



# KINDER TORAH

ט"ז

PARASHAS TETZAVEH

## THINK ABOUT OTHERS

“ **W**hy is the parasha of korbonos located next to the parasha of *Bigdei Kehuna* (Priestly Garments)?” The Gemora (Erechin 16a) asks this famous question. The Gemora answers, “Just as korbonos *michaper* (provide an atonement), so too *Bigdei Kehuna* – *michaprim*. The *kesones* (shirt-like garment) atones for the spilling of blood. The *michnasayim* (pants) atone for immorality. The *mitznefes* (turban) atones for conceit. The *avnet* (sash) atones for improper thoughts. The *choshen* (breastplate) atones for *dinim* – sins involving court disputes. The *ephod* atones for *avodah zara* (idol worship). The *meil* (robe) atones for loshon hora. The *tzitz* (headband) atones for brazen deeds. What a merit it was to have a Beis HaMikdash and a Kohen Godol, whose clothing could provide a *kapora* for all of these sins!

**T**he Keli Yakar points out a difficulty in the verses. When Hashem commanded Moshe to tell the people to make the *Bigdei Kehuna*, He began with the *choshen*, followed by the *ephod* (Shemos 28:4). When the Bnei Yisrael proceeded to make the garments, they first made the *ephod*, then the *choshen* (28:6,15). Why did they not follow the order that Hashem commanded?

**W**e find the answer in the Gemora Erachin. The *choshen* atoned for sins involving court disputes. The sinners corrupted the laws that govern human relationships. The *ephod*, on the other hand, atoned for idol worship, a sin between man and Hashem alone. By placing the *choshen* before the *ephod*, the Almighty is showing us that His prime concern is how we treat each other. We must behave justly, by adhering to His *dinim*. Secondly, we must carry out our obligations to Him directly. The proofs of this order of priorities are the two events in parashas Noach. The generation of the Tower of Bavel served *avodah zara*, yet they were not destroyed. The generation of the flood, on the other hand, corrupted the *dinim* by stealing. Because of their sin, they were wiped out. Now, the Keli Yakar’s question becomes even more puzzling. If this is indeed the correct order of priorities, why did the Bnei Yisrael make the *ephod* first?

**T**he answer is that Klal Yisrael was concerned about Hashem’s honor. The mitzvos of honoring Him should precede the mitzvos of honoring our fellow man. Therefore, they took the sin of *avodah zara* most seriously, and the *dinim* were secondary. The Keli Yakar also offers an alternative answer. Hashem Himself is able to forgive His own honor. However, he

cannot pardon an injustice done to a man if the wronged man does not forgive the wrongdoer. Therefore, He gave precedence to the *dinim*. Because He could not forgive them, He wanted us to be careful not to transgress them. However, for the Bnei Yisrael the situation was reversed. They were able to forgive each other for damages or injuries. However, they could not pardon sins against Hashem. Only He can do that. Therefore, they placed *avodah zara* first, because it was not within their power to forgive its sins.

**I**f we think deeply into the words of the Keli Yakar, we discover a fundamental principle of the Torah. Hashem is most concerned about our honor and well-being. We are most concerned about His honor. Each one is more concerned about the other than about himself. This is the correct way to live. Make the needs of others your number one priority. This is the way of tsaddikim. This is the way of Hashem.



*Kinderlach . . .*  
When you wake up in the morning, who do you think about? Hashem. You say to Him “*modeh ani.*” Then whom do you think about? The one sleeping in the next bed. Be careful not to wake him up by making noise. You get dressed in nice, clean, *tsnuah* clothing to honor Hashem. You honor Imma by thanking her for preparing delicious food for you. And so your day goes on, thinking about Hashem and your fellow man. Your main concern is honoring them and giving them *nachas*. You are on the right *derech* (path) *kinderlach*. The *derech* of tsaddikim. The *derech* of Hashem.

## BETTER THAN GOLD

“ **T**he Torah of Your mouth is better than thousands of gold and silver” (Tehillim 119:72). Most people hold gold and silver in high regard. They spend huge amounts of time and effort amassing great fortunes of wealth. Something that

is worth such a large investment must be valuable. Dovid HaMelech is telling us that Torah is more precious. Rabbeinu Bechaye illustrates two proofs from this week’s parasha.

“ **T**hey shall take for you pure pressed olive oil for lighting the eternal light” (Shemos 27:20). The first drop of pure oil that comes out of the olive is for the Menorah in the Beis HaMikdash. That Menorah represents Torah. The remaining oil from the olive is used in the *Mincha* (grain) offerings, which are eaten. Normally, a person who has two grades of oil will put the better quality into his food, and save the lesser quality for lighting his lamps. The Torah instructs us to do the opposite. We must save our best oil for the lamp, which represents Torah. That is the highest priority. The lesser grade oil can then be used for food.

“ **S**et in gold, they shall be mounted” (Shemos 28:20). The precious stones of the *Choshen* (Breastplate) were set in gold mountings. Written on the stones were the Hebrew letters of the names of the tribes. This shows us that the Torah is more valuable than gold and jewels. The gold is used as a basis to mount the jewels. Therefore, the jewels are more valuable than the gold. However, the jewels themselves are only a basis to the letters of the Torah! They are more valuable than everything. The world was created with these Hebrew letters. Therefore, everything is contained within them.

*Kinderlach . . .*  
Put your best efforts into learning. Just as we give our best, purest oil to the Menorah, give your Torah learning your best efforts. You will be rewarded with a profit whose value is too great to be counted. A smart businessman will tell you to do the work that brings you the most profit. If you can earn gold instead of silver, take the job that pays gold. Precious stones are an even better wage. What is the most valuable thing you can acquire? Torah. More precious than gold, silver, and diamonds. Work hard learning Torah. You will become wealthy beyond your wildest dreams.

Parasha Questions:

- What were the twelve stones of the *choshen* and how were they arranged? (28:17-20)
- What would happen to Aharon Kohen if he entered the Kodesh lacking one of the *Bigdei Kehuna*? (Rashi 28:35)
- Which korbonos were necessary to offer on the mizbeach in order to sanctify it? (29:37-46)