, a kohen would declare: “Whenever a farmer succeeds a little [and certainly whenever he succeeds a lot], something in me lives.” Hence by the very nature of the economic structure set up by the Bible, the kohen-priest could truly give the blessing of prosperity and well-being to the congregation of Israel “with love.”

And it was because the kohanim were freed from professional and agricultural pursuits that they were able to devote themselves entirely to God, the Holy Temple, and the religio-moral needs of the nation. Their single-minded commitment to the holy and the divine was symbolized by the words engraved upon the highly visible gold plate (tzitz) worn around the forehead of the High Priest: “Holy unto God” (Ex. 28:36). Indeed, so important was it deemed that the religious and moral message not be compromised by political sectarian considerations that the Bible legislates a total separation between the religious and legislative spheres. The tribe of Judah was entrusted with sovereign, legislative leadership: “The specter shall not depart from Judah...” (Gen. 49:10), whereas the tribe of Levi was entrusted with religio-moral leadership: “They shall teach Jacob your law, and Israel your Torah...” (Deut. 33:10). No member of the priestly class could control the bank or become a cabinet minister. Thus the kohen, and the religio-moral voice which he represents, emerges in a totally independent position, above the economic interests of special-interest groups and beyond the intrigues of palace politics.

From this perspective we can offer a second interpretation of the words “with love” which conclude the introduction to the priestly benediction: “Love” does not describe the emotions of the kohen, but rather defines the content of the blessing. The most important blessing that can be bestowed upon the nation is that we live together in harmony and love. And only a priestly class separated from petty self-interest and competitions, truly devoted to God, can hope to inspire such love and harmony!

Now we can understand why Moses’ name is absent particularly from this portion of Tetzaveh. If the kohanim are to symbolize selfless commitment to God and to the nation, they cannot possibly have a better example than Moses, who was willing to have his name removed from the Torah for the sake of the future of his people! If any act in the Torah can be singled out for demonstrating pure love, with no strings attached, it is when Moses refuses God’s offer to start a new nation from his loins; Moses would rather that he remain anonymous but let the people of Israel live. Indeed, the essence of Moses’ greatness

emerges most clearly from the portion of his absence and anonymity.

Torah.Org: Rabbi Yissocher Frand

Leaders Should Not Be Too Great for Their Generation

The pasuk in Parshas Tezaveh says: “And you, bring near to yourself Aharon your brother, and his sons with him, from the midst of the Children of Israel, so that he shall be a Kohen to me – Aharon, Nadav and Avihu, Elazar and Isamar the sons of Aharon.” [Shemos 28:1]. I heard a thought on a tape from Rav Isaac Bernstein linking this pasuk with a very novel teaching of the Dubno Maggid.

Rav Bernstein is bothered – what does the pasuk mean when it says “You should take Aharon your brother and his sons with him FROM THE MIDST (mi’toch) BNEI YISRAEL”? The words “Mi’toch Bnei Yisrael” seem superfluous. Obviously, Kohanim will not be taken from a different nation! Is there then some kind of message that the Torah is trying to convey with these words?

The Dubno Maggid says a mind-boggling idea. The Talmud teaches [Rosh HaShannah 25B] that Yiftach in his generation was like Shmuel in his generation. The Shofet Yiftach is a very enigmatic Biblical personality. He was not what we would call the greatest man who ever walked the face of the earth. He certainly was not anywhere near the caliber of the prophet Shmuel. Shmuel haNavi stands out in a Tanach full of great people as one of the dominant personalities of Jewish history. When Chazal say that Yiftach in his generation was like Shmuel in his generation, they are trying to convey that Yiftach was not on the level of a Shmuel, but every generation must live with the leader it has. Therefore, the people living in Yiftach’s generation had to give him the same honor and deference as if he was a Shmuel haNavi.

This is the simple interpretation of this gemara in Maseches Rosh HaShannah. The Dubno Maggid quotes a Medrash in Koheles (which I could not find in any Medrash on my computer database, but the Dubno Maggid is greater than any computer – so I am not questioning the authenticity of his source). According to this Medrash the intent of the Talmudic passage is the reverse: Had Shmuel lived in the generation of Yiftach, he would not have been considered to be anything special. This is mind-boggling, because we see in the story of Yiftach that Yiftach made some terrible mistakes in his life.

The Dubno Maggid explains that the Medrash does not mean that Yiftach was greater than Shmuel. Shmuel was far greater than Yiftach and most other people. The Medrash means that every generation needs a leader to whom they can relate. Sometimes, a leader can be TOO BIG for his generation. He could be too far above them and too removed from them to

Likutei Divrei Torah

lead them properly. The Dubno Maggid, in his inimitable fashion, gives a parable to explain this:

Just like the clothes a person wears cannot be too small on him, so too the clothes a person wears cannot be too big on him. Someone who is a size 42 who wears a size 56 suit will not be properly dressed! That is the way it is with leaders at well. The leader needs to be appropriate and fit the particular generation he is leading. The Dubno Maggid explains that had Shmuel been in the generation of Yiftach, he would not have been an effective leader because he was too spiritually superior to that generation. The people could not have related to him.

Rav Bernstein suggests that this is perhaps what the pasuk is hinting at in our parsha as well. The pasuk says “And you should take Aharon and his sons... FROM THE MIDST OF BNEI YISRAEL.” The Kohanim need to be the leaders of their generation, consequently they need to come from the midst of the people – individuals whom the people can look up to, and yet relate to. If they are too far above the level of the people, they will not be able to function as role models. “Augh! He is too above us. He is a Malach! We need a human being!”

Ohr Torah Stone Dvar Torah

The True Contents of the Mishkan Rabbi Pesach Wolicki

This week’s parashah, Tetzaveh, and last week’s parashah, Terumah, are often thought of as one unit. They are two parts of the same extended monologue of God commanding Moshe regarding the building of the Mishkan and everything in it. Both have long lists of materials, items to be made, and instructions regarding construction.

Parashat Terumah, after listing the materials that were collected for the entire project, discusses the construction of the Ark, table, Menorah, and the structure of the Mishkan building itself, i.e. the wooden beams for walls, curtains, and roof.

Tetzaveh includes the instructions for lighting the Menorah, crafting the clothing for the Kohanim and the Kohen Gadol, the consecration of the Kohanim themselves, the daily Tamid offering, the Golden Altar, and the incense.

It seems at first glance that the division between the two parshiot is only a matter of

What Does Judaism Say About ... Podcast

with Rabbi Dr. Nachum Amsel. The week’s topic is **Euthanasia and Abortion** - Next week: Death and Mourning
Search for “Nachum Amsel” on your podcast app or go to:

Apple: tinyurl.com/applejudaismsays

Spotify: tinyurl.com/spotifyjudaismsays

convenience. Terumah contains ninety-six verses. Tetzaveh contains one hundred one verses. It would seem, then, that this is really one long section divided, more or less, in half.

Despite the aforementioned commonalities between Terumah and Tetzaveh, there is one distinction between the parshiot that points us in a very different direction.

The opening line of Parashat Terumah states the most commonly repeated line in the Torah. “And God spoke to Moshe saying.” This line of narration is then followed by the uninterrupted monologue of approximately two hundred verses that follows. We then see the same line repeated at the opening of Parashat Ki Tisa, beginning a new monologue of commandments from God to Moshe. After this introductory verse at the beginning of Parashat Terumah, there is not a single mention of the name of God in that entire parasha. In stark contrast, God’s name is mentioned twenty-four times in Parashat Tetzaveh.

Why is God’s name absent from the commands in Terumah, but repeatedly mentioned in Tetzaveh?

As we mentioned, Parashat Terumah deals with the construction of the structure of the Mishkan, i.e. the building itself, walls, roof, and curtains. Parashat Tetzaveh, on the other hand, deals with the clothing of the Kohanim, the people who serve in the Mishkan, and the ongoing service, day in and day out – the daily Tamid offering, the offering of incense, and the lighting of the Menorah.

I’d like to suggest that the contrast in mentions of God’s name between these two sets of instructions teaches us an important lesson. People have a tendency to see holy buildings as having inherent holiness, as being ends in and of themselves. They view the synagogue as the place where God and religion reside. There are those who care for their synagogue as an institution while neglecting to participate in the ongoing services that take place there.

Perhaps, the Torah is telling us that such an attitude about the buildings in which we worship is incorrect. While we certainly believe in the concept of kedushat mikdash and kedushat beit knesset, the sanctity of the Temple and the sanctity of the synagogue, this sanctity is due only to the worship that takes place there. God’s presence does not reside in the building – the wooden beams and curtains – but in the worship of God that takes place there. Without service of God, the beams and curtains are devoid of God’s presence.

The Talmud teaches, “When the Holy One blessed is He comes to a synagogue and does not find ten men, He is immediately angered.” (Brachot 6) Rav A.Y. Kook explains that the existence of a synagogue itself is valuable. It is a sign of honor to God. However, the presence

of a synagogue in a community with no minyan shows that while they have some measure of respect for God, the community does not enable God’s will to permeate their day to day lives. In the words of Rav Kook, “such a synagogue that is built is not desirable for Him, because the foundation of service of God is the direction of the way of life according to His will.” The daily synagogue service, like the Tamid, incense, and the Menorah in the Mishkan, is what brings God into our consciousness on a perpetual basis.

The chapters commanding the construction of the Mishkan open by saying, “And they shall make for Me a Mishkan, and I shall dwell among them.” The verse does not say “... and I shall dwell in it” referring to the Mishkan, but “... and I shall dwell among them” referring to the people themselves. God does not need or want a building. He wants the service within the building as a way for us to bring His presence into our lives.

The Internal Dimensions of the Katoret **Rabbi Evan and Tova Levine**

“You shall make a mizbe’ach on which to bring incense up in smoke, of shittim wood shall you make it.” (Shemot 30:1)

Rabbi Shlomo Ephraim ben Aaron Luntschitz, the Kli Yakar, a renowned 17th century Torah commentator, understood from this verse that:

“Both altars were to atone for the wayward soul. The copper altar was to atone for the body, damaged by the stone of sin, upon which animals were offered in place of man as they resemble the physicality of man... [the] altar for incense, upon which you will cause smoke to ascend as a pleasant fragrance before Hashem, atone[s] for the spirit of man which soars heavenwards like the smoke of the incense...” (Kli Yakar, Shemot 30:1)

In essence, the twofold service of the mizbe’ach, the mizbe’ach Ha’Chitoni (copper altar) and the mizbe’ach ha’ketoret (incense altar), were to act as conduits helping man, both individually and communally, realign body and soul with the passionate pursuit of knowledge and service of Hashem. That is, Hashem provided us with a process to transform our shortcomings into the stepping stones of actualizing our covenantal relationship with him.

Nearly 2,000 years since the destruction of the Second Temple, we have been forced as a people to learn how to navigate this process, to develop this relationship, without the benefit of the physical mizbe’ach, but how?

On Shemini Atzeret 5560 (1799), Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the first Lubavitcher Rebbe (known as the Ba’al Ha’Tanya), gave a passionate discourse addressing this very question, “We no longer have a Beit Hamikdash, nor a mizbe’ach!” the Ba’al Ha’Tanya exclaimed, “It is, therefore,

Likutei Divrei Torah

incumbent upon every person to identify the expression of his soul’s desire... to understand how... Divine service is manifest in the heart of each person. In every generation, one must find within his soul the fire [passion] that will burn and consume the offerings.” (Likutei Torah, V’shavtem Mayim B’sason, 1799)

Rabbi Schneur Zalman offers a profound insight. How do we continue to foster a relationship with Hashem? By taking charge of our spiritual destiny and finding our truest inner voice, by choosing to find the unique aspects of ourselves that excite and inspire our avodat hashem, and by refusing to be complacent and passive in our religious experience.

The Ba’al Ha’Tanya continues by describing the heart as spiritually analogous to the two mizbe’ach, “the heart is akin to the mizbe’ach, just as there were two mizbe’ach, the internal and external, so too there are two dimensions in the heart – the external dimension of the heart and the internal.” (Based on the notes of the Tzamach Tzedek on this piece.)

The external dimension of the heart is the emotional and intellectual expressions of the heart which we choose to communicate, whereas the internal dimension is values or voices which we find in our heart of hearts – the values and ideals which shape and form who we are and what we truly believe.

Utilizing the analogy of the Ba’al Ha’Tanya, I would like to suggest an exercise to help us develop and actualize consistency and passion for authentic avodat Hashem.

The Ba’al Ha’Tanya’s suggestion that the inner recesses of our hearts are akin to the mizbe’ach ha’Ketoret, the altar for incense, offers us an incredible glimpse into five areas of religious service, which we need to identify and develop in order to help us sustain and progress a meaningful Jewish existence.

They are found in two fascinating excerpts from the Midrash Tanchuma, “What do the letters in the word ketoret (“incense”) stand for? The kuf stands for kedushah (“sanctification”), tet for taharah (“purity”), resh for rachamim (“mercy”), and tav for tikvah (“hope”)...” (Midrash Tanchuma Tetzaveh 14) and “[the] incense is brought, not because of sin or transgression or guilt, but only out of sheer joy. Hence, “Ointment and incense rejoice the heart” (Midrash Tanchuma Tetzaveh 15).

The five areas of religious service mentioned in the Midrash are the five areas of our personal religious expression that we can develop and foster in the inner recesses of our hearts – on our own internal mizbe’ach. We need to ask ourselves: what does it mean to be and live a life of kedushah – to dedicate myself to Hashem and his Torah? What does it mean

for me to live a life of taharah – to be pure, genuine, and authentic? What does it mean for me to live a life of rachamim – to be merciful and to act with compassion? What does it mean to live a life of tikvah, hope – what do I look forward to and what excites me to progress into the future? And finally, how does all of this culminate in a genuine Jewish life full of joy?

By taking the time to ask ourselves these questions and by becoming more acquainted with the real “us” we will be able to share an authentic, passionate Judaism, which is the essence of shlichut and building meaning relationships as shlichim, as well as foster a more authentic, meaningful personal experience as seekers of Hashem.

Mizrachi Dvar Torah

Rav Doron Perez - Joy and Jealousy

One of the incredible qualities of Aharon, the Kohen Gadol, was that he felt not one iota of jealousy towards his younger brother, Moshe Rabbeinu.

It is so difficult not to be jealous of others, especially if they are younger than us, more talented than us, and achieve so much more in life. No-one achieved more in life than Aharon's younger brother, Moshe Rabbeinu. Aharon was older than him, Moshe didn't suffer in Egypt (as he was with his father-in-law in Midyan) while Aharon was suffering with the people, and Aharon was also a prophet but was superseded by his younger brother. When Hashem came to Moshe and told him to lead the Jewish people, he was concerned his brother would be jealous. Yet, incredibly, we are told in Parashat Shemot that Aharon would be totally happy, and would not be jealous of him one iota.

What was the reward of this pure heart, which was not jealous when there was so much room for jealousy? As we see in Parashat Tetzaveh, it is the same heart which will have placed on it the breastplate of the Kohen Gadol, which had on it the twelve stones representing the twelve tribes, the source of G-d revealing Himself through these stones. Aharon had this unique clothing and vessel on his heart, because his heart was pure and without jealousy.

What a lesson for us all – one of the great barometers of our sense of spirituality and connection to G-d is how genuinely happy we can be for other people, especially those who may supersede us. May we all know that what we have, our achievements and our blessings are what we need at that point, and what others have is a different reckoning. If we can truly be happy for others and rejoice in their achievements it is a sign we are truly connected, and deserving of the breastplate of the Kohen Gadol on our hearts, and being truly connected to Hashem.

Rabbi Dr. Norman J. Lamm's Derashot Ledorot

The Warehouses of Wisdom

Recently [1962!] we of the Western World laughed knowingly at the astrologers and Hindu priests who confidently predicted the end of the world. No doubt, these superstitions per se are so ludicrous as to justify the ridicule. However, was their concern about the end of the world really so very foolish? Or were they inadvertently, dramatizing the greatest, most agonizing, and most crucial problem facing all of us, East and West: that of the sheer survival of the human race?

The end of the world may not come about, as the Hindu astrologers predicted, because of a conjunction of the other planets. But it may very well come about because of a disjunction and moral confusion of the inhabitants of this planet. It is not the eclipse of the sun, but the eclipse of the human heart that ought to fill us with terror. What is the nature of this unprecedented problem? It is not that we have too much knowledge, but that we do not know how to use what we have. It is not that we are too smart, but that we are too smart for our own good. Our brains have grown, while our hearts have shrunk. The mind of man has sharpened, while his soul has grown dull. His science has leaped forward, and his spirit has been stunted. In the terms of our own tradition, we have increased Chokhmah (wisdom, knowledge), and decreased Yirah (reverence, piety, ethical aspirations).

Rabbi Hayyim Volozhiner, in his Nefesh Hayyim (Part 4 Chapter 4), on the basis of a Talmudic text (Shabbat 30a), has analyzed for us the problem of Torah and Chokhmah on the one hand, and Yirah on the other, by presenting them in an agricultural metaphor. Wisdom, he says, is like tevuah- the harvest, the produce of the fields, which the farmer seeks to store away. Yirah, the fear of God, is the warehouse in which the harvest of wisdom is stored. In other words, if there is more knowledge than conscience, more tevuah than otzar, the knowledge is wasted and even harmful. Man's absorptive capacity of wisdom is limited by his spiritual powers. First, therefore, you must construct your inner warehouse, that of Yirah, then you may reap your harvest of Chokhmah and store it away for your own benefit.

How modern, how contemporary, that parable is! Only recently the New York Times ran a series of three articles, the burden of which was the fact that we already have too much knowledge for our own good. Even if all research should abruptly stop, we would have enough work ordering and utilizing the knowledge we have for the next 100 years. There is so much surplus knowledge in the world today, so many professional magazines published and circulated, that individual scholars find it impossible to keep up with all the information that is available to them. There is, indeed, a surplus of the harvest of knowledge!

Likutei Divrei Torah

In today's Sidra, Moses is commanded by G-d to arrange for the making of the special priestly vestments for Aaron and his sons. We read: V'ata tedaber el kol chakhmei lev asher miletiv ruach chokhmah. "And you shall speak to all the wise-hearted whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom" that they should make these garments (Ex. 28:3). What is meant by chakhmei lev, "the wise-hearted?" The term means not the wisdom of the brain and the mind, not mere knowledge, but the wisdom of the heart and the soul, of feeling and faith, of reverence and ethical sensitivity. Only those who have the latter can be filled, by God, with the former. How appropriately the Baal ha-Turim points out that numerically, by gimatriya, the words chakhmei lev asher are equal to the word Yirat, of the expression Yirat ha-Shem- the fear of the Lord! Only those who endowed with wise hearts and the fear of the Lord have the warehouses which deserve and can absorb the "spirit of wisdom." Indeed, before beginning to gather the fruits of wisdom, we must built in our very hearts the store-houses made of Yirat ha-Shem.

Our contemporaries have not taken this advice seriously at all. Our civilization, to use the analogy of Rabbi Hayyim, appears like a series of tiny warehouses, each filled to capacity and bursting at the seams, while thousands upon thousands of workers crawl about like busy ants, day and night, not building more and adequate warehouse, but growing, harvesting, and piling up more and more grain which lies all about the scene, unused, unassimilated, unabsorbed, wasting away and rotting, inviting the rodents of the spirit to disport themselves in it and inject poisons with which to destroy unhappy mankind. Certainly we have wisdom—too much, however, for our inner undersized warehouses of piety and morality.

Indeed this is not only a question of the Space Age or of nuclear bombs, but of the very fabric of our civilization. Only a few years ago Science Newsletter reported that the automobile has in the past forty years killed over one-million Americans- twice as much as America lost in all the wars of its history combined! Does this mean that the horse and buggy drivers were better? No, but it does mean that the advanced knowledge that led to the invention of cars, required an equivalent advance in wise-heartedness, in the inner spiritual warehouse with which to control and assimilate that new knowledge. It means that we needed then, and certainly now, a pervasive spirit of sophisticated Yirat ha-Shem in all our culture, one which will teach our engineers, our drivers and pedestrians, old and young, to value life above speed, felicity above velocity, humanity above horse-power. President Kennedy has only recently mentioned an even more serious problem: automation, what he calls "the major domestic challenge of the Sixties." What shall we do with the resulting unemployment? What will Americans do with the leisure that will result from automation— will it bring them happiness

and creativity, or boredom and neuroses? Will we expend as much mental energy concerning ourselves with people, with G-d's image, as we will in blind devotion to technological advances? With the new advances in cybernetics, will we control our new thinking machines, or will they control us?

This week an American astronaut went into orbit. Is it heretical to ask: why? Why must the Russians do it? Why must anyone try to reach beyond the atmosphere? How long can we afford, naively, to assume that knowledge for its own sake is an absolute and unquestioned good? Could not all this brain power and money be used more advantageously- for medical knowledge, or to advance the social sciences? Perhaps to build more of the inner-warehouses..?

For everyone who is thrilled by the idea of inter-planetary travel, let us remember that this week we read of some scientist who is thinking of diverting an asteroid so that it can hit the earth and, properly directed, become a militarily valuable "continent smasher" which can destroy the whole continent of the enemy. How tragically we have entrusted our fate to technological geniuses who are ethical idiots! What a prostitution of knowledge to think in such terms! What we desperately need is less engineering and more conscience, less new knowledge and more pondering and educating ourselves how to use the knowledge we already have best to serve humanity.

When King Solomon was a young man, he asked G-d for the gift of wisdom. He thought that with it he will be able to solve all problems. But when he was an old man he cried out: Yosif daat yosif makhov- "he who increaseth knowledge, increaseth pain." A hundred year ago, in the heyday of the faith in "the inevitability of progress," most people believed that all the world's ills could be solved by more knowledge. And now the 19th century optimists have become 20th century pessimists. No wonder that Prof. Robert Oppenheimer, the "father of the Atom Bomb," has stated that in some way, scientists of his generation have "known sin." Indeed! In our Amidah prayer we recite the blessing of ata chohen l'adam daat- the blessing asking for wisdom- and immediately afterwards, we bless G-d ha-rotzeh bi'teshuvah, who desireth repentance. Originally, the proximity of the theme of repentance to that of wisdom was to emphasize that only when there is knowledge can there be true repentance. Today, however, I think the direction is reversed. Today we must repent for the senseless accumulation of surplus wisdom gathered obsessively without any thought as to the consequences for humanity, without any thought of first building the inner structures of Yirah.

For indeed we moderns have much to repent for our thoughtless worship of wisdom and science and technology, and the consequent threat to all mankind. We have plumbed the nature of the Atom, but neglected the nature of

the sons of Adam. Are today's uranium-hunters really any better than yesterday's head-hunters? One scientist quoted by Joseph Wood Krutch, has said, "we do not know where we are going; we do not know where we want to go; but we are doing everything possible to accelerate our movements."

Let us conclude with the first verse in today's Haftorah from the Prophet Ezekiel: ata ben adam haged et Bet Yisrael et ha-bayit ve'yikalmu me'avonotehem u-mad'du et tokhnit. "Thou, O son of man, show the plans of the Temple to the House of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their sins; and let them measure accurately."

This is the order ordained by G-d for a prophetic people. First ve'yikalmu me'avonotehem, then U-mad'du et tokhnit. First introspection- the fear of God, then the construction of the house of God. First feeling with the heart, reverence; then measuring with the mind, progress. First, psychology, the inner life; then technology, outer-life. First the warehouse, then the harvest. Thus will the House of Israel build the Temple of the future. Thus will all mankind build a civilization for both the present and then the future, one which will be safe from the overwhelming horror of universal suicide brought on by the disparity of overgrown minds and undersized souls.

Ata ben adam- "Thou, O son of man." It is up to each of us, in his or her own way, to contribute to that sacred goal, to a humane future for all humanity. How we live privately, what values we instill in our children, what goal we cherish, how we make our voices heard in this free and democratic society- these will determine the course of our race. "Thou, O son of man."

To sponsor an issue of Likutei Divrei Torah:
Call Saadia Greenberg 301-649-7350
or email: sgreenberg@jhu.edu
<http://torah.saadia.info>

Weekly Parsha TETZAVEH
Rabbi Wein's Weekly Blog

If clothes make the man, the garments of the ordinary priests and the High Priest of Israel certainly grant them the authority and holiness of their offices. One of the major disqualifications that affected the priest's ability to perform services in the Temple was that he lacked the proper clothing that characterized and identified him. We find generally in Jewish life that clothing plays an important societal and religious role.

Modesty in dress, special clothing for the Sabbath and holidays and acceptable attire have always been the norms in Jewish society. The clothing of Jews was always affected by the influence of the countries and societies in which they lived. One need only look at the paintings of the Dutch masters of the seventeenth century, portraying the Jews and rabbis of Amsterdam at their synagogue services and homes, in order to realize how acculturated Jewish dress was, even amongst the most rigorously pious rabbis of the time.

The Church sought to regulate the colors of dress that Jews would be allowed to wear in the Middle Ages. It was the Church that made black the main color motif of Jewish dress. It seems that the Jews in Europe before the time of the Crusades wore brightly colored clothing as did their non-Jewish neighbors. It was only after the official medieval persecution of Ashkenazic Jews by the Church that restrictions were made on the color and type of clothing that could be worn by Jews.

Jews were also forced to wear ludicrous looking hats and badges of shame on their clothing. However, Jews made their forced shameful clothing items of Jewish pride and long after the decline of the Church and the abolition of such degrees (though they were restored by the Germans in World War II) Jews continued to wear informal peasant dress, strange hats and caps and mainly black clothing. The rule regarding all clothing was that it be modest and presentable.

The garments of the High Priest of Israel were ornate, unique and very luxurious in manufacture and appearance. In contrast, the garments of the ordinary priests of Israel were simple, sparse and sparkling white. If the garments of the High Priest represented majesty, grandeur and power of leadership, the garments of the ordinary priests represented holiness and service.

Not everyone could aspire to achieve majesty and grandeur – there was only one High Priest present at any one given time during the periods of the First and Second Temples. However purity of life and devotion to service of God and of Israel was something that many could achieve. This truth was reflected in the different clothing of the High Priest and of his fellow, but ordinary, priests.

It is to be noted that the High Priest himself also always wore the vestments of the ordinary priests. He had four additional garments that he wore that were of precious metal and fabric and unique to him. But before one could don the garments of majesty, power, grandeur and importance, one had to first learn the lessons of humility, holiness, purity and service to others and to God as represented by the clothing of the ordinary priests of Israel. Though we no longer have priestly vestments present in our Jewish society today, the lessons that they taught us should be remembered and followed.

Shabbat shalom
Rabbi Berel Wein

Leadership Means Making Space
TETZAVEH
Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Tetzaveh is, as is well known, the parsha in which for once Moses take second place. In fact, he is not mentioned by name at all, and all the focus is on his brother, Aaron, and on the role he came to occupy and personify, that of High Priest, the Kohen Gadol.

There are many conjectures as to why this went to Aaron as opposed to Moses himself, the most obvious being that this was Moses' punishment for refusing one time too many God's request that he lead the Israelites.

And Moses said, "Pardon Your servant, Lord. Please send someone else."

Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses and He said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and he will be glad to see you. You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. He will speak to the people for you, he will be your spokesman, and you will be his guide.

Ex. 4:13-16

There is, though, a deeper message, the principle of the separation of powers, which opposes the concentration of leadership into one person or institution. All human authority needs checks and balances if it is to remain uncorrupted. In particular, political and religious leadership, keter malchut and keter kehunah, should never be combined. Moses wore the crowns of political and prophetic leadership, Aaron that of priesthood. The division allowed each to be a check on the other.

That is the theory. What is especially interesting is how this works out in terms of personal relationships, in this case that between the two brothers, Moses and Aaron. The Torah says relatively little about their family dynamic, but the hints are fascinating.

Consider, first of all, the passage we've just seen from near the beginning of the book of Exodus, when God tells Moses that Aaron is "already on his way to meet you, and he will be glad to see you." These sound like simple words, but in reality they are far from common.

Moses was Aaron's younger brother, three years his junior. Would it not have been natural for Aaron to be more than a little envious that his younger brother was about to become the leader he himself was not destined to be – all the more so since Moses had not spent his life among his people. He had been, first, an adopted prince of Egypt, and had then taken refuge with Yitro and the Midianites. Relative to Aaron, Moses, his younger brother, was also an outsider.

Yet God says, "He will be glad to see you."

Aaron's ability to rejoice in his brother's rise to greatness is particularly striking when set against the entire biblical history of the relationship between brothers thus far. It has been a set of variations on the theme of sibling rivalry: Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers. The Psalm says:

"How good and pleasant it is for brothers to live together."

Ps. 133:1

And in response, reading Bereishit, we are likely to add, "and how rare." But now comes the second test, this time not of Aaron but of Moses. Moses is now being commanded to create a form of leadership he himself will never be able to exercise, that of the priesthood, and the person he must award it to is his elder brother. Can he do so with the same generosity of spirit that his brother showed toward him?

Note how the Torah emphasises God's insistence that it be Moses who bestows this honour on Aaron.

Three times the word ve-atah, "And you," is used early on in the parsha:

"And you shall command the Israelites to bring you pure oil" (for the Menorah that Aaron and his sons would keep alight).

Ex. 27:20

"And you shall draw your brother Aaron and his sons close to you to serve Me as priests – Aaron and his sons Nadav and Avihu, Elazar and Itamar. Make sacred vestments for your brother Aaron, for glory and for splendour.

Ex. 28:1-2

"And you shall speak to all the skilled craftsmen whom I have endowed with a spirit of wisdom, and ask them to make Aaron's vestments; these will consecrate him to serve Me as priest.

Ex. 28:3

Moses must show the people – and Aaron himself – that he has the humility, the tzimtzum, the power of self-effacement, needed to make space for someone else to share in the leadership of the people. Someone whose strengths are not his, whose role is different from his, someone

who may be more popular, closer to the people, than Moses is – as in fact Aaron turned out to be.

It's rare for a leader to be able to share the spotlight so generously. In 2005 the historian Doris Kearns Goodwin published an influential book about Abraham Lincoln entitled *Team of Rivals*. In it she tells the story of how Lincoln appointed to his cabinet the three men who had opposed him as candidate for the Republican party leadership. William Henry Seward, who had been expected to win, eventually said of him, "His magnanimity is almost superhuman . . . the President is the best of us."

It takes a special kind of character to make space for those whom one is entitled to see as rivals. Early on, Aaron showed that character in relation to Moses, and now Moses is called on to show it to Aaron.

True leadership involves humility and magnanimity. The smaller the ego, the greater the leader. That's what Moses showed in the parsha that does not mention his name.

Head Covering and Fear of Heaven

Revivim

Why are unmarried women not obligated to cover their heads, and what is the halakha regarding head covering for women during prayer? * The controversy over wigs brought from India, and the doubts about whether this involves the prohibition of deriving benefit from idolatry * What should one do when arriving at the synagogue, and finding someone else sitting in their regular seat? * Praying next to a baby who dirtied their diaper

What to do When a Guest Sits in one's Regular Seat in the Synagogue

Q: My regular prayer seat is near the entrance of the synagogue, and as a result, guests often sit in my spot. Is it proper to ask them to get up, or since I don't want to embarrass them, should I forfeit sitting in my regular seat for those prayers?

A: It is a mitzvah (positive commandment) for a person to establish a set place for their prayer (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 90:19), because one who establishes a set place for prayer thereby expresses the constant connection they have with God, and since their connection to the Source of Life is stable, their life is enhanced, as our Sages said: "Whoever establishes a set place for their prayer, the God of Abraham aids them," and "their enemies fall before them" (Berachot 6b, 7b).

However, there is an even greater mitzvah to avoid paining another person, which is a branch of the commandment "And you shall love your neighbor as yourself" which Rabbi Akiva said is a great principle of the Torah. Therefore, if there is no respectable place to redirect the guest, one should avoid asking them to get up from the seat. When the prayer service is already underway, such as near 'Barchu', it appears that even if your name is on the seat and it is possible to direct the guest elsewhere, one should not ask them to switch places.

Of course there are different situations, such as if one of them is elderly or very young, and in all situations, one must act sensitively as appropriate.

In order to avoid the problem from the start, it is preferable to arrive at the synagogue early, and if possible, even merit being among the first ten, so that guests will not sit in your seat.

Additionally, it is proper for every community to appoint a pleasant Gabai (sexton), who will kindly welcome the guests, and avoid unpleasantness by directing them to appropriate seats.

Prayer Next to a Soiled Baby

Q: I prayed next to a baby who turned out to have soiled their diaper. After I cleaned him up, do I need to repeat my prayer?

A: If the baby is older and can already eat a kezayit (olive size) portion of grain in the time it takes to eat half a loaf of bread (approx. 7 minutes), around a year old, and a foul odor emits from his excrement, it is forbidden from the Torah to pray next to him, and if you already prayed – the prayer is invalid, and you must repeat the prayer. If no foul odor emitted, the prayer is valid.

Regarding blessings recited next to a baby whose excrement emits a foul odor, the poskim (Jewish law arbiters) disagree whether they are also invalidated like the Amidah prayer and Keri'at Shema, and due to the

safek (doubt), one does not repeat them (Peninei Halakha: Prayer 3:9-10).

Is it Really Preferable to Die, Rather than Publicly Embarrass One's Friend?

Q: Our Sages said: "It is better for a person to throw themselves into a fiery furnace, rather than publicly embarrass their friend" (Sotah 10b). Is this literally true, and is it really preferable for a person to die, rather than publicly embarrass their friend?

A: These words of our Sages were said hyperbolically, in order to warn about the tremendous severity of the prohibition of embarrassing others, but it is not an actual halachic obligation to sacrifice one's life for this (Meiri Berachot 43b, Chinuch #240, Ayin Yaakov, and so wrote Rabbi Moshe Kafon HaCohen, Brit Avot on Avot 3:15. And so implies from Rambam Deot 6:8, Teshuva 3:14).

However, some poskim imply that one must literally sacrifice their life in order not to publicly embarrass their friend (Tosafot Sotah 10b "noach", Shaarei Teshuva 3:137, Binyan Tzion #172). However, it appears basically that their intention is for a case of extremely severe insult that would alter a person's status to the point that they may commit suicide, or become ill and die from agony.

Why are Women Not Obligated to Wear a Kippah?

Q: Why have unmarried women not had the custom to cover their heads with a kippah like men?

A: Wearing a kippah for men is intended to inspire fear of Heaven. It is related in the Talmud (Shabbat 156b) that after it became known to the mother of Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak based on his astrological sign that he was liable to become a thief, she was very strict with him to always cover his head, and this way, he grew up in Torah and mitzvot. Once, when his head covering fell off, his evil inclination overcame him, and he greatly desired to steal dates from the top of a palm tree. At that moment, Rav Nachman understood his mother's insistence. Over time, the minhag hassidut (pious custom) was accepted among all Israel to cover one's head all day, to the point where it became an obligatory custom (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 2:6). It appears that the custom of wearing a kippah, somewhat replaced tefillin. Ideally, one should wear tefillin all day, and since people became more meticulous about the honor of tefillin, to only wear them with complete bodily and mental purity, they are only worn during prayer, and instead, people became meticulous about wearing a kippah all day.

However, for women, head covering is for modesty and not in order to inspire fear of Heaven. Therefore, married women cover their heads, while unmarried women, who do not need to be as strict as married women, do not need to cover their heads.

It is possible to interpret that women's observance of the laws of modesty in their clothing expresses fear of Heaven more, and therefore, there is no need for a head covering as well, in order to express fear of Heaven.

Unmarried Women are Not Obligated to Wear a Kippah in Prayer, or Blessings

Some poskim say that when mentioning God's name and reciting blessings, even unmarried women should cover their heads, since in this matter, there is no difference between men and women, but rather, it is an independent obligation to cover one's head when mentioning God's name (Ish Matzliach, Yaskil Avdi). Others say that, at the very least, during the Amidah, women should cover their heads (Yabia Omer 6:15). However, in practice, unmarried women are not meticulous about this, and even during prayer, do not have the custom to cover their heads. Only men have an obligatory, minhag hassidut to cover their heads all day, in order to inspire them to fear of Heaven, and therefore, they have a complete obligation to cover their heads when mentioning God's name. But for unmarried women who do not practice this pious custom, it does not express fear of Heaven for them, and therefore, they are not obligated in it when praying and reciting blessings (see Peninei Halakha: Women's Prayer 10:6).

Are Married Women Obligated to Cover Their Heads During Prayer and Blessings?

Married women must cover their heads during prayer, since without a head covering, they would be dressed contrary to halakha. Even one who is not accustomed to being meticulous about head covering, should at least be careful about this during prayer even when alone in her home, since it is inappropriate to pray while dressed in a manner not respectable according to halakha.

Regarding reciting blessings and verses that contain God's name, some say that even when a woman is alone, if she is married, she must be careful to cover her head (Yabia Omer 6:15). And some say that since unmarried women are not obligated in this, married women are also not obligated, since the obligation for married women to cover their heads is only due to modesty, and since when reciting blessings there is no obligation to dress respectfully, their law follows that of unmarried women, and it is permitted for them to recite blessings and the bedtime Shema without a head covering. And this is the prevalent custom and the halakha (Peninei Halakha: Women's Prayer 10:6).

Wigs Whose Hair is from India

About twenty years ago, in 2004, a controversy arose regarding wigs whose hair is imported from India. It became clear that some of the hair is brought from the area of the city of Tirupati in southern India, where there is a place of worship visited by tens of millions of people each year, many of whom shave their head hair before coming before the idol. The hair belonging to the place of worship is then sold to the wig industry.

Those poskim prohibiting, argued that shaving the hair is an act of worship, and is therefore considered a quasi-sacrificial slaughtering (shechita), rendering the hair forbidden for benefit.

In contrast, those poskim permitting, clarified with people familiar with the religion, and it became clear that shaving the hair is not an act of worship, but merely preparation before coming submissively before the idol, and is therefore not forbidden for benefit.

Halakha to Permit

Even if we accept the claim of the stringent poskim that there is concern that shaving the hair is considered worship, wigs made from hair brought from India may be permitted, since this involves a *sfeik sfeika* (a double doubt), and the halakha is that even regarding the prohibition of deriving benefit from idolatry – in a *sfeik sfeika*, the law follows the lenient opinion, as explained in the Mishnah: "One who finds idolatry fragments, they are permitted" (Avodah Zarah 41a). Rashi, Rambam and others explained, based on the Gemara (ibid. 41b), that this is a *sfeik sfeika* – doubtful whether they worshipped these idols, and if they were worshipped – perhaps the non-Jews nullified them. And so is codified in halakha (Shach YD 141:7).

Therefore, even when certain the wig hair came from Tirupati, the wig is permitted for benefit, and therefore, it is permitted to purchase it, and wear it. All the more so when it is unknown if it came from there, and then, there would be three doubts.

The Three Doubts in Brief

The first doubt: Whether shaving the hair is an act of worship that can forbid the hair from benefit, or if it is not an act of worship but merely preparation before coming to the idol. From clarifying the matter, it appears the lenient opinion is correct, since the priests of the religion itself said that shaving is not worship, and the hair is considered impure for them, and unfit for an offering. However, the stringent argued that the masses think it is worship, and therefore, it is considered a way of worshipping that idol, thus forbidding the hair.

The second doubt: Even if we accept the stringent view that shaving the hair is worship, the Rishonim (early authorities) disputed whether a worship that resembles the Temple service only partially, such as shaving hair which partially resembles animal slaughter, forbids the offering from benefit. According to Ramban, Rashba and Ritva it does not forbid, while according to Tosafot, Tur and Shulchan Aruch YD 139:3, it forbids.

The third doubt relates to laws of *taravot* (mixtures), meaning, that even if we say shaving the hair is worship, and even if we say this worship forbids the hair, according to the lenient opinion, the Tirupati hair is *batel* (nullified) among the rest of the hair brought from India for the

wig industry, and the hair leaving India is *batel* among hair from the rest of the world, while according to the stringent opinion, it is not *batel* (since the reasoning of the sides is complex, we will not mention them).

Rabbi Eliezer Melamed

Parshat Tetzaveh: When Absence Proves Love

Rabbi Dr. Shlomo Riskin is the Founder and Rosh HaYeshiva of Ohr Torah Stone

"And you shall command the children of Israel... And you shall bring forth your brother Aaron and his sons together with him... And you shall speak to all of the wise-hearted." (Exodus 27:20–28:3)

Often what you really have is that which you give away, what you most profoundly say is what you leave unsaid when you wisely decide not to respond, and the most commanding presence is felt most keenly when that presence is not around. An example of the third phenomenon is to be found in the Torah reading of Tetzaveh, the only portion since the opening of the book of Exodus wherein Moses' name does not appear even once! Why not?

The Midrashic answer suggests that Moses initiated his own absence. When the Israelites sinned by worshiping the golden calf less than six weeks after the divine revelation at Sinai, God's anger reaches the breaking point (as it were) and he makes Moses the following offer:

"And now leave Me alone as my anger shall burn and I will destroy them, and I shall make of you a great nation." (Exodus 32:10)

God suggests that He wipe Israel, no longer worthy of His benevolence, from the pages of history by starting a new nation, a new branch, from the loins of Moses himself.

Others in his shoes might have taken up God's offer, but Moses refuses to increase his own glory at the expense of the nation. The climax of his brilliant argument is an emotional ultimatum: God must forgive the people.

"...If not [says Moses], blot me, I pray you, out of Your book which You have written." (Exodus 32:32)

God responds to Moses' pleas. But Moses' expression of identification with the people, Moses' selfless willingness for himself to be obliterated as long as his nation prevails, is eternalized by the fact that in one portion of the Torah, Tetzaveh, the master prophet's name is "missing in action."

But on an even deeper level, is there a further significance to the fact that the "blotting out" of Moses' name occurs specifically in Tetzaveh?

Even a quick glance reveals that our portion is almost entirely devoted to the priesthood. Chapters 28 and 29 deal extensively with all the garments that the priests are commanded to wear, particularly the High Priest, as well as the sacrifices that shall be brought to "sanctify the priests." In fact, Tetzaveh is often called Parashat Ha-Kohanim, the portion of the priests.

Without a temple, the priest's public role is severely limited. One area, though, where his presence is still felt (particularly here in Israel and among Sephardim even in the Diaspora) is the daily priestly blessing during the repetition of the morning Amida: at the conclusion of the blessing for peace, the priests, attended to by Levites, stand before the congregation and invoke the biblical blessing: "May God bless you and keep you..." (Num. 6:24). Before intoning these words, they recite the following blessing: "Blessed are You Lord, our God, king of the universe, who has sanctified us with the holiness of Aaron, and has commanded us to bless His people with love."

The final words in the blessing – "with love" – raise certain questions, since kohanim, or descendants of the High Priest Aaron, are fairly typical people. Some are as sweet as cherry ices in July, and some are as cold as Alaskan ice cubes, but most change in accordance with their mood upon awakening. How can we measure the love-quotient felt by Mr. Cohen when he ascends the bimah for the blessing? How can we legislate the emotion of love which the priests are apparently expected to feel?

The first answer lies in the very nature of the priesthood, in how the Bible legislated the priestly class's means of livelihood. It's often said that if you ask a typical entrepreneur, "How 's business?" if he says,

“great,” it means that he is doing well and his competitor is facing bankruptcy; if he says, “good,” that means it’s a good market for everyone, he’s doing well and so is his competitor; and if he says, “terrible,” then that means he’s facing bankruptcy but his competition is earning a lot of money. Gore Vidal was once quoted by Hilma Wolitzer in the New York Times for his poignantly honest observation: “Whenever a friend succeeds a little, something in me dies.”

Enter the kohen. If there is one person who disagrees with Mr. Vidal, it would have to be a member of the priestly class who served in the Temple, received no portion of land to till or business to develop, and who made his living by tithes given him by the Israelites: 1/40, 1/50, 1/60 of their produce depending upon the generosity of the individual donor. And since the tithe was a percentage of the crop, the better the farmer makes out, the happier the kohen would be. To modify the Vidal quote, a kohen would declare: “Whenever a farmer succeeds a little [and certainly whenever he succeeds a lot], something in me lives.” Hence by the very nature of the economic structure set up by the Bible, the kohen-priest could truly give the blessing of prosperity and well-being to the congregation of Israel “with love.”

And it was because the kohanim were freed from professional and agricultural pursuits that they were able to devote themselves entirely to God, the Holy Temple, and the religio-moral needs of the nation. Their single-minded commitment to the holy and the divine was symbolized by the words engraved upon the highly visible gold plate (tzitz) worn around the forehead of the High Priest: “Holy unto God” (Ex. 28:36). Indeed, so important was it deemed that the religious and moral message not be compromised by political sectarian considerations that the Bible legislates a total separation between the religious and legislative spheres. The tribe of Judah was entrusted with sovereign, legislative leadership: “The specter shall not depart from Judah...” (Gen. 49:10), whereas the tribe of Levi was entrusted with religio-moral leadership: “They shall teach Jacob your law, and Israel your Torah...” (Deut. 33:10). No member of the priestly class could control the bank or become a cabinet minister. Thus the kohen, and the religio-moral voice which he represents, emerges in a totally independent position, above the economic interests of special-interest groups and beyond the intrigues of palace politics.

From this perspective we can offer a second interpretation of the words “with love” which conclude the introduction to the priestly benediction: “Love” does not describe the emotions of the kohen, but rather defines the content of the blessing. The most important blessing that can be bestowed upon the nation is that we live together in harmony and love. And only a priestly class separated from petty self-interest and competitions, truly devoted to God, can hope to inspire such love and harmony!

Now we can understand why Moses’ name is absent particularly from this portion of Tetzaveh. If the kohanim are to symbolize selfless commitment to God and to the nation, they cannot possibly have a better example than Moses, who was willing to have his name removed from the Torah for the sake of the future of his people! If any act in the Torah can be singled out for demonstrating pure love, with no strings attached, it is when Moses refuses God’s offer to start a new nation from his loins; Moses would rather that he remain anonymous but let the people of Israel live. Indeed, the essence of Moses’ greatness emerges most clearly from the portion of his absence and anonymity.

Shabbat Shalom

Are You a Sun or a Moon?

The Jewish Leap Year Challenges Us to Integrate Creativity and Consistency

By: Rabbi YY Jacobson

Two Roads

Two roads diverged in the long voyage of our people. There were “Solar Jews” and “Lunar Jews.”

There were always the people whose primary focus has been on holding on tenaciously to the past, with little or no change. Just because Voltaire gave us Enlightenment, Nietzsche taught us about the Will for Power,

Tocqueville explained to us democracy, Freud discovered the subconscious, and America is changing by the day, this group argues, our core values—what makes us human and Jewish—still do not undergo change. Learn from the sun, they say. It has been doing the same thing for millennia and still casts its light and warmth effectively. In contrast, the lunar Jews focus on the constant changes in history: The fluctuating trends, the cultural developments, the novel inventions, the technological revolutions, and the newly discovered wisdom. These Jews allow their ears to absorb the sounds of progression and the alterations in the climate. They aspire to define a Judaism—or a philosophy of life—that would be relevant to the contemporary conversation of humanity in its journey toward progress. “Learn from the moon,” they exclaim. Every day it is different. It waxes; it wanes; it even disappears once in a while. It forever assumes diverse shapes. Often, they mocked their elders who were unchangeable. Their lunar anthem was this:

Rooted in the tombs of yesterday

Growing, thriving toward the sky.

Not satisfied with answers carved in clay

Give us new life or we will die.

In some ways, it was this perspective that gave birth to the contemporary Jewish world. As the winds of modernity swept Europe, as Enlightenment and Emancipation cast their glow on a downtrodden nation, millions of Jews felt that clinging to the lifestyle and traditions of their ancestors would impede their bright journey to a new world order. In the process, they bid farewell to the old to embrace the new; they said goodbye to the yore to embrace the “your.”

Then came the Holocaust and changed everything. A shattered people observed in unfathomable horror how the most enlightened European nation with the most PhDs, the crown jewel of the sciences and arts, was capable of sending one-and-a-half million children into gas chambers, with no qualms. As our nation struggled to regain its bearings and rebuild, confusion emerged.

The solar Jews focused on the fact that if you are not anchored in absolute values, traditions, and faith, you may forfeit continuity. In your passion to remain relevant today, you may forfeit the wisdom of yesteryear. In your ambition to grow tall, you can’t detach from the roots that keep you alive.

“By the time a man realizes that maybe his father was right, he usually has a son who thinks he’s wrong,” Charles Wadsworth once said.

The lunar Jews accuse solar Jews of monotony and dogma, stifling the new energy of today. In their hope to continue the chain of history by adding their identically matching link, they fail to leave room for creativity and self-expression.

Two Approaches to Business

Often, the conflict between the lunar and solar personalities emerges in a company, a business, or an organization.

The CEO, David, is adventurous, creative, courageous, and fearless of risks. He feels that the company has to embrace a new model to bring it over the top, though it has not done things this way since its inception. Yet the senior Vice President, Henry, adheres to a different code: Conservative approaches and investments, calculated growth strategies, continuing the models of yesterday which proved successful.

At a board meeting trying to reconcile between the two, strong words are hurled: The VP accuses the CEO, thirty years younger than him, of being volatile and impetuous. “This young know-it-all arrogant leader will take a successful company, earning its fixed annual revenue, and run it into the ground because of his irresponsible and youthful decisions.” The CEO does not remain silent. “Henry is an old man. He moves with the speed of a turtle. His consistency and regularity have led us to paralysis, stagnation, and deadness. With him at the helm, we will become irrelevant.”

Two Spouses

Often the dichotomy flares up in a marriage:

She is spontaneous, fun-loving, bursting with ever-changing moods and emotions. Occasionally, her luminous personality shines like the full moon; equally frequent, however, are periods of sadness and inner

struggle. She waxes and wanes. And sometimes she wants to disappear from the world for two days, just like the moon.

He is solid, dependable, consistent, as regular as tomorrow's sunrise. When he has a flight, he packs two days before and shows up at the airport 3 and-a-half hours before his flight. He has been leaving the house at the same minute—8:19 AM—for the past 36 years to catch the 8:30 train. At work, he's efficient, productive, and a stalwart upholder of company policy. He has not been late to an appointment since the Cuban Missile Crisis. Even the Landing on the Moon did not excite him enough to stay up later than usual. After all, he is a sun... He goes to bed, with one book on his night table, because he never picks up a second book before he finishes reading the first. That, in his mind, is frivolous and irresponsible... (His wife, on the other hand, goes to bed with six books, so that when she gets bored of the first book—usually after three pages—she can pick up the second book.)

Or sometimes (maybe more often) it is the other way around. She is made of steel. She is solid, reliable, and dependable. He is moody and unstable. He may be an "artist," but he's out for lunch. And lunch never ends with him. Either way, as can be expected, theirs is not an easy marriage.

Who Prevails?

Each of us tends to deal with this conflict differently. But the common denominator for most is that we try to overemphasize one of the two approaches so that we can form some sense of identity. Sometimes as a society we give one approach exclusive power when the other has dominated our attention for a long time. It becomes a pendulum swing from one extreme to another: Embracing art and creativity until we've totally lost all sense of moral truth, and then giving total control to discipline and dogma until there is no distinguishable personality left in us.

Judaism, in its profound understanding of human nature and the process of history, challenges us to embark on the road less traveled.

Two Calendars

There are two types of calendars used by most civilizations today: the Western calendar and the Muslim calendar. The Western calendar follows the solar cycle, while the Muslim calendar follows the lunar cycle. The primary features of both calendars are the month and the year. Yet their duration can be calculated through either the sun or the moon.

Let us go on a little journey through these two calendars.[1]

The solar orbit (the orbit of the sun around the earth, or of the earth around the sun) is completed every 365 days[2]. That makes for a year. If you divide these 365 days into 12 sections, you get approximately 30 days in each. This makes up the months.

This is how the Western calendar works. The months are not defined by the completion of any particular orbit; they are an artificial creation, a product of the mind dividing the solar orbit into 12 sections.[3]

The lunar orbit (the apparent orbit of the moon around the earth, or the earth around the moon) is completed every 29 1/2 days, 12 times as fast as the sun. That makes for a month. Now, when you multiply the lunar month—29 or 30 days[4]—12 times, you have a year.

Such a year, comprised of 12 lunar months, adds up to 354 days,[5] 11 days shorter than a solar year of 365 days. When a new lunar year begins (the beginning of the 13th month), the solar year has not yet finished its previous year and orbit.

This is how the Muslim calendar works. As with the months in the Western calendar, the years in the Muslim calendar are not defined by an objective astronomical reality but are a creation of the human mind multiplying the moon's orbit 12 times.[6]

This is why Ramadan—the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, which is the Islamic month of fasting, in which participating Muslims refrain from eating, drinking, and intimate relations for the entire month from dawn until sunset—can fall out either in winter or summer, or any other season. Sometimes Ramadan is in hot August, and sometimes in cold February (in 2022 it will begin on April 2 through May 2). Why? Because the Muslim calendar, unlike the Western calendar, has nothing

to do with the sun and its seasons. It completely revolves around the moon.

The Problem

As long as you don't mix the two calendars, you're fine. But this is where the Jews came in and generated confusion. The Jewish calendar is unique in that it integrates these two very different cycles of time—the solar and the lunar—into a harmonious system.

The very first mitzvah given to the Jewish people—even before their Exodus from Egypt—specified the formula by which to set the cycles of Jewish time, and it gave birth to the most complex calendar ever employed.[7]

The Torah specifies that Jewish months need to be established by the lunar orbit. Simple enough. Yet the Torah also instructs the Jewish people to celebrate their holidays (observed on certain days of the lunar month) during specific solar seasons. For example, the holiday of Passover, beginning on the 15th day of the lunar month of Nissan, must also be the spring season (a product of the solar cycle).[8]

Now, if the lunar and solar year had enjoyed an identical number of days, this system would work perfectly: The lunar and solar months would travel together side by side. But since the lunar year is 354 days, and the solar year is 365 days, each passing year creates a discrepancy of 11 days between the two cycles. In the course of 10 years, the lunar year falls behind the solar year some 110 days. The result of this would be that Passover, celebrated in the lunar month of Nissan, would eventually end up in the winter.

The Solution

To confront this problem, the Jewish calendar introduced the "leap year." Every few years, a 13th month consisting of 30 days is added to the lunar year. This way the "lunar year" catches up to the "solar year." This is done approximately every three years when the discrepancy between the lunar and solar year reaches 33 days. The added month synchronizes them, more or less.[9]

Now, this year in the Jewish calendar, 5784, is one of those leap years. And the Hebrew month in which we presently find ourselves, Adar 1, is exactly such a type of month—an additional 13th month added to our lunar year. The additional month is always added to the month of Adar, ensuring that the following month, Nissan, the month of Passover, is in spring, since the lunar year has now "caught" up to the solar year.

So in summation, the Jewish people calculate their time according to both the moon and the sun. Our months are the moons; our years are the suns. To ensure that our lunar months keep pace with the solar year, we are constantly attempting to have the moon overcome its 11-day void and catch up to the sun's year.

Why the Headache?

But why the need for such headaches? If the Torah wants us to synchronize our months and years with the solar seasons, let it establish a solar calendar to begin with! Why the need to follow a lunar system and then try to make up for its flaws, shortcomings, and mishaps?

The answer to this enigma is that in Judaism we measure and calculate our days the same way in which we measure and calculate our inner lives. We define time in the same way that we define our mission in life. And our mission in life is not to become either lunar or solar, but to integrate them. Sure, the synthesis of two celestial beings which possess differing patterns is never easy; it always requires tuning, fine-tuning, checks and balances, adjustments, vigilance, humility, and the readiness to challenge ourselves. But any other way would be neglecting a vital component of our design and of our objective in life.

To run from your spouse because they are so different is short-sided. Sure, to synchronize two personalities is not always a smooth journey, especially when one is a sun and the other—a moon. Yet it is in this attempt to bring together two orbits in which we can fully realize our inner potential and become the people we were meant to become.

Truth can never be captured via the moon or the sun on their own. We ought to utilize our innovative ability to its fullest, and yet, for our creativity to be productive and life-affirming, we must have a structure in which to operate. If I forfeit that structure in the name of liberty and self-expression, it would be akin to water escaping the "boundaries" of

the pot in order to come into direct contact with the fire beneath the pot. The results? No fire left.

To lose touch with time-tested values of the past in the name of creativity is akin to playing a football game on a massive roof of a tall building, lacking a firm fence. Instead of enjoying a thrilling game, we become too timid to play, because we know how dangerous it is, or conversely, we become reckless. The best thing we can do is to construct a fence, and then we can enjoy an awesome game.

Let's take the marital structure. Some may argue for complete lunar passion and romance, without the limitations imposed by the "solar" stable commitment to one person with no red lines crossed. The marriage-without boundaries may sound exciting, but the results are well known: It undermines rather than enhances the love and trust between a husband and wife, and the person often ends up with nothing.

We love the moon. We must be fresh, creative, passionate, and explore and actualize all of our individual resources. We ought to celebrate the new and the creative. But the leap year teaches us, that our inner moon—our inner lunacy—must, once every few years, be synchronized with our inner sun. We need to anchor our spiritedness in time-tested values to define what is right and what is wrong. Our creativity blossoms best on the soil of commitment and tradition. The structures of morality and the laws of the Torah are similar to the laws of biology. If in my attempt for creativity I ignore the intricate "laws" that govern my organism, I will end up damaging myself.

You can't ignore the rhythm of the soul. Only in the struggle to synthesize the sun and the moon, can the full capacity and majesty of the human being be expressed.[10]

Now, as Jews are once again facing such adversity and hatred, it is time to reclaim our tradition, our Torah, Mitzvos, and faith -- the spiritual weapons of our eternity, coupled with its creative fearless vigor, empowering us to heal ourselves and the world.

[1] For a full understanding of the subject below, see "Understanding the Jewish Calendar" (Feldheim Press).

[2] To be exact, the solar orbit is slightly less than 365.25 days.

[3] Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra puts it thus (Exodus 12:2): "The sun has no month."

[4] Since the moon completes its orbit, as mentioned, every 29.5 days, and we don't want to have a new month beginning in the middle of a day, six lunar months out of a year consist of 29 days, while six other lunar months are comprised of 30 days.

[5] The exact figure is 353, 354, or 365 days.

[6] Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra puts it thus (Exodus 12:2): "The moon has no year."

[7] See Rambam Hilchos Kiddush Hachodesh and references noted in commentaries.

[8] The start of spring, also known as the vernal equinox, is the point when the sun's center crosses the equator from South to North, March 21 on the Gregorian calendar.

[9] Specifically, this is how it works. The Jewish calendar follows a 19-year cycle. Seven out of these 19 years—years 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17 and 19—consist of 13, instead of 12, months.

Let us take a journey through this 19-year cycle: During the first two years of the cycle, the lunar year falls behind the solar year 22 days. Therefore, by the third year of the cycle, when 36 lunar months (three lunar years) would have set it back almost 34 days in relation to the annual seasonal solar cycle, we add a 13th month to the lunar year. Now, we are only four days behind.

Three years later, now some 38 days behind (almost 34 from three lunar years plus four days behind from before), we repeat the process. Now we are eight days behind.

Two years later, the lunar year accumulates a deficit of 29 days, so we add once again a month of 30 days to the lunar year. This actually places the lunar year ahead of the solar year, and now the solar year needs to do the catching up.

And so it goes: every two to three years, an extra month is added to the Jewish lunar year. At the conclusion of each 19-year cycle, the solar and lunar years will be perfectly aligned with each other. This is why once in 19 years your English and Hebrew birthdays will finally be on the same day. Then we once again resume the cycle.

[10] This essay is based on a series of talks I heard from the Lubavitcher Rebbe during the month of Tishrei of 5744 (1983), which was a leap year. See: The public letter of the Rebbe dated 6 Tishrei 5744; Sichas 6 and 13 Tishrei 5744. The Rebbe then gave many more examples and illustrations of these two "orbits" in human life and in Jewish life.

A Shabbos B'Yachad

chiefrabbi.org

Office of the Chief Rabbi

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

Purim Katan: Did you know about the minor festivals taking place this weekend?

22 February 2024

Did you know that this Friday and Shabbat there are some minor festivals on the Jewish calendar?

Friday will be called Purim Katan, minor Purim and Shabbat will be called Shushan Purim Katan, minor Shushan Purim.

What's this all about?

Well you probably know that this is a leap year on our calendar, which means that we have two months of Adar.

So, the question posed in the Gemara, Masechet Megillah Daf Vav is, during which month should the festival of Purim be?

First Adar or second Adar?

And as you might expect there is a Machloket, there is a difference of view.

According to one school of thought, Purim should be in first Adar and that's because of the principle 'Ain Maavirin Al Hamitzvot', you do not delay a mitzvah.

We're passionate, we're enthusiastic about the opportunity, the privilege to perform Hashem's mitzvot and that is why a mitzvah should not be put off.

Purim should be held as soon as possible.

Then there's a second view, and that is 'Mismach Geula L'Geula' and this is the preferred school of thought.

We need to guarantee that the redemption of Purim is as close as possible to the redemption of Pesach.

To stage Purim just one month before the festival of Pesach, to guarantee that we go from joy to joy, from redemption.

And that's what we do in Halacha.

Therefore, during the first month of Adar, you have got a minor Purim and a minor Shushan Purim.

Second month, it is the real one, to be as close to Pesach as possible.

And for us right now, such a powerful, relevant message emerges.

We want to ensure that we do not just have one solitary event of joy, marking one occasion of redemption.

No, we want to be on a roll, we want to go from happiness to happiness, from redemption to redemption.

And that is our prayer during these exceptionally challenging times, may Hashem bless the State of Israel and the Jewish people, that we will indeed achieve a state of joy, and may that take us again and again to many more experiences of joy.

I wish you all Purim Katan Sameach.

Shabbat shalom.

Rabbi Mirvis is the Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom. He was formerly Chief Rabbi of Ireland

Drasha Parshas Tetzaveh

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Bell Bottoms

This week the Kohen Gadol (High Priest) is commanded in sartorial law. The Torah instructs the creation of eight intricate garments that must be worn at all times by Ahron. Each vestment functions on a specific spiritual level. One, however, seems to also have a mundane raison d'être.

The Torah instructs the Kohen Gadol to wear a Me'il, a four cornered blue-wool garment worn like a sandwich-sign. The hem of this majestic robe was adorned with an alternating array of 72 functioning gold bells and small pomegranates. Unlike most of the vestments, where the Torah just commands what to sew, the Torah explains the purpose of the Me'il. Exodus 28:34 "Its sound (i.e., the bells) shall be heard upon entering the Sanctuary before Hashem." The Torah continues to tell us that if the Kohen Gadol dares enter the sanctuary without that bell adorned garment, he is subject to a decree of untimely death.

It is nearly impossible to fathom divine reasoning for each vestment. The written Torah does not give an explicit explanation as to why the

Kohen must wear the belts, tunics, and turbans. Yet when it tells us about the bells at the bottom of the Me'il it justifies their existence with a very mundane reason. "Its sound shall be heard upon entering the Sanctuary before Hashem." Our sages explain that the Torah is teaching a moral lesson: one should announce himself before entering any room. I am amazed. Does Hashem, who knows every mortal's move, have a "knock before entering" sign on the doorway of His sanctuary? Why, of all places, is this the place to teach etiquette? Couldn't the Torah have found more mundane whereabouts to direct the people about proper behavior upon entering a room?

The young widow who entered Reb Shlomo Zalman's study was obviously distraught. In addition to the loneliness and pain she experienced, a sense of urgency was about her. She had recurring pangs of guilt. She wanted to do something spiritual to memorialize her dear husband. Perhaps she should establish a free loan fund or contribute books to the Yeshiva library. Or perhaps there was an act of spiritual self-improvement that she should perform.*

Reb Shlomo Zalman waited till she finished and then instructed her to listen to his advice very carefully. "I understand your need to do something spiritual as a tikkun (uplift) for your husband's soul. This is my advice to you. Go out and buy some toys for your children, take them to the park and enjoy life with them. Forget the quest for the great spiritual tikkun and help your children rejoice in life. That will bring the greatest tikkun for your husband."

The Kohen's bells teach us all a great lesson. Upon entering the Holy of Holies, the Kohen's thoughts may become so focused on attaining the high level of spirituality that he may forget simple courtesy. He may forget to knock before entering. The Torah tells us that the search for spirituality can never supersede simple etiquette. We often have dreams and lofty spiritual goals. How many toes do we step upon to achieve them? How many doors do we burst through to prescribe our morals to inattentive ears?

This week the Torah tells us that even the High Priest — the holiest of mortals — as he converges on the Kodosh HaKodoshim — the holiest of places — in the quest to perform the most spiritual of Judaic rites — must remember one simple thing. It is the same thing that the poor farmer must remember before trudging into his home: basic courtesy. Don't forget to knock. And the foremost place to teach us that lesson is the Holy of Holies.

** Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (1910-1995) was one of the foremost Torah Scholars of our generation. Dean of Yeshiva Kol Torah, his Halachic rulings guided thousands world over. This story is adapted from And From Jerusalem his Word c 1995 Hanoach Teller, N.Y.C. Pub Co.*

*This issue is dedicated in loving memory Nochum Moshe ben Yosef - by Sam & Ingrid Davies and Family
Good Shabbos!*

Copyright © 1996 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc.

Rabbi M. Kamenetzky is the Dean of the Yeshiva of South Shore.

Drasha © 2023 by Torah.org.

Rav Frand - Parshas Tetzaveh

The Funds for Building the Mishkan Were Easier To Collect Than the Oil for The Menorah

Last week's parsha also contains a solicitation, but does not use the word tzav. Rather, Parshas Terumah begins with the pasuk "Speak to the Children of Israel and let them take for Me a portion, from every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion." (Shemos 25:2) Everyone was asked to donate to the Mishkan building campaign. They donated all sorts of items, precious metals – gold, silver, and copper – as well as animal skins, wood, spices and the like. It was a very successful campaign, during which they collected everything they needed for the Mishkan.

The sefer Abir Yaakov asks why the Torah does not use the command (Tzav es Bnei Yisrael) in Parshas Teruma like it does here in Parshas Tetzaveh, rather than the more casual statement "Speak to the Children of Israel and let them take for Me an offering..." Anytime someone solicits money – gold, silver, or other valuable items, people don't like to part with their money. They certainly don't like to part with their

precious metals. It is a request which may very well cause hesitation and resistance. Therefore, we would expect the Torah to use a forceful word such as "tzav" there. It seems incongruous that when asking for olive oil, the Torah uses a "command" (v'ata tetzaveh) and when asking for gold and silver, the Torah uses a mere request. Which is the easier ask?

Imagine a man who wants to relax on a Sunday morning but there is a meshullach (charity collector) at the door who gives his elaborate story of desperate need and asks for \$1000. His story hits just the right way and the man writes a check for \$1,000. The following Sunday morning, the same man is trying to enjoy his coffee when a meshullach comes to the door and says that he needs \$100. Okay, the man gives him \$100. Ten minutes later another meshullach comes to the door: "I desperately need \$100." A total of ten people come to the door, each asking for \$100. Lo and behold, another Sunday went by, another \$1,000 was distributed to charity.

Which is easier and which is harder? Is it harder to give \$1,000 in one shot or is it harder to give \$100 ten times over? The Rambam writes (in his Mishna Commentary on Maseches Avos) that it is harder to give \$100 ten times than it is to give \$1,000 in one shot. Not only is it harder, but it makes a bigger impact on the giver if he gives ten times a smaller amount than if he gives the same amount in one contribution.

If someone wants to become a baal tzedakah (generous person), the way to achieve that is to donate over and over and over again. A one-time splurge of generosity may be nice, but it does not change anything in a person's neshama. Stinginess can only be overcome by repetitive action to counteract the negative character trait.

The Mishkan was a one-time building campaign. It was an unprecedented event that had never previously occurred in the history of Klal Yisrael. Everyone was excited about the prospect. They were happy to participate in this once in a lifetime event. Therefore, there was no need for a lashon ziruz (a language of diligence). "Speak to the Children of Israel and take for me..." was sufficient. However, the olive oil was a maintenance item. The appeal for shemen zayis for the Menorah needed to be made over and over again, every week, every month, every year. That is hard. That needs a lashon of tzav – "Command the Children of Israel..."

Transcribed by David Twersky; Jerusalem DavidATwersky@gmail.com

Edited by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD dhoffman@torah.org

Rav Frand © 2023 by Torah.org.

TorahWeb

Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky

Looking at the World Through the Eyes of the Tzitz

The imagery of the Kohen Gadol wearing the bigdei kehuna is the model of a holy, exalted individual. Adorning his head is the tzitz which describes the essence of the role of the Kohen Gadol, as carved into this golden ornament are the words קָדוֹשׁ לֵה' - Holy for Hashem. Although the actual tzitz is only worn by the Kohen Gadol, what the tzitz symbolizes is significant for everyone.

There are several aspects of the tzitz that are strikingly similar to two mitzvos that are performed daily. The very name tzitz is related to the word tzitzis. Many interpret the word tzitz as being derived from the word describing a thread, referring to the blue thread that was connected to the golden plate of the tzitz. Not only in name are the tzitz and tzitzis related, but the blue colored string of both connect these two mitzvos as well.

Another mitzva that is similar to the tzitz is the mitzva of tefillin. The tzitz is worn on the head of the Kohen Gadol, and according to many opinions it is worn in precisely the same place that the tefillin shel rosh is placed. Chazal discuss the technical difficulty of how the Kohen Gadol was able to wear both the tzitz and the tefillin shel rosh simultaneously, and they conclude that in fact there was sufficient room for both. On both the tzitz and the tefillin shel rosh, a name of Hashem is present. On the tzitz the words "קָדוֹשׁ לֵה'" appeared, and the letter ש", which represents one of the names of Hashem, is carved on the tefillin, highlighting the similarity between these mitzvos. Chazal derive from this connection that one who wears tefillin must act in a way similar to the Kohen Gadol who is adorned with the tzitz. Concerning the tzitz the

Torah says "והיה על מצחו תמיד" - "he always wears it on his forehead." Chazal observe that obviously there are times when the tzitz is not actually worn, so what does it mean that it is always worn? Chazal explain that the halacha requires that when the tzitz is worn, the Kohen Gadol must be cognizant of it and cannot be involved in thoughts that are antithetical to the sanctity of the tzitz. This halacha extends to tefillin and therefore when tefillin are worn one must be careful to retain the proper focus on thoughts that are appropriate for the holiness of tefillin. What is the underlying message which the mitzvos of the tzitz, tzitzis, and tefillin are coming to teach us? There is one theme that permeates all three of these mitzvos. There is a question whether the tzitz was worn in exactly the same place as the tefillin or slightly below. According to both opinions it was situated either directly between the eyes or slightly below above. Although the Halacha is clear that tefillin are worn higher than eye level, the Torah describes tefillin as being situated "בין עיניך" - "between your eyes." Clearly, the tzitz and the tefillin are connected to the sense of sight. The very names for these mitzvos emphasize the significance of seeing. The word tzitz is related to tzitzis not only concerning the common blue thread but also the word tzitzis is related to the word "להציץ" - "to see." Rashi (Bamidbar 15:38) quotes two meanings of the word tzitzis - a thread and seeing. Tefillin shel rosh are referred to in the Torah as "טוטפות". Rashi (Shemos 13:16) interprets טוטפות as similar to a word describing speech. Rashi observes that when one sees the tefillin shel rosh being worn one speaks about the miracles of yetzias Mitzrayim described in its parshiyos. Chazal interpret the passuk (Devarim 28:10), "וראו כלי'עמי הארץ כי שם ה' נקרא עליך ויראו ממך" - "the nations of the world will see the name of Hashem upon you and fear you" - as referring to tefillin shel rosh which is visible to all. The mitzva of tzitzis is linked to sight as the purpose of tzitzis is "וראתם אותו וזכרתם" - "You should see it and remember all the commandments of Hashem" (Bamidbar 15:39).

These three mitzvos teach us how to look at the world. We can observe things in a way that distances us from Hashem, but we can also decide to look at everything around us as an opportunity to help us in our Avodas Hashem. We can strive to be like the Kohen Gadol. We can place these words on our eyes and have them govern everything we see. We can look at our tzitzis and have them guide us in the challenge of, "ולא תחורו אחרי לבבכם ואחרי עיניכם". We can be inspired by the tefillin we wear and the tefillin worn by others and see the letter "ש" that represents Hashem's name. We can see the tefillin and choose to remember the truths contained inside them and live our lives of sanctity according to those lessons.

We look forward to once again seeing the Kohen Gadol adorned with the tzitz. The spiritual leader of the Jewish people who is like the Kohen Gadol serves as a role model to all. May we merit to learn the lesson of the tzitz, the tzitzis, and tefillin, and always look at the world through the holiness of these three mitzvos.

© 2024 by TorahWeb Foundation.

Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz

Parashat Tetzaveh 5784

To Rule or To Serve?

The Torah portion of Tetzaveh is a direct continuation of the previous parasha, Terumah. These two portions deal with the preparations necessary for the work in the Mishkan, the Tabernacle – the temporary sanctuary that accompanied the children of Israel during their wanderings in the desert until the construction of the permanent Temple in Jerusalem. However, while Parashat Terumah deals with the structure of the Tabernacle itself and the vessels placed within it, outlining a precise plan for the Tabernacle and its vessels, Parashat Tetzaveh primarily deals with the preparation of the individuals intended to work in the Tabernacle and operate it – Aaron the Priest and his sons.

This preparation focused on two areas: one is related to the special garments of the priests. These garments are required to be made from specific fabrics, particularly the garments of the High Priest, which were made "for honor and for beauty." The second area in which the preparation of the priests is expressed is during the seven days of

"milu'im," seven days in which Aaron and his sons practiced the work in the Tabernacle.

Among the details of the garments of the High Priest, there are several precious stones set in them. On his chest, the High Priest wears the 'Choshen,' a kind of ornament adorned with precious stones on which the names of the twelve tribes of Israel are engraved: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Joseph, and Benjamin. Each stone bears the name of one of the tribes of Israel, making a total of twelve stones. In addition, on his shoulders, the High Priest wears two additional stones, on each of which are engraved the names of six tribes.

Why were the names of the tribes of Israel engraved on the garments of the High Priest? The Torah addresses this question. Regarding the stones that Aaron wears on his chest, it is said:

Thus shall Aaron carry the names of the sons of Israel in the choshen of judgment over his heart when he enters the Holy, as a remembrance before the Lord at all times. (Exodus 28:29)

And concerning the two stones on his shoulders, a similar justification is given:

...and Aaron shall carry their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders as a remembrance. (Exodus 28:12)

The High Priest bears the memory of the children of Israel before the Lord in two places on his body: on his heart and on his shoulders, so that the children of Israel will be "as a remembrance."

Interpretations regarding the meaning of this "remembrance" vary among commentators. Many understood that the purpose is for the priest to remember the children of Israel before the Lord. However, other commentators, such as the Ralbag (Provence, 1288-1344) and Don Isaac Abarbanel (Portugal and Spain, 1437-1509), explained that the purpose of engraving the names on the stones is for the priest himself, so that the High Priest will always remember that he is acting in the Temple on behalf of the people.

The role of priesthood is a delicate one. On one hand, the priest is responsible for the rituals in the Temple as a representative and delegate of the entire nation. On the other hand, this role can lead the priest to arrogance, domination, and even corruption. In later generations, we find priests who exploited their status and role dishonestly for personal gains. This is recounted in the Book of Samuel about the sons of Eli the Priest, Hophni and Phineas, who behaved dishonestly with the men and women who came to the Tabernacle in Shiloh.

The High Priest who always bears the names of the children of Israel on his shoulders and on his heart is required to remember at all times that he does not serve in the Temple because of extra privileges granted to him. The priest serves the people by working before the Lord.

Not only the priest is required not to dominate over the people. Every leader and public figure is required to remember that he is not above others but, on the contrary, serves them.

This is illustrated in the Babylonian Talmud (Tractate Horayot, page 10) about two sages, Rabbi Elazar Chisma and Rabbi Yochanan ben Guldaga, who were poor, and Rabban Gamliel appointed them a position in his study house so that they could support themselves from it. But the two continued to sit in the back rows of the study house. When Rabban Gamliel saw this, he reprimanded them: "Are you assuming that I am giving you authority? I am giving you servitude!"

The more we remember that the role of a teacher, educator, or public figure is not to rule but rather to serve – the better we will fulfill our roles faithfully and successfully.

The writer is rabbi of the Western Wall and Holy Sites.

Shema Yisrael Torah Network

Peninim on the Torah - Parashas Tetzaveh

פרשת תצוה תשפ"ד

ואתה תצוה את בני ישראל

Now you shall command Bnei Yisrael. (27:20)

A name is important, but, for some people, it is sadly all they have. They feel that lineage of any sort will pave the way for their future. While in some instances it might be true, the lineage will not preserve their legacy. This is not meant to demean the value of a name. It can carry

cultural, historical or familial significance, which is meaningful, not only to the person, but also to those who revere his lineage and what it represents. Legacy is established, however, by the impact one makes on his surroundings, his friends and his students.

One's identity should be defined by achievement, rather than by name. The contribution one makes to those around him and future generations is more significant than an inherited name or title. Having said this, I suggest a homiletic explanation for the fact that Moshe *Rabbeinu's* name is noticeably missing from this *parshah*. In fact, from the time that Moshe first emerges in *Parashas Shemos* until the end of the Torah, Moshe's name is always present – except for *Parashas Tetzaveh*.

The reason for this anomaly, as explained by the *Baal HaTurim*, is that, when the Jews committed the *cheit ha'eigal*, sin of the golden calf, Hashem wanted to destroy them. Moshe said to Hashem, "Hashem, if You forgive *Klal Yisrael*, good! But, if not, *mecheini na m'Sifrecha*, remove any mention of me from the Torah. I cannot be a leader who failed to gain mercy for his people." This unparalleled devotion to the nation turned the tide, and Hashem rescinded His anger. The nation was spared, but Moshe's utterance, *mecheini na m'Sifrecha*, had to be fulfilled. His name had to be erased from the Torah. His word had to be upheld. One *parshah* was selected to be the one in which our quintessential leader's name is not mentioned. *Parashas Tetzaveh* invariably occurs around *Adar 7*, which is the *Yahrzeit* of Moshe *Rabbeinu*. Thus, it was chosen for the "honor."

Perhaps the *parshah's* message is that one's name is not what serves as a platform for legacy. Moshe *Rabbeinu's* name is his impact as *Rabbeinu* – not Moshe. Indeed, this message is expressed in the *parshah* dedicated to Aharon *HaKohen*, when Moshe transfers the institution of priesthood to his brother. Two names: Moshe and Aharon, but what really matters, what really lives on, are their roles, *Rabbeinu* and *Kohen Gadol*. It is their function, service and impact on the nation that plays a pivotal role for all generations – not their names.

This might shed light on the alternating sequence of Aharon and Moshe in the Torah. The Torah teaches us that they were equal in significance. But one was Aharon, and the other was Moshe. They are not the same. Perhaps it is because the name does not take precedence. It is the position which is of greatest consequence. Moshe was the *Rabban shel kol Yisrael*. Aharon was the *Kohen Gadol*. Each left his individual mark on the nation.

ויקחו אליך שמן זית וך כתיב

And they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil. (27:20)

Chazal (*Midrash Rabbah*, *Shemos* 36:1) quote the *pasuk* in *Yirmiyahu* (11:16), *Zayis raanan yefe'i pri to'ar kara Hashem shemecha*, "Hashem named you verdant olive tree, fair, with choice fruit" to indicate the comparison of *Klal Yisrael* to olive oil. *Chazal* state three characteristics of the Jewish People which mimic the characteristics of olive oil. First, the olive does not give forth its oil until it has been smashed and pressed. Likewise, (some of) the Jewish People return to Hashem through *teshuvah*, repentance, once they have suffered at the hands of anti-Semites of all creeds, who have persecuted them with all forms of afflictions. Second, oil and other liquids do not mingle with one another. Oil's viscosity is such that it cannot mix with any other liquids. Likewise, the Jew, regardless of how hard he may try to be accepted, at the end of the day, the acceptance is only superficial. They put on a good show of caring for and seeking our friendship, but beneath the façade lays the same feelings of insecurity – catalyzed by animus, as always. Third, even when one is able to combine oil and water, the oil will rise to the top. Likewise, when *Klal Yisrael* performs the will of Hashem, all recognize them as being special in human decency, ethical/moral character.

If I may add that, by nature of his biological affinity with the *Avos HaKedoshim*, holy Patriarchs, every Jew manifests the special characteristics that identify the Jew and his likeness with olive oil. This identification is stronger and more pronounced due to his affiliation with and devotion to the Torah. Perhaps this is why Hashem instructed Moshe *Rabbeinu* to "take the olive oil to you," a requirement for the oil to be brought to Moshe to certify its purity. Our quintessential leader is the symbol of Torah. As such, the olive oil must be the essence of purity, because it exemplifies the Torah which is Divinely authored, its pristine nature preserved through the generations via the agency of "Moshes" of each generation. The Torah refines and enhances one who studies and adheres to its *mitzvos*. A Jew is a Jew, regardless of his level of commitment. A Torah Jew exemplifies Hashem's ideal for His chosen people.

Horav Zev Weinberger, zl, suggests that *Chazal's* three *peshatim*, expositions, on how the Jew is equated with olive oil reflects three types of Jews (or Jewish practices). The first is the non-practicing, totally assimilated Jew, who, if it were to be his choice, would revoke his "membership" in this august group. He has little to no background, or he is so turned off that he wants to run as far away as he can. He requires the anti-Semite to remind him he has no exit strategy from Judaism. The hatred of the anti-Semite is filled with such vitriol that he will seek out any drop of Jewish blood that a person possesses – regardless of how many generations have passed since a member of his family has affiliated with *Yiddishkeit*. How sad it is when one needs the *goy* to remind him that he is Jewish. Anti-Semitism has a long history of affecting Jewish identity. Individuals have responded to religious animus by turning inward, reflecting on their heritage, culture and faith. It is not easy for someone who has never known or suddenly has realized – that running away is to no avail, that he has an identity – one that is characterized by strength, resilience, pride and determination.

Second, are those Jews who, despite their alienation from Torah and *mitzvos*, draw the line at intermarriage. They, like oil which does not mix well with other liquids, will neither destroy their own bloodlines, nor permit their offspring to do so. Ultimately, they understand that the Jewish nation is as different from the gentile world as oil is different from water. The spiritual "viscosity" of each one of the two does not mesh well with the other.

Last, is the Jew whose deep-rooted sense of commitment and devotion to his religious observance motivate him to take pride in celebrating his heritage. The pride he has in his religious identity leads to a sense of belonging, understanding that he is part of something much larger than himself. He is part of the *am Hashem*, the chosen nation of Hashem. He seeks peaceful coexistence with the outside world as long as such engagement will not adversely affect his religious priorities. We want the world to recognize and respect Hashem. This cannot succeed if we are extremist or separatist. People will respect Judaism when they admire the Jewish People. This does not mean compromising our religious devotion. On the contrary, people respect honesty and applaud individuals who remain true to their commitments. When we make religious concessions, we sell ourselves and the religion we represent short.

ונשאה אהרן את שמות בני ישראל בחשן המשפט על לבו

Aharon shall bear the names of Bnei Yisrael on the Choshen Hamishpat (Breastplate of judgment) on his heart. (28:29)

Aharon *HaKohen* merited to wear the breastplate on his heart due to the manner in which he accepted Moshe *Rabbeinu's* appointment as the leader of the Jewish People. Prior to Moshe's entrance on the scene, Aharon had been the *Navi* and leader of the Jewish people. Suddenly, his position transformed from leader to assistant. Not only did Aharon not complain, but the Torah says *V'roacha v'somach b'libo*, "He will see you and he will rejoice in his heart" (*Shemos* 4:4). Aharon's humility was such that he manifested no ego whatsoever when he lost his position to his younger brother. This is an incredible level of brotherly love. I think it goes further and deeper. Aharon truly rejoiced when he saw how happy Moshe was. "He will see you" – When Aharon will look at your face, he will be filled with joy over your good fortune. When he sees your joy – he, too, will be happy.

Some people live for themselves, and some very special people live to provide for others. Someone who lives for others does not view his "contribution" or "deferment" to them as a sacrifice, but rather, as something he enjoys doing. *Horav Yisrael Meir Lau, Shlita*, underscores this idea (cited by Rabbi Binyamin Pruzansky, *Living Higher*) by relating a poignant story.

Bar mitzvah boys wait and look forward to that august moment in which they pass through this momentous rite of passage. Sadly, when the Covid epidemic was raging, many *bar mitzvah* boys had to settle with little to no fanfare. During the initial stages, the *shuls* were closed and receiving an *aliyah*, being called up to the Torah, was, for the most part, impossible. Former Chief Rabbi of *Eretz Yisrael*, Rabbi Lau, was asked to address a group of *bar mitzvah* boys via Zoom. One must appreciate the mindset of these boys. This was the moment for which they had planned, strived and prepared for quite some time. At this young age, it was supposed to be their greatest moment. Alas, now it was but a dream.

The Chief Rabbi began by telling the group about his past. He was a young Holocaust survivor, who was, at an early age orphaned of his father and mother. The Nazis had murdered his parents in Treblinka. The young Yisrael Meir was spared certain death when his older brother placed him into a sack and smuggled him into Buchenwald. Following the liberation, he and

his older brother, two children alone in the world, emigrated to *Eretz Yisrael*, where they hoped to make their home. Like all boys, *Yisrael Meir's bar mitzvah* was coming up; he prepared his *parashah* well. He was not *laining*, reading the Torah, just for himself, but also for his parents and all the family members who the Nazis had murdered. Word went out that one of the youngest survivors of the Holocaust was reading the Torah in honor of his *bar mitzvah*, and the *shul* quickly filled to capacity, the excitement palpable.

The time came, and the young boy ascended to the *bimah*, draped in his *tallis*, prepared to demonstrate how well he had prepared. When he reached the *bimah*, he became aware of a developing issue. Apparently, an elderly man who served as the *shul's* regular *baal korei*, Torah reader, was miffed that this young man was replacing him at the *bimah*. The man was lonely and, other than *laining* in *shul*, he had very little in life. The reading of the Torah was very important to him, and he was not prepared to give it up – especially on a *Shabbos* when the *shul* was packed with visitors from all over.

The *gabbai*, sexton, who was in charge of the Torah reading, as well as the leading of the *tefillos*, asked the man, “Did you forget that this week is a *bar mitzvah*, and the boy will read the Torah?” “You should have informed me earlier,” the *baal korei* countered. “I spent an entire week preparing to *lain*!” “You are absolutely right,” the *gabbai* said, “but the boy has spent months preparing for this moment.” The *baal korei* would not budge, “You cannot do this to me. I read the Torah every week to a small crowd. Finally, I have a week when I can show off my talents to a large crowd, you take it from me!” “You do not seem to understand,” said the *gabbai*. “The crowd is here today to listen to the *bar mitzvah* boy read the Torah – not you. The young boy is an orphan. He has nothing – no parents – no family. It is his first big day! Let it be.”

Rav Lau said, “I saw the pain in the elderly man’s eyes. He, too, had nothing. He was in his twilight years and all alone. I had my entire life ahead of me. I went over to him and said, ‘I am still young, and I pray that I will have many more opportunities in life to read from the Torah. You should *lain*, and I will receive an *aliyah*.’ The *gabbai* looked at me and nodded. It was okay to let the man read the Torah. When I saw the look on the *baal korei's* face, I immediately knew that I had done the right thing.”

Rav Lau looked at the boys and said, “You must ask yourselves as you enter into the yoke of *mitzvos*: ‘What will be my first *mitzvah*?’ I know that my first *mitzvah* was giving up my spot to an elderly Jew to whom it meant so much. Indeed, I have had many forums for speaking publicly. Remember: When you give up a little to help a fellow *Yid*, you never lose out.”

Aharon *HaKohen* taught us well to always think of the other fellow. After all, what else are we here for?

שבעת ימים ילבשם הכהן תחתיו מבניו אשר יבוא אל אהל מועד לשרת בקודש

For a seven-day period, the Kohen who succeeds him from his sons, who shall enter the Ohel Moed to serve in the Sanctuary shall wear them. (29:30)

The son of the *Kohen Gadol* (if he is worthy) takes precedence over any other *Kohen* to succeed his father. Two *Kohanim* actually served in the positions of *Kohen Gadol* – the regular High Priest – and *Kohen Mashuach Milchamah* – a *Kohen Gadol* ordained specifically prior to the nation’s entrance into a war. This latter one was a specially designated *Kohen Gadol* whose purpose it was to address the nation and give his charge before the battle, encouraging them that Hashem will protect them. The

Kohen Mashuach Milchamah is forbidden to marry a widow and may pose questions to the *Urim v'Tumim*. The function of the *Kohen Mashuach Milchamah* was just that: to address the nation prior to war. Such a *Kohen* could go through life with the august title and never do anything but speak publicly one time. One distinction between the *Kohen Gadol* and *Kohen Mashuach Milchamah* is inheritance. The *Kohen Gadol's* son succeeds his father; the *Kohen Mashuach Milchamah's* son does not.

Returning to our opening *pasuk*, Chazal (*Yoma* 73a) teach that the rule that the *Kohen Mashuach Milchamah's* son does not inherit his father’s position is derived from the *pasuk* that adds: “Who shall enter the *Ohel Moed* to serve in the Sanctuary?” – only the son of a *Kohen Gadol* who enters the Holy of Holies may inherit his father’s position. The son of a *Kohen* who only performs the duty of addressing the nation prior to war does not inherit his father’s position.

Having said this, we cite a well-known *teshuvah*, responsa, from the *Techeiles Mordechai*, *Horav Mordechai Yohlin*, זל (served as *Rav* in a suburb of Kiev, Ukraine, then emigrated to America, where he was *Rav* in Philadelphia. *Niftar Erev Yom Kippur* 1942). He was asked about the laws of *chazakah*, whereby a *chazzan* had a long-standing position leading the *Shacharis* service during the *Yamim Noraim*. After a number of years, an assistant *chazzan* was appointed, who, due to the fact that the primary *chazzan* was still active, would instead lead the services on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*. Since he did not work during the *Yamim Noraim*, he took a position elsewhere during these days.

The question was: The first *chazzan* left this world for his eternal rest. His son claimed *chazakah* (the *halachic* status of permanence that is established when an event repeats itself three times), since his father had held the position of *chazzan* for many years. The assistant *chazzan* claimed that, by right, it belonged to him as the next in line. The only reason he was not present for the *Yamim Noraim* was that he had no work. Furthermore, the rule of *chazakah* should not apply if it is not consecutive, 365 days a year, for three years. The late *chazzan* had only worked three days a year!

He quotes *Horav Moshe Nosson HaLevi Rubinstein*, זל, who cites Chazal in *Meseches Yoma* who apply our opening *pasuk* as support to disallow the son of the *Mashuach Milchamah* from inheriting his father’s position. He suggests that if, in fact, a *chazakah* of three incomplete times was invalid, why would Chazal require a *pasuk* to teach that the *Mashuach Milchamah's* position does not go to his son? The *Kohen Mashuach* did his service from time to time. Thus, the *chazakah* was faulty. Apparently, the idea that Chazal found it necessary to employ a lesson from the *pasuk* to invalidate the son of the *Mashuach Milchamah* is an indication that otherwise he would have succeeded his father, based on the rule of *chazakah*.

I suggest that the *chazzan*, who led service three times a year, and the *Kohen Mashuach Milchamah*, who performed his function sparingly, are both entitled to the benefits of the rule of *chazakah*. How often a person carries out his function has no bearing on his title or position. At the end of the day, he is the *shul's* *chazzan*, and he is the *Kohen Gadol Mashuach Milchamah*. This title is ongoing; thus, it provides him with a *chazakah*.

Sponsored anonymously

לזכות ולרפואה שלמה

בעד חולי עמו ישראל

Hebrew Academy of Cleveland, ©All rights reserved
prepared and edited by Rabbi L. Scheinbaum

לע"נ

שרה משא בת ר' יעקב אליעזר ע"ה
ביילא בת (אריה) לייב ע"ה
אנא מלכה בת ישראל ע"ה

Parshat Tetzaveh: Kohenization

by Rabbi Eitan Mayer

[Just a quick footnote to last week's shiur: besides Ibn Ezra, whom I mentioned, Ramban (35:1), Abravanel (35:1), and Cassuto all understand that the worship of the Egel results in the cancellation of the plan to build the Mishkan.]

PARASHAT TETZAVEH:

Parashat Tetzaveh continues Hashem's description to Moshe of the structure of the Mishkan (portable Temple) and its accoutrements, but moves from the topic of the structure of the Mishkan and the details of the Kelim -- the topic of Parashat Teruma -- to the topic of the Kohanim, the Priests. The Priestly section (not to be confused with what Bible critics call "P") splits into three subsections:

- 1) Introduction: The command to select Aharon & sons as Kohanim.
- 2) Part I: Clothing of the Kohanim.
- 3) Part II: Initiation process of the Kohanim.

In the 'Kohenic context,' I want to deal with two basic questions:

1) Function: the Kohen has many specific jobs. But what is behind all of his responsibilities? What is the function of a Kohen in Bnei Yisrael? Does the Kohen work for God or for the people? We will approach this question by breaking it down into two smaller questions:

- a) What are the jobs of the Kohen?
- b) How do these jobs express the basic function of a Kohen?

2) Orientation: how does the Kohen's function -- his role in the nation -- affect his orientation toward God and toward the people? When he takes on all of the jobs included in being a Kohen, does he remain the same person with a new job, or does the new job redefine him? This is a question every religious leader has to answer for himself or herself: What is the relationship between one's function as religious leader and one's personal religious identity? Is there any room left for the religious leader's personal religious fulfillment and creativity? In looking at this question, we will look at two processes in the creation of a Kohen:

- a) "Depersonalization"
- b) "Repersonalization"

THE FUNCTION OF THE KOHEN:

What are all of the Kohen's jobs? (We will focus on the Kohen Gadol in particular, since we have the most information about him and since the Kohenic qualities are most sharply expressed in him.) For those which are well known, we will leave out the sources:

1) AVODA (sacrificial service in the Temple): offering korbano (sacrifices), burning the ketoret (incense), lighting the Menora (candelabrum), maintaining the Shulhan (table) and its bread.

2) BLESSING Bnei Yisrael with the Birkhat Kohanim (Priestly blessing).

3) TEACHING:

a) VaYikra 10:8-11 -- "God spoke to Aharon: '... Distinguish between holy and unholy, between pure and impure, and ... teach the Bnei Yisrael all of the laws which God has told them through Moshe.'"

b) Malakhi 2:6-7 -- (in context, the Navi [prophet] is criticizing the corrupt Kohanim of his time and reminding them of the Kohanim of old, whose exemplary qualities he describes): "The teaching of truth was in his [i.e., the priest of old] mouth; no evil was found on his lips. In peace and uprightness he walked with Me, and he returned many from sin; for the lips of the Kohen shall keep knowledge, and they [Israel] shall seek teaching at his mouth, for he is a messenger ["malakh"] of the Lord of Hosts."

4) JUDGING:

a) Tzara'at: the Kohen is empowered to diagnose Tzara'at, the disease described by the Torah in detail in Sefer VaYikra (ch. 13-14) which, according to Hazal (Arakhin 15b), comes as a punishment for slander and other sins.

b) Sota: the Kohen is instrumental in the process of investigation and trial when a woman is caught sequestered with a man other than her husband, and is accused by her husband of infidelity.

c) Deciding difficult questions of halakha: Devarim 17:8-9 -- "When a matter of law escapes you, whether of blood, civil law, ritual lesions, or matters of strife in your gates, you shall get up and go up to the place which God, your Lord, will choose [referring to the future Temple]. You shall come to the Kohanim-Leviyim and to the judge of that time, and seek [the law], and they will tell you the judgment."

d) Decisions of national importance: the Urim ve-Tummim (Shemot 28:30), the divine oracle, is operated by the Kohen.

5) REPRESENTING BNEI YISRAEL before God. Some examples from our parasha:

a) Efod: 28:6-13 -- the Kohen Gadol wears the Efod (a sort of apron) as part of his uniform; significantly, the Efod bears two special stones, one on each shoulderpiece, each of which has the names of six of the tribes of Bnei Yisrael carved into it. The Torah stresses that Aharon is to wear the Efod and thereby bring these names before God "as a remembrance": Aharon appears before God as the representative of the people whose names are carved into the stones he bears.

b) Hoshen: 28:15-30 -- the Hoshen, or breastplate, bears twelve stones in which are inscribed the names of the tribes; the Torah stresses also here that Aharon carries them "as a remembrance" before God, like the stones of the Efod.

c) Tzitz: 28:36-38 -- the Tzitz is a sort of headband made of gold which Aharon wears on his forehead; the words "Kodesh la-Shem," "Holy to God," are inscribed on it. Its function is to atone for all of the sacrifices the people bring under improper conditions (such as when the sacrifice has become ritually impure). The Tzitz 'insists' (see Rashbam) that despite the shortcomings of the people's korbanot, all of the offerings are ultimately "Kodesh la-Shem," dedicated wholly to God, and should therefore be accepted by God.

6) The Kohen creates the backdrop for God's "Kavod" to appear to the people: In VaYikra Perek 9, the inauguration of the Mishkan takes place. Its climax is when Aharon completes 'setting up' the Korban on the Mizbe'ah so that the 'Kavod' (glory) of God can be revealed to the people, who are assembled to watch. Aharon finishes his duties, and then the Kavod appears as a fire from heaven which descends and consumes the korban on the Mizbe'ah. This is a pattern which appears in several places in Tanakh (perhaps most notably in the story of Eliyahu's challenge to the prophets of Ba'al on Har ha-Carmel).

Now that we have all of the Kohen's jobs in front of us, we can deal with the next question: What is the function of the Kohen?

The Kohen mediates between God and the people; the Kohen is a bridge over which traffic moves in both directions. He represents God to the people and the people to God:

1) Kohen acting as God's representative to the Bnei Yisrael:

- a) Teaching: he is a "malakh Hashem Tzevakot," an angel/messenger bearing God's word.
- b) Judging, especially using the Urim ve-Tummim, which express God's instructions.
- c) Creating the stage for God's revelation to the people.
- d) Birkhat Kohanim: passing down God's blessing to the people.

2) Kohen acting as the people's representative to God:

a) Avoda: the Kohen conducts the national worship of God by bringing Korbanot Tzibbur (collective offerings from the entire nation) and maintaining the various functions of the Mishkan, the national center of avodat Hashem (service of Hashem). He facilitates individual worship/avoda by bringing the korbanot of individuals before God.

3) Wearing Bigdei Kehuna: the stones on the Hoshen and Efod with the names of the tribes represent the nation's coming before God; the Tzitz insures that even when the people's korbanot are not perfect, they are accepted by God.

ORIENTATION OF KOHEN:

We now come to our second basic question about the Kohanim: how does the function of being a bridge between God and Bnei Yisrael impact on the orientation of the Kohen toward his own identity? Is there still a person under all of the Bigdei Kehuna (is there a man under that rabbinical beard), or does the office of Kohen overwhelm the Kohen's personal identity?

Part of the Torah's answer is communicated by the structure of Parashat Tetzaveh. The 'Kohanim' section, which takes up most of Parashat Tetzaveh, is surrounded by 'Mishkan' sections:

I: Instructions for Aron (Ark), Shulhan (Table), Menora (Candelabrum), Mizbah ha-Nehoshet (Brass Altar), Mishkan (portable Temple)

II: The "Kohanim" material of Parashat Tetzaveh

III: Instructions for Mizbah ha-Ketoret (Incense Altar), Shemen ha-Mishhah (oil of anointing), Ketoret (Incense), and Kiyyor (Washing-Cistern).

In other words, the Kohanim section appears to interrupt the Mishkan section. Why not first finish talking about the Mishkan and Kelim before starting with the Kohanim? The point of putting the Kohanim section here may be to show us that it is not an "interruption," that the Kohanim share something very basic with the Kelim of the Mishkan: becoming Kohanim means that Aharon and his sons are transformed by their function into Kelim, in a sense. Their personal identity is overcome by their function as bridges between God and Bnei Yisrael.

Imagine you're trying to get from Manhattan to New Jersey, and you want to take the bridge. If the bridge starts to dance as you try to cross it, twisting into different shapes, swaying to its own rhythm, bucking up and down, you'll never get across! Aharon and his sons have become this bridge: since they function as bridges between God and the people, their own identity must be subordinated to their function as mediators. Inserting their own personalities, their own religious orientations, their own spontaneity into their function as Kohanim would interfere with the 'traffic' trying to cross the bridge. Instead of representing God to the people and the people to God, they would be taking advantage of their powerful position to represent only themselves to the people and to God. A Kohen must become depersonalized; he must become objectified, almost dehumanized, in his function of Kehuna.

Now we can take a look at the parasha and see how this theme plays out: how the Torah depersonalizes the Kohanim and objectifies them so they can perform their function properly.

DEPERSONALIZING THE KOHANIM:

1) "THE CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN": Kohen as the carrier of begadim (clothes):

a) The Torah gives detailed instructions for the construction of the Efod, Hoshen, and Tzitz; in fact, the Torah focuses so much on the clothing that the Kohen who is to wear them seems secondary to them! The Kohen is to wear the Efod and Hoshen with the names of the tribes on the stones so that the people will, symbolically, come before God. His function, then, is to be the wearer of the Begadim, the carrier of the people before God. The clothes are the point; the Kohen merely carries the clothes on his body. The Urim ve-Tummim, carried inside the Hoshen, also put the focus on the begadim and point away from the individual inside: the Urim ve-Tummim is an oracle of sorts, consulted on important issues, and the Kohen is merely a mediator for the expression of God's will through the oracle. He carries around this source of revelation. The Tzitz as well, with its message of "Kodesh la-Shem" ("dedicated to God"), relates not to *Aharon's* dedication to God, but to the *people's sacrifices* dedication to God. Aharon's clothing communicates to God and communicates to the people, but he himself is merely the nexus for this communication. He is secondary to it; instead of taking an active, participatory, human role, he is objectified, passive, facilitative.

b) Besides the appointment of the Kohanim and the creation of their clothing, the Torah also communicates a succession plan for the Kehuna Gedola. Here again, the Torah spends most of its space describing the transfer of the begadim, not the wearer and his qualities (29:29-30). One gets the sense that what is being created in Parashat Tetzaveh, and passed from father to son when the time comes, is an "office" of Kohen Gadol, an office which transcends (perhaps even ignores) the importance of its holder. This perspective is also implicit in the Torah's description of Aharon's death (BeMidbar 20:23-28), which takes pains to describe how Aharon's Bigdei Kehuna are removed and put onto his son before he dies. The

passing of the office is expressed most sharply by the passing of the begadim, not the passing of personal authority or honor, because the begadim truly express the character of the Kohen's function: carrier of the begadim, facilitator of a relationship.

c) In Shemot 28:35, the Torah says: "It [the Me'il, a robe with bells on it] should be upon Aharon for serving, so that its sound is heard when he enters the Holy, before God, and when he goes out, so that he will not die." Rashi comments, "So that he will not die" -- from the negative you can infer the positive: if he has them [the begadim], he will not incur the death penalty; but if he enters [the holy area] without one of these pieces of clothing, he is condemned to death at the hand of Heaven." Ramban disagrees with Rashi that this particular pasuk expresses the general prohibition of the Kohen's serving without the requisite begadim, but he agrees that there is such a prohibition, derived from a different pasuk. He says: "... We learn this [i.e., the prohibition of serving without the requisite begadim] from ... Sanhedrin (83a) and Shehitat Ha-Kodashim (Zev. 17b): 'One [a Kohen] missing clothing who serves [i.e., performs sacrificial service in the Temple], how do we know that he suffers death? Rav Avahu said in the name of Rav Yohanan ... 'Gird them with the belt, and put the turbans on them, and their Kehuna should be a law to them forever' (29:9) -- when their clothing is upon them, their Kehuna [priesthood] is upon them; when their clothing is not upon them, their Kehuna is not upon them, and they are 'Zarim' [the halakhic term for non-kohanim]; and the Master has said, 'A Zar who performs sacrificial service, suffers death ...'."

In other words, according to this Gemara, a Kohen without all of his begadim is not a Kohen! He is a "Zar," a "stranger," the Torah's term for a non-Kohen, and he suffers the same fate a Zar would suffer for illegally performing the Avoda: death by the hand of Heaven. For our theme, the point is clear: the focus is completely on the begadim; the Kohen is merely the carrier.

2) PARALLELS BETWEEN THE KOHANIM AND THE KELIM (vessels of the Mishkan):

In several contexts, the Torah draws parallels between the Kohanim and Kelim. This contributes to the theme of depersonalization and objectification, especially since many of the parallels appear in the initiation process of the Kohanim. The Kohanim's initiation objectifies them and depersonalizes them, perhaps to express to them what their orientation to their Kehuna should be. Examples of these parallels (besides the inclusion of the 'Kohanim' section inside the 'Mishkan' section, mentioned above):

a) God commands Moshe to "take" Aharon and his sons as Kohanim: "Bring close to you Aharon, your brother, and his sons ... Aharon, Nadav, Avihu, Elazar, and Itamar, the sons of Aharon." This list of people sounds a lot like the lists of materials which we find in profusion all over the parshiot of the Mishkan. Usually, we find a command to build a certain Keli and then a list of materials: for example, the Torah commands the creation of Bigdei Kehuna and then lists the materials out of which they are to be made: "... The gold, blue, purple, red, and fine linen" (28:5). There are Kelim to be created -- the Bigdei Kehuna -- and the materials are gold, blue, purple, red, and fine linen. In parallel fashion, there is a Keli to be created -- the Kehuna -- and the 'materials' are Aharon, Nadav, Avihu, Elazar, and Itamar.

b) The Kohanim are anointed with oil, just as the Kelim are (see 30:25-33, 29:7, 29:21, and 40:9-16).

c) The Kohanim are anointed with blood, just as the Mizbe'ah (altar) is, and in fact, the blood used for the Kohanim is from the same animal as that sprinkled on the Mizbe'ah (see 29:12, 29:16, 29:20-21).

d) "Kiddush": the Kohanim are sanctified, as some of the Kelim are (see 29:37, 29:1, 29:21, 28:41).

e) Passivity: throughout the period of their initiation, the Kohanim are completely passive while Moshe does all of the Avoda (sacrificial service). Moreover, they remain passive while Moshe performs various functions on them! (See VaYikra 8:6-14.) Moshe is "makriv" (brings close) the raw human pre-kohen material to the Ohel Mo'ed; Moshe washes the kohanim; Moshe dresses them; Moshe anoints them with oil; Moshe sprinkles them with blood. They stand, passive, like the lifeless, personality-lacking kelim of the Mishkan.

f) Parallels between Kohanim and korbanot: Moshe is "makriv" the Kohanim, the same word used with regard to korbanot (and actually the root of the word "korbanot"!); see 28:1, 29:4, 29:8, 29:10); Moshe is "rohetz" (washes) them, a function also performed on some of the korbanot in the same context (see 29:4, 29:17).

3) REPRESSION OF HUMANITY: In several contexts, the Torah expresses the idea that the Kohen, particularly the

Kohen Gadol, is not allowed the 'luxury' of expressing his emotions at the expense of the Avoda to which he is bound. Even when a close relative dies, he must remain in the Mikdash, before God, doing the Avoda, rather than leaving the Mikdash to mourn his loss. For him, the religious and national responsibility of the Kehuna must always supersede the personal and human.

This is most painfully and dramatically expressed by Aharon's reaction to the death of his sons, Nadav and Avihu, when they bring a "foreign fire" before God and are consumed in His fire. Moshe instructs Aharon that he is not to mourn, not to interrupt his duties as Kohen, not to leave the Mikdash. He tells Aharon that God has said, "Through those who are close to Me I am sanctified; I am honored in front of the entire congregation"; in response, Aharon is simply silent (VaYikra 10:3).

Many mefarshim understand God's statement -- "Through those who are close to Me I am sanctified" -- as a reference to Nadav and Avihu; as sanctified kohanim, chosen servants of God, they are the ones "close to God." By killing them for their slight disobedience, God inspires the awe of the people, hence, "I am honored in front of the entire congregation." But Rashbam disagrees. He paraphrases Moshe's command to Aharon after the death of his sons:

RASHBAM:

"Moshe said to Aharon, 'Do not mourn, do not cry, do not stop doing the Avoda, because what I am telling you is the word of God, that 'I will be sanctified through those close to Me' -- 'through the Kohen Gadol, who is close to Me to serve Me, I wish to be sanctified, and I do not wish that My name be profaned along with My Avoda,' for this is what God has told me [Moshe], that 'the Kohen Gadol . . . should not undo his hair or remove his priestly clothing, and not leave the Mikdash, and not profane thereby the Mikdash of his God' -- so if you do not leave the Mikdash, it remains holy" Therefore, "Do not abandon your Avoda, for you are the Kohen Gadol, and do not leave [the Mikdash], and do not profane, but instead let God and His Avoda be sanctified through you. As a result, "Before the entire congregation shall I be honored" - the honor of the Shekhina is that he [Aharon] sees his sons die, yet he puts aside his mourning for the service of his Creator. "Aharon was silent" -- silenced his mourning: he did not cry and did not mourn"

According to Rashbam, the function of the Kohen, especially the Kohen Gadol, is to remain always dedicated to God and to prioritize God over all personal needs. Aharon responds by silencing his mourning; he maintains his Kehuna and suppresses his humanity, as the Kohen must.

[There is also the inhumanity of Shevet Levi's vengeance against the worshippers of the Egel, even when they are his own relatives (see Shemot 32:26-29 and see Devarim 33:8-10, where Moshe praises their "inhuman" fealty to God), but we will leave that for another time.]

"REPERSONALIZATION":

The 'depersonalization' of the Kohanim brings us to something we touched on last week: the potential danger in doing the Avoda. Evidence of this danger is all over the Torah: the Kohanim are warned to wear the Me'il, to wash from the Kiyor, and to wear the Mikhnasayim (pants), all "so that they do not die" (!!); the Kohanim (and others) at Har Sinai are warned not to go up the mountain so that God does not "destroy them"; a Zar who does the Avoda suffers death at the hands of Heaven, as does a Kohen who serves without the proper begadim.

The function of the Kohen is to act as a bridge between God and the human community of Bnei Yisrael. This means that the Kohanim have to surrender their personal identity and humanity to a significant degree. What happens if a Kohen fails to surrender to his kohenic function, if he stubbornly insists on expressing his own personality and achieving his own spiritual goals through his privileged access to Hashem? Perhaps a look at Parashat Pekudei, several weeks ahead of us, will provide an answer:

Many have pointed out the pattern of the repeated phrase, "Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe" ("Just as Hashem had commanded Moshe") in Parashat Pekudei; this phrase appears there about fifteen times, describing how Moshe and the people built and prepared the Mishkan and each of its appurtenances exactly as instructed by God: "Just as Hashem had commanded Moshe." But the pattern of "Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe" does not end at the end of Parashat Pekudei. Parashat Pekudei is followed by a 'parenthetical' section, a "Manual for Korbanot" (AKA Parashat VaYikra and the first part of Parashat Tzav). This parenthetical section ends in the second half of Parashat Tzav, where the Torah picks up the Mishkan narrative once again, describing the eight-day process of the initiation of the Mishkan and the Kohanim. Tellingly, this narrative picks right back up with the "Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe" pattern we note in Parashat Pekudei; fifteen additional repetitions of this phrase appear here, describing how all of the events of the initiation take place "exactly as

Hashem had commanded Moshe." What is it all about? What is the Torah trying to communicate with this pattern?

In all, the Torah repeats the pattern of "Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe" thirty times, with slight variation, though Pekudei and then Tzav and Shemini. The people do exactly what God commands -- to the letter, to the "T," exactly, exactly, exactly. But then the pattern comes to a sudden end:

Shemot 38:22 -- ". . . Asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 39:1 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 39:5 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 39:21 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 39:26 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 39:29 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 39:31 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 39:32 -- ". . . Ke-khol asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 39:42 -- ". . . Ke-khol asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 39:33 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem"
Shemot 40:16 -- ". . . Ke-khol asher tziva Hashem oto"
Shemot 40:19 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 40:21 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 40:23 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 40:25 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 40:27 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 40:29 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
Shemot 40:32 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
VaYikra 8:4 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem oto"
VaYikra 8:5 -- ". . . Asher tziva Hashem . . ."
VaYikra 8:9 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
VaYikra 8:13 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
VaYikra 8:17 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
VaYikra 8:21 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
VaYikra 8:29 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"
VaYikra 8:35 -- ". . . Asher tziva Hashem be-yad Moshe"
VaYikra 8:36 -- ". . . Asher tziva Hashem be-yad Moshe"
VaYikra 9:6 -- ". . . Asher tziva Hashem"
VaYikra 9:7 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem"
VaYikra 9:10 -- ". . . Ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe"

The pattern crashes to a catastrophic and tragic halt with VaYikra 10:1 --

VaYikra 10:1 -- "ASHER **LO** **TZIVA** OTAM."

The Torah sets up the pattern of "ka-asher tziva Hashem," reporting Bnei Yisrael's strict, unwavering obedience to Hashem's exact instructions for the Mishkan, in order to shatter the perfection with the report that Nadav and Avihu bring an offering of ketoret (incense) which God did NOT command - "asher LO tziva Hashem." For this crime, they die.

A Kohen qua Kohen must forfeit his identity, his humanity, his search for ways to express and experience his own spirituality; he does exactly "Ka-asher tziva Hashem" -- because he is a faithful Keli Mikdash, merely a bridge. The moment the Kohen's personal, self-representing religious identity returns -- the moment he uses his position as Kohen to pursue personal religious aspirations -- at that moment, he negates the process of depersonalization and objectification which made him a Kohen. Repersonalized, representing only himself, he is a Zar, a non-Kohen, and what he brings is Zara, "Eish Zara" (a "foreign fire").

Shabbat Shalom

Parshas Tetzaveh: A Continual Offering

By Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom

I. A CONTINUAL OFFERING

Over these few weeks, we are reading about the command to construct the Mishkan (Sanctuary) and the fulfillment of that command by the B=nei Yisra=el. After being commanded to build the Mishkan, all of its vessels and accouterments, the B=nei Yisra=el were adjured to sacrifice the Olat haTamid -the continual burnt offering. The Olat haTamid is offered up twice daily:

The one lamb you shall offer in the morning; and the other lamb you shall offer between the evens (between noon and the end of the day).@ (Sh=mot 29:39) The Olat haTamid claims primacy not only as the first sacrifice mandated (besides the Pessach); its significance is alluded to in many Parashiot relating to the sacrificial order: Ybesides the Olat haTamid and its libation appears fourteen (14!) times in Bamidbar (chapters 28-29). Every sacrifice brought is to be offered up Ybesides the Olat haTamid i.e. after the daily Acontinual@ sacrifice. It is from these verses that the dictum AFrequency causes precedence@ is derived:

Kol haTadir meHavero Kodem et Havero (That [ritual] which is more frequent than another precedes that other.) (Mishna Zevachim 10:1) An example of the application of this concept is found in the eighth chapter of Berachot (and its parallel Sugya in the last chapter of Pesachim) where Beit Shammai and Beit Hillel disagree about the order of the two B=rakhot recited at Friday night Kiddush. The Gemara explains Beit Hillel=s position (that the blessing over the wine is recited before the blessing over the Shabbat), by applying the rule of frequency generates precedence. Since the recitation of the blessing over wine (YBorei P=ri Haggafen) is perforce more frequent than the recitation of the blessing over Shabbat (YM=kaddesh haShabbat), the blessing over wine precedes the blessing over Shabbat.

II. DEFINITIONS OF *TAMID*

I would like to raise two questions about the Olat haTamid; one formulaic and the other fundamental. The formula used to describe the daily sacrifices: Tamid, is somewhat misleading here. In other usages in Tenakh, the term Tamid indicates unceasing presence or action. For example:

The fire shall be Tamid (constantly) burning on the altar, it shall never go out.@ (Vayyikra 6:6 B see MT Hilkhos T=midin uMusafin 2:1).

The fire is always to be burning on the altar B this constitutes Tamid. The well-known prayer of David:

I have set God before me Tamid (constantly)@ (T=hillim 16:8) expresses David=s unceasing awareness of the Divine Presence.

In our case, however, the constancy of the daily offerings is much more limited, indeed occasional. AThe one lamb shall you offer in the morning, and the other lamb shall you offer between the evens.@

How can the Torah describe these offerings as Tamid when they are brought at two separate junctures of the day?

One might argue that the meaning here of Tamid is not the same as in the verses quoted above; that here it indicates that the practice is to be constant, i.e. day in and day out (without missing a day). This could be termed Arelative constancy@-relative to the demands of the ritual, it is practiced constantly. For instance, we would describe someone who keeps Shabbat regularly as one who Aalways keeps Shabbat@, even though there are six days out of seven when this is impossible. Relative to the Mitzvah of Sh=mirat Shabbat, however, he fulfills them regularly; this justifies the appellation ASomer Shabbat.@

One might argue that B except for R. Yose. (BT Menahot 99b): The Lehem haPanim (showbread) is to be before God ATamid@. The old loaves were replaced each week with the new loaves. According to the first opinion in the Mishna, four Kohanim slid the old loaves off of the table as four others slid the new loaves on to the table; this in order to fulfill the

requirement of Tamid. R. Yose disagreed, saying that even if one set of loaves was removed totally and the other then put in its place, this still fulfilled the requirement of Tamid. In the Gemara, a more detailed opinion of R. Yose=s is quoted:

R. Yose says: Even if they removed the old set of loaves in the morning and set up the new set of loaves in the evening, this is Tamid.

R. Yose could have argued Arelative constancy@ and explained that as long as the bread was there every week, it is considered Tamid. R. Yose=s refusal to use this argument indicates that the demand of Tamid is not relieved via relative constancy; we must redefine constancy for each case individually.

III. GENERATING PRECEDENCE

Kol haTadir meHavero Kodem et Havero (That [ritual] which is more frequent than another precedes that other.) This legal concept is derived from the law of the Olat haTamid . A fundamental question, shooting its curious arrows of inquiry beyond the formula of Tamid, begs to be answered here. Why does frequency translate into precedence in Halakhah? Conventionally, occasional and unusual occurrences are more exciting, exotic and inspiring. That which is constant is mundane, humdrum and usual; the religious psyche seeks and thrives on the occasion, the festivity; that which removes us and helps us to transcend our everyday existence. How can we compare an everyday sunset to Halley=s comet? Isn=t the Sh=ma Yisra=el of Nei=la [at the end of Yom haKippurim] a hundredfold more inspiring than the Sh=ma Yisra=el of a midwinter=s Tuesday evening?

One answer that is tempting utilizes a reversal of assumption: Precedence itself does not indicate significance; contrariwise, precedence indicates a lack of significance. That which is more common goes first B in order to build up to the less common, more exciting event or ritual. This sense of ordering practice with the intent of creating a spiritual climax is inviting; it appeals to our dramatic and suspenseful entertainment mentality. This answer, however, cannot withstand the test of the juxtaposed Halakha.

Following the formulation of the rule that Afrequency generates precedence@, the next Mishnah in Zevachim (10:2), asserts a comparable principle: ASanctity generates precedence.@ Kol haM=kudash meHavero Kodem et Havero (That [ritual] which is holier than another precedes that other.) Clearly, the precedence of that which is holy is comparable to the precedence of that which is frequent. Since we would not assume that the holier ritual is practiced first in order to build up to one less holy; our theory of spiritual climax which explains the precedence of that which is frequent is apparently disproved.

We now have two problems to solve: Why does frequency generate precedence; and how can we refer to the daily offerings as Tamid when they are not an unceasing practice?

IV. RAMBAM=S APPROACH

Alt is a Mitzvat >Aseh to offer in the Sanctuary two lambs of the first year every dayY@ (Sefer haMitzvot, Mitzvat >Aseh #39; Mishneh Torah: introduction to Hilkhhot T=midin uMusafin, Mitzvah #1).

Rambam defines the two daily T=midin as one Mitzva. This is similar in formula to Rambam=s definition of the Mitzvah of Reading the Sh=ma. (Sefer HaMitzvot, Mitzvat >Aseh #10; Mishneh Torah: introduction to Hilkhhot K=ri=at Sh=ma; see, however, Sefer haMitzvot of R. Sa=adia Ga=on where K=ri=at Sh=ma is counted as two Mitzot, morning and evening separately; see also Ramban=s critique on Sefer haMitzvot, Shores #9). The two daily offerings (as well as the two daily readings of the Sh=ma) are not two separate Mitzvot; each pair constitutes one Mitzvah. This presentation is itself difficult; how can two separate actions, each defined separately (at the very least, each has its own time parameter. For another distinction, see B.T. Menahot 50a and MT T=midin uMusafin 1:12) be considered one Mitzva?

One possible avenue of response is that of >Ikkuva (interdependence). We find other Mitzvot which are composed of various actions; since each one is necessary for the fulfillment of the Mitzvah, each is regarded as an Ikkuva to the performance of the Mitzvah; it therefore becomes part of the same Mitzvah. By way of example, each of the four species taken on Sukkot is an Ikkuva to the performance of the Mitzvah (Mishna Menahot 3:6; Mishneh Torah: Hilkhhot Lulav 7:5).

Therefore, if one lacked an Etrog, and took the Lulav, Hadas and Aravah, it would be (from an Halakhic standpoint) a meaningless action. Since all four species are an Ikkuva B a necessary component B to performing the Mitzvah, they must be considered one Mitzvah (one could, of course, define causality in the inverse direction thusly: Since all four comprise one Mitzva, each then becomes a necessary component to its fulfillment). Applying Ikkuva to the T=midin would have to work as follows:

Since each offering (morning and afternoon) is necessary for the fulfillment of the Mitzvah, they must be defined as one Mitzvah. The same rule would have to apply to the morning and evening readings of the Sh=ma=, in order to defend Rambam=s grouping of these two readings into one Mitzvah. The Halakhah, however, does not bear this out. Rambam (Hilkhhot T=midin uMusafin 1:12) following the Gemara in Menahot (50b), rules that if the morning Tamid was not brought, even if this neglect was intentional, the afternoon Tamid is still brought. The one exception to this rule (Rambam, BT Menahot ad loc.) is rooted in a concern extrinsic to our problem. Similarly, regarding the reading of the Sh=ma=, if one neglected to read the Sh=ma= in the morning, this does not exempt him from the obligation to read the Sh=ma= in the evening, neither does neglecting the evening reading prevent the morning reading from being a complete obligation (see BT Berakhot 26a).

Clearly, Ikkuva is not Rambam=s reason for considering both T=midin (and both readings of the Sh=ma=) as one Mitzva. How very frustrating! Instead of answering the two questions above, we have compounded the problem by adding a third. Why does Rambam count the two daily T=midin (and, correspondingly, the two daily readings of the Sh=ma=) as one Mitzva? We can answer this by returning to the Gemara=s discussion of the demand for Tamid in the fulfillment of the Mitzvah of Lehem haPanim B a section we referred to above (end of Section II).

V. THE *LEHEM HAPANIM*

The Torah states:

You shall take choice flour, and bake twelve loaves of it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf. You shall place them in two rows, six in a row, on the table of pure gold. You shall put pure frankincense with each row, to be a token offering for the bread, as an offering by fire to YHVH. Every sabbath day Aaron shall set them in order before YHVH Tamid as a commitment of the people of Israel, as a covenant forever. They shall be for Aaron and his descendants, who shall eat them in a holy place, for they are most holy portions for him from the offerings by fire to YHVH, a perpetual due. (Vayyikra 24:5-9) The Lehem HaPanim (showbread), which rested on the Shulhan (table) Tamid was replaced with the new set of loaves every Shabbat. According to the Mishnah (Menahot 11:7) , there are two opinions of how the bread was replaced while maintaining the constancy of Tamid. According to the first opinion, as the new bread was placed on the Shulhan, the old bread was slid off.

R. Yose, however, was of the opinion that such temporal proximity was unnecessary. In a Baraita (quoted in BT Menahot 99b), R. Yose is quoted as saying that even if the old bread was removed in the morning and the new bread replaced in the evening, this still constitutes Tamid.

R. Ami (ibid) derives the following rule from R. Yose=s statement:

Even if one only read one chapter [of T=nakh] in the morning and one chapter in the evening, he has fulfilled >The scroll of this Torah shall not disappear from your mouth= [and you shall study it day and night] (Yehoshua 1:8).@ R. Yohanan, quoting R. Shim=on b. Yohai, states: AEven if one only read the Shema= in the morning and in the evening, he has fulfilled >It shall not disappear= @ (BT Menahot ibid)

VI. TWO DEFINITIONS OF CONSTANCY

There are two ways of defining constancy. The simplest, most common way is Aconstancy = continually recurring@ (American Heritage Dictionary). Rambam=s formula in the enumeration of the Mitzvot, counting both daily T=midin as one Mitzvah helps us (and even forces us) to reevaluate the definition of constancy. A less common, but possibly more valid definition within the oeuvre of Halakha is: Aconstancy = frequent expression of an unceasing relationship.@

By way of example, a happily married couple is endlessly in love. Nevertheless, the expression of their mutual affection must, perforce, be limited by the other demands and manifestations of their lives. Each member works, studies and perhaps plays separately. By delegating birthdays, anniversaries, certain holidays and the like, the frequent Aromatic interlude@ serves as an indication of their unending love for each other. These days function as A signposts@ in the relationship; the mood and spirit of such occasions helps to define the ongoing nature of the relationship (Within the pale of the Shir haShirim model, this can serve as an analogy for the relationship between God and the Jewish people. Shabbat is a beautiful example of a A relationship signpost@ which helps define the relationship during the rest of the week).

\

All three questions which we asked can be answered as one: The daily offering is called Tamid, for it is the symbol of constant devotion to God. Since the daily T=midin function as daily Apoles@ to the relationship (the morning Tamid is the first sacrifice of the day. Except for the Pessah, the afternoon Tamid is the last), they are one Mitzvah; a continuous Mitzvah of Olah which has its expression at the extremes of the day. So, too, is the reading of the Sh=ma; A when you lie down and when you rise up@ is a way of assigning special times to that relationship- instructively, these times are, once again, at the extremes of man=s day, just as the times for the Tamid are at the extremes of the Sanctuary day (there are no sacrifices offered at night; MT Ma=aseh haKorbanot 4:1).

Kol haTadir meHavero Kodem et Havero (That [ritual] which is more frequent than another precedes that other) is now understood. All Mitzvot are a symbol of the covenant between the Jewish people and God; that Mitzvah which is more frequent indicates that it represents a more significant element in that relationship (much as we remain in closer contact with close friends and family than with mere acquaintances); therefore it demands precedence. QED

Text Copyright © 2009 by Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom and Torah.org. The author is Educational Coordinator of the Jewish Studies Institute of the Yeshiva of Los Angeles.

THE TANACH STUDY CENTER www.tanach.org

In Memory of Rabbi Abraham Leibtag

Shiurim in Chumash & Navi by Menachem Leibtag

PARSHAT TETZAVEH

Order in the 'court-yard'? Certainly that's what we'd expect to find when the Torah presents the laws of the mishkan; and that is exactly what we do find - most of the time.

However, there is one glaring exception - that relates to the placement of the laws of the **mizbach ha-ktoret** at the end of Parshat Tetzaveh (instead of at the beginning of Parshat Teruma).

In the following shiur, we will first clarify our question; afterward we will offer an explanation that relates once again to the thematic connection between the mishkan and Ma'amad Har Sinai.

INTRODUCTION

Recall, from last week's shiur how Parshat Tetzaveh forms part of the larger unit (chapters 25 thru 31), which we referred to as **tzivui ha-mishkan** [the commandment to build the mishkan]. This unit contains a complete set of laws in which God explains to Moshe how the mishkan is to be built and how it will operate.

In that shiur, we discussed the controversy concerning when and why this set of laws was first given to Moshe Rabeinu. In the following shiur, we analyze the internal structure of this unit, to show how (and why) it actually contains **two** distinct units - that overlap in a very special manner.

A VERY LONG 'DIBBUR'

Before we begin, we must make one general observation concerning why parshiot Teruma and Tetzaveh (i.e. Shmot 25:1-30:10) should be considered a distinct 'sub-unit'. Note how Parshat Teruma begins with God's commandment to Moshe to "speak to Bnei Yisrael and tell them..." (25:1) - followed by a lengthy set of instructions that continues all the way until the end of Parshat Tetzaveh (i.e. 30:10). To prove this, simply note how the next "dibbur" doesn't begin until the opening pasuk of Parshat Ki Tisa. [See the new "dibbur" in 30:11, while noting that there has not been any similar opening statement since 25:1. However, from 30:11 till the end of chapter 31, every parshia in a separate "dibbur"! We'll return to this observation later in the shiur.]

Therefore, we begin our study with an analysis of this first 'sub-unit' (i.e. 25:1 thru 30:10). Afterward, we will discuss how the six short 'parshiot' in Parshat Ki Tisa (30:11 thru 31:18) that follow, even though they are outside this unit, complete the larger unit of "tzivui ha-mishkan" - the commandment to build the Mishkan.

AN OUTLINE OF TERUMA/TETZAVEH

The following outline summarizes the topic of each parshia within this unit of parshiot Teruma/Tetzaveh. Study it carefully, noting how it appears to follow in a rather logical order (at least until the very end). It will clarify our opening question.

[Follow this chart with a Tanach Koren at hand.]

Introduction - Donation of the **materials** (25:1-7)

& the purpose of this project:

"Ve-asu li mikdash ve-shachanti betocham" (25:8-9)

Vessels in the Kodesh Kodashim (innermost sanctuary)

Aron - the ark to house the "luchot" (25:10-16)

Kaporet - the special lid for the ark (25:17-22)

Vessels in the Kodesh (main sanctuary)

Shulchan - the table for the show-bread (25:23-30)

Menora - the candelabra (25:31-40)

The Ohel Mo'ed [The tent housing these vessels] (26:1-37)

Yeriot - The canvas of the tent - from cloth & goatskins

Krashim - the wooden beams supporting this tent

Parochet - the curtain to partition the Kodesh Kdoshim

The Chatzer [The outer courtyard & its vessels]

Mizbeiach Ha-Ola (the altar / 27:1-8)

Chatzer - the outer courtyard

its curtains and poles (see 27:9-19)

Oil For The Menora (27:20-21)

[A priori, we would have expected to find this commandment with the **menorah**. See further *iyun*.]

The 'Bigdei Kehuna' - (28:1-43)

Six parshiot describing the priestly garments

The Seven-Day Inaugural Dedication Ceremony (29:1-37)

Olat Tamid (29:38-46)

The daily offering on the altar (after its dedication)

The Mizbach Ha-Ktoret - the incense altar (30:1-10)

[This seems 'out of place', as we will discuss.]

As you review this outline, note the logical order of its progression. It begins by describing the 'aron' - the most sacred object in the mishkan, situated in the 'kodesh kodashim'; then continues with the vessels located in the 'kodesh', followed by the 'ohel mo'ed' [Tent of Meeting], which houses these vessels. Afterward we find the 'mizbach ha-ola' - which is located outside this tent - and the courtyard ['chatzer'] that surrounds it. This unit concludes with the 'bigdei kehuna' - the special garments for the kohanim who will officiate in the mishkan, followed by the details of its seven-day dedication ceremony (and the daily sacrifice that will be henceforth offered).

However, the final parshia describing the "mizbach ha-ktoret" appears to be totally 'out of place'. After all, this golden altar is one of the three vessels situated in the kodesh. Clearly, this parshia should have been recorded in chapter 26 together with the laws of the "shulchan and menorah - the other vessels located in the ohel mo'ed.

To verify this point (that the mizbach ktoret is recorded out of place), simply note the parallel mention of these vessels in Parshat Vayakhel (see 35:13-15, 37:10-29, & 39:35-39). There the laws of the mizbach ktoret are consistently recorded together with the laws of the menorah and the shulchan.

Furthermore, this 'displacement' of the mizbach ha-ktoret is only half the problem. We will now explain how the psukim that precede this parshia place this golden altar in even greater 'isolation'!

OUT OF 'PLACE' and 'OUT' OF PLACE

Review the above outline once again, noting how the parshia of the olat tamid (29:38-46) forms what 'should have been' the conclusion of this unit. Let's take a closer look at this parshia, noting how its concluding verses forms a beautiful summary for this entire unit (see 29:42-44):

"Olat tamid for all generations, in front of the ohel mo'ed - the place where we will meet to speak to you from there."

[note how this pasuk 'matches' 25:22!]

And I will sanctify the **OHEL MO'ED** (& its vessels),

[summarizing chapters 25 & 26]

the **MIZBEIACH** (i.e. the **chatzer**),

[summarizing chapter 27]

and the **KOHANIM**... (i.e. their garments & dedication)

[summarizing chapters 28 & 29]

(see 29:44)

As you review these psukim, note how the words in **CAPS** correlate to the primary topics in the above outline! But that's not all, for the next pasuk forms almost a perfect 'bookend' for this entire unit: "ve-shachanti betoch **bnei Yisrael**..." (see 29:45) - matching: "ve-asu li mikdash ve-shachanti betocham" (see 25:8) - the opening commandment of this entire unit - found at the beginning of Parshat Teruma!

Finally, to top it off, this parshia concludes with its 'grand finale' - that connects the purpose of this mishkan to the very purpose of the entire process of Yetziat Mitzrayim:

"And they shall know that I am their God who took them out of Egypt - **le-shochni betocham - in order** to dwell among them; I am the Lord their God" (see 29:42-46).

Thus, chapters 25 thru 29 form a clearly defined unit with 'matching bookends'. But this only magnifies our opening question regarding the placement of the laws concerning the **mizbach ha-ktoret** (in the next parshia / see 30:1-10) - for it is not only 'out of place' - it is totally isolated - outside this 'shechina' unit!

This total isolation of the mizbach ha-ktoret forces us to search for a thematic reason for the Torah's intentional placement of these laws after the closure of the shechina unit.

BACK TO HAR SINAI

To suggest an answer to this question, let's return once again to the conceptual parallel between the mishkan and Har Sinai, as discussed in last week's shiur, and as explicated by Ramban:

"... the hidden purpose ['sod'] of the mishkan is for God's **glory** which dwelled ('shachan') on **Har Sinai** to dwell upon it..." (Ramban on 25:1, see TSC shiur on Teruma).

According to Ramban, the very purpose of the mishkan was to serve as a vehicle that could perpetuate the Sinai experience! This purpose is reflected in the numerous parallels that exist between Ma'amad Har Sinai and the mishkan. For example:

* The **aron**:

contains the **luchot ha-eidut** (25:21), the everlasting testimony of the covenant forged between God and bnei Yisrael at Har Sinai (see 24:3-12).

* The **keruvim**:

situated above the **kaporet** (on top of the **aron**), serve as the site from where God will continue to speak to Moshe. There, Moshe will receive the remaining mitzvot, just as he had received the dibrot from God on Har Sinai.

* The **mizbach ha-ola** -

where Bnei Yisrael will offer their **olat & shlamim**, is similar to the **mizbeich** that Bnei Yisrael built at the foot of Har Sinai, upon which they offered **olat & shlamim** (see 24:4-8).

Following this train of thought, we should expect to find a parallel as well between the mizbach ha-ktoret and Ma'amad Har Sinai - a parallel that may shed light on why the Torah places the mizbach ha-ktoret after the Shechina unit of the mishkan was completed. To find it, we must first consider a more general parallel between Har Sinai and the mishkan.

THREE MECHITZOT

One of the most striking parallels between the mishkan and Har Sinai relates to the concept of '**mechitzot**' - boundaries. At Har Sinai, the **people** are instructed to remain at the **foot** of the mountain while the **kohanim** are permitted to come a bit closer (see 19:22; 24:1-2 & 24:9). Only **Moshe** is granted access to the **top** of the mountain (see 19:20-24 & 24:2 & 24:12).

In regard to the mishkan, we find a very interesting parallel. The **people** are permitted to proceed only as far as the outer courtyard of the mishkan (where the **mizbach ha-ola** is located). The **kohanim** are allowed into the "**kodesh**" (where the **shulchan & menorah** are located), and only Moshe (and Aharon) can enter the "**kodesh ha-kodashim**" (where the **aron & keruvim** are located).

[Additionally, Bnei Yisrael may enter the courtyard only after first purifying themselves (i.e. they must be "tahor"), just as a purification process was required in preparation for Ma'amad Har Sinai (see 19:10-15).]

The following table summarizes this parallel:

GROUP	HAR SINAI	THE MISHKAN	FUNCTION
Moshe	top of mountain	Kodesh kodashim	dibur
Kohanim	mid-mountain	Kodesh (ohel mo'ed)	meeting
People	foot of mountain	Chatzer (courtyard)	korbanot

So how does the **mizbach ha-ktoret** fit into all this?

In our shiur on Parshat Yitro, we discussed the dialectic nature of the encounter between God and Bnei Yisrael at Har Sinai. Ideally, Bnei Yisrael should have heard the commandments directly from God [**panim be-panim**']. However, as mortal man is incapable of withstanding God's Presence (see Devarim 5:4-5, 20-25), God found it necessary to 'buffer' this encounter. due to this tension, God found it necessary to cover Har Sinai with a **cloud** before revealing himself:

"Behold I am coming to you **be-av** he-**anan** - in the **thickness** of a **cloud** - in order that they can hear as I speak to you..." (see 19:9)

"... And Har Sinai was full of **smoke** ['ashan'], for God had come down upon it with fire..."

(see 19:16-18 and the TSC shiur on Parshat Yitro).

In this manner, the **anan** (cloud) on Har Sinai effectively served as a **buffer** between:

- Bnei Yisrael at the **foot** of the mountain, and
- God's revelation at the **top** of the mountain.

One could suggest that the **mizbach ha-ktoret** serves a similar function. When the **ktoret** [incense] is offered on the coals of this small altar, it creates a cloud of smoke (see Vayikra 16:13) in the "kodesh". In this manner, this "anan" [cloud of smoke] forms a buffer between Bnei Yisrael, who stand outside in the **chatzer** - and God, whose presence dwells in the "**kodesh ha-kodashim**".

THE AXIS: -Aron -- Mizbach Ktoret -- Mizbach Ola

This interpretation is supported by two key psukim that describe the relationship between the **mizbach ha-ola**, **mizbach ha-ktoret**, and the **kodesh kodashim**.

The first pasuk stresses the connection between the **mizbach ha-ola** and the **ohel mo'ed**. As you study this pasuk, note how redundant it appears to be:

"**olat tamid** [the daily offering on the mizbach ha-ola]

- for all generations,
- in front of the entrance to the **ohel mo'ed** -
- before God [lifnei Hashem]
- from where **I will meet you**
- to **speak** to you there" (see 29:42).

Surely, the Torah could have explained where this public offering is brought in half the words; yet for some reason the Torah wishes to emphasize a thematic connection between the "olat tamid" and the place where God will speak to Bnei Yisrael.

Then, in the next 'parshia', the Torah provides explicit instructions concerning where to place the **mizbach ha-ktoret**. Note once again the 'wordiness' of this pasuk, and how it relates to the pasuk above:

"And you shall **place** it [the mizbach ktoret]

- in front of the **parochet**,
- which is over the **aron ha-eidut**,
- in front of the **kaporet** which is upon the **eidut**
- from where **I will meet with you**." (see 30:6).

It is for this reason that the Torah emphasizes that the mizbach ktoret must be located between these two focal points, i.e. along this very same **axis** that connects the **mizbach ha-ola** with the **kodesh kodashim**.

In fact, later on in the same chapter, when the Torah explains how the ktoret was made, it emphasizes this point once again:

"...and you shall grind it very fine, and **put it**:

- before the testimony [lifnei ha'**eidut**]
- in the tent of meeting [**ohel moed**],
- where **I will meet with you**; - it shall be for you most holy." (see 30:36)

A 'PROTECTED' DIVINE ENCOUNTER

In a manner very similar to what took place at Har Sinai, God 'comes down' from the heavens, as it were, to the **kodesh kodashim**; while Bnei Yisrael come from their camp, to stand before God in the **chatzer** of the mishkan.

Hence, the main section of the **ohel mo'ed** serves as a buffer between God and Bnei Yisrael. There, the **ktoret** must be offered each time the **kohen** enters to perform his service, which creates an **anan** [cloud of smoke] to 'protect' the **kohen** when he enters the **kodesh**:

"And Aharon shall offer the **ktoret** daily, in the morning before tending to the **menorah**, and when lighting the **menorah** in the evening..." (30:7-8).

[Note also Vayikra 16:2, where Aharon must also offer ktoret to create a similar cloud of smoke to protect himself before entering the kodesh ha-kodashim on Yom Kippur!]

With this background we can answer our opening question. One could suggest that by placing the commandment to build the **mizbach ha-ktoret** after the summary psukim at the very end of this unit, the Torah alludes to its unique function as a 'buffer' in this covenantal encounter. As - 'realistically' - Bnei Yisrael may not be worthy of this encounter, the Torah commands Bnei Yisrael to place the **mizbach ktoret** in the kodesh to serve as a buffer, to protect them for the Shechina that dwells in the kodesh kedoshim.

[Note the similarity between the nature of this 'protected encounter' in the mishkan and what we referred to in our shiur on Parshat Yitro as '**plan A**,' by which God speaks to Moshe while 'covered by a cloud' so that the people can only overhear their conversation. See Shmot 19:9! See also Devarim 5:5.]

Furthermore, the dialectic nature of this encounter is highlighted by the placement of the laws of the mizbach ha-ktoret outside this Shechina unit, yet within the same dibur!

THE KTORET UNIT

Up until this point, we have treated parshiot Teruma/Tetzaveh as one, integrated unit, as indicated by the single **dibur** that introduces these two parshiot. Now we must consider the remaining parshiot (in Parshat Ki Tisa) that form the final six paragraphs of the greater **tzivui ha-mishkan** unit.

Take a minute to review the beginning of Ki-Tisa (i.e. 30:11-31:17), noting how it describes several other mitzvot concerning the mishkan that were also 'left out' of the **Shechina unit**.

When we list these parshiot in order, we find once again a set of 'bookends':

30:1-10 **mizbach ha-ktoret** (* bookend 1 *)
(as explained above)

30:11-16 **Machatzit ha-shekel** -
money collected to fund the **ohel mo'ed**

30:17-21 **Ki'yor**
the faucet for the kohanim to wash their hands

30:22-33 **Shemen ha-mishcha**
special oil to anoint the mishkan's accessories and the kohanim

30:34-38 **Ktoret** (* bookend 2 *)
the incense for the **mizbach ktoret**

[At this point, the **laws** concerning the mishkan end. Chapter 31 discusses the appointment of Betzalel to build the mishkan and the prohibition to work on **Shabbat** (to preclude the possible, mistaken notion the work for the mishkan on shabbat is permissible). Whereas these do not involve laws directly relating to the construction of the mishkan and its accessories, we have omitted them from this table.]

The above table shows how (1) the **mizbach ktoret** and (2) the mitzvah to make the **ktoret** delineate a second unit, which contains several peripheral commandments regarding the mishkan.

A PARALLEL STRUCTURE

As your review these parshiot, note how a rather amazing parallel structure emerges; pointing to the direct connection between this **Ktoret** unit and the previous **Shechina unit**. Note how each of these peripheral commandments in the **Ktoret unit** corresponds (in the same order!) to a related topic in the **Shechina unit**!

The following table illustrates this parallel:

TOPIC	SHECHINA UNIT	KTORET UNIT
Accessories in the mishkan	aron, kaporet, shulchan, menorah	mizbach ktoret
Ohel Mo'ed	yeriot, krashim	machatzit ha-shekel le-avodat ohel mo'ed
Chatzer	mizbach ha-ola	kiyor
Dedication	bigdei kehuna & milu'im (to anoint the kohanim)	shemen ha-mishcha
Daily Offering	korban tamid on mizbach ha-ola	ktoret tamid on mizbach ha-ktoret

The mitzvot found in the **Shechina unit**, which focus on God's 'hitgalut' in the mishkan, are complemented by the mitzvot in the **Ktoret unit**, which focus on the need to protect Bnei Yisrael in this special encounter.

Note as well how all of the mitzvot in the Ktoret unit emphasize either kapara (see shiur on Yom Kippur, where we explained how kapara involves protection from God's hitgalut) or warn of impending death if not performed properly (see 30:10; 30:12; 30:21; 30:33; 30:38; relate to Devarim 5:21-23!). Protection is required from the potential punishment enacted should man not prepare himself properly for this encounter with God in the mishkan.

In this manner, the laws of the mizbach ktoret can serve as an eternal reminder of how man must not only value his ability to enjoy a relationship with God, but also remain aware of the natural limits of this encounter.

shabbat shalom,
menachem

FOR FURTHER IYUN

A. Be sure to see Ramban on 30:1, where he explains why the mizbach ha-ktoret is at the end of the unit. See also Seforno & Chizkuni. Relate these approaches to our analysis of this unit in the above shiur.

B. In our discussion of the overall structure, we noted that (B) comprises the complete unit of **tzivui ha-mishkan**. Note that this complete unit includes **seven** dibur's. [A dibur is each time the Torah introduces God's speech to Moshe with, "Va-yedaber Hashem el Moshe leimor" or "va-yomer ...", etc.

[See 25:1, 30:11, 30:17, 30:22, 30:34, 31:1, and 31:12.]

One could view these dibur's as allusions to the seven days of creation. The first **dibur**, covering the entire **Shechina unit**, may reflect the concept of God's creation of **light / Shechina** (see Rashi on Breishit 1:3). The next four deal with other mitzvot of the mishkan. [Admittedly, they don't work out as good as the rest.] The sixth **dibur** describes the appointment of Betzalel to build the mishkan. This may parallel God's creation of man on the sixth day. Just as man in Creation [**perek aleph**] was to master the material world and utilize his God-given talents towards a divine purpose, so must Betzalel organize the materials collected and use his God-given talents to oversee the construction of the mishkan. To do so, he requires 'ruach Elokim' (31:3/ relate to the creation of man 'be-tzelem Elokim').

The seventh **dibur** is the mitzvah to keep **Shabbat**! (See 31:15.) This may serve as the basis for the many Midrashim that describe the mishkan as the pinnacle of the creation process. This reflects, once

again, the biblical theme that the natural world needs to be directed towards a divine purpose. This is the duty of man not only in the mishkan, but also throughout his daily life, as well.

C. A FULL TIME JOB

Recall from our original outline how the first two psukim of Parshat Tetzaveh (i.e. the mitzvah to light the menorah /see 27:20-21) also appears out of place. If we follow the logic of the structure of the **Shechina unit**, it should have been recorded together with the mitzvah to build the menorah (just as the mitzvah to offer the **lechem ha-panim** is included with the mitzvah to build the **shulchan** / see 25:30).

Nevertheless, the Torah transfers these psukim from chapter 26 and juxtaposes them with the mitzvah to make the **bigdei kehuna** (in chapter 28). Why?

One could suggest that in doing so, the Torah alludes to a more important role of the **kohanim**. Aside from the honor and glory of their position, as reflected by their special garments, their primary job is to 'spread the light' of Torah - the message of mishkan, as represented by the **aron ha-eidut** at its focal point - to Bnei Yisrael.

It is this mitzvah of the **kohanim**, to disseminate the Torah, which may explain why it referred to as a "chukat olam le-doroteichem - an everlasting law for all generations" (see 27:31). Even when the mikdash lay in ruins, this mitzvah forever remains the obligation of our religious leaders.

D. ADDITIONAL SOURCES & RESEARCH

Re: The 'displacement' of the mizbach ha-ktoret

We explained that the Torah 'transferred' the discussion of the mizbach ha-ktoret to the end of the mishkan unit to emphasize its role as a 'buffer', protecting Bnei Yisrael from the 'hashra'at ha-Shechina' that occurs in the mishkan. This general idea appears in the Vilna Gaon's "Aderet Eliyahu". The Gaon explains that neither the ktoret nor the machatzit ha-shekel (which the Torah discusses immediately following its discussion of the mizbach ha-ktoret) was indispensable for 'hashra'at ha-Shechina'. They come into play once the Shechina has already descended, in order to bring kapara for Bnei Yisrael. Though the Gaon does not mention the 'buffer' idea developed in the shiur, his explanation does feature the concept of a need for kapara when the Shechina descends and the mizbach ha-zahav as filling that role. Like the Gaon, the Seforno also writes that the mizbach ha-zahav is not necessary for the Shechina to descend. However, rather than pointing to atonement as the ktoret's primary function, the Seforno views it as an expression of kavod to Hashem, and hence a prayer of sorts asking the Almighty to accept the korbanot offered on the other mizbeiach. The Ramban also writes along the lines, describing the mizbach ha-zahav as an expression of kavod rather than a means of bringing the Shechina.

This point, whether or not the ktoret is required to bring the Shechina, appears to be subject to dispute. The Midrash Tanchuma, Tetzaveh 15, writes clearly that the Shechina would not descend into the mishkan until after the ktoret was offered. This is also the view of the Da'at Zekeinim mi-Ba'alei ha-Tosafot on Shmot 25:6. This view would oppose the position of the Seforno and Vilna Gaon.

Several different answers to the question of this parsha's location appear in other mefarshim. Some Acharonim, including the Meshech Chochma (30:1), view the location of this parsha as an allusion to the halacha allowing the offering of ktoret even without the mizbach ha-ktoret. The Or Ha-chayim (25:9) also sees here a subtle allusion to a technicality, that Shlomo Ha-melech built his own mizbach ha-ktoret rather than using Moshe's. (This assumption is somewhat controversial - see Torah Shleima, milu'im to Parshat Tetzaveh, 29.) The Tzror Ha-mor (30:1) writes that the Torah places this parsha last to indicate the unique stature of the mizbach ha-ktoret as the most important of all the klei ha-mikdash. A similar theory is advanced by Rav Dov Rabinowitz ("Da'at Sofrim"), who claims that Bnei Yisrael are worthy for the ktoret, the most exalted of all the offerings, only after they have loyally executed all the commands of the previous chapters and the Shechina has taken its residence in the mishkan. Rav Zalman

Sorotzkin (Oznayim la-Torah 30:1) suggests precisely the opposite: lest one afford too much importance to the mizbach ha-zahav over the mizbach ha-nechoshet, the Torah extracted the former from the discussion of the klei ha-mikdash in order to emphasize that the mizbach ha-nechoshet actually constitutes the primary altar. The Netziv understands the Torah's structure as intended to underscore the distinct themes symbolized by the two mizbachot. The mizbach ha-nechoshet - along with the menorah - represents Torah, whereas the mizbach ha-ktoret symbolizes gemilut chasadim. The Torah emphasizes their symbolic distinction by separating them; their coexistence in the heichal points to the need for the two to work in tandem. The Malbim, who develops an elaborate system of symbolism with regard to the mishkan and its accessories, views the mizbach ha-ktoret as representing the spiritual result of the avoda performed in the mishkan. It is therefore presented last and apart from the rest of the mishkan's components, as it represents that which is attained as a result of that was discussed beforehand.