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A Healthy Distance

Rabbi Shmuel Goldin

For the first and only time since his introduction in the beginning of Parshat Shmot, Moshe's name is omitted from an entire parsha.

Questions

Why is Moshe's name omitted from Parshat Tetzave?

The question is compounded by the fact that the omission seems clearly deliberate. Over and over again, the Torah creates settings in the parsha where Moshe's name, by all rights, should appear – only to exclude it from the text on each occasion.

For example, the first sentence of the parsha does not begin with the usual formula, “And the Lord said to Moshe saying, speak unto the children of Israel and say...”

In place of this familiar opening we find the abrupt directive, “And you [Moshe] shall command the children of Israel...”

This phenomenon repeats itself throughout the parsha.

Approaches

A. A fascinating Midrashic tradition connects the omission of Moshe's name in Parshat Tetzave to a dramatic encounter between this great leader and his Creator, chronicled in the next parsha, Ki Tissa.

In the aftermath of the sin of the golden calf, Moshe turns to the Israelites and proclaims, “You have committed a grievous sin, and now I will ascend to the Lord; perhaps I can atone for your sin.”

Moshe then ascends Mount Sinai where he confronts God and declares: “I beseech you! This people have committed a grievous sin and have created for themselves a god of gold. And now, if you will forgive their sin – and if not, erase me from Your book which You have written!”

God responds, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I shall erase from My book...”

During the critical, turbulent moments following the sin of the golden calf, Moshe apparently makes a fundamental error in his own assessment of his leadership role – an error which must be emphatically and immediately corrected by God.

Moshe has to be reminded that he cannot serve as the intermediary between God and His people. Once again, the Torah conveys the fundamental truth that is transmitted over and over again during the unfolding events at Sinai: the hallmark of divine worship is direct, personal encounter between man and God.

Parshat Tetzave is dedicated exclusively to the topic of the kehuna (priesthood). Within this parsha's boundaries the Torah introduces the concept of the kehuna, outlines the detailed instructions for the fashioning of the priestly garments and discusses plans for the eventual investiture of Aharon and his descendants into their eternal roles as Kohanim.

The very concept of the priesthood carries the potential danger that the Kohen will be perceived, erroneously, as an intermediary between the people and their God rather than as the nation's representative within the Temple. To clarify that no leader should ever perceive himself or be perceived as an essential go-between between the people and their Creator, Moshe's name is omitted specifically from Parshat Tetzave. There could be no more appropriate response for the momentary, yet critical, lapse on Moshe's part recorded in Parshat Ki Tissa – the instance, when, due to the unimaginable pressures of the moment, Moshe attempts to take upon himself the atonement of others.

B. An alternative explanation for Moshe's “absence” from Parshat Tetzave is offered by some scholars, based upon a Talmudic tradition rooted at the burning bush, the scene of Moshe's call to leadership.

There, God repeatedly overrules Moshe's objections concerning his election to leadership, until, finally, the Torah states: "And the anger of God was kindled against Moshe and He said: 'Is there not Aharon your brother, the Levi? I know that he will gladly speak.... He shall speak for you to the people...'"

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, noting God's anger and the sudden introduction of Aharon, explains that at this point Moshe loses an honored opportunity. Moshe was originally destined to be not only Moshe Rabbeinu, the lawgiver, teacher and political leader of the Israelites, he was to be the Kohen Gadol, as well. Due to Moshe's continued reluctance at the burning bush, however, God relieves him of that honor and bestows it upon his brother, Aharon.

Team Teaching

Rabbi Josh Hoffman

Parshas Tetzaveh deals primarily with the making of the priestly vestments to be used in the divine service of the mishkan, or the tabernacle. However, the parsha begins with God's command to Moshe to tell the people to provide pure olive oil to be used by his brother Aharon in the daily lighting of the menorah, whose construction was described in last week's parsha, Terumah. This command concerning the menorah, in fact, seems to be out of place in this parsha, and should, one would think, have been included either in a later parsha that deals with the actual service done by the kohanim in the mishkan, or in the previous parsha, which presented us with the details of the construction of the menorah. Why, then, is it placed here, immediately before the section on the priestly garments? Apparently there is some connection between these two sections which the Torah wants us to notice and understand. What, then, is that connection? Rabbi Naphtali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin, the Netziv, in his commentary Ha'amek Davar, posits an interesting duality between Moshe and Aharon that can help answer the questions we have presented. He notes that the menorah is used by the rabbis as a symbol for Torah. Why, however, was such a symbol necessary? The aron, which is called the ark of testimony, contained the tablets with the Torah engraved upon it, which is seemingly the strongest allusion to Torah conceivable. Why, then, was there a need for the menorah to symbolize Torah as well? The Netziv

To mark this lost opportunity, Moshe's name is omitted from Parshat Tetzave, the parsha that introduces the concept of the kehuna (priesthood).

C. As intriguing as the Midrashic explanations for Moshe's "absence" in Parshat Tetzave may be, a much simpler, yet equally powerful, psat explanation can be offered.

Parshat Tetzave is "Aharon's parsha," the section of biblical text which introduces the glorious role that Aharon and his descendants will assume across the ages. In recognition of the fact that this is his brother's "moment," Moshe is forced to take a step back out of the limelight. Moshe is certainly present, playing an essential role in the proceedings. Aharon, however, is center stage.

Even Moshe, the greatest leader our people has known, must at times step aside, to allow others to shine.

says that there are two aspects of Torah learning - that of analysis, plumbing into the depths of Torah and presenting innovative explanations of it, and that of reaching halachic conclusions through comparing various matters to each other. Moshe and Aharon, says the Netziv, were endowed with different strengths in their Torah learning. Moshe had a special expertise in understanding the depths of Torah, or its 'pilpul,' as the Netziv puts it. Aharon's strength, on the other hand, was in being able to decide the halacha, a skill that, the rabbis say, requires special divine aid. Although Moshe also able to decide halacha, as witness his judging of the people as recorded in parshas Yisro, Aharon surpassed him in this area. The rabbis in fact tell us, in Avos d'Rabbi Nasan, that Moshe and Aharon were the two heads of the Sanhedrin, the highest court of Jewish law, and the halacha issued from the two of them working together. The dual symbolism for Torah of the aron and the menorah, then, represent the two strengths within Torah that Moshe and Aharon possessed.

The Netziv writes, based on a Talmudic passage, that the menorah symbolizes the intensity of in-depth Torah study. For this reason, Moshe is commanded, in the beginning of our parsha, to direct Aharon in lighting the menorah, since Moshe had a special role to play in the deeper meaning of the menorah. The menorah, then, according to the Netziv, symbolizes Moshe's area of expertise within Torah, while the aron symbolizes Aharon's strength. Perhaps, as a

variation on the Netziv, we can explain the symbolism in a different way, and say that the aron symbolizes the fixed content of the Torah, as contained in the tablets, and its theoretical exposition, which was Moshe's strength. The Torah in this sense remains within the aron, a subject of study. Through the vehicle of halachic decision making, the Torah illuminates the world, as its precepts are carried out in daily life. Moshe and Aharon thus had separate roles within Torah, and therefore there were two different vessels in the mishkan to symbolize these two roles. Moshe was commanded to direct Aharon in lighting the menorah to symbolize the two of them working together, as the heads of the Sanhedrin, to teach Torah to the nation.

Based on our variation of the Netziv's exposition, we can understand why the section on the lighting of the menorah is placed before the section on the priestly garments. The Talmud in tractate Yoma tells us that the various different priestly garments served as an atonement for different transgressions, a number of which stem from bad character traits. This theme is elaborated upon by the Malbim in his commentary to this parsha. Rabbi Ephraim of Lunshitz, the author of the commentary *Keli Yakar*, pointed out in his first work, *Ir Gibborim*, that the core problem underlying all character flaws and the root of all these flaws is arrogance. Moshe and Aharon, in their roles as the teachers of Torah to the Jewish people, represented the opposite of arrogance. Each had his separate strength, and yet the two worked together in order to present the nation

with the full spectrum of the Torah's content. Anyone familiar with the history of yeshivos, the schools of higher Jewish learning, knows that it is rare for yeshiva heads with different orientations in their learning to avoid conflict at all times. In some cases, one of the rabbis leaves and forms his own separate yeshiva. The fact that Moshe and Aharon were able to work together as well as they did was therefore noteworthy. (Interestingly, the Netziv himself was an involved party in a difference of opinion over the issue of who would succeed to the leadership of the famed Volozhin yeshiva. The other candidate was Rabbi Yosef Dov HaLevi Soloveichik, known as the Beis HaLevi. These two figures had radically different approaches to learning, and different students favored one or the other as rosh yeshiva. In the end, the Netziv was given the position. Still, the two rabbis shared the function of delivering the main Talmud lecture in the yeshiva, each one teaching three of the six weekdays. It is interesting to speculate whether this experience was on the Netziv's mind when he wrote of the different learning strengths of Moshe and Aharon). Learning from both mentors, the nation could, through the Torah it learned, serve its function of illuminating the world, as a light to the nations. The living example of these two brothers working together in this way served as the best example of good character traits, and therefore is a fitting introduction to the section on the priestly garments, whose underlying theme is the development of such traits.

The Dual Focus of the Bigdei Kehunah

Rabbi Dovid Gottlieb

The Torah goes to great length and spares no detail in describing the bigdei kehunah, the special priestly vestments worn during the service in the Mishkan (and Beis Ha-Mikdash). This very detail, however, as well as the ornate nature of the garments themselves, raises the obvious question: why the preoccupation with clothing, something external and superficial?

When commanding Moshe about the bigdei kehunah God notes that the purpose of these garments is "le'chavod u-le'sifares," for glory and for splendor (Shemos 28:2). However, this doesn't seem to answer the question; it begs the question. Since when are glory and honor admirable

goals to aspire towards? And why, in the Mishkan of all places, is there a focus on material beauty? This difficulty is compounded when one considers that the Rambam (Kelei Ha-Mikdash 8:4-5) goes even further, ruling that if there is any imperfection in the garments – a small stain, not exactly the right size – they must be discarded. Again, why such an emphasis on the appearance of the kohanim?

The Netziv (Ha'amek Davar) explains that the special clothing was necessary because of the important message it projected to the Jewish people. He explains that it was crucial for the kohanim's service – and especially for the Kohen Gadol – that they be respected and held in high esteem. Even as they were accessible to everyone it was

necessary for the kohanim to be perceived as somewhat removed from the rest of the nation. The Netziv explains that the priestly vestments were therefore elaborate and beautiful, thereby elevating the stature of the kohanim by projecting a sense of dignity and inspiring feelings of awe.

Rav Elya Meir Bloch (Peninei Da'as al Ha-Torah) offers an alternate explanation which focuses on the impact that the garments had, not on others, but on the kohanim themselves.

R. Bloch notes that while Hashem initially tells Moshe that the purpose of the vestments is “for glory and for splendor,” in the very next verse (28:3), when Moshe is told how to instruct the artisans, the emphasis is on garments’ function, “le’kadsho, le’chahano li,” sanctify and serve God. The question is, obviously, why the shift in focus? Why does the Torah emphasize appearance of the garments when speaking to Moshe but stress their functionality when giving instructions to the artisans?

To resolve this difficulty R. Bloch explains that the purpose of the garments was to “bring down” a certain level of kedushah, sanctity, into the world. To achieve this purpose the garments needed to be made exactly according to Hashem’s specifications. Theoretically, though, the garments could have been very modest and not elegant at all; as long as the kohanim performed their service in garments made in keeping with Hashem’s directions their function would be served and the kedushah would be obtained. Thus, R. Bloch notes, the instructions given to the artisans who would actually weave the begadim needed only to relate to the spiritual function of the garments,

“le’kadsho, le’chahano li.”

But that was not enough. Hashem understood that in reality the garments couldn’t be simple or modest; they had to be beautiful and dignified. While the appearance of the begadim may not matter for the spiritual reality, it most certainly mattered for the human reality. While it wouldn’t make a difference for Hashem, it would make a difference to the kohanim who had to work in those garments. R. Bloch explains that human nature is such that we take more seriously those things which are associated with special and beautiful clothing. To ensure that the kohanim would constantly recognize the significance of their avodah it was necessary for them to wear elegant and dignified clothing. Therefore, when instructing Moshe, who would then communicate with Aharon and his children, the stress was placed on their appearance, “le’chavod u-le’sifares.”

Aside from providing insight into the importance of the bigdei kehunah, the respective explanations of the Netziv and R. Bloch have broader significance as well. What is true of the priestly vestments is similarly true regarding the clothing that each of us wear. The way we dress – both men and women – projects an image to others and, at the same time, impacts our self-image. The more modestly and dignified we dress the more respect from others we will engender and the more self-respect we will have. And the opposite is, unfortunately, true as well. In this, as in so many other areas, the kohanim should serve as our role models. We should dress – and generally act – in a way that is both dignified, “le’chavod u-le’sifares” and that will help us live noble lives, “le’kadsho, le’chahano li

Do the Clothes Make the Man?

Rabbi Eli Reich

Vasita bigdei kodesh l’aharon achicha lichavod u’litiferes – “and you shall make holy garments for Aharon – your brother for honor and splendor” (Shemos 28:2).

What purpose do the begadim (priestly garments) serve?

On a basic level, the bigdei kehuna (priestly garments) lend stature to the kohanim. The Ramban comments that the bigdei kehuna are indeed royal garb, and Rabbeinu Bachya and the Netziv further explain that the kohen should be revered as a king in the eyes of Am Yisrael. Alternatively, Ibn Ezra highlights the uniqueness of the

garments as reflecting the uniqueness of the kohanim.

Additionally, the choice of clothing conveys a deep reverence for the avodah (Temple service). The special garments bring great honor to the avodah and the Beis Hamikdosh (Sefer HaChinuch), thereby bringing honor to Hashem. Clearly, the clothing we wear to a birthday party is not the same clothing we wear to a wedding, and similarly, our Shabbos attire is not our weekday attire. Our choice of clothing reflects the importance we see in a particular event. Accordingly, the bigdei kehuna must be new and beautiful (Zevachim 18b), and if ever sullied, they may not be laundered (Zevachim 88b). Even a proper fit

withholds the fulfillment of the Temple service.

The Sefer HaChinuch notes that the wearing of the begadim is not merely a matter of respect. The begadim aid the kohen in achieving a greater level of kavanah (intent). Simultaneously, the awe-inspiring attire propels the sinner to a deeper level of teshuva.

However, one should not think the begadim are limited to merely external value.

The Talmud teaches that the begadim participate in the atonement of the sinner. “R. Einini Bar Sasson asked: Why is the parsha of korbanos adjacent to the parsha of bigdei kehuna? The Talmud answers, to teach us that just as the korbanos bring atonement, so too the bigdei kehuna bring atonement” (Zevachim 88b). The Talmud also delineates how each garment atones for a particular sin. The garments are not just for show; they are active during the avodah!

The Talmud teaches that the avodah is invalid if performed without the begadim (Zevachim 17b). The specific language used in the Talmud is critical. The wearing of the bigdei kehuna determines if the kohen is a real kohen or an imposter. The Rambam (in Klei HaMikdash 10:4 and more explicitly in Sanhedrin 19:2) stresses that a kohen who performs the avodah without the bigdei kehuna is like a non-kohen, and is therefore subject to the same punishment as a zar (stranger) who performs the avodah. A kohen without his garments is no more than a Yisrael. In light of these sources, the requirement of begadim sounds more like a prerequisite for being a kohen

than a prerequisite for avodah. Why is a kohen without begadim less of a kohen?

A beautiful explanation is offered by the Malbim. The physical body is clothed in garments, called madim (see Vayikra 6:3 “mido bad”), the modern term for a soldier’s uniform. Similarly the nefesh (spiritual self) is clothed in one’s middos (personality and character). A person’s middos reflect his strengths. The kohen must clothe his body in physical garments, but that is not enough. The kohen is commanded to transform himself while putting on the begadim, just as wearing madim demands that one “wear” middos. The transcendent act of putting on the garments prepares the kohen to approach the avodah with the proper frame of mind. He is now ready for the avodah, and only then is the kehuna thrust upon him. Otherwise, he is merely a zar.

The begadim’s influence on the kohen reveals an additional dimension to the begadim. The begadim’s transformation of the kohen serves as a powerful symbol of teshuva. It is therefore not surprising that wearing the bigdei kehuna can even serve as an atonement. Their effect is not limited to the kohen, but the entire avodah is a different avodah.

The same is true of bigdei shabbos. Our Shabbos attire does not merely reflect our reverence and appreciation of the sanctity of Shabbos. Rather, it also signifies that we are ready to be enveloped by the holiness of Shabbos.

Rashi’s Libi Omer Li

Rabbi David Horwitz

Parashat Tetzaveh lists the garments that the kohen gadol wears: These are the vestments they are to make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a fringed tunic, a headdress and a sash (Exodus 28:4). What exactly was the ephod? Rashi (ad loc.) writes as follows:

I have heard no tradition nor have I found in the Boraitha any description of its shape, but my own mind tells me (ve-libi omer li) that it was tied on behind him; its breadth was the same as the breadth of a man’s back like a kind of apron which is called pourceint in Old French, which ladies of rank tie on when they ride on horseback. Such, as mentioned, was the way in which the lower part was made, as it is said (2Samuel VI: 14): “And David was

girded with a linen ephod”- this informs us that the ephod was something tied on the body. It is, however, not possible to say that it consisted of a girdle only, because it is said (Lev. VIII:7): “And he put the ephod upon him,” and afterwards it is stated, “And he girded him with the heshev of the ephod,” and this (word heshev) Onkelos translated as “the girdle of the ephod.” This, therefore, informs us that the heshev is the girdle and the ephod is the name of the ornamental garment itself. Furthermore, it is not possible to assert that it was on account of the two shoulder-straps that it was called ephod (i.e., that the term ephod applies to these two straps and the girdle to which they were attached), for it is said (Exodus XXVIII: 27): “The two

shoulder pieces of the ephod” –this tells us that the ephod is a separate name, the shoulder-pieces a separate name and the girdle a separate name (i.e., each one of these is the name of a separate article.) Consequently, I say that it is called ephod in reference to the apron-like garment which hung down, and that it was so called because they bedecked him (ophedo) and ornamented him with it, as it is said (Leviticus VIII:7): “And he bedecked him with it.” The heshev was the girdle which was on the upper portion of it (the ephod), and the shoulder pieces were attached to it. Furthermore, my own mind (ve-od omer li libi) tells me that there is evidence that it was a kind of garment, for R. Jonathan ben Uzziel translates (2 Samuel VI: 14): “And David was girded with a linen ephod” by “a linen kardot” and exactly similarly does he translates me‘ilim (robes) by kardotim in the story of Tamar, Absalom’s sister (2 Samuel XIII: 18) “For which such robes (me ‘ilim) were the kings daughters that were virgins appareled.” (Since R. Jonathan ben Uzziel translates both ephod and me‘il with the term b>kardot, it is evident that the former was a garment of some kind just as we know the me‘il to have been.) {Pentateuch with Targum Onkelos, Haphtaroth and Rashi’s Commentary, translated into English and annotated by Rev. M. Rosenbaum and Dr. A. M. Silbermann, in collaboration with A. Blashki and L. Joseph: Exodus (New York, 1965), p. 152.}

What does Rashi mean when he says, “libi omer li?”

Over twenty years ago I heard Ha-Rav Avraham Gershon Zaks, zatzal (1930-1989), a grandson of the Chofetz Chaim, present the following explanation. Rav Gershon refused to believe that these words imply that Rashi was relying on his own intuition. He consequently interpreted the phrase in accordance with an idea developed by the Brisker Rav, Ha-Rav Yitzhak Ze’ev (R. Velvel) Soloveitchik, zatzal (d. 1959). R. Velvel took the verse in Proverbs (3:8): Bind them about your throat; Write them on the tablet of your mind (literally, heart), and utilized it to interpret the verse in Deuteronomy (6:7), in the Parashah of Qeriat Shema that mentions the obligation of parents to teach their children Torah: ve-shinantam. Now, according to Hazal, the obligation to learn (and teach others) Torah entails the obligation to learn both Torah She- Bi-Ktav (the written Torah) and Torah She-Be’al Peh (the oral Torah). Torah She-Ba’al Peh was ideally meant to be memorized. If it would be memorized, it would indeed be written on the tablet of a persons’ heart.

Hence, one could, would, and should find the answer to any conundrum by checking the Torah she-ba’al peh that would be inscribed on his heart. (An obligation, if you will, to attempt to photographically memorize all of shas! According to this idea, the memory feats (e.g., forwards and backwards) of the famed Gaon of Vilna were not just tricks, but expressions of the complete halakhic fulfillment of the obligation of ve-shi-nantam! They were the result of his photographically memorizing the entire Torah.) That, R. Gershon concluded, is what Rashi meant when he writes libi omer li. He was referring to the fact that he had verified what he was about to write with the Torah she-be’al peh that was inscribed in his heart.

Of course, if one does not interpret Rashi in this matter, one will conclude that Rashi indeed utilized his own intuition to explain the term ephod. But it was not a haphazard guess, but the result of the combination of his singular mastery of a massive storehouse of knowledge, his judicious powers of interpretation and analysis, and his careful weighing of the evidence in reaching conclusions. And we must add to this- the influence of his rabbeim. Rashi had three primary rabbeim, R. Ya’aqov ben R. Yaqar (of Magentza =Mainz, Germany), Rav Yitzhak Ha-Levi (of Vermaiza=Worms, Germany), and R. Yitzhak ben Rav Yehudah (or Magentza=Mainz.) (On these figures, see Avraham Grossman, Hachmei Ashkenaz Ha-Rishonim [The Early Sages of Ashkenaz (900-1096) – Jerusalem, 1981]. For Rashi himself, see Grossman, Hakhmei Tzarefat Ha-Rishonim [The Early Sages of France- Jerusalem, 1995], pp. 121-253; idem, Rashi: R. Shelomoh Yitzhaki [Jerusalem, 2006], and idem, Emunot ve-De’ot be-Olamot shel Rashi [Alon Shevut, 2008].) Even after R. Ya’aqov ben Rav Yaqar, his primary teacher, had passed away, Rashi still based decisions upon what he had previously absorbed from him.

Interestingly, we find several examples of Rashi’s use of the phrase ve-libi omer li (or variations thereof) in his teshuvot as well. (See Teshuvot Rashi, ed. Israel Elfenbein [New York, 1943], p. xl). One of them concerns Rashi’s position in a major dispute (circa 1070 C. E.) which was referred to as plugat ha-ray’ah. Rashi took the lenient view, in opposition to his teacher R. Yitzhak Ha-Levi and the rabbinic elite of Germany at the time. Rashi based his position on the view of his primary teacher, R. Ya’aqov ben Rav Yaqar, who had died already. His language in this matter seems to be remarkably similar to what we find in his biblical commentary concerning the ephod.

In Teshuvot Rashi, #59 (ed. Elfenbein, p. 57) we find the following striking passage:

I can hang (my opinion) on a big tree, R. Ya'akov ben R. Yaqar. And even though I have not heard from his mouth (the law concerning) this matter, nonetheless my mind (literally, my heart) and my reasoning and my understanding all came from him (literally, from his mouth). (Ve-af ki lo sham'ati mi-piv davar zeh, mi-kol maqom, libi ve-sevarati v-havanati mi-piv yatzau.)

The Menorah and the Mizbach Ha-Zahav

Rabbi Avraham Gordimer

Whereas Parshas Terumah details the structure of the Mishkan, Parshas Tetzaveh primarily addresses the Bigdei Kehunah (the Priestly Vestments) and the initiation procedures for Aharon and his sons to serve as Kohanim. It seems quite puzzling that Parshas Tetzaveh also includes the commands of kindling the Menorah and erecting the Mizbach Ha-Zahav - the Golden Altar, designated for burning Ketores (incense offering) in the Mishkan - for these two mitzvos appear to be unrelated to the Bigdei Kehunah or the initiation of the Kohanim. One would expect that kindling the Menorah and erecting the Mizbach Ha-Zahav would appear in Parshas Terumah, alongside the commands to construct both the Menorah and the Mizbach Ha-Nechoshes - the Bronze Altar, used for most other sacrifices. Why, then, does the Torah omit the lighting of the Menorah and the construction of the Mizbach Ha-Zahav from Parshas Terumah and reserve them for Parshas Tetzaveh?

Sefer Ha-Chinuch (mitzvos 98 and 103) explains that the purpose of lighting the Menorah and burning Ketores on the Mizbach Ha-Zahav is to bring glory to Hashem's House. This may be the rationale for the Torah's presentation of these commandments alongside the Bigdei Kehunah, for the Bigdei Kehunah themselves are "for glory and splendor". (Shemos 28:2) This theme of glory and splendor applies to lighting the Menorah, burning Ketores and garbing in Bidgei Kehunah, and it thus unites these three topics into one parshah.

On a deeper level, we can understand the relevance of the mitzvos to light the Menorah and erect the Mizbach Ha-Zahav from an analysis of the Bigdei Kehunah themselves. The halacha states that any Avodah (sacrificial

Rashi here reveals that in his role as a poseq, just as in his role as a biblical commentator, he was not merely a human tape recorder. He was able to confidently arrive at his own decisions, in the face of opposition by figures older than he, by using his own powers of reasoning. But his confidence was the result of years of training, and included the absorption of the methodology of his own revered teacher.

service) which is performed by Kohanim while not wearing Bidgei Kehunah is passul (invalid). In fact, the Gemara explains that the very status of a Kohen (for the purpose of Avodah) is lacking when the Kohen is not garbed in his priestly vestments. Think about it; it is quite a powerful concept, for even when the Avodah is performed correctly, it is considered as being done by a Zar (non-Kohen) when the servicing Kohen is lacking Bidgei Kehunah. Whereas one who davens without appropriate dress is still considered to have fulfilled the obligation to pray, and one who performs a mitzvah while wearing inappropriate attire nevertheless fulfills the mitzvah at hand, a Kohen who performs Avodah, but lacks garments which are designed to display glory and splendor, is deemed to have acted in vain. Why is this so?

The answer is that Avodah in the Mishkan and Beis Ha-Mikdash must by definition constitute a display of glory and splendor. This is not a side requirement or a preference; it is the core of all Avodah. Without it, Avodah is deemed flawed and invalid. Thus, lack of Bigdei Kehunah is, per force, a lacking in the very constitution of Avodah, for Avodah is defined as a display of glory and splendor.

This takes us back to the mitzvos of kindling the Menorah and offering Ketores on the Mizbach Ha-Zahav. These two institutions are not normative components of the Mishkan, as are all other furnishings presented in Parshas Terumah. Rather, lighting the Menorah and burning Ketores bestow upon the Mishkan a quality of glory and splendor, rendering the entirety of the Mishkan an edifice of perceptible majesty and grandeur. Through the mitzvos of lighting the Menorah, offering Ketores and wearing Bigdei Kehunah, the Torah introduces the halacha

that Avodah and the Mishkan itself must be manifestations of glory and splendor. This is why the commandments to

kindle the Menorah and erect the Mizbach Ha-Zahav are intrinsic to the core of Parshas Tetzaveh.

Daily Avodas Hashem

Rabbi Beinish Ginsburg

We find something striking about the flow of the topics in Parshiyos Terumah and Tetzaveh. Parshas Terumah begins with a discussion of the mishkan. Hashem commands[i] Moshe to build a mishkan, “v’asu li mikdash v’shachanti b’socham.” The Torah then describes how each of the keilim of the Mishkan are supposed to be built. The Torah then describes the mishkan itself. That is in Parshas Terumah. In Parshas Tetzaveh the Torah moves on to discuss the kohanim. First, the Torah discusses the bigdei kehuna and how they are supposed to be made. Then the Torah[ii] describes the process of the initiation and consecration of the kohanim, “this is what you shall do to them to consecrate them to serve as kohanim.” So at this point, we have the mishkan itself, the keilim of the mishkan, the begadim of the kohanim, and the initiation of the kohanim. At this point, one would think we are ready to have the shechinah dwell in the Mishkan and dwell in our midst, as the Torah describes earlier at the beginning of Parshas Terumah.

But we find something else. The Torah[iii] then describes the Korban Tamid. Every day we offer two korbanos on the mizbeach - one in the morning and one in the evening. Then, immediately after the description of the Korban Tamid, the Torah[iv] describes, “vi’shachanti b’soch B’nei Yisroel v’hayisi lachem l’Elokim,” “and I will dwell in the midst of B’nei Yisroel and be their G-d.”

This is very striking. The Torah puts the description of the Korban Tamid here, before the pesukim describing Hashem’s Shechinah dwelling in the Mishkan and dwelling among us. Why? What is the message? Rav Hirsch[v] explains as follows. The promised goal of the mishkan is Hashem’s presence in the Mishkan and in the nation. The pesukim are teaching us that,

This goal is only achieved by the priests expressing ... on behalf of the nation. The daily devotion of the lives of the people to the ideals of Judaism as represented by the sanctuary... is the meaning of the Tamid-offering.

In other words, Rav Hirsch is explaining, it is not enough to have the building, it is not enough to have the holy vessels, it is not enough to have the holy garments, it

is not enough to have the kohanim ready to do the avodah. The shechinah does not dwell in the mishkan until the mishkan becomes the place of service of Hashem.

Rav Hirsch[vi] writes: The constant devotion of the people to the ideals of the divine Torah, that is the necessary condition for the shechinah to rest ... The shechinah will only dwell in the Mishkan when the sanctuary becomes alive and active through the acts of devotion of the people. These acts of devotion are supposed to symbolize the heartbeat, the central driving force of national life.

This is a major yesod in Torah hashkafa. The goal of the Mishkan is the daily service of HaKadosh Baruch Hu and when we do serve Hashem on a daily basis, then the shechinah will dwell in the mishkan and amongst Am Yisroel in general. The Korban Tamid in the mishkan is symbolic, as Rav Hirsch explains, of the daily devotion of B’nei Yisroel to avodas Hashem.

This explanation of Rav Hirsch fits well with Rav Hirsch’s general approach to the mishkan. Rav Hirsch explains in many places that the purpose of the mishkan is to be a source of inspiration to serve Hashem well in our ordinary daily lives. It is not enough to just be dedicated to HaKadosh Baruch Hu in the Beis HaMikdash, we have to also serve Hashem in our ordinary, daily lives. To teach this idea, the Torah delays the description of the shechinah dwelling in the mishkan until after the mishkan itself becomes a source of avodas Hashem. If one wants to have the shechinah in his life, he has to have daily devotion and commitment to avodas Hashem in his daily life. This is Rav Hirsch’s beautiful explanation of the flow and the order of Parshiyos Terumah and Tetzaveh.

The lesson for us, of course, is to live up to the challenge, this charge of the mishkan. We do not have the mishkan nowadays. But we have other sources of inspiration- we have yeshivos, seminaries, Torah classes, etc... The goal of every Jew has to be that he is inspired by his years and his time in these institutions, and he takes the inspiration with him as he enters the outside world. Every person has the ability to bring the shechinah into his home, but the only way to do it is with daily commitment to avodas Hashem.