



**Wembley Synagogue**

אַחֲרֵי מוֹת - קִדְּשִׁים

**Insights from the commentators into the Sidrot of Acharei Mot and Kedoshim**

אָחֲרָי אַחֲרֵי אָחִיךָ - Speak to Aharon your brother (16:2)

Why does the Torah stress that Aharon was Moshe's brother? Ha'drash V'Haiyun quotes the Sifra, which teaches that while Aharon was limited as to when and how he could enter the Holy of Holies, Moshe enjoyed unlimited access. The Torah outlines the limited circumstances under which Aharon may enter this area. Since Moshe might fear that this would arouse Aharon's jealousy, Hashem told him "speak to Aharon your brother, about whom I had told you when you were returning to Egypt to lead the Jewish people, Aharon your brother .....behold he is going to meet you and when he sees you he will rejoice in his heart (Shemot 4:14). As Rashi (ad loc.) explains, 'contrary to your assumption that he would feel hurt over your appointment to greatness he will sincerely rejoice for you.' Here too Aharon your brother will have no ill feelings that though his brother Moshe has free access to the Holy of Holies, he himself may not enter at all times. (Source: The Torah Treasury)

וְאֵל יָבֹא בְּכָל עֵת אֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ - He shall not come at all times into the Sanctuary. (16:2) The phrase *בְּכָל עֵת* - "*bechol eit*" - "at all times" - forbids the Kohen's constant presence in the Sanctuary, but seems to permit occasional visits. Since he was allowed to come in only on *Yom Kippur*, what is the reason for the strange construction of this verse? It is Satan's mission to continuously induce the Jew to sin. The *Gemara* (*Yoma* 20a) notes that "*הַשָּׂטָן*" - "the Satan" - has the numerical value of 364. From this we may infer that, during 364 days of the solar year, the Satan has permission to cause trouble, but on the 365th day of the year - *Yom Kippur* - this permission is revoked. Thus, the day of *Yom Kippur*, is very different from the other 364 days of the year. The message that Hashem conveyed to Aharon was that he should not come "*bechol eit*" - "at all times" - any ordinary day of the year. The only day when he could enter the Inner-Sanctuary was on the special day of the year - *Yom Kippur*. (Source: Vedibarta Bam)

וְלָבַשׁ - אֶת הַבְּגָד הַקֹּדֶשׁ - A sacred linen tunic he shall wear (16:4)

Upon entering the Holy of Holies, the Kohen Gadol removed his elaborate priestly clothes and put on simple, white linen. In public, the kohen was responsible to maintain the dignity appropriate to his grand position in life. When he went into the Holy of Holies to confess the sins of the People of Israel, to entreat Hashem on behalf of His people, he entered dressed as an ordinary Kohen. At the spiritually heightened moment, the most solemn of the year, the most respected of men became a simple mortal. The facade of dignity and station in life no longer distinguished him from any other person. This was his moment of face-to-face confrontation with Hashem. The awesome feeling affected the Kohen Gadol's entire being, mirrored in his external clothing. (Source: Peninim on the Torah)

וַיִּכְפֹּר בְּעֵדוֹ וּבְעֵדוֹ בֵּיתוֹ - And (he) shall provide atonement for himself and for his household. (16:6) The Kohen Gadol gained atonement by pronouncing vidui - confession, for his own - as well as his family's transgressions. The Torah seems to place emphasis upon the Kohen Gadol's "baito," household. Indeed, in the beginning of the *Gemara Yoma* the Mishnah states that we prepare another woman for the Kohen Gadol in the event his wife dies prior to the *Yom Kippur* service. A Kohen Gadol who does not have a wife is disqualified from performing the *avodah* service. Rav Moshe Shternbuch, renders a practical reason for this halachah. Without a wife one lacks sheleimut- completion/perfection. He is deficient, lacking an integral component in completing himself as a man. The individual who represents the whole of Israel on *Yom Kippur* must be an *adam shalem*- a complete person. On the holiest day of the year, when we seek atonement to perfect ourselves, we must stand before Hashem b'sheleimut- complete. (Source: Peninim on the Torah)

וְלָקַח מִדַּם הַפָּר וּמִדַּם הַשְּׂעִיר - And he shall take the blood of the calf and the blood of the goat (16:18). At a siyum marking the completion of the *Gemara Yoma*, Rav Meir Shapiro of Lublin made the following observation. The Talmud (*Yoma* 57b) rules that the blood of the two animals had to be mixed before being sprinkled on the kapporet. This stipulation teaches us a valuable lesson. The great (symbolised by the calf) are required to intermingle with the small (symbolised by the goat). They can not stand by the side keeping their distance. The Jewish people can only achieve atonement and forgiveness for their sins when all people are joined together. (Source: The Parsha Anthology)

**Kedoshim**

אֲלֵכֶיֶם ה' אֶלְקֵיֶם -You shall be holy, for holy am I, Hashem, your G-d. (19:2) Rashi quoting the Midrash Vayikra Rabba 24:5 says that עֲדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל -congregation of the people of Israel teaches us that this portion was said at a gathering of the entire nation.

Why, in fact was this portion, more than others throughout the Torah, said at a gathering of the entire nation? What is the significance of this particular assembly? Within the Sidra of Kedoshim are mentioned many of the classic mitzvot בֵּין אָדָם לְחַבְרֵי

- between man and man - such as 'do not unjustly withhold that which is due to your brother, and do not steal,' 'do not pervert justice,' 'do not hate your brother in your heart,' 'love your neighbour as yourself.' Most people identify "holiness" which encompasses faith and close adherence to the word of Hashem, with the mitzvot that are directly between man and G-d. Praying, putting on tefillin, reciting the Shema, fasting on Yom Kippur – these all reflect upon one's level of "holiness." Yet people often don't consider the mitzvot between man and man, such as stealing and embezzling as being in the same realm of holiness. Rashi teaches us that this portion was delivered in front of the entire nation. The message of being holy was not taught only to those few who were great and who lived within the realm of the spiritual, it was presented to everyone. This means that achieving the level of holiness is something that even the average person in the street is expected to attain. Everyone was commanded to infuse their lives with holiness. (Source: Ateret Mordechai on the Torah)

אֲלֵכֶיֶם ה' אֶלְקֵיֶם -You shall be holy, for I, G-d your G-d am holy. (19:2) On this *pasuk*, the *Midrash Rabbah* (24:9) says, "*Kedushati lema'alah mikedushatchem*" – "My holiness is greater than yours."

Why is it necessary for the *Midrash* to inform us that Hashem's holiness is greater than ours? Why would we think otherwise?

Indeed, the intent of the *Midrash* is not simply to inform us of Hashem's greatness, but to relate an important message to the Jewish people. Every Jew is able to *add* to the holiness of Hashem, by conducting his life in a way which is a *Kiddush Hashem* – sanctification of Hashem. People impressed with the behavior of the Jewish people will ultimately praise Hashem.

Thus, in effect Hashem is saying, "*Kedushati lema'alah*" – "My holiness [in Heaven is] – *mikedushatchem*" – "dependent on the holiness of your conduct on earth."

לֹא תִגְנוֹב -You shall not steal. (19:11)

The *tzadik* Rabbi Meshulam Zusya of Anipoli, a student of the Baal Shem Tov's teachings – Reb Zushe as he was known defined seven lessons we can take from a thief.

He says that:-

- 1) The thief works quietly without others knowing – the same with spirituality – the foundation of all spiritual progress is humility.
- 2) The thief is ready to put himself in danger – Spiritual progress involves taking risks
- 3) The smallest detail is of great importance to a thief – strict observance of Judaism requires attention to detail
- 4) The thief works hard- a principle in Judaism is that important things in life come through effort.
- 5) The thief works at speed – If we are sluggish or lazy we won't achieve our true potential
- 6) The thief is confident and optimistic - we should believe in ourselves that we can succeed
- 7) If a thief does not succeed the first time, he tries again and again – A *tzaddik* falls seven times before rising! The question is how we react when we fail.

וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹתְךָ -You should love your fellow like you love yourself (19:18)

How important is it to "love your fellow like you love yourself?"

**Rashi** quotes Rabbi Akiva as saying "this is a major principle of the Torah."

**The Gemara Shabbat** 31a quotes Hillel who said "What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. This is the entire Torah – the rest is commentary." **Sefer Hachinuch** says that many of the commandments of the Torah depend on this mitzvah. For a person who loves his fellow as loves himself will not steal his property, cheat him financially, abuse him verbally, go into unfair competition with him or harm him in any way.

**Shabbat Shalom**



**Shabbat starts 8.03pm**



**Shabbat ends: 9.12pm**