Points to Ponder

Tetzaveh/Zachor 5783

**וְאַתָּ֞ה  And you (27:20)** - Moshe Rabbeinu's name appears nowhere in Parshat Tetzaveh. Why not? The Zohar notes that this is the payment for Moshe’s request that his name be striken from the Torah if Hashem could not forgive Bnei Yisrael for the Cheit HaEigel. **Rav Gedalia Schorr** explains that when we speak to someone in an intimate fashion, we don't use a first name. The same is true in this week's parsha: When Hashem addresses Moshe after his willingness to sacrifice himself for Klal Yisrael, there is a unique intimacy between Moshe and Hashem. The vav hachibur of “ve'atta” indicates that there is no separation between Hashem and Moshe. Moshe loses his name because his identity is no longer distinct from Hashem; it is as if kivyachol Hashem and Moshe are so closely connected that there is no separation. In the language of Rav Schorr, there is no mechitza that divides them.

**וְאַתָּ֞ה תְּצַוֶּ֣ה**  **You will command (27:20)** - “You” here refers to Moshe Rabbeinu. **The Lubavitcher Rebbe** explained that the name of a person is not really his essence. A name is not necessary for the person himself, only for someone else, so that others can call him. We see that a person’s name can be changed, added or even dropped. A person doesn’t get a name at birth, but only at the *bris*milah for a boy or at the next time the Torah is read for a girl. A person’s name comes after they have been around for a while. When we say atah , “you ,” that is something higher than a name. It refers to the person himself; that which cannot be limited by a name. When HaShem talks to Moshe Rabbeinu and says, Ve’atah tetzave , it means that he is referring to the essence of Moshe Rabbeinu — not to his qualities of leadership, not to his wisdom, not to his knowledge, but to Moshe himself, the source and origin of all these other qualities. Even though Moshe’s name isn’t mentioned here at all, this is not to be interpreted as a negative thing — that HaShem was punishing him. On the contrary, because of his mesirus*nefesh* , his self-transcendence, his willingness to erase himself from the Torah for the sake of the Jews, the Torah reveals him as he is in his essence — atah , transcending his name and all of his attributes and qualities.

**וְלֹֽא־יִזַּ֣ח הַח֔שֶׁן מֵעַ֖ל הָֽאֵפֽוֹד And you shall not disconnect the Choshen from the Eiphod (28:28) – Rav Menachem Ben Tziyon Sacks** explained that the Ephod represents hard work and toil. The Choshen, which has the Urim V’Tumim on it, represents spiritual matters. This prohibition is symbolic of how we should live our lives — יפה תלמוד תורה עם דרך ארץ. We make sure that the Torah and the avodah of our lives work together in harmony.

**וְשַׂמְתָּ֤ אֹתוֹ֙ עַל־פְּתִ֣יל תְּכֵ֔לֶת וְהָיָ֖ה עַל־הַמִּצְנָ֑פֶת You shall place the Tzitz on the Tcheiles (28:37)** - In Parashas Pekudei it says “ויתנו עליו פתיל תכלת”. Was the Tzitz on top of the Techeiles or was the Techeiles on top of the Tzitz? **Rav Moshe Feinstein** explains that Techeiles represents growth in steps (התכלת דומה לים והים דומה לרקיע). The Tzitz represents great moments of inspiration. Sometimes we have to grow in steps to reach great heights. Sometimes the great moments of inspiration come first and then we need to continue afterwards in small steps to continue growing. Both are highlighted in the Tzitz/Techeiles debate.

**וְרָֽחַצְתָּ֥ אֹתָ֖ם בַּמָּֽיִם And they will wash themselves in water (29:4)** – The reference is to Mikvah. **Rav Schachter** explained that Similar to the Tevilah of a Ger, before putting on Bigdei Kehuna the kohanim go into mikvah. Both are gaining a higher level of kedusha, so both need to go to Mikvah. It is also why the Kohen Gadol has to go to mikvah in between each group of begadim, on Yom Kippur. Once he takes off his Bigdei Kehuna, he’s lost his higher kedusha, and needs to do tevilla before putting on the other Begaddim..

**ריח ניחוח** **A pleasing fragrance for Hashem (29:18)** - **Rav Eliezer Ashkenazi** notes that ריח ניחוח is merely an opportunity. We shouldn’t think that just because something smells good, it is accepted. Rather it is all dependent on teshuva. This is why smell is used as a metaphor. Just because there is a good smell nearby doesn’t mean that the process is complete.

**אֲשֶׁ֨ר הוֹצֵ֧אתִי אֹתָ֛ם מֵאֶ֥רֶץ מִצְרַ֖יִם לְשָׁכְנִ֣י בְתוֹכָ֑ם Whom I took out of Egypt live among them (29:46)** – Rashi notes that Hashem took us out to dwell among us. Ramban adds that the idea of Hashraas HaShechina is a desire of Hashem. Rav Shaul Yisraeli explained that what diaspora Jews lose when considering their spiritual lives is that Hashem sees the ideal place for spiritual dwelling to be Eretz Yisrael. He added that living in Israel is not for the financial or economic or social advantages. Life in Israel, and true religious Zionism, is built on the idea that we see the purpose of life is to live with Hashem’s Shechina about us.

**Haftara**

**וַיְשַׁמַּ֚ע שָׁאוּל֙ אֶת־הָעָ֔ם וַֽיִּפְקְדֵם֙ בַּטְּלָאִ֔ים Shaul brought the people together and counted them via Telaim (Shmuel Alef 1:4)** - The **Redak** explains that he counted them on Pesach using the number of animals used for the Korban Pesach groups. Ergo, it seems that the people went to war immediately after the first day of Pesach. Why the connection between Pesach and the battle of Amalek? **The Bnei Yisoschar** explains that it comes from the reminder to remember Amalek on the path that it was on when you left Mitzrayim. **Rav Binyamin Eisenberger Shli**ta adds that this connection also explains why Esther chose to wait one extra day before putting her request to Achasveirosh. She knew that Haman’s ancestor Aggag lost to the Jews on the day after Pesach. Thus, she knew it was a day that the Jews could beat Haman again.