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## A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

### פרשת תצוה

וְעָשִׂיתָ בְּגָדֵי קֹדֶשׁ לְאַהֲרֹן אָחִיךָ לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאֳרָתוֹ. (שמות כח, ב)

*You shall make vestments of sanctity for Ahron your brother, for glory and splendour. (Shemos 28:2)*

In this week's *Sidrah*, Moshe received instructions about the Bigdei Kehunah. The Torah outlines the unique vestments that the Kohanim must wear while serving in the Mishkan and, later, in the Beis HaMikdash. These distinctive and unusual garments set the Kohanim apart during their performance of the *avodah*.

The *possuk* describes the vestments as being *לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאֳרָתוֹ*, *for glory and splendour*. The Seforno explains that there are two aspects to these garments. Firstly, they are *לְכָבוֹד*, intended for the *honour* of Hashem, as holy garments were worn for His service. Secondly, they are *לְתִפְאֳרָתוֹ*, which means they lend *splendour* to the Kohen Gadol, who acts as the teacher of the nation. This helps ensure that he is revered by the *shevatim*, whose names he bears on his heart and shoulders. The Seforno's explanation clarifies that while these special garments are primarily for the honour of Hashem, they also serve to dignify the office of the Kohen Gadol, so that the people, who are expected to view him as their teacher, will show him respect and reverence.

The Rosh Yeshivah *shlita* elaborates on this theme. The holy vestments of the Kohen Gadol represented his elevated *madreigah*, inspiring reverence in all who observed him. This can be seen in the *ציץ* on his forehead, which bore the inscription "קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה". This phrase epitomised the level of dedication demanded from the Kohen Gadol - all his thoughts and actions should be completely focused on understanding and fulfilling the will of Hashem. This focus allowed the people to revere him and seek Torah knowledge from him. As it is stated in the *possuk* (*Malachi* 2:7): *כִּי שִׁפְתַי כֶּהֵן יִשְׁמְרוּ דַעַת וְתוֹרָה יִבְקְשׁוּ מִפִּיהוּ כִּי מְלַאֲךְ הוּא עַבְדֵי יְהוָה הוּא*, *For the lips of the Kohen should safeguard knowledge, and people should seek teaching from his mouth; for he is an agent of Hashem, Master of Legions*. Only when the thoughts of the Kohen Gadol are entirely centred on acquiring the will of Hashem can he truly serve as His messenger to teach the Torah.

In addition, the Kohen Gadol wore the Choshen, containing twelve stones inscribed with the names of the *shevatim*, on his chest, to symbolise his concern and love for Klal Yisroel. When using the Choshen to make important decisions, such as whether to go to war, the Kohen Gadol needed to be sensitive to the needs of each individual. To determine whether to engage in battle – given the great dangers involved - he had to be aware and mindful of the personal needs of the nation.

It is noteworthy that we do not find two Kohanim with distinct roles - one wearing the holy Tzitz and the other wearing the Choshen. There is not a single saintly Kohen adorned with the Tzitz, dedicated solely to understanding and fulfilling the will of Hashem while teaching Torah to the masses, and another Kohen wearing the Choshen, who bears the names of the *shevatim*, attuned to the needs of the nation and making vital decisions regarding national security and wellbeing. Rather, it was the

same Kohen Gadol who fulfilled both roles, which were not only uncontradictory but also complementary. True *sheleimus* requires both of these aspects. This idea is evident in Pirkei Avos, which lists the 48 traits necessary to genuinely attain the Torah, including many good *middos* such as caring for others. Just as someone with Torah knowledge also needs to cultivate good *middos*, a person who possesses a heart full of love for every Yid also requires true Torah knowledge to correctly guide and channel those feelings of love and concern.

The Rosh Yeshivah explains that the need for the Torah to guide one's feelings and positive *middos* can be found in the *berachah* of שִׁים שְׁלוֹם recited at the end of *Shemoneh Esreh*. We daven: בְּרַכְנוּ אֲבוּנוּ, קָלְנוּ כְּאֶחָד בְּאוֹר פְּנֵיךְ, כִּי בְאוֹר פְּנֵיךְ נִתְּתָ לָנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ תּוֹרַת חַיִּים, וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד, וְצְדָקָה וּבְרָכָה וְרַחֲמִים, וְשְׁלוֹם וְחַיִּים, *Bless us, our Father, all of us as one, with the light of Your countenance, for with the light of Your countenance You gave us, Hashem, our G-d, the Torah of life and a love of kindness, righteousness, blessing, compassion, life, and peace.* Firstly, we acknowledge that through הָאֲרַת פְּנִים – Hashem's countenance - we have been granted the "Torah of life," which guides us and brings meaning to our lives. We then proceed to beseech Hashem for more of His countenance, which will provide us with וְשְׁלוֹם חַיִּים וְרַחֲמִים, בְּרָכָה, צְדָקָה, אַהֲבַת חֶסֶד.

This signifies that the Torah, bestowed through Hashem's countenance, serves as the foundation for developing the positive *middos* mentioned. The Siddur Iyun Tefillah (from the Kesav veHakabalah) explains that the term "אהבת" - love of" refers to all the traits that follow it, meaning love of kindness, love of righteousness, and so on. Thus, the *berachah* implies that in order to cultivate and acquire a genuine love for kindness, righteousness, blessing, compassion, life, and peace, one must have Hashem's countenance – the Torah – to sincerely and correctly direct and channel these qualities.

The dual personality required of the Kohen Gadol, as symbolised by the Tzitz and the Choshen, imparts a profound lesson. The Tzitz represents his commitment to fulfilling Hashem's will and teaching the Torah, while the Choshen signifies his heart filled with love and sensitivity towards the people he guides in practical matters. These two complementary roles of the Kohen Gadol illustrate that true greatness in Torah requires good *middos*, and additionally, to achieve proper conduct and develop one's *middos*, one needs the guidance of the Torah.

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