

Toras Aish

Thoughts From Across the Torah Spectrum

RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS

Covenant & Conversation

It is interesting to note the absence of Moses from the parsha of Tetzaveh. For once Moses, the hero, the leader, the liberator, the lawgiver, is off-stage in the only instance where the name of Moses is not mentioned at all in any parsha since the first parsha of the book of Shemot (in which he is born).

Instead our focus is on his elder brother Aaron who, elsewhere, is often in the background. Indeed, virtually the whole parsha is devoted to the role Moses did not occupy, except briefly – that of priest in general, High Priest in particular.

It is important that we have a parsha dedicated to the legacy of the priestly role for Judaism. However, need this focus have removed Moses from the passage entirely? Is there any larger significance to his absence? The commentators offered various suggestions.¹

One given in the Talmud refers to an event at the beginning of Moses' leadership: his encounter with God at the burning bush. 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." (Exodus 4:13–15)

The Talmud records a debate about the lasting consequences of that moment when Moses, as it were, refused one time too many. To decline a leadership challenge once or twice is a sign of humility. To continue to do so when it is God Himself issuing the challenge risks provoking divine anger, as happened here. The Talmud comments "Then the Lord's anger burned against Moses" – Rabbi Yehoshua ben Karcha said: every instance of [divine] anger in the Torah leaves a lasting effect, except in this instance. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai said: here too it left a lasting effect, for it goes on to say, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite?" Surely Aaron was a priest [not just a Levite]. Rather, what God meant was: I originally intended that you [Moses] would be a priest and he [Aaron] would merely be a Levite. But now [because of your refusal], he will eventually become a priest and you will only be a Levite.²

According to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the lasting effect of Moses' reluctance to lead was that one vital leadership role – priesthood – would eventually go to Aaron rather than to Moses himself.

Basing himself on this passage, Rabbi Jacob ben Asher (1270–1340) suggests that Moses' name is missing from Tetzaveh, which deals with the priestly garments, "to spare him distress" on seeing Aaron acquire the insignia of priesthood that might have been Moses' own.³

Without negating this or other explanations, there is also a more fundamental message. 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 between them, though this can only be read between the lines (and spelled out in midrash), not directly in the text. Jacob and Esau meet,

¹ See my earlier essay on Tetzaveh, "Priests and Prophets", Covenant and Conversation: Exodus, the book of Redemption, p. 219.

² Zevahim 102a.

³ R. Jacob ben Asher, commentary of Baal HaTurim to Exodus 27:20.



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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.

The drama has a fifth act: the relationship between Moses and Aaron. Here, for the first time, there is no hint of sibling rivalry.⁴ 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.

Their partnership is a constant feature of the narrative. But there are certain moments where it is highlighted. The first occurs in the passage already cited above. God tells Moses that 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, would 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, while Aaron remained with the Israelites. 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 yet it was he who was about to become the 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. And the Lord said

to Aaron, Go to the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him. (Exodus 4:27)

The second fascinating clue is contained in a strange passage that traces the descent of Moses and Aaron. Amram married his father’s sister Yocheved, 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 this same Moses and Aaron. (Exodus 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 says “Aaron and Moses,” the second, “Moses and Aaron.”⁵ 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’. There is a wonderful Midrash that bears out this idea, 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.⁶

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.⁷

A final Midrash completes the picture by referring to this week’s parsha 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

⁴ Some developed later – see Numbers, chap. 12 – but was resolved by Moses’ humility.

⁵ “This teaches that they were equals” (Tosefta, Kritot, end).

⁶ Shemot Rabbah 5:10

⁷ Ibid., ad loc.

vested with the Urim and Tumim.⁸

The Urim and Tumim were a form of oracle, carried by the High Priest in his breastplate. They conveyed divine inspiration and guidance, a kind of priestly equivalent of the divine word that came to the prophet.⁹ 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. “One who honours others.”¹⁰ Aaron honoured his younger brother. That is why Moses (not mentioned by name but by implication) is told in this week’s parsha, “Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron, to give him honour and splendour” (Exodus 28:2). To this day a Kohen is honoured by being the 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 act in the biblical drama 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. *Covenant and Conversation 5779 is kindly supported by the Maurice Wohl Charitable Foundation in memory of Maurice and Vivienne Wohl z”l ©2019 Rabbi Lord J. Sacks and rabbisacks.org*

RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

Shabbat Shalom

"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

⁸ Ibid. 3:17.

⁹ According to Ramban, they consisted of letters spelling out the divine name or names, some of which would light up at key moments, spelling out a message to be deciphered by the High Priest.

¹⁰ Avot 4:1

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.”

And when the Priests (Cohanim) give their blessing, the Synagogue turns into a Sanctuary!

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 ends up. To modify the Vidal quote, a kohen would declare: "Whenever a farmer succeeds a little [and certainly 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 since the one leader of Israel, Moses, had so much love for Israel that he was willing to be blotted out of Torah if his beloved people were destroyed, it is the portion of Tetzaveh, the portion of the Priest-Kohanim, whose love for Israel remind us of Moses, although Moses is absent. Even if Moses is absent, his deep love is felt! Indeed, the essence of Moses' greatness, His sacrificial love of his people, emerges most clearly from the portion of his absence and anonymity. ©2019 *Ohr Torah Institutions & Rabbi S. Riskin*

RABBI BEREL WEIN

Wein Online

The concept of an eternal light in the place of worship is an ancient one derived from the opening section of this week's reading of the Torah. The eternal light represents the unquenchable spirit and resilience of the eternal soul that the Lord has implanted within human beings. Human life can be taken away but the spirit of life, which is so unique to human beings, seems never to disappear.

In this week's reading of the Torah, we learn that the eternal light must be attended to and nurtured.

It requires preparation of the fuel and the kindling of that eternal light by human beings, in this case the descendants of Aaron, the priests of Israel. There was an eternal flame that existed on the altar in the Tabernacle and in the holy Temple. That flame existed and was kept alive permanently by a miracle of God. It existed during the entire time of the first Temple but was one of the miracles that no longer reappeared in the times of the second Temple and thereafter. But the eternal light that was to be lit and maintained on the great candelabra in the building of the Temple was not to be miraculously so endowed. This light required constant human attention and participation.

From this we may derive that there are two forms of eternity in human affairs and history. One is of purely divine origin, miraculous and wondrous, which operates completely independent from human efforts, ordinary laws and rules of nature. The other path of eternity, represented by the likes of the candelabra, is wholly dependent on human participation, care and attention.

Human beings often confuse these two types of eternal light. When it comes to certain matters, mainly spiritual or familial in nature, we rely heavily on miracles that will sustain us and allow us to escape from our difficulties. Regarding our personal lives, our profession, and our politics, we feel that these areas of human life are totally within our ability and purview to control and shape. However, the Torah teaches us that both forms of eternallight, the miraculous and the one that requires human effort and attention, are with us always.

That is why in the Tabernacle, and later in the first Temple itself the eternal light was represented at one and the same time and in the same place. Miracles do happen, and the guiding hand of the Eternal One is evident throughout the history of the Jews. But, the old adage that God helps those who help themselves is also valid and true. The eternal flame is to be lit by human beings who prepare the fuel and kindle a light through human effort and care. It is this combination of the forces of eternity that unite and guarantee that the light of Israel will never be extinguished. ©2019 *Rabbi Berel Wein - Jewish historian, author and international lecturer offers a complete selection of CDs, audio tapes, video tapes, DVDs, and books on Jewish history at www.rabbiwein.com. For more information on these and other products visit www.rabbiwein.com*

RABBI AVI WEISS

Shabbat Forshpeis

This week's portion deals primarily with the priestly garments. Right at the outset, the Torah states that they were worn by the Priest for "honor" (kavod). In the words of the Torah, "and you shall make Holy garments for your brother Aharon (Aaron), and they shall be for honor (kavod) and beauty (tiferet)." (Exodus

28:2)

But honor seems contrary to the Torah ideal. R. Eliezer HaKapar states: "jealousy, desire and honor take a person from the world." (Avot 4:28) Shouldn't the Torah, therefore, request a priest to aspire to achieve the highest level of humility, rather than honor?

The answer may lie in a deeper understanding of the Hebrew word kavod. Rav Ahron Soloveichik argues that the word kavod contains within it, the root of the word kaved. Kaved means "heavy" and is linked etymologically to kavod. In concrete terms, heaviness is determined by the pull of gravity upon an object. In conceptual terms, weight is determined by the degree of responsibility one has. The greater responsibility (kaved), the greater the potential honor once those obligations are fulfilled.

The meaning of our verse now becomes clear. The goal of the priestly garments is not honor, but rather to serve as a reminder that the priest has a greater responsibility to the community.

Notwithstanding its relationship with kaved, kavod can still be productive. While honor can sometimes lead to bloating of the ego which, in turn, can get in the way of real accomplishments, it can also be a powerful and important tool to help others. When one assists others, kavod is not only brought to the giver, but G-d is honored as well. Note the liturgy on Shabbat, the Keyl Adon prayer that echoes the language of our portion when it states, pe'er v'kavod notnim lishmo, "splendor and honor are given to G-d's name".

Note the Midrash on the verse, "And you shall love the Lord your G-d with all your heart." (Deuteronomy 6:5) The rabbis note that the Hebrew for heart (Lev) is written in the plural (Levavkha). Since the heart symbolizes human nature, the use of the plural here is viewed by the rabbis as meaning that G-d is to be worshipped with both the good and bad inclinations. In the same vein, the natural human tendency to enjoy being honored can be a factor in spurring us to undertake beneficial efforts on behalf of people in need. Perhaps the honor of the priestly garments can lead the Priest to work with greater vigor for Am Yisrael.

Sometimes greater responsibility can lead to honor and, at times, honor can inspire greater commitment. It has often been said that "clothes make the man." The Torah here is completing the sentence, with the teaching that clothes are there to make us act for others. ©2013 Hebrew Institute of Riverdale & CJC-AMCHA. Rabbi Avi Weiss is Founder and Dean of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, the Open Orthodox Rabbinical School, and Senior Rabbi of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale

RABBI DAVID LEVINE

Heart and Wisdom

In last week's parasha (Terumah), we saw that Moshe was given instructions on building the Mishkan and

the various keilim (objects) that were to be placed inside the Mishkan. The people first gave gold, silver and copper, wool, fine linen, and goats' hair, skins, wood, spices, oil, and precious stones. The Torah uses a phrase when describing these gifts: "from every man whose heart stirs him (yidvenu libo) to give a voluntary gift." The heart here is seen as urging the individual to bring forth something of value that was needed and donating it to the building of the Mishkan. HaRav Shmshon Raphael Hirsch explains that the etymology of the word yidvenu is related to the word nataf which means "flow out from within." Here it represents the most complete freedom of will.

Our section of the Torah begins, "And you will make holy garments for Aharon your brother for honor and distinction. And you will speak to all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aharon's garments to sanctify him that he may serve Me as a priest." The heart here is described as the center of wisdom and understanding. Biblical and later texts see the heart as a place of evaluation and decision making. It follows then that two requirements were made of the people who were to make the clothes for the Kohanim: (1) they must be chochmei leiv, wise hearted, and (2) mileitiv ru'ach chachmah, that I (Hashem) filled with the spirit of wisdom. As we delve further into these p'sukim we will endeavor to distinguish between these terms.

HaRav Zalman Sorotzkin speaks first about the usage of leiv, heart, when describing the commands concerning the building of the Mishkan. Sorotzkin explains that it is the responsibility of every Jewish community to build a house of prayer and the leaders of the community should institute whatever is necessary to raise the funds for this purpose. Sorotzkin is puzzled by the lack of organization here and that the funds for the Mishkan were not required of everyone but instead from a person whose heart stirs him. There were also no unnecessary gifts of items that were outside of the list of materials for the Mishkan and the clothes of the Kohanim. Moshe presented the people with a list and the people did not deviate from this list. Here Sorotzkin finds an answer for his question. Every gift that was made was used for the purpose of the Temple and the people had a double sense of satisfaction that together they built this place of prayer and individually they assisted in this undertaking willingly.

Hirsch gives us an additional insight into the difference between "chachmei leiv, wise-hearted", and "asher mileitiv ru'ach chachmah, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom." The importance of the word chachmah, wisdom, is stressed in the making of the garments but is not stressed in the instructions for making the Mishkan until later in Parashat Vayakhel where two men were assigned the task of building each item. "The reason can well be that regarding the Sanctuary itself and its appurtenances, everything in

every detail had to follow meticulously the model shown to Moshe, whereas, in the case of the garments, more room was left for the taste of the maker. The garments had to be made with the definite idea in the mind of the worker of the purpose for which they were to be used. Then, and then only, did they give the Kohein the requisite kedusha, holiness.” The Or HaChaim explains that there were three parts of holiness necessary for the construction of the Mishkan: (1) those whose donations to the Mishkan flowed from their hearts, (2) those who, through their chachmah, were able to use their skills (chachmat leiv) to build the parts of the Mishkan and those who understood (mileitiv ru’ach chachmah) the purpose and function of each of the clothes, and (3) the Kohanim themselves who performed the duties in the Mishkan and sanctified it with their service. It appears from the Or HaChaim that chachmei leiv refers to people who have innate skills that enable them to produce precise work. Those who have been blessed with ru’ach chachmah are capable of a higher level of understanding which takes into consideration both function and holiness.

The terms we have been using here are mentioned again when discussing Betzalel and Ahali’av, the two men mentioned by name to oversee the entire building of the Mishkan. “And Moshe said to the B’nei Yisrael, see, Hashem has called by name Betzalel the son of Uri the son of Chur of the tribe of Yehudah. He filled him with the spirit of Elokim, with wisdom, with understanding, and with knowledge, and with every craft. And to combine ideas, to work with the gold, silver and with copper. And in the cutting of stones for setting and in carving wood in making all kinds of design work. And also the gift of teaching He put into his heart, both he and Ahali’av the son of Achisamach of the tribe of Dan.” Here we see another characteristic of the heart, the ability to teach others.

We have seen four different characteristics of the heart based on the Torah’s use of the phrases connecting to our word leiv or libo, heart or his heart. We first spoke of the heart as an initiator of our actions. The phrase nadav leiv, the free-flowing donation from the heart, characterized the gifts which the B’nei Yisrael willfully gave to supply the needs of the Mishkan. Secondly, we saw the heart as the center of knowledge chachmat leiv, wisdom of the heart, which gave the people the skills for constructing the Mishkan. Thirdly, we saw that the heart can go beyond simple knowledge and combine ideas and thoughts to form understanding, ru’ach chachmah. This enabled the people to synthesize the ideas of purpose and holiness into the creation of the garments of the Kohanim. Fourthly, two men, Betzalel and Ahali’av, were able to understand all of these ideas completely and were given the skill to teach those ideas to others, u’llhorot natan b’libo, and also the gift of teaching He put into his (Betzalel’s) heart.

We are also blessed with hearts that can learn and develop, but how does one raise himself to a higher level? One begins by giving freely of himself to Hashem. One must first have complete Faith that one’s needs will be met regardless of what one gives away. When one believes that Hashem provides what He intends for us to have, we are more willing to part with that which was given to us to share with others. As we gain more insight, we are able to comprehend what is demanded of us and synthesize those ideas to form a closer relationship with Hashem. As we rise to that level of comprehension we are also blessed with the ability and the responsibility to teach others what we have gained. Everything relates to our understanding of and commitment to Hashem. This can only come from study and performance of mitzvot. Our efforts are assisted by Hashem so that we can be successful in our pursuit of this goal. May we each continue to use our hearts to set higher goals so that Hashem can enable us to reach them. ©2019 Rabbi D. Levine

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Adar Rishon & Sheni

Translated by Rabbi Mordechai Weiss

When there is a leap year and we add a second Adar to the calendar, our Sages (“Tanaim”) in the Talmud are divided as to which month we are referring to when we simply say “Adar”. Rabbi Yehudah states that when we use the term “Adar” alone, we are denoting the first Adar (Adar Rishon) and when referring to the second Adar (Adar Sheni) we must indicate “Adar Sheni”. Thus when signing a document on a leap year, if we are referring to the first Adar we would only write Adar and when we refer to the second Adar we must indicate “Adar Sheni”.

Rabbi Meir disagrees and states that on a leap year, when we refer to Adar alone, the reference is to the second Adar (Tractate Nedarim 63a). Most of our sages however, follow the previously stated view of Rabbi Yehudah. The Rambam (Maimonides) however follows the view of Rabbi Meir. In any case, when writing a divorce (Get) both Adars are referred to by name, either “Adar Rishon” or “Adar Sheni”.

This controversy impacts on many situations. For example, if a person rents a house during a leap year, does the lease expire on the first or the second Adar? The renter might claim that it is the second Adar, but the owner could insist that it is the first Adar. In such a situation some Rabbis advise them to split the second month, while others state that the owner has the upper hand, since the property belongs to him. Thus the burden of proof is on the renter that the lease is referring to the second Adar (Hamotzi M’chavero Alav Haraya).

This controversy would also affect when a person would commemorate a Yahrzeit (the day on which a father or mother or any close relative died and

the traditional Kaddish is said); hence, the tradition of some to recite "Kaddish" on both "Adars"

There is some indication in our literature that when we memorialize the death of our teacher Moses on the seventh of Adar, we refer to the second Adar because of its close proximity to the holiday of Purim.

One can ask as well, how do we announce the new month in the synagogue the Shabbat prior to Rosh Chodesh (the beginning of the month)?

In short, in all the cases cited, there seem to be different opinions and the prudent thing to do is to indicate in each instance, what month we are referring to; "Adar Rishon" or "Adar Sheni". ©2018 Rabbi M. Weiss and *Encyclopedia Talmudit*

RABBI KALMAN PACKOUZ

Shabbat Shalom Weekly

The Torah states: "And you shall command the Children of Israel that they bring to you pure pressed olive oil for illumination to keep the lamp constantly burning" (Exodus 27:20).

The Midrash comments on this verse that the Almighty does not really need the light, but you should nonetheless make a light for Him just as He makes light for you. The Midrash gives the analogy of a blind person and a person who could see walking together. The person with sight led the blind person the entire way. When they came to their destination the sighted person told the blind person to make a light. "I want you to do this," he said, "so you will not feel a debt of gratitude for all that I have done for you. Now you have done something for me in return."

There are many ulterior motives a person can have when he does favors for others. The ultimate in doing kindness is to do it without any expectations for something in return -- and to do the kindness in a manner that doesn't make the other person feel obligated. This Midrash should be our guide when we do a favor for another person. Our attitude should be totally to help someone.

Many people feel strong resentment towards people who do not show any gratitude for what they have done for them. While a person should feel gratitude, one who does kindnesses for others for the sake of doing kindness will be free of any negative feelings towards someone who does not reciprocate or express gratitude. Moreover, an elevated person will go out of his way to make the person receiving his kindness feel free of any obligations towards him. *Dvar Torah based on Growth Through Torah by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin ©2019 Rabbi K. Packouz & aish.com*

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 Kodesh 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 Hanoch Teller, N.Y.C. Pub Co.) ©2019 Rabbi M. Kamenetzky & torah.org

HARAV SHLOMO WOLBE ZT"L

Bais Hamussar

Rav Wolbe (Da'as Shlomo) comments that one who is very particular about his clothing, will only buy a suit from a tailor. A suit tailored to their specific body sits better on them than a store bought suit. In this regard, the world of ruchniyus is no different from the material world. There are "ordinary" articles of spiritual clothing, and there are articles that are "hand tailored" to fit a person.

Rabbeinu Yonah writes (Sha'arei Teshuvah 1:10) that every person should be aware that, "Hashem has blown into my nostrils a living spirit, wisdom of the heart... to enable me... to fear Him." Why does Rabbeinu Yonah emphasize that the wisdom given to us is wisdom "of the heart?" The answer can be found in the menorah oil discussed in this week's parsha.

Parshas Tetzaveh commences with Hashem instructing Moshe to command Bnei Yisrael to prepare the purest olive oil for the lighting of the menorah. In Parshas Vayakhel (35:14) this unique oil is listed among the various components of the Mishkan whose preparation required the expertise of "wise hearted men." Rashi explains that this was so because this oil was different from all other oils. Only the ripest olives from the top of the tree were used, and only the very first drop squeezed from each olive qualified to be used as oil for the menorah.

Just as the oil of the menorah needed the



expertise of "wise hearted" men because it differed from ordinary oil, so too, the

fear of Hashem requires "wisdom of the heart" because it differs from ordinary fear. The Navi Yeshaya (29:13), relaying Hashem's castigation of Bnei Yisrael, declares, "Their fear of Me is like commands performed by rote." Indeed they feared Hashem, but their fear was robotic. They practiced their fear by rote as if was a standard item that one acquires in any store. Their fear was not tailored to fit their individuality.

So who is the tailor that can outfit a person with a perfect garb of yiras Shamayim?

The tailor is the person himself! Each person for himself, after becoming cognizant of his specific set of virtues and deficiencies, can fashion a spiritual suit that should fit him like a glove. The wisdom required to achieve this goal cannot be found in a sefer. No two people are the same and no two situations are the same, and thus, the guidelines set down for Reuven will not work for Shimon. Rather, this knowledge can be found by each person in the wisdom of his heart.

Just because your neighbor eats in a specific restaurant doesn't mean that you should, and just because your friend dresses in a specific manner doesn't mean that you have to. The only place to look to the find the answers to what you should or should not be doing is in the mirror. Take a deep breath, smile, and define for yourself where you stand in the spiritual arena. This exercise will enable you to stop wearing borrowed clothing and begin enjoying the advantage of wearing a perfectly tailored suit! ©2016 Rabbi S. Wolbe zt'l & AishDas Society

RABBI SHLOMO RESSLER

Weekly Dvar

At the beginning of the Parshat Tetzaveh, the Jews are commanded to bring the purest olive oil as fuel for the lamp in the Tabernacle. Rashi explains that the purest olive oil is required for the lamp, but not for the flour offerings brought in the Tabernacle. What is the significance of this ritual detail?

R' Baruch Simon, quoting from the Chasam Sofer, explains that this rule runs contrary to how one would act at home. A person would use the purest, best tasting olive oil in food, and use a lower grade of oil as fuel, where the taste doesn't matter. However, in the Tabernacle, the best grade was used for the lamp and a lesser grade for the equivalent of food. The lamp symbolizes wisdom, Torah and the life of the spirit while the flour offering symbolizes material things. This detail regarding which oil should be used for which purpose in the Tabernacle is actually teaching a broad lesson about priorities in life. Often, the inclination is to seek out the best and to expend the most effort in material matters, while settling for "good enough" in the spiritual realm. The olive oil is teaching us that the opposite outlook is the proper one. ©2013 Rabbi S. Ressler and LeLamed, Inc.