

A significant part of this week's *Parashah* deals with the *Bigdei Kehunah* / Priestly Garments. R' Avraham Dov Auerbach z"l (Chief Rabbi of Teveryah, Israel; died 2021) writes: The idea of clothing was something new after Adam ate from the *Etz Ha'da'at*, as we read (*Bereishit* 3:21), "Hashem Elokim made for Adam and his wife garments of skin, and He clothed them." Dressing oneself is something that is unique to human beings.

Before Adam's sin, R' Auerbach continues, man was primarily a spiritual being, and the small materialistic side of his personality did not interfere. Therefore, he did not require clothing in order to subdue his physical side. After the sin, however, man became primarily a physical being, and it became necessary to cover the body to remind man that his physical being is not his essence; his soul is his essence.

R' Auerbach notes that the only part of the body that normally remains uncovered is a person's face. This is because a person's face is the window into his inside. Every change in a person's thoughts and feelings can, generally, be read on a person's face.

The garments of a regular *Kohen* ensure that his body is covered, thus saving him from the disgrace of being unclothed like an animal, R' Auerbach writes. The garments of the *Kohen Gadol* add another dimension--they atone for sins that are unique to humans, among them, judging improperly (the *Choshen* / Breastplate), brazenness (the *Tzitz* / Headplate), and speaking *Lashon Ha'ara* (the *Me'il* / Cloak). (*Pitchei Avraham*)

## Shabbat

R' Chaim Elazar Shapira z"l (the *Munkatcher Rebbe*, known as the *Minchas Elazar* after his significant *Halachic* work; died 1937) writes: It is said in the name of R' Dov Ber z"l (the *Maggid of Mezeritch*, the successor to the *Ba'al Shem Tov*; died 1772) that it is a wonder that the Torah does not expressly command us to take a nap on *Erev Shabbat*. According to another version, R' Shapira writes, the *Maggid* said that it is a wonder that taking a nap on *Erev Shabbat* is not one of the Ten Commandments!

What is behind these surprising statements? The *Minchas Elazar* writes that the answer is obvious. On Friday night, a person must stay awake through the *Shabbat Seudah*, including the *Zemiroth*. In addition, he must set aside a significant amount of time for Torah study, which requires alertness and concentration. As such, it is no wonder at all that taking a nap is an important part of the *Shabbat* preparations.

Seen in this light, the *Minchas Elazar* continues, it is apparent that taking a nap before *Shabbat* is hinted to in the Torah, in the verse (*Shmot* 16:5), "And it shall be that on the sixth day when they prepare what they bring . . ." This verse is the source of the obligation to make all necessary preparations for *Shabbat*. But, it is a wonder that it is not one of the Ten Commandments! (*Divrei Torah* IX 13)

R' Naftali Goldberg z"l (rabbi of Sielec, Poland; author of *Kol Naftali*; died 1907) says: Sleeping on *Erev Shabbat* is mentioned expressly in the Torah. Specifically, Adam did it, as we read (*Bereishit* 2:21), "So Hashem Elokim cast a deep sleep upon the man and he slept; and He took one of his sides and He filled in flesh in its place." When did this occur? On *Erev Shabbat*! (The word, "*Va'yishan*" / "And he slept," is superfluous and suggests this lesson.)

(Quoted in *Otzar Peninei Ha'chassidut: Shabbat Kodesh* II p.46)

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## Parashat Zachor

Moshe Rabbeinu's name does not appear in this week's *Parashah*, which commentaries attribute to his saying, after the sin of the Golden Calf (*Shmot* 32:32), "And now, if You would but forgive their sin! But if not, erase me now from Your book that You have written." Even though Moshe's words were conditional, they made an impression, and his name was "erased" from one *Parashah*.

But why did Moshe ask to be erased from the Torah? R' Nosson David Rabinowitz z"l (1866-1930; the Parczew-Siedlce *Rebbe* in Poland) explains: We read that after the splitting of the Sea (*Shmot* 14:31), *Bnei Yisrael* "had faith in Hashem and in Moshe, His servant." This faith in Moshe prepared *Bnei Yisrael* to accept the Torah. But then, when *Bnei Yisrael* made the Golden Calf, they said (*Shmot* 32:1), "This man Moshe who brought us up from the land of Egypt--*Lo yadanu* / we do not know what became of him!" In the Torah, the verb "*Yada*" (יָדָה) means "to know," but it also means "to form a connection" (see *Bereishit* 4:1). Thus, *Bnei Yisrael* were declaring that they were ready to make a Golden Calf because they no longer felt connected to Moshe. *Kabbalists* say that every Jew's soul is connected to a particular letter in the Torah, while Moshe's soul encompasses all other souls and all letters of the Torah. Moshe therefore reasoned: If *Bnei Yisrael* no longer feel connected to me, they have also severed their ties with the Torah. As such, I (Moshe), as the sum total of all of them, no longer have a place in the Torah.

In most non-leap years, *Parashat Tetzaveh* coincides with *Parashat Zachor*, in which we read (*Devarim* 25:19), "It shall be when Hashem, your *Elokim*, gives you rest from all your enemies all around, in the Land that Hashem, your *Elokim*, gives you as an inheritance to possess it, you shall wipe out the memory of Amalek from under the heaven..." Why, asks R' Rabinowitz will Amalek be destroyed only after Hashem gives us rest in our land from all our other enemies? He explains:

We read (*Bereishit* 8:21) that the *Yetzer Ha'ra* is implanted in a person from his youth. Is this not a bit unfair? Would not giving a person his *Yetzer Ha'tov* first improve his odds of defeating the *Yetzer Ha'ra*? The answer, R' Rabinowitz writes, is that without darkness one cannot truly appreciate light. If not for the contrast with evil, one could not truly appreciate good. Therefore, evil has to precede good.

Amalek, say our Sages, is the paradigm of evil. That is why it attacked *Bnei Yisrael* as soon as they left Egypt, trying to stop the birth of the nation that would be the bearer of holiness at the moment of delivery, so-to-speak. And that is why Amalek must exist until the time when the world achieves its perfection. As long as we are still working to bring out all of the world's goodness, we must have the evil of Amalek to contrast it with.

How did *Bnei Yisrael* defeat Amalek in their first encounter in the desert? The Torah tells us (*Shmot* 17:11), "When Moshe raised his hand, *Yisrael* was stronger." When the Jewish People connect with the hands of a Moshe, with the spiritual power of a *Tzaddik*, we succeed. When we disconnect from the *Tzaddik*, when we ask rhetorically, "What good are Torah scholars?" we end up with a Golden Calf. Then, our *Parashah* hints, we effectively erase Moshe from the Torah.

(*V'eileh Ha'davarim She'ne'emru L'David*)

**"You shall command *Bnei Yisrael* that they shall take for you olive oil--pure, pressed for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually." (27:20)**

R' Yitzchak Klein z"l *Hy"d* (rabbi of Kosice, Slovakia; killed in the Holocaust) writes: The primary *Mitzvah* of Torah study is to engage in the give-and-take that leads to deriving practical *Halachah* from the *Gemara*. This is why, explains R' David Halevi z"l (1586-1667; Poland; known as the "*Taz*"), the blessing before studying Torah uses the verb "*La'asok*" / "To engross ourselves in the words of Torah." It is not sufficient to merely "read" or "say" the words of Torah.

R' Klein continues: This type of study has an advantage and a disadvantage. On the one hand, superficial study is easier, but one who studies superficially does not retain what he learned. On the other hand, studying in depth takes concentration and exertion, but its reward is that one remembers what he learned. This is what the *Gemara* (*Berachot* 63b) is teaching when it says (commenting on *Bemidbar* 19:14), "The Torah is preserved only in one who kills himself over it."

R' Klein concludes: This lesson is alluded to in our verse: "Take for you olive oil--pure," *i.e.*, if you want your Torah knowledge to be pure and clear, it should be "pressed for illumination," *i.e.*, you should press yourself to study hard. Then, you will "kindle the lamp continually," *i.e.*, your learning will stay with you.



**"You shall make vestments of sanctity for Aharon your brother, for *Kavod* / glory and *Tiferet* / splendor." (28:2)**

R' Eliyahu z"l (1720-1797; the *Vilna Gaon*) writes: *Tiferet* refers to greatness that is part of a person's essence, while *Kavod* refers to external greatness. For example, if a son has a wise father, the son's pride at being the flesh-and-blood of a wise man is "*Tiferet*," as we read (*Mishlei* 17:6), "The *Tiferet* of children is their parents." In contrast, the distinction that a servant gets from having a rich or distinguished master is "*Kavod*," because his association with his master is incidental. Both of these types of distinction were found in the *Kohen Gadol*, the *Vilna Gaon* writes: He was someone who was honorable in his own right (*i.e.*, *Tiferet*), and he wore expensive garments, which gave him external honor (*Kavod*).

We read (*Esther* 1:4) that Achashveirosh "displayed the riches of the *Kavod* of his kingdom and the *Tiferet* of his excellent majesty." The *Gemara* (*Megillah* 12a) comments: "He wore the *Bigdei Kehunah* / Priestly Garments." This means, writes the *Vilna Gaon*, that his display included both aspects--*Tiferet* / his hereditary wealth and *Kavod* / the wealth of his kingdom.

(*Peirush Ha'GRA Al Derech Ha'pshat, Esther* 1:4)