



Ohr Yerushalayim News

ב"א אדר א תשפ"ב – תצוה – 12th February 2022 - Volume 14 - Issue 32

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Eliezer and Sara Issler on the birth of their daughter Ayala. The Kehilla is invited to a Kiddush in their home, 65 Singleton Road, from 11.15.

Mazel Tov to Hudi and Dassa Scherer on the birth of their son. The Sholom Zochor takes place at 13 Hilton Crescent from 8pm. Mazel Tov also to grandparents Malcolm and Vivienne Fagleman.

Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrzeit this week:
Shabbos, 11th Addar - Sharon Levinson for her father
Sun, 12th Addar - Robert Berman for his mother
Fri, 17th Addar - Shelley Levey for her mother

Dirshu Mishna Beruro

In addition to R' Shaya's Dirshu Mishna Beruro Shiur, the Rov will be starting an early morning Shiur on Monday - Friday mornings from 6.25-6.45am. The Shiur starts this Sunday at 6.55am.

Case Clothed

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

"Clothes," they say, "make the man." But did you ever wonder about the man who makes the clothes?

This week's portion discusses the priestly vestments worn by both the common kohen (priest) and the Kohen Gadol (High Priest). The common kohen wore four garments while the High Priest wore eight.

The garments of the High Priest were ornate and complex. They needed highly skilled artisans to embroider and fashion them. They included, among others, a jewel-studded breastplate, a honeycomb-woven tunic, an apron-like garment and a specially designed garment that was adorned with gold bells and woven pomegranates.

To weave these garments was quite a complex task, and Moshe had to direct the craftsmen with the particulars of the difficult sartorial laws. Yet when Hashem charges Moshe He described the function of the garments much differently than He did in telling Moshe to command the tailors.

Moshe himself was told by Hashem that the objective of the garments was for glory and splendor — surely wonderful, but very physical attributes. Yet when he is told to command the artisans, the message he is told to impart was quite different. "You shall speak to the wise-hearted people whom I have invested with a spirit of wisdom, as they shall make holy vestments to sanctify and minister for me." (Exodus 28:1-3) "The clothes," Moshe tells the tailors, "were not meant for glory or splendor; they were to sanctify and to minister." Why the change in stated purpose?

A Long Island rabbi attended a taharah (ritual ceremony to prepare a deceased Jew for burial) for an individual whose background was rooted in a Chasidic community. Chevra Kadishas (burial societies) are often immune to the emotions, trauma and dread that would normally accompany a dead soul on a table.

The Chevra did their job almost perfunctorily, with hardly a word spoken, and that did not strike the rabbi as strange. Years of working with cadavers can numb the senses of even the toughest men. All of a sudden, a murmur bounced back and forth between Chasidic members of the Chevra. "Er hut a visa? (He has a visa?)" they queried. Then the conversation took a stranger turn. They began to mumble about a first class ticket.

The rabbi became concerned. Why was anyone talking about travel plans during this most sacred of rituals? That was not the time nor place. It just did not make sense.

Immediately the room became silent, it was now filled with awe and a sense of reverence. "Er hut a visa!" exclaimed the senior member of the group. The entire Chevra nodded and the atmosphere suddenly transformed.

They continued to prepare for the funeral as if the deceased had been a great sage or Chasidic Rebbe. The rabbi was unable to understand the sudden change in atmosphere until the eldest man beckoned him. "Come here," he said. "I'll show you something. The old man lifted the arm of the deceased to reveal seven numbers crudely tattooed on the dead man's forearm. "Do you know what they are?"

"Of course," replied the Rabbi. "They are the numbers that the Nazi's tattooed on every prisoner in the concentration camps."

"No," the old man said. "These numbers are the first-class ticket to Gan Eden. They are the visa and they are the tickets. Period."

The badges we wear have different meanings to every individual. Moshe, the man of G-d who saw the world with a profound vision of spirituality, was told about the more mundane aspect of the priestly garments. "They are for glory and honor." But he is told to charge the artisans, who often see only the splendor and glory of the corporeal world, with the true purpose of the garments — "to sanctify and minister."

Often we see numbers, events, and even garments as the mere manifestation of natural events whose memories impart us with only of a sense of awe for the history or beauty within. Sometimes we mortals must be reminded of a sense even greater than glory and splendor — ministration and sanctification of G-d's name.

King of Hearts

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

This week's Torah portion is devoted primarily to describing in intricate detail the special vestments worn by the kohanim and kohen gadol when performing their service in the Bais Hamikdash, and the manner in which these garments were to be crafted.

Of these, the most magnificent was the choshen, the breastplate worn by the kohain gadol. On its surface were attached 12 precious stones with the name of a tribe engraved on each one. Within the choshen lay the urim v'tumim, the slip of parchment upon which Hashem's name was inscribed. This name gave the choshen its sublime power through which the individual letters of the tribal names would light up (signified by the word "urim" meaning light).

When the illuminated letters were properly aligned, they provided the answers to questions of national import posed by the kohen gadol to

Davening Times

פרשת תצוה

Zman Shabbos	4.56pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	5.01pm
Hashkomo	7.25am
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.58am
Mincha	1.30pm / 4.44pm
Motzei Shabbos	6.04pm
Ovos uBonim	7.04pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	5.05pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

Hashem. Various letters of the breastplate would become luminescent, allowing the high priest to unite them into words, in order to read Hashem's response (signified by the word "tumim," completeness or wholeness).

This miraculous Divine form of communication remained with the Jewish people until King Yehoash hid the urim v'tumim at the time of the First Temple's destruction, to ensure that it would not fall into enemy hands.

Our sages point out that Aharon Hakohen merited to wear this wondrous vestment as reward for a particularly noble deed. When Moshe was chosen as the redeemer of the Jewish people, he was worried that his older brother, Aharon, would feel a tinge of jealousy at his being passed over for this exalted role. Hashem testified to him (Shemos 4:15) that, on the contrary, Aharon rejoiced in his heart at his brother's appointment to greatness.

It was due to this noble and selfless joy at his brother's lofty position, says the Midrash, that Aharon merited to become the bearer of the choshen.

We cannot fail to marvel at Aharon who exhibited such amazing selflessness towards his younger brother. But why was he rewarded specifically with being able to wear the choshen? Couldn't Hashem have alternatively showered him with wealth or longevity as a reward?

The manner in which Hashem communicated his message to His people through the choshen provides us with a fascinating clue as to why this particular reward was most appropriate.

Whenever Hashem responded to a question from the kohain gadol, the answer was conveyed through the choshen's illuminated letters. But the response had to be deciphered by aligning the glowing letters in a particular sequence, so that the words they formed would correctly determine Hashem's precise answer. It required a great measure of temimus, pure faith and wholeness of heart, to correctly interpret the Divine communication.

On various occasions we read in the Talmud that the message of the choshen was misread and misinterpreted, often with dire consequences. To correctly decipher the code required a rare degree of pure-heartedness and objectivity. By expunging every trace of ego and demonstrating that he was capable of rejoicing in his brother's good fortune, Aharon attained this degree of selflessness.

Aharon's quintessence reflected his loving embrace of his fellow Jews. Because he saw each Jew as a beloved brother, he excelled in uniting others, in fostering peace and harmony between people. Untainted by envy or self-aggrandizement, he knew how to draw forth the best in others and how to build on these strengths.

Aharon perceived no evil in anyone for he truly saw the inner light that ennobled every Jew. He was thus capable of using the illuminated letters of the urim v'tumim, and interpreting them as Hashem desired.

In our own lives we, too, can strive to attain a degree of Aharon's noble trait of being able to rejoice in another's good fortune and to discern their special virtues. By emphasizing the inherent goodness of our family members, our neighbors and co-workers, we too will merit the skill of interpreting life's message appropriately and communicating directly with our Divine source.

Get A Grip

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig (Torah.org)

With them you shall dress Aharon your brother and his sons with him. You shall anoint them, and fill their hands..." (28:41)

The Torah relates that Moshe is instructed to anoint Aharon and his sons and to "fill their hands". Rashi explains that the expression "fill their hands" refers to the act of inauguration. Rashi adds that in medieval times, a newly inaugurated official had a gauntlet placed in his hand to symbolize his new position of authority. Similarly, explains Rashi, the Torah uses the expression "filling the hands" to indicate the conferring of a new authority.

The Ramban questions the fact that Rashi associates a medieval custom with the usage of the expression in the Torah. What bearing should this medieval practice have on the definition of a Torah expression?

A person's hands reflect his state of mind. If a person fidgets he is revealing that he is nervous and insecure, traits which are usually present in an unfulfilled individual. Placing something within a person's hand for him to grasp, stabilizes his hand. By placing the gauntlet into the official's hands we indicate our desire for him to be fulfilled. In the vernacular we use the expression "having a grip on things" to indicate competency.

Rashi is not mentioning a historical custom to explain the definition of the word. Rather, Rashi is explaining that the psychological and emotional reason behind this medieval custom offers an insight into the human condition. This insight can be used to explain why the Torah refers to the inauguration process as "filling the hands". We are expressing our confidence that the

newly appointed individual will perform his responsibilities competently and will find his fulfillment through this service.

Close To The Chest

"and the fourth row: tarshish, shoham, and yashfeh..." (28:20)

Aharon wore an ornament on his chest called the "Choshen"; it had gold settings into which twelve precious gems were placed. Each gem represented one of the twelve sons of Yaakov. The last of the Choshen's gems was the "yashpeh". Rabbeinu Bechaya cites a Midrash which connects the yashpeh stone with the Tribe of Binyamin. Yashpeh, explains the Midrash, is a contraction of the words "yesh" and "peh" – "has a mouth"; it was chosen to represent Binyamin because its name reflects a praiseworthy trait displayed by him. Although Binyamin was aware that his brothers sold Yoseif into slavery, he did not reveal their actions to his father. If Binyamin was being lauded for his silence, why was the gem called "yashpeh" – "has a mouth"? Should the more appropriate name not be "ainpeh" – "has no mouth"? What trait did Binyamin exhibit through his silence?

The Talmud relates that Yaakov suspected that Lavan may attempt to substitute Leah for Rachel. Therefore, as a preventative measure he gave Rachel a secret password which would identify her to him on their wedding night. At the thought of her sister's public humiliation Rachel revealed to Leah the password which enabled Lavan's subterfuge to be successful. The Talmud identifies Rachel's behavior as an example of "tznius" – "modesty" and states that because of her exceptional display of tznius she merited to have great descendants who too would display exemplary acts of tznius: Shaul HaMelech, after being anointed by Shmuel as the Sovereign of Israel, did not reveal his status to his family members. Esther, while in the pageant which would determine the next queen of Persia, did not reveal her regal ancestry for fear that it would place the other girls at a disadvantage. What new definition of tznius is the Talmud revealing?

Tznius is generally defined as a code of modesty which determines our mode of dress and behavior. We approach this obligation as "bein adam lamakom", a responsibility that we have to our Creator. The Talmud is teaching us that the requirement to be modest is also "bein adam lachaveiro", a social responsibility. The laws of tznius require that we act in a manner which does not invade the space of others. Our actions must be measured in terms of how they will impact upon the sensitivities of our fellow man. The manner of dress required is not dictated by how much of the body must be covered alone, but by the awareness that dressing in a provocative manner may be an attack upon the senses of another as well. An outfit that meets the Halachic specifications in terms of its length may still violate the laws of tznius if it is designed in a manner which draws public attention.

Staying within our own space and not invading the space of others is not only relegated to attire. Speech is the area through which we have the greatest difficulty in focusing upon the sensitivities of others. All too often we speak up because of the benefit we derive from what we are saying, but fail to realize the damage we do to others with the content, decibel level and even verbosity of our speech.

All of the examples of tznius ascribed to the descendants of Rachel involve mastery over the spoken word. In Rachel's situation, the fact that she discerned the appropriate time to divulge sensitive information is highlighted. In the scenarios involving her descendants their ability to abstain from divulging information at personal cost is highlighted. Binyamin is the son of Rachel and it is this specific trait which is being heralded.

A person who has endured a terribly traumatic experience very often is unable to discuss it for fear that discussing it will cause him to relive the experience. Overcoming this fear and conversing with a person who cares about him helps ease the burden of the trauma. Binyamin's loss of his only maternal brother at the hands of his paternal brothers must have been a highly traumatic experience. The only one to whom he could convey his feelings was his father, yet he refrained from doing so. By assigning the yashpeh as the gem to represent Binyamin the Torah is attesting to the fact that his abstinence from discussing his brother's fate was not a result of his inability to divulge the information due to his trauma. On the contrary, "yesh peh", his ability to converse about the issue was intact. Although it might have been of great emotional benefit for Binyamin to discuss the matter with his father, the knowledge that the pain his father would receive when enlightened as to his sons' actions would not permit Binyamin to speak. This acute sensitivity to protecting others from pain, even at great personal sacrifice, stems from Binyamin's perfection of his inherited trait of tznius.