

Candle Lighting

7:17

S"Z Kriat Shema

10:21

Sunset

7:35

Motzei Shabbat

8:11



Parshat HaShavu'ah

צו

TZAV

ח' ניסן תשע"ה

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A PUBLICATION OF



Ashreinu

חלקינו מה טוב

Enriching and Enhancing Your Study of the Weekly Torah Portion

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BEAUTIFUL GARBAGE

RABBI AVI HOCHMAN

In any given relationship there are certain responsibilities that one should take upon him or herself for the betterment of the relationship. Giving someone a ride, helping someone with their work, washing the dishes—all of these are an integral part of building the relationship.

One such responsibility, perhaps the least glorious, is taking out the garbage. It smells and at times can spill on you. Once, when taking out the garbage, I pushed too hard to fit the bag in the can and I cut my thumb and needed stitches! It is an unpleasant and lowly job.

“וְלִבַּשׁ הַכֹּהֵן מְדוּ...וְהָרִים אֶת הַדָּשָׁן”—“And the Kohen shall wear his linen tunic...and he should lift out the ashes...” (Vayikra 6:3). Rashi explains that word מְדוּ teaches us that the kohen’s clothes must be made according to his size. They must fit perfectly. Rav Moshe Wolfson wonders why the Torah waits until now to teach us this lesson regarding the clothes of the kohen? Wouldn’t it have made more sense to teach this back in Parshat Tetzaveh? Furthermore, why discuss the fit of the clothes specifically here with the mitzvah of תְּרוּמַת הַדָּשָׁן and not anywhere else within Sefer Vayikra and its discussion of the kohen’s job?

Rav Wolfson explains that the mitzvah of תְּרוּמַת הַדָּשָׁן is for the kohen to take the ashes that were left on the *mizbe'ach*. There were so many important jobs in the Beit Hamikdash that required the kohen to dress in his finest clothes, his בגדי כהונה. Perhaps the kohen might think that the job of cleaning up ashes is so insignificant and demeaning that it’s not really important that his clothes are perfect. Does it really matter if the tunic is a drop too short or too long? Does it matter if it doesn’t completely fit? If you think about it, why would a job of cleaning up the “garbage” require such dignified clothing?

Continued page 4





BRING ON THE GLORY

CHAYA COHEN ('16)

MONTHLY WRITER

Today, when one hears the word *smicha*, the ordination of Rabbis immediately comes to mind. But in this week's Torah portion, the original usage is revealed in the context of Aharon and his two sons being anointed as the first kohanim. The anointment is described as an intense ceremony that requires vestments, anointing oils, a bull, two rams, a basket of unleavened bread, the witnessing power of the entire community, and more.

But of all the rituals performed here, the strangest one might be the painting of blood on Aharon and his son's right ears, thumbs, and big toes. What is the significance of marking the kohanim on these three particular parts? What important life lesson can we learn from this esoteric ritual?

The ear is marked because it is the place where the outside world enters man's consciousness. Once marked in this way, each new priest would hear things and perceive things differently. Perhaps only holy sounds will now enter the ear, or the regular sounds that enter will become consecrated in a new way.

The thumb is marked in order to remind the kohanim that matters of life and death reside in the work of their hands. They are responsible for the deaths of countless animals, and, through this expiating action, they are responsible for the lives of the entire community. Their hands do God's work in this world.

Continued page 4

AN UNBREAKABLE CONNECTION

JOLIE DAVIES ('16)

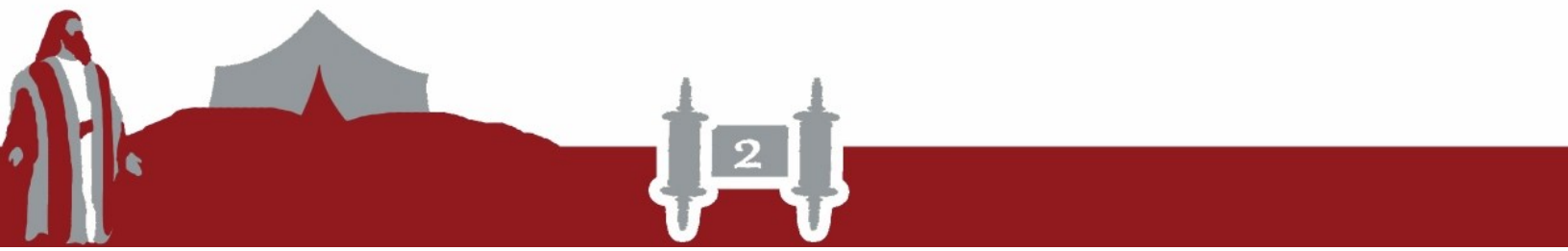
The names of all the parshiot are deliberate. Each one contains its own underlying message. The title of this week's parsha, "Tzav," means command, referring to the particular command to give different kinds of korbanot to Hashem.

Another definition for the word "Tzav" is "connection", meaning that Hashem's commands establish a connection between Him and an individual person. The Zohar states that Hashem is infinite and defies all categories and boundaries; pondering this can make us feel insignificant and miniscule. Yet, God gave the Torah to human beings, creating a bond between Him and the Jewish people and giving us significance and a higher purpose.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe brings up an interesting point: even if one did not fulfill a particular mitzvah, the connection to Hashem is still present. This is because the purpose of mitzvot is to define the role of the individual in relation to Hashem.

The best way to connect to Him is to fully observe the commandments, but even when one does not observe them, he still has a higher purpose in the world and as a member of the Jewish nation. The connection is still there, even if it could be improved.

Continued page 4





EMBRACE THE COMMAND

JORDAN LANDES ('18)

The first word of this week's parsha, "Tzav," is generally translated as "command." In the world we live in today, the word "command" is not always well received. In our society, nobody really wants to be told what to do. However, in Judaism, we believe in a highly structured lifestyle that is based on commandments. Although the word "mitzvah" is often translated as "good deed," it in fact means commandment. This is a very important difference. When we recite a bracha before a mitzvah we say, "Blessed are you Hashem our God who has commanded us to...". Without the order from Hashem, the act we are doing isn't a mitzvah, it is simply an act of kindness.

Based on this idea, we can better understand Chazal's statement that a person who performs a mitzvah because he wants to is not as admirable as a person who performs a mitzvah out of a sense of obligation. Rabbi Berel Wein gives a great explanation as to why this might be true. It is much harder to do something when you have to vs. when you want to. We all have a voice inside of us that guides our actions. The voice does not always want to listen when another voice tells it what to do.

The Jewish people are like Hashem's "army". An army is based on the idea of obligation, responsibility, and command. Without that structure, an army would simply be a group of individuals, each of whom had only his own best interests at heart. Discipline and command are necessary foundations for any army, including Bnei Yisrael. Viewing ourselves as soldiers and seeing God as the commander enables us to appreciate our obligation to perform mitzvot without resentment.

FIRE OF TORAH

ZACK BEN - EZRA ('18)

Parshat Tzav discusses the kohanim and their service in the Mishkan and, later, the Beit Hamikdash. The parsha mentions that the kohanim kept a constant fire on the altar as part of their *avodah*. The process they performed included taking the ashes and bringing them to the outside of the camp and putting new wood on the altar.

Just like the fire on the altar was constantly burning, our fire and passion for Torah must always be burning inside of us. As human beings, we are constantly struggling to be inspired. Although we might feel inspiration after seeing, hearing about, or experiencing a powerful event, that inspiration is often very short-lived. Our parsha teaches us how to keep this fire for Torah always burning inside of us.

The key is change. Just like the kohanim would change the wood on the altar constantly, we must always be changing and growing. The way for us to do that is to keep learning Torah constantly. Additionally, just like the kohanim would take the ashes and treat them in a holy way, we must do the same with our "ashes". We cannot disregard the things we have previously learned. We must continue to review and reflect on what we have learned and build on that knowledge to keep the fire of Torah burning inside of us constantly.



Rabbi Hochman continued

The Torah is reminding us here that this job is a central and an integral part of the overall עבודת המקדש. We should never think that just because our job is not the most important or the one that gets the most attention it doesn't mean it is not significant. Every role that we play or task that we are given plays a part in the larger picture.

If this is true regarding how we perceive our given tasks, then it is also true in regards to how we dress ourselves for our own service to Hashem. Our appearance says a tremendous amount about how we view our job. Every day we are given the task of serving Hashem with all types of *avodah*, and sometimes some jobs are more exciting and interesting than others. However, the Torah is reminding us that no matter what the task, we always need to give 100% in body, mind, and action.

Cohen continued

Lastly, the toe, a seemingly insignificant part of the body, provides us with balance. Perhaps the anointing of the kohen's toe serves to remind them that only through the life God lends can we walk our designated paths.

This special anointing reminds the kohanim to be mindful of Hashem's set plan and that they should walk the earth with *emunah* in Hashem. So, when Moshe slaughters the animal and paints the blood on Aharon and his sons, he is conferring their designated holiness upon them.

Today, in lieu of animal sacrifice, we offer God the service of our hearts in the forms of prayer and unwavering devotion. In this way, we are all like kohanim, drawing near to Hashem with our own appropriate offerings. But, we still have the task of consecrating what we hear, what we touch, and how we walk in the world so that our lives can be imbued with Hashem and his glory.

Davies continued

The Torah's goal is to encourage us to constantly seek a deeper level of connection with Hashem. For example, by giving *tzedaka*, a mitzvah indirectly mentioned in Parshat Tzav, one strengthens his connection with Hashem by giving something away to another person who is less fortunate. "Tzav" is meant to give us encouragement throughout the generations. Ultimately, the real encouragement is the knowledge that by having Hashem's laws and commands we are truly connected with Him.

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