

GREAT FOR SHARING
AT THE SHABBOS TABLE!



אור ישראל

Living Life Deeper

PARSHAS
TETZAVEH 5778

BY RABBI NETANEL NAAMAT
RABBI NAFTALI ZIONS

בְּשִׁיטְיָחָא

The Clothes Make the Man

At the beginning of this week's *Parshah*, Hashem instructed *Moshe Rabbeinu* to make clothing for the *Kohanim* "לכבוד ולתפארת" designated for "grandeur and glory."¹ The *Sefer HaChinuch*² explains this *Pasuk* to mean that in addition to the obligation to make the garments, there is an additional requirement that during the *Avodah*, the *Kohein* must wear them. This serves to promote a sense of "grandeur and glory" for the *Kohanim*. In fact, the *Rambam*³ derives from the words "לכבוד ולתפארת" that the garments had to be in new condition, of nice appearance, and of proper size when worn by the *Kohanim*.

What need was there for the *Kohanim* to have special clothing? What was the significance of promoting a sense of "grandeur and glory?" The *Chinuch* explains that a person's attitude and feelings are affected by his actions. Therefore, while doing the *Avodah* the *Kohein* needed to focus all of his thoughts and intentions on what he was doing, why he was doing it, and in the presence of Whom. Despite serving in the *Bais HaMikdash*, and having constant miracles occur therein,⁴ there was a concern that the *Kohein* may lose focus and therefore compromise on the quality of his *Avodah*. To combat this problem, Hashem instructed that the *Kohanim* must wear special garments while serving in the *Bais HaMikdash*. Doing so was the first step in a multi-step process. When a *Kohein* would wear this special clothing, every part of his body would be covered, therefore, wherever he would look, the feeling of "grandeur and glory" would be generated, which would remind the *Kohein* that he is in the presence of Hashem, resulting in him having the proper thoughts and intentions while doing the *Avodah*.

What a surprise! The *Kohein*, in the *Bais HaMikdash*, while doing the *Avodah*, needs a constant reminder of before Whom he stands! While we sadly do not have a *Beis Hamikdash* today, we each have our own *Avodah* in the form of *Tefillah*. As we *Daven* or say *Berachos* day in and day out, we naturally fall prey to habit and forget Who we are speaking to. However, we can follow in the example of the *Kohanim* of old, and use personal reminders to refocus us. By doing so, our relationship to Hashem becomes more real and will also energize and invigorate our *Tefillah*.

1 *Shemos* 28:40

2 *Mitzvah* 99

3 *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* 8:4

4 *Avos* 5:5

**The Kohein, in the
Bais HaMikdash, while
doing the Avodah,
needs a constant
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Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

We are all told that we are standing before Hashem when we *Daven*, but is there a way to remind ourselves of that fact?

Changing one's environment can be very helpful. Having a place to *Daven* that is uncluttered, both from distracting items, and distracting people, will allow a person the peace of mind needed to focus on the words that they are saying.

A reminder - a bright sticker or something similar - at various points within the *Siddur* can remind one that they are standing in front of Hashem. (The sticker should be changed from time to time, otherwise, it will blend into the background.)

Lastly, pausing for a moment before each paragraph, and thinking about what the next paragraph says, will help a person concentrate on what they are doing.

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A NOT-SO-SUBTLE REMINDER

It had been years since Shimmy* had seen his favorite high school rebbi. After graduating, Shimmy went to learn at a yeshiva in a different state, and he had lost touch with Rabbi Klapman. He heard, though, that Rabbi Klapman was coming into town for an event, and Shimmy arranged to pick him up at the airport.

Their reunion was heartwarming - each one had great respect for the other. After the initial greetings, Rabbi Klapman asked Shimmy how things are going.

"Well, rebbi, there is one thing I wanted to discuss. I find that I have a very hard time *Davening*. I know I should, but I don't feel connected. I feel like I'm just saying the words, but there's nothing behind it."

"Unfortunately, that's not an uncommon problem," responded Rabbi Klapman. "It applies to yeshiva bochurim like you, married women, children, and great rabbis. *Tefillah* is called *Avodah* for a reason - it takes work! Let me ask you - do you believe in Hashem?"

Shimmy was taken aback. "Of course!"

"Many people go through life 'knowing' that there is a Hashem, but sadly, not feeling it - not connecting. True, *Tefillah* needs a connection, but *Tefillah* itself is the perfect opportunity to rekindle that connection. Try this - when you *Daven*, try to focus on the relationship. The praises of Hashem aren't academic - He really is that amazing! And when you ask for things in *Shemoneh Esrei*, recognize that Hashem truly is the One in charge. You're not asking a machine to produce for you, you're speaking to the Creator, the One who can really make it happen."

"Sounds like *Davening* is a *Mussar Seder*."

"Exactly! If you approach *Tefillah* like you're trying to get things, you'll quickly get burned out. But if your approach to *Tefillah* is that you want to come closer to Hashem, to truly appreciate what He does for us, you'll find that you will grow, both in your *Emunah*, and in your affinity to *Tefillah*."

**Based on a true story, names have been changed.*

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Avodah for a reason -
it takes work!**

DID YOU KNOW?

- We fulfill a *Mitzvas Aseih* every moment that we remind ourselves of Hashem's presence.¹
- Prior to starting *Shemoneh Esrei* one should imagine themselves standing in front of Hashem.² The *Mishnah Berurah*³ adds that one should always visualize themselves in the presence of Hashem because He is everywhere.
- Unlike what happens when becoming too familiar with people, increasing our awareness of Hashem enables us to see extra layers of the infinite layers of Hashem's greatness.⁴

1 *Biur Halacha* 1, s.v. הוּא, *Aruch HaShulchan Ohr HaChaim* 1:14

2 *Sanhedrin* 22a

3 *Mishnah Berurah* 1:4

4 *Sefer HaMakneh* 31a s.v. אמר רבי יהושע