Points to Ponder

Tetzaveh 5779

**לְהַֽעֲלֹ֥ת נֵ֖ר תָּמִֽיד:  To light a permanent light (27:20)** - Why is the purpose of the Menorah -- lighting an eternal light -- given with a separate command and a separate Parsha when the placing of the Lechem HaPanim on the Shulchan seems like a by-product of the command to build it? **Rav Baruch Gigi Shlita** explains that the Shulchan represent Parnassa and man’s pursuit of it while the Menorah represents spiritual pursuit. While man has times in his life that are devoted to things that appear to be different from his pursuit of Torah -- the ultimate goal of everything we do is to light an eternal light. Thus, even when taking time to focus on Parnassa or health or raising our families, our focus needs to be that these activities are, indeed, just sub-goals of our main goal -- that of lighting a permanent Ner Tamid. Hence Birchos HaTorah are not regularly re-recited because our day is focus-filled with Torah study but we have certain things that appear to be slight deviations -- not alternative goals.

**לְכָב֖וֹד וּלְתִפְאָֽרֶת: For honor and glory (28:2) - Kli Yakar** (to 28:39)  notes that Achashveirosh wore the Bigdei Kehuna as well. Kli Yakar explains that his intent was to atone for all of his sins that the clothes are supposed to atone for -- but he was wrong. **Rav Elya Svei** suggested otherwise. He opines that the basis of the Kappara aspect of the Bigdei Kehuna are in the fact that they inspire the nation to have positive Middos and change those that are not positive. Achashveirosh thought that he too, had Middos and Shittos and he too, wanted to inspire. However, here he erred. One cannot have personal Shittos in Middos and expect the divine to amplify and meet them. Proper middos and the way to express them, are a function of the Divine and that is where Achashveirosh and the Bigdei Kehuna were on different wavelengths.

**וְאֵפוֹד֙  Eifod (28:4) - Rashi** here notes that he never knew what the Eifod was but it seems to be tied in the back. Why did he think that it was an apron tied specifically to protect the back? **Rav Shimon Schwab ztl.** suggests that it boils down to an understanding of the function of the Eifod. The Talmud (Erachin 16a) notes that the Eifod was to atone for the sin of Avoda Zara. Avoda Zara happens when people err in their understanding of Hashem and use the metaphors of our relationship with him and take them literally. Thus, stars become the “eyes of God” but really are not. This system takes the beauty of the literal relationship with Hashem and leaves only the waste byproduct -- the similes and metaphors without the nutrients that they contained -- as human or animal waste is created once the good is sucked out of that which we ingest. Just as waste is removed behind the body, the Eifod needed to atone for the sin created from waste -- that of Avoda Zara and needed to be in the place that Avoda Zara is represented -- behind the human.

**וְנִשְׁמַ֣ע ק֠וֹל֠וֹ  And his voice shall be heard (28:35) - Rav Gifter ztl.** noted that the bells at the end of the Me’il of the Kohein Gadol let off a pleasant but clear noise. It reminds us that each and every step we make in life also needs to be measured and focused because it makes an impact but that the impact can be a pleasurable one.

**וְהָיָ֤ה עַל־מִצְחוֹ֙ תָּמִ֔יד All the time (28:38)** - The Talmud (Yoma 7) notes that one needs to check his Tefillin all the time. The source is from the fact that the Kohein Gadol had to be aware of the Tzitz on his head all the time. The Tzitz only had one name of Hashem while Tefillin have many more. Tosafos (Sukkah 46a) asks where one learns that he needs to touch the Tefillin from? **Tosafos** answers that if one needs to keep something on his mind as long as he is wearing it, he needs to be active with it. Regular touching of the Tefillin will keep him active with the touching. The problem with the suggestion is that we do not find an obligation to touch the Tzitz. The Kohein Gadol did NOT have to keep touching it. Why were we not concerned with HIS Heisech HaDaas? Moreover, the Kohein Gadol may not raise his hands over the Tzitz. How is he to touch it? **The Steipler** ztl. answers that perhaps in that case, the very fact that he cannot raise his hands above the Tzitz IS the very reminder needed (sometimes that which you CANNOT do, stays more on your mind than things you may). Alternatively, he suggests that the fact that there is a Mitzva of Mora Mikdash keeps the Kohein Gadol’s focus.

**וְעָשִׂ֥יתָ מִזְבֵּ֖חַ מִקְטַ֣ר קְטֹ֑רֶת  You should make a Mizbeiach for Ketores (30:1)** - Why is this Kli mentioned in THIS parsha instead of last week’s? **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** suggested that Ketores smells were far reaching -- they were even detectable in Yericho. Moreover the smell penetrates into a person even when he does not want to. Also, smell can protect a person from harm by alerting him or her to noxious things that can harm him. Rav Moshe adds that the Torah leader needs to function in a similar way. He needs to be able to influence the people even when they are far away and even when it appears that they are not willing. He needs to be able to “smell” which ideas are foreign and which not, in order to distance himself and his followers from them. Therefore, the Torah waited until after recognizing the person of Aharon who as a Jewish leader was a star at influencing the people positively before putting the symbol of the Mizbach HaZahav into the Sefer to encourage Jewish leaders to be like the Mizbeiach following the example of Aharon.

**הִקְטִ֥יר עָלָ֛יו אַֽהֲרֹ֖ן קְטֹ֣רֶת סַמִּ֑ים Aharon shall bring the Ketores (30:7)** - Why does Aharon have to be the one to do it? I thought Ketores could be brought by any of the Kohanim each day that was not Yom Kippur? **Rav Schachter Shlita quoted Sforno** who suggested that in the Midbar the Anan was so strong that it created an environment wherein each day of the entire 40 years was like a day of Yom Kippur. Just as a Kohein Gadol does the entire Avoda then, he does the entire Avoda in the Midbar too.

**Haftorah זֹ֖את תּוֹרַ֣ת הַבָּ֑יִת This is the story of the house (Yechezkel 43:12) - Rav Avraham Rivlin Shlita** noted that the Nevuah of Yechezkel is different from the dimensions of the first Beis HaMikdash of the Haftorah from Terumah and is different from Meseches Middos which describes the dimensions of the second Beis HaMikdash. Still, he notes, one does not need to despair in the inconsistencies. **Tosafos Yom Tov** (Middos) notes that the inconsistencies tell the story better. As Hashem allowed different interpretations from first beis hamikdash to the second, he will reveal the meaning in these prophesies and will make them too, consistent with His will when rebuilding the third.