

KOLLEL AGUDATH ACHIM

Rosh Kollel
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My father in law is currently recuperating at home. Please daven for Aharon ben Yita to have a complete recovery..

Moshe Teller

PARASHAT TETZAVEH- 2023

פרשת תצוה 5783

“LESSONS OF THE ME’IL”

Next Tuesday, 14th of Adar-One, (March 7) marks the 52nd yahrtzeit of my father, Tzvi ben Aharon, A’H. This Dvar Torah is designated lezeicher nishmato. He died on Purim, on a regular Adar, so when we have a leap year I observe the main yahrtzeit on the first Adar and observe also the second Adar –as a minhag. But the main Chiyyuv is on the first Adar because yahrtzeit observance is a form of Kibbud Av; therefore it is observed on the first opportunity when it arises.

Parashat Tetzaveh discusses the clothing worn by the Kohanim and, in particular, the Kohen Gadol. Gemara Zevachim (88b) states that each of the eight garment discussed in this parasha atones for a particular sin. The Me’il, or robe, atones for the sin of Lashon HaRa, therefore it is the largest of all garments, a full garment from the neck to the ground. It was made entirely of blue wool, (28:33) a color that is reminiscent of heaven and ocean, symbolizing HaShem’s heavenly Throne of Glory. Its color caused people to reflect upon the heaven and sea that stays within its bounds and never diverge from their assigned orbits and tasks. So too says the Kli Yakar, we should contain our Divinely ordained power of speech within the limits of purity and holiness. .

The Maharal wonders what the connection is between the robe and Lashon HaRa? He suggests using and understanding the role of each Jew. The task of wearing the Me’il, as well as the other seven garments is exclusive to a Kohen Gadol in the Beit HaMikdash. There are some Mitzvot that only a Levi can do, while some Mitzvot must be performed by men and others are exclusive to women. Clearly, each individual has a specific mission to fulfill. Judaism does not subscribe to the idea of equality, which believes that everyone is guaranteed the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities. (That was the argument of Korach who rebelled against Moshe Rabbeinu claiming “Ki Kol HaEdah Kulam Kedoshim U’vetocham HaShem, U’maduah Tit’na’suhal Al K’hal HaShem.” “The entire assembly-all of them-are holy and HaShem is among them; why do you raise yourselves over the congregation of HaShem”?)

In Judaism, everyone has a specific role that he/she must fulfill. Instead of focusing on the opportunities for Mitzvot that others have and harbor jealousy over it, a person should focus on fulfilling his/her own role as best as he/she can. The Me’il symbolizes the concept that, just as only one person can be Kohen Gadol; so too, there are tasks that only I, and I alone can do. Gd created each of us with a different face, different DNA, different talent enabling us to focus on our individual roles. Each of us has our own role and mission in life, therefore no need for jealousy of what others have or can do, which is the breeder of Lashon HaRa.

Furthermore, the rationale of a person speaking Lashon HaRa often stems from intolerance of those that differ. A person who cannot accept that others have legitimate ways of doing things will denigrate those others. For example, a person who loves to study Torah and does so regularly may criticize the behavior of one who does not learn as much. The first person must be able to accept the fact that not everyone is like him. This, we must come to realize from the Me’il, that there are many different people in the world with many legitimate paths to follow. Not everyone must be exactly like us to deserve our respect.

The Me'il has a big job and thus, a large garment. Even in our religious community, Lashon HaRa ranks as the #1 most common Aveira (sin) and the most difficult to control. Let us resolve to try to make a small dent, not by faulting others but beginning with ourselves.

This is the only parasha (since parashat Shemot) that Moshe Rabbeinu's name is not mentioned.

Shabbat Shalom From Yerushalayim,
Rabbi Aharon Ziegler

לבנת הספיר

THE
Great News!
Rabbi Ziegler is publishing a new sefer entitled
"The Sapphire Bricks of Torah - Gems from the Weekly Parasha."
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