

This week's *Parashah* describes the *Bigdei Kehunah* / the garments of the *Kohen Gadol* and the other *Kohanim*. We read about one of them, the *Choshen Ha'mishpat* / Breastplate of Judgment (28:29-30), "Aharon shall bear the names of the sons of *Yisrael* on the *Choshen Ha'mishpat* on his heart... Into the *Choshen Ha'mishpat* you shall place the *Urim* and the *Tumim*, and they shall be on Aharon's heart when he comes before *Hashem*, and Aharon shall bear the judgment of *Bnei Yisrael* on his heart constantly before *Hashem*."

Why does the Torah say three times that that the *Choshen* should be worn over Aharon's heart? R' Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi z"l (1929-2023; *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshivat Ateret Yisrael in Yerushalayim and Modi'in Illit) explains: In fact, the Torah is not telling us at all where the *Choshen* should be worn; we already know that from the prior verses that describe how the *Choshen* should be hung from the *Kohen Gadol's* shoulders. Rather, our verses are telling us that there are three subjects that the *Kohen Gadol* should keep on his heart always: the names of the sons of *Yisrael*--i.e., his brethren; the *Urim V'tumim*--i.e., the Name of G-d; and the judgment of *Bnei Yisrael*--i.e., the needs and best interests of the Jewish People.

The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 139a) says that Aharon merited to wear the *Choshen* because was not jealous when his younger brother Moshe was appointed *Hashem's* emissary to take *Bnei Yisrael* out of Egypt; to the contrary, Aharon rejoiced when he saw Moshe. R' Ezrachi observes: The *Gemara* is teaching that the fact that Aharon was able to empty his heart of selfish feelings was what made him suited to carry the Jewish People on his heart. (*Birkat Mordechai* 5759-5763)

Shabbat

Midrash Tanna D'vei Eliyahu teaches: A person should awaken early on *Shabbat* to study Torah; then he should go to the *Bet Ha'kneset* and *Bet Ha'midrash* to [pray and] read the Torah and the *Nevi'im* / Prophets [i.e., the *Haftarah*]; then he should go home to eat and drink, as we read (*Kohelet* 9:7), "Go, eat your bread with joy and drink your wine with a glad heart, for *Elokim* has already approved your deeds." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Yissachar Shlomo Teichtal z"l *Hy"d* (1885-1945; rabbi and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Pieštany, Czechoslovakia) writes: This *Midrash* provides strong support to those pious individuals and people of good deeds who are particular not to pray until after they have studied Torah. If possible, one should do this on weekdays as well, for it is a very good practice, R' Teichtal adds.

Notably, *Rashi* z"l writes (in his commentary to *Berachot* 5b) that studying Torah before *Shacharit* is prohibited. The *Tosafot* argue, however, saying that they are not aware of any source for *Rashi's* position. To the contrary, the *Tosafot* assert, there is proof from the *Gemara* (*Berachot* 14b) that learning before *Shacharit* is permitted. R' Teichtal quotes R' Avraham Abisch z"l (1690-1769; rabbi of Frankfurt, Germany), who explains that *Rashi* and *Tosafot* are not really arguing. If a person lives in a constant state of closeness to *Hashem*, he should pray immediately upon waking up; studying Torah--especially *Halachah*, which deals with our mundane world--will actually distance such a person from *Hashem*. The typical person, however, will become closer to *Hashem* and will pray with greater joy if he studies Torah first, as we read (*Tehilim* 19:9), "The commands of *Hashem* are upright, gladdening the heart." We read further in *Mishlei* (12:25), "When there is worry in man's heart, . . . let a good thing convert it to gladness." The Torah is called "a good thing" (*Mishlei* 4:2); it can convert man's worries to gladness.

(*Seder Zemirot L'Shabbat Kodesh Mishneh Sachir* p.37)

Hamaayan / The Torah Spring

לע"נ חנה שרה בת משה אהרן ע"ה

10815 Meadowhill Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901 / 301-775-9623

Send e-mail to: TheTorahSpring@gmail.com

Donate online: <https://thetorahspring.org/donate>

Donations to *Hamaayan* are tax deductible.



Sponsored by
the Vogel family

on the *yahrzeit* of Tziporah bat Isaac (Argand) Schneider a"h

“You shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Yisrael . . . You shall place both stones on the shoulder straps of the Ephod, remembrance stones for Bnei Yisrael. Aharon shall carry their names before Hashem on both his shoulders as a remembrance.” (28:11-12)

Rashi z”l comments on the words “as a remembrance”: “So that *Hashem* will see the names of the tribes written before Him and He will remember their righteousness.”

R’ David Meir Krolewiecki z”l (Lomza and Warsaw, Poland; late 19th century) writes: *Rashi* is addressing an apparent redundancy in the verse--“remembrance stones . . . as a remembrance”--and his explanation may be understood in light of the following idea:

We read (*Vayikra* 26:42), “I will remember My covenant with Yaakov and also My covenant with Yitzchak, and also My covenant with Avraham I will remember . . .” Why is this verse included in the *Tochachah* / the terrible punishments that are foretold to come if *Bnei Yisrael* reject *Hashem*? R’ Yeshayah Halevi Horowitz z”l (the *Shelah Hakadosh*; rabbi of Prague and Yerushalayim; died 1630) explains: We tend to think that it is good for us if *Hashem* remembers the Patriarchs, but that is not necessarily so. When we are unworthy, it can be bad for us if *Hashem* remembers the Patriarchs, for He may compare us unfavorably to our Forefathers and become even more angry with us.

Rashi is saying, R’ Krolewiecki writes, that our verse is not redundant, for there are two different remembrances spoken of in the verse: (1) “Remembrance stones for Bnei Yisrael,” and (2) “Before Hashem . . . as a remembrance.” If the stones remind Bnei Yisrael who their ancestors were--the twelve sons of Yaakov--and *Bnei Yisrael* act in a way that befits the descendants of such righteous people, then, says the end of the verse (as explained by *Rashi*), “*Hashem* will see the names of the tribes written before Him and He will remember their righteousness” in circumstances that will be good for *Bnei Yisrael*. (*Divrei Negidim: Imrei Kedem*)

“It shall be on Aharon's forehead so that Aharon shall bring forgiveness . . .” (28:38)

The *Gemara* (*Yoma* 7b) records a dispute whether the *Kohen Gadol's* *Tzitz* / headband atones for sin when the *Kohen Gadol* is not wearing it. Rabbi Yehuda says that it does not, as implied by a straightforward reading of our verse. Rabbi Shimon, however, holds that it does atone even when the *Kohen Gadol* is not wearing it, as long as it is whole. [Until here from the *Gemara*]

R’ Eliyahu Ha’Tzarfati z”l (1715-1805; rabbi of Fez, Morocco) writes: According to Rabbi Shimon, the verse’s first word, “*Ve’hayah*” / “It shall be,” must be understood as saying: “The *Tzitz* shall bring forgiveness as long as it shall be,” but not if it is broken. Then, “On Aharon’s forehead” is a separate thought, telling us where Aharon should wear the *Tzitz*. Notably, R’ Eliyahu writes, the *Trop* / cantillation mark on “*Ve’hayah*” is a “*Zarka*,” whose name sounds like the Hebrew word that means “to throw.” This indicates that the verse is speaking of a time when the *Tzitz* is “thrown” aside and not on the *Kohen Gadol's* forehead.

(*Aderet Eliyahu*)

“Now you shall command Bnei Yisrael that they shall take to you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually. In the Ohel Mo’ed / Tent of Meeting, outside the Parochet / Partition that is near the Testimonial-Luchot, Aharon and his sons shall arrange it from evening until morning, before Hashem, an eternal decree for their generations, from Bnei Yisrael.” (27:20-21)

R’ Aryeh Yehuda Leib Teomim z”l (1727-1831; Brody, Galicia) asks: Why does the verse command expressly that the olive oil be given to Moshe? Also, why was it necessary to mention that the *Menorah* was “near the Testimonial-Luchot”? Lastly, why is this *Mitzvah* in particular called “an eternal decree for their generations”?

R’ Teomim explains based on the *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 22b), which asks: Does he need the *Menorah's* light? For all of the 40 years that *Bnei Yisrael* were in the desert, they traveled by *Hashem's* light! (Many understand the *Gemara* to be asking: “Does He--*Hashem*--need the *Menorah's* light?” However, the *Tosafot* explain the *Gemara* to be asking: Did Aharon need the *Menorah's* light when he entered the *Ohel Mo’ed*? The Pillar of Cloud illuminated *Bnei Yisrael's* entire camp!) The *Gemara* answers that the purpose of the *Menorah* is not to give light, but rather to testify that the *Shechinah* resides among *Bnei Yisrael*. How so? Because the “western light” held the same volume of oil as the *Menorah's* other lights--enough for a long winter night--yet it remained lit for 24 hours. [Until here from the *Gemara*]

R’ Teomim continues: If the purpose of the *Menorah* were to illuminate the inside of the *Ohel Mo’ed* for the *Kohanim*, then perhaps the *Kohanim* should supply the oil. However, since that was not its purpose--rather, it was meant to testify to *Hashem's* Presence among the Jewish People--it was appropriate that “public” oil be used. Therefore, the Torah commands that the oil be give to Moshe--so he could acquire it on behalf of all of *Bnei Yisrael*. This also explains why the Torah says that the *Menorah* should be “near the Testimonial-Luchot,” for the *Menorah* itself provided testimony.

R’ Teomim concludes: The miracle that the western light remained lit for 24 hours ceased with the passing of Shimon *Ha’tzaddik*, early in the Second Temple period. One might think that there was no longer a reason to light the *Menorah* at the point, since it no longer testified to the *Shechinah's* Presence. To dispel such a notion, the Torah says, “an eternal decree for their generations.”

(*Ya’alat Chen*)



“And you shall speak to all the wise-hearted people whom I have invested with a spirit of wisdom . . .” (28:3)

R’ Levi ben Gershon z”l (*Ralbag*; 1288-1344) writes: We learn from here that all wisdom that a person has comes to him from *Hashem*. *Ralbag* adds for emphasis: “And that is the absolute truth!” (*Perushei Ha’Torah L’Ralbag*)