



## Wembley Synagogue

צו

## Insights from the commentators into the Sedra of Tzav

צו אֶת אַהֲרֹן - Command Aharon. (6:12)

In general, the Torah introduces the commandments regarding the *korbanot* (sacrifices) with the less emphatic term, *amarta* -say, or *daber* -speak. Regarding the *Korban Olah* (Burnt offering), the command is emphasised with the word *tzav* -command. The Rabbis explain that the Kohanim are being urged to be especially zealous in performing this service and to reiterate its significance to future generations. Rabbi Shimon adds that this is applies especially to commandments that involve a monetary loss, such as the *Korban Olah*, which is entirely burnt on the Altar, leaving nothing for the Kohanim. (Source: Peninim on the Torah)

צו אֶת אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר זֹאת תּוֹרַת הָעֹלָה - Command Aharon and his sons saying, 'This is the law of the burnt-offering.' (6:2) Rashi writes that the term "*tzav*" denotes encouragement for the present and for future generations, and Rabbi Shimon said that it is especially necessary to give encouragement in the places where there is a "*chisaron kis*" — "loss of money." "*Chisaron kis*" literally means "loss of purse." Why does the text not say "*chisaron mamon*" — "loss of money"?

The burnt-offering atones for sinful thoughts (*Midrash Rabbah* 7:3). A person can also sin with his eyes by viewing improper things, with his ears by hearing evil and with his tongue by speaking sinfully.

To avoid speaking, the upper and lower jaw is like a "*kis*" (purse) that can lock up the tongue. The eyelids are a "*kis*" that can cover the eyes and prevent them from seeing evil. The external parts of the ears can be a "*kis*" with which to seal them from hearing evil. The only part of the body that has no protective guard is the mind.

Therefore, Rabbi Shimon says that it is necessary to warn a person to be especially careful with his thoughts because of "*chisaron kis*" — the absence of an external constraint.

וּמִכְסֵי בָד - (And he [the Kohen] shall wear) linen breeches on his flesh. (6:3)

The words "*al besaro*" — "on his flesh" — teach us that the garments must be worn directly on his flesh with nothing else intervening (Rashi).

On *Yom Kippur* the *Kohen Gadol* would immerse in a *mikvah*, dry himself, and change into other garments. He needed to dry himself so that there would be no water between his flesh and the garments (see Rambam, *Avodat Yom Hakippurim* 2:2, *Mishneh Lemelech*). The *Gemara* (*Zevachim* 35a) praises the *Kohanim* for walking in blood up to their knees while they performed the service in the *Beit Hamikdash*. A question is asked: Why isn't the blood considered a *chatzitzah* — separation — between their feet and the floor? The *Gemara* answers that liquids are not considered a separation. If so, why was it necessary for the *Kohen Gadol* to dry himself after immersing?

The reason why there may not be any *chatzitzah* — separation — between the *Kohen's* foot and the floor is not because his foot must be in contact with the floor, but because otherwise he is not totally on the *Beit Hamikdash* property while performing the service. Thus, though liquids are a foreign substance they do not create a separation, and even if they are under his feet it is nevertheless considered that he is standing on *Beit Hamikdash* property.

In the case of the garments, however, there is a specific *halachah* that they must be *al besaro* — tightly fitted and in contact with his flesh — and even an air space between his flesh and the garment is considered a *chatzitzah* — separation (see *Zevachim* 19a). The *Kohen Gadol* must therefore dry himself thoroughly after immersing, because in regard to the rule of "*al besaro*," the water would be a separation, since the garments would not be firmly in contact with his flesh. (Source:Peninim on the Torah)

אֵשׁ תָּמִיד תִּקְדָּד עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לֹא תִכָּבֵה - A permanent fire shall remain aflame on the Altar; it shall not be extinguished (6:6). Ha'Drash V'Ha'Iyun renders this statement homiletically. When a person is at home, calm and relaxed, when their life is in order and everything is going smoothly, we feel protected against circumstances that might sway us from the correct path of observance. First, things are going well; we has no reason to waver in our commitment to Hashem. There is no emotional pull to drag us away. Second, we are in our community, among friends and associates with whom we

have an established acquaintance. But the situation changes drastically when one is on the road, in a strange place where he is not known, where whatever improper behaviour one might be tempted to commit will go unnoticed and unchallenged. The temptation is great.

This is the underlying meaning of King David's praise in Psalm 128:1, "Praised shall be he who maintains his fear of Hashem even when he is on the road, dwelling in strange unknown places."

The Torah alludes to this when it commands us to sustain the fire on the altar at all times - even during periods of travel. Upon the altar of the heart, the altar of man's spiritual consciousness, the flame - the fire of one's passion and commitment - should burn brightly, even when he travels and the challenges to his commitment ever present.

(Source: Peninim on the Torah)

וְהַכֹּהֵן הַמְשִׁיחַ תְּחִתּוֹ - And the priest anointed in his (Aharon's) place (from his children should perform it as a statute forever (6:15)

There are two meal-offerings which can be brought only by a Kohen. One is offered the first time a Kohen performs the Temple service, and when a Kohen Gadol (High priest) assumes his new office. The other is offered every day by the Kohen Gadol. The "first-day" offering is often called "*Minchat Chinuch*" - induction meal-offering, while that of the Kohen Gadol is called "*Minchat Chavitin*", a pan meal-offering so named because of the flat pan in which it was baked. Bringing this offering every day would remind the Kohen Gadol of an important lesson. It was incumbent upon the Kohen Gadol to realise that his prestigious position was a gift from Hashem. Hence, his position was not his by right. Rather, Hashem's continued kindness allowed him to retain his important post.

Even if the Kohen Gadol will not be deposed by bet din - an unusual occurrence- Hashem may cause him to be demoted by bringing upon him blemishes, contamination or death.

Each day that Hashem allowed him to remain in his important position was as if he was newly appointed on that day and so each day was like his inauguration day.

From here we learn that any blessing or appointment that Hashem gives must be continually deserved and the recipient must contemplate it and appreciate it every day.

(Source: Darash Moshe)

### Some ideas about Shabbat Hagadol

On the 10th day of *Nissan*, which was a *Shabbat*, Hashem commanded the Jewish people to prepare a lamb for a *Pesach*-offering and tie it to the foot of their beds (*Tur Orach Chaim* 430). On Wednesday afternoon, the 14th day of *Nissan*, the Jews slaughtered the *Pesach*-offering, and left Egypt the following morning (Thursday), the 15th day of *Nissan* (*Shabbat* 87b).

The Egyptians visited the homes of their Jewish slaves and were horrified to see how the Jews were treating the lambs, which the Egyptians worshipped. When the Egyptians asked what they were doing with the lambs, the Jews did not try to evade the question and proudly proclaimed "We have a G-d Who commanded us to sacrifice these."

A major difference between a *katan* - minor - and a *gadol* - adult - is that a minor is frequently shy and likely to obscure the truth with excuses. On the other hand, an adult, mature and not ashamed, forthrightly proclaims his convictions. On this *Shabbat* the Jews acted as *gedolim* - mature adults - and unhesitatingly proclaimed their allegiance to Hashem. Since they acted like *gedolim*, this *Shabbat* is known as *Shabbat Hagadol*.

(Source: Vedibarta Bam)

The Jews were liberated from Egypt in the year 2448 after creation. They had their first real taste of freedom on the *Shabbat* before *Pesach*, when they prepared the lamb for the *Korban Pesach*. The words "*Shabbat Hagadol*" remind us of the redemption: *shin* stands for *Shabbat*, *beit* = 2,000, *taf* = 400, and the word *hagadol* has the numerical value of 48.

## Shabbat Shalom and Chag Kasher V' Sameach!



**Shabbat starts 7.16pm**



**Shabbat ends: 8.20pm**

The *Insights into the Sedra* sheet is edited by Chazan Anthony Wolfson

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