



THANK YOU HASHEM

For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Tetzaveh

HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

ולא יזח החשן מעל האפוד...

"The choshen shall not budge from the ephod..."

ONE OF THE 365 prohibitions in the Torah is for the *Choshen* to move from upon the *Ephod*. The holy Degel Machaneh Ephraim points out that each of the mitzvos are eternal, maintaining relevance in every age and stage. What, then, is the meaning of this prohibition in our generation, centuries removed from the *bigdei kehunah*? The *navi* Yeshayahu rebuked his generation for their rote observance of the Torah's commandments, paraphrasing Hashem's message: "They have honored Me with their lips, but their hearts were far from Me." The Torah and mitzvos are intended to serve as vessels which allow for the cultivation and expression of our desire for a relationship with the Giver of the Torah, our Father in heaven. Chazal tell us that "*Rachmanah libah ba'*", Hashem desires our hearts, and that "whether one does a lot or a little, what matters is that his heart is focused for the sake of Heaven." Oftentimes, because of the many vehicles of expressing this desire and their obligatory nature, it is possible for the purpose of the Torah's obligations to become obscured to the point that we forget about what spirit they are intended to help nurture. When this occurs, our engagement with Yiddishkeit can become a robotic and mechanical process, devoid of any personal import or essential meaning; countless words of *tefillah* ultimately disjointed from a prayerful heart. The Degel sees these words, "*V'lo yizach haChoshen mei'al haEiphod*" as yet another warning about this



malady. The *Choshen*, worn on the heart, symbolizes emotional investment and a spirit of meaning. "*Eiphod*," which shares the same numerical value as "*Peh* - Mouth," symbolizes the vessel of *tefillah* which is intended to serve as a channel through which we can express our love and awe of Hashem. Thus, in commanding us not to move the *Choshen* (heart) from upon the *Eiphod* (mouth), Hashem is reminding each and every Jew about the importance to ensure that our halacha observance serves to allow our emotional investment to merit expression instead of squashing that essential spirit. 🙏

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 👑 Hashem commands Moshe regarding the pure olive oil which will be used in the Menorah Ahron is to kindle each day.
- 👑 Description of the *bigdei kehuna*. All kohanim wore: 1) *Kesones* — a full-length linen tunic, 2) *Michnasayim* —linen pants, 3) *Mitznefes* —a linen turban; 4) *Avneit*—a long sash above the waist.
- 👑 The Kohen Gadol wore four additional garments: 5) *Eifod* - an apron-like garment, 6) *Choshen* - a breastplate containing twelve precious stones inscribed with the names of the twelve *shevatim*, 7) *Me'il* - a cloak made of blue wool with gold bells and decorative pomegranates on its hem; 8) *Tzitz* - a golden plate worn on the forehead, bearing the inscription "*Kodesh L'Shem*".
- 👑 Hashem gives detailed instructions for the seven-day initiation of Ahron and his four sons into the *kehuna*, and for the making of the golden Mizbaech upon which the *ketores* was burned.

P'nimiyus haParsha

An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

ואתה תצוה את־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיָקְחוּ אֵלֶיךָ שֶׁמֶן זַיִת זָךְ קְתִיב לְמֵאוֹר לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד...

“And you will command the b'nei Yisrael to bring to you refined olive oil, crushed, for illumination; to kindle the candles of the Menorah...”

OUR PARSHA BEGINS with the words, “And you will command the b'nei Yisrael to bring to you refined olive oil, crushed, for illumination; to kindle the candles of the Menorah.” This abrupt commencement, in addition to the obvious absence of Moshe’s name, highlights a fact that becomes clearer and clearer as we read on: Moshe’s name is entirely absent from *parshas Tetzaveh*. The Ba’al HaTurim and others point out that this absence fulfills Moshe’s request after the *cheit ha’eigel* of “Erase me from Your Book”. Even though this request was contingent on a condition that was never met (Hashem’s refusal to forgive the Jewish nation), having emerged from Moshe’s mouth, it had to be fulfilled in some form, and that was by having his name left out of *parshas Tetzaveh* completely, which, as the 20th parsha, may be seen as alluded to within Moshe’s words – “*M’sifrecha – M’sefer Cha’f*”, “from Your 20th Book.”

The Lubavitcher Rebbe *zy”a* sees the absence of Moshe’s name in the context of the oil that was to be used in the kindling of the Menorah as holding a deep message about this tzaddik’s eternal role. Our tradition places a great deal of emphasis on the significance of names, going so far as to teach that a person’s life-mission is encapsulated in his or her name (which is one of the reasons we add a name to an ailing individual, in the attempt of granting the patient a new mission and thus additional years in this world). However, even so, a name is still essentially a human construct which enables the abstract essence of a person or thing to manifest in the world. In its purest form, that spiritual essence is devoid of any name – we do not give a name to a newborn baby immediately after birth because the soul has not yet sufficiently settled in this world so as to require (or contain the capacity to constrict itself into) a name.

Moshe Rabbeinu’s task as leader of the Jewish nation was to embody the quintessential Jew; the ideal model of an oved Hashem. In this capacity, the essential Jewishness emanating from his very being would uncover the Jewish spark within every single Jew. His *avodah* as the tzaddik was to lay the most fundamental foundations for spiritual growth by drilling deep into the Jewish heart until he reached the core of the essential Jewishness of our collective soul to allow a mighty flow of untouchable holiness, untainted purity, and infinite yearning for a relationship with our Creator to come gushing forth. In order to achieve this response, Moshe would need to be deeply in tune with the collectivity of the essential Jewish spirit he embodied in his own spiritual structure. Always aware of the essential aspect at the core of his own soul, Moshe would be able to easily draw that element out of the souls in his charge.

The Jewish nation did not light the Menorah – Ahron did. But they needed to bring the oil, to demonstrate their willingness to be a part, to prepare vessels for the awesome light of Torah revealed by the great tzaddikim. Awakening this willingness and preparation is the domain of the Moshe Rabbeinu, the tzaddik whose focus is constantly fixed on the essentiality of our nation’s collective soul, that core of perfect holiness we share at the deepest level of our identity. Thus, in the context of the b’nei Yisrael bringing the oil for the Menorah, Hashem refers to Moshe without using his name. This demonstrates that in order to succeed in his mission to wake up the sleeping heart of the Jewish nation, he would need to remain ever-connected to a place that reached beyond his name, to the most essential aspect of his being; his essence, his core in *Knesses Yisrael*, the collective Jewish soul. Only then would he be able to reveal the essential identity of each and every Jew, inspiring them to prepare a vessel into which the light of Ahron’s flickering candles could rest to light up the world. 🕯



Revealing his own essential Jewishness enables the tzaddik to perceive the intrinsic holiness in every Jewish soul.

Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

THE CHERNOVITZER RAV begins his exploration of *Tefillas Mincha* by explaining that this prayer is an extension of the ego-obliterating rectification of Hashem’s crown that takes place during *Mussaf*. If during *Mussaf* we have the overwhelming opportunity to play a role in “fixing the crown of the king,” (“*Kesser yitnu lecha etc.*”), *Mincha* signifies our placing the crown on the king’s head. However much awe and gratitude we feel during *Mussaf*, we should rightfully feel even more overwhelmed by Hashem’s presence and love during *Mincha* when we place the crown on His head, so to speak. Indeed, because of our great trembling in our proximity to His Presence, we cannot properly position the crown, and He Himself must place it where it belongs. This is as the Zlotchover Maggid interpreted the verse, “*Tov asisah im avdecha*,” “You have done kindness with Your servant.” On a deeper level, these words may be read, “**Tov**”: The bulk of any good we manage to do, “**Asisah**”: You Yourself do, “**im avdecha**”: with only minimal participation on our part. *Mincha* is a joint effort, where Hashem takes part in the process and completes our attempt to serve Him. This, explains the Chernovitzer, is why *Mincha* takes a minimal amount of time. During *Mincha*, we do whatever we can, but ultimately Hashem does the rest. Therefore, we can only say so much before our awareness of Hashem’s grandeur kicks in and we realize that “*lecha dumiyah tehillah*,” “For You, silence is praise.” Because *Mincha* signifies a direct encounter with Hashem, the aspect of “*lecha*”, “*dumiyah tehillah*”, the only praise we can offer is to remain silent and allow Hashem to complete our effort. 🕯

This section is adapted from the sefer “Sidduro Shel Shabbos” by R’ Chaim of Chernowitz zy”a (1760-1816)

Profiles of Tzaddikim

Biographical sketches of the Chassidic Masters

The Baal HaTanya zy"ta

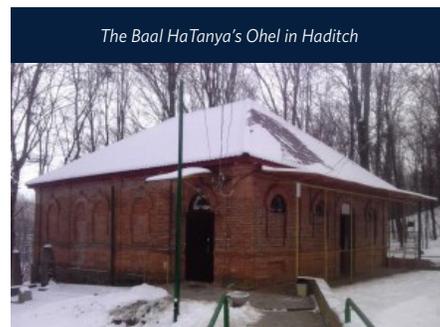
Reb Shneur Zalman was born in Laznia, White Russia in 1745 (5505). He displayed extraordinary signs of genius from a very early age. At the tender age of eight years old, he wrote an all-inclusive commentary on the Torah based on the teachings of Rashi, Ramban, and Ibn Ezra. By the time he was 12, he began delivering a weekly halachic discourse regarding the laws of *Kiddush haChodesh*. It was then that the townspeople started to refer to him as "Rav."

The young tzaddik married Sterna Segal at age 15. She was the daughter of Yehuda Leib Segal, a wealthy resident of Vitebsk, whose support enabled Reb Shneur Zalman to spend his days immersed in intense Torah study. During this period of his life, he was exposed to mathematics, philosophy, and Kabbalah, further expanding his intellectual reach.

In 1764 (5524) he joined the court of the Maggid of Mezritch, becoming his foremost, as well as his youngest, disciple. It was during the 12 years he spent with the Maggid that he was initiated into the world of Chassidus and the writings of the Arizal. Upon the passing of the Maggid, Reb Shneur Zalman became the leader of the Chassidim in Lithuania. In spite of the harsh opposition he experienced during this time, the tzaddik continued to build, creating a large network of Chassidic centers and further expanding the reach of this revolutionary movement.

After being incarcerated twice due to the altercations between the Chassidim and Misnagdim, Reb Shneur Zalman moved to Liadi where his influence continued to grow immensely until his passing in 1813 (5573). He is most well-known as the founder of Chabad Chassidus and the author of the Tanya, lovingly referred to as the Alter Rebbe or the Baal HaTanya. He also authored the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, a comprehensive code of Jewish law. His Chassidic discourses were published under the titles *Likutei Torah* and *Torah Ohr*. 🕎

Zechuso yagein aleinu! This section is written by R' Akiva Bruck, author of "From Behind the Curtain" (Mosaica Press)



Chassidus 101

Exploring the Foundations of Chassidus

THROUGHOUT THE WRITINGS of the tzaddikim, one finds numerous explanations regarding the necessity of a physical world which conceals Hashem's presence and - ultimately - enables us to develop a relationship with him. As physical, finite beings, the ability to connect with the infinite Master of the universe seems impossible. However, this is indeed the function of the Torah. Fulfilling the mitzvos and living our lives aligned with Hashem's Will allows us to develop an intimate relationship with our Father in heaven. However, one wonders why such concealments are necessary in the first place. Additionally, we are taught that Hashem created the world in order to bestow *chesed* upon us. If this is true, why is Hashem's *chesed* so often cloaked in experiences which give us no hint of their inner love and kindness?

While the tzaddikim stress that this and similar concepts are far beyond our finite comprehension, it is nevertheless vital to develop a basic understanding of what Chazal taught us in order to better understand our relationship with Hashem and His relationship with us, albeit in a manner tailored to our limited intellects.

In sefer *Pri Haaretz*, Reb Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk outlines a unique distinction between our laws and the laws of the nations of the world. While the nations of the world are commanded to set up their own judicial system and establish laws of their own, the source of these laws differs drastically from the mitzvos we were given. The tzaddik teaches that the world was founded upon *chesed* - "*olam chesed yibaneh*," Hashem's desire to give, so to speak. This idea gives rise to a paradox: How are finite beings supposed to receive from the Infinite?

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How can we experience Unity in a world of multiplicity and experience Hashem's infinite Kindness in a world of such darkness?

In explaining this, the tzaddik offers us one of the most foundational understandings in Chassidus and Yiddishkeit as a whole. Reb Menachem Mendel explains that it is the darkness itself, the *tzimtzum* or constriction involved in the creation of the world, that lends us the proper vessels with which to receive Hashem's light. If Hashem were to reveal His infinite kindness without a medium, a conduit through which we can properly receive, the entire universe would revert to the way it was pre-creation. Therefore, it is specifically the darkness and coarseness of the physical world in which we live that enables us to fulfill the very purpose of creation - to receive and experience Hashem's overwhelming love for us.

The *mitzvos* are physical mediums through which we can connect to the infinite. They are vessels which enable our *neshamos* to experience divinity in this world and develop a healthy relationship with Hashem. Therefore, the laws of the Torah stand in stark contrast to the commandment for non-Jews to establish laws of their own, laws based merely on human intellect and reasoning.

The Baal Shem Tov and his talmidim wished to emblazon this idea upon our very souls: every experience and opportunity to fulfill a mitzvah, even a seemingly simple mitzvah, is an opportunity to further bind ourselves to the Creator of the world, drawing ourselves ever closer to Him. May we each merit to experience this relationship in its most powerful expressions! 🕎

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

During a visit with his Rebbe, Rebbe Shmuel of Lubavitch, Rav David-Zvi Chain, the chief rabbi of Chernigov, noticed the rebbe's attendant walking into the Rebbe's room with a change of clothing. When he inquired about this to the other chassidim, he was told that the Rebbe would soon need this change of clothes because whenever he met with his chassidim for an extended period of time, he always perspired heavily.

When the attendant emerged from the room, he asked the chassidim, "Do any of you know why the Rebbe perspires so much when he grants *yechidus* in there? The whole thing lasts only an hour!"

Suddenly, the door to the Rebbe's chamber opened, and he responded to the question himself.

"In the course of this past hour I received twenty-five people for *yechidus*. If I am to properly advise each person, I must experience his distress exactly as he himself experiences it - I must divest myself of my own garments and clothe myself in his. However, when the time comes for me to offer my advice, I cannot do so while I am still dressed in his spiritual garments. I therefore have to get out of his clothes and dress myself again in my own. This means that for every person who comes in with a question, I have to undress and dress again. Now consider, if in the course of one hour a man has to undress and dress fifty times over, would he not perspire?"

A real Rebbe doesn't simply listen to the chassid's tale of woe. He descends into it so that he can share in the pain. In a world filled with suffering, let's be real Rebbes for everyone we encounter! 🕎

"THANK YOU HASHEM FOR SHABBOS KODESH!" IS A WEEKLY PROJECT OF @TYHASHEM

"Thank You Hashem" is a powerful sound bite. These simple words are a prayer, blessing, appreciation, sanctification, and expression of spiritual intimacy—all in one. Jews from all walks of life utter them in all life circumstances, finding meaning and strength in direct access to Hashem. Our mission is to ignite that passion and pride in every Jew worldwide. To remind us all that Hashem exists in every single aspect of life. That He loves each of us in every situation, environment, and spiritual position. And that by saying His name with gratitude, we return His love every day.

"THANK YOU HASHEM
FOR SHABBOS KODESH! WEEKLY"
IS WRITTEN BY R' YAAKOV KLEIN,
AUTHOR OF **THE STORY OF OUR LIVES** (FELDHEIM)
AND EDITED BY **ASHIRA HERZFELD**
FOR MORE OF R' YAAKOV'S WRITINGS, VISIT LPITORAH.ORG.

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413 CENTRAL AVE
CEDARHURST, NY 11516
T: (516) 341-7202
PRINT@PRINONPOINT.COM

