

I always find this parasha very sad and depressing. According to tradition, the 7th of Adar, FRIDAY, February 19, is the Yahrzeit of Moshe Rabbeinu, and Parashat Tetzaveh usually coincides with that date. It is the first parasha since Moshe's appearance that his name is not mentioned. It is also the parasha where Moshe encounters his first defeat.

In the beginning of Sefer Shemot, when Gd commanded Moshe to redeem the Jewish people from bondage, Moshe answered, "Please, G'D, send whomever you wish to send" (4:13). Gd answered him angrily, "Is there not Aharon your brother, the Levi?" (4:14). In his commentary on the Pasuk, Rashi cites the words of Chazal (Sages), that Gd had originally chosen Moshe as a Kohen Gadol (High Priest). As a result on Moshe's repeated attempts to avoid the mission that Gd wished to give him, Gd took the priesthood from him and gave it to his brother, Aharon.

In our parasha, Moshe is told of this indirectly when Gd says to him, "Bring near to you your brother Aharon and his sons with him...to minister to me. (Shemot 28:1). This was like a double blow; not he, but his brother Aharon will serve as Kohen Gadol, and so will Aharon's children be serving as Kohanim, while nothing given to Moshe's children. Although Moshe had served as Kohen Gadol during the week-long consecration of the Mishkan, this was only a preparation for Aharon's induction into the priesthood. Therefore, the name of Moshe was specifically left out of Parashat Tetzaveh. How sad!

The Gemara tells us (Taanit 11b, and Avoda Zara 34a) that during the consecration, Moshe did not wear the garments of a Kohen Gadol, but rather a white robe. Why did Gd not tell Moshe to put on the eight garments of the Kohen Gadol? Rav Soloveitchik suggested, that the 8 garments that the Kohen Gadol must wear confer his priestly status upon him. In Judaism, clothing is a reflection of one's personality. A human being's most significant aspect of his dignity. Once people undress, nothing differentiates one person from another. Therefore, clothing completes and enhances an individual's personality. Dignity is something that must be cultivated. We recognize a person of special status by his clothing. Therefore, the Gemara states, that Kohanim may function in the Mikdash only when they are wearing their vestments (Zevachim 17b)

Moshe did not require wearing Bigdei Kehuna (priestly vestments) because he had been chosen by Gd himself. Yet even if Moshe had become the Kohen Gadol for the long term, he still would not have required the eight garments to perform his functions. This is because he had all the qualities that an appointed official requires. Moshe, a priestly representative being in a class by himself, wore a white frock to emphasize the clarity of his character. He was so exalted that by his very nature, he was considered a Kohen Gadol.

The parasha marks a major turning point in Moshe's life. Had Moshe not initially refused his leadership role, then he would have been the official Kohen Gadol, and the Beit HaMikdash would never have been destroyed. The Exodus from Mitzrayim would have constituted a permanent not a

temporary redemption. This parasha coinciding with the 7th of Adar, is in a sense, marking the beginning of Moshe's death.

Shabbat Shalom, from YERUSHALAYIM.

QUESTIONS ON PARASHAT TETZAVEH:

1-The Me'il, or robe, was the largest of all Priestly garments. What sin was the Me'il an atonement for?

2-Gemara Bava Batra, 8B, states, that when collecting or handling communal funds, be it money, gold or silver we must have at least two people collecting. Where in our parasha is the source for this?

3-What reasons do we have for the "Urim" and "Tunim" being called by those names?

4- I wrote in my Dvar Torah why the name of Moshe Rabbeinu is not mentioned in this parasha. What other reason can you find?

5- A golden Tzitz (head -plate) was worn on the forehead of the Kohen Gadol (28:36). On the Tzitz was inscribed the words,"KODESH LA'HASHEM". Was this inscription written on one line or on two lines? See Gemara Shabbat 63B.

JUST FOR FUN:

HOW IMPORTANT DO PEOPLE HAVE TO BE BEFORE THEY ARE CONSIDERED ASSASINATED RATHER THAN JUST MURDERED???

KOL HAKAVOD TO THOSE WHO ANSWERED QUESTIONS ON TRUMAH