

פרשת תצוה

Our Parshas Tetzaveh is where we are introduced to the position of the Kohen Godol.

This week, the Torah tells us of three aspects regarding the Kohen Godol.

The first aspect is the unique clothes that the Kohen Godol must don when he performs his service in the Beis HaMikdosh. With great detail and with a formidable task in comprehending that detail, the Torah tells us step by step over a space of thirty-nine verses (Sh'mos Perek 28/P'sukim 1-39) what that special clothing is¹ and how the various garments are made and worn. And thus we read in that section (Posuk 2):

וְעָשִׂיתָ בְּגָדֵי קֹדֶשׁ לְאַהֲרֹן אָחִיךָ לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאֳרָתָ:

You shall make clothes of sanctity for your brother Aharon for honor and beauty.

The second aspect is the inauguration of Aharon, together with his sons who will be Kohanim. That is a seven-day event marked by the clothing that they wear and the offerings that they bring. That, too, is a section to which the Torah devotes many P'sukim – 46! (Perek 29 in its entirety).

The third aspect is our introduction to Yom HaKippurim at the very end of the Parsha where we read (Perek 30/Posuk 10):

וְכִפֶּר אֶהָרֶן עַל קַרְנֹתָיו אֶחַת בַּשָּׁנָה מִדַּם חַטָּאת הַכֹּפְרִים אֶחַת בַּשָּׁנָה יְכַפֵּר עָלָיו
לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם קֹדֶשׁ קֹדְשִׁים הוּא לֵה':

Aharon shall atone on the horns of the altar once a year with the blood of the sin-offering of atonement once a year he shall atone for it for your generations; it is the holy of holies for Hashem.

¹ The Torah also informs of the clothing of the *Kohen Hedyot*, the one who is not a Kohen Godol.

We are focusing on the Kohen Godol here and thus will not talk about the other Kohanim, even though some of what we learn is not unique to the Kohen Godol alone.

As we already know, all the services of Yom HaKippurim had to be performed by the Kohen Godol².

The inaugural prerequisites for the appointment of a Kohen Godol are codified by Rambam in the fourth Perek of Hilchos K'lei HaMikdosh V'Ovdeihem. We read there (Halachos 12-13, 15):

וממנין כהן גדול הוא ראש לכל הכהנים, ומושחין אותו בשמן המשחה, ומלבישין אותו בגדי כהונה גדולה שנאמר (ויקרא כא/3³) והכהן הגדול מאחיו אשר יוצק וגו', ואם אין שם שמן המשחה מרבין אותו בבגדי כהונה גדולה בלבד שנאמר אשר יוצק על ראשו שמן המשחה ומלא את ידו ללבוש את הבגדים, כשם שמתרבה בשמן המשחה כך מתרבה בבגדים.

כיצד מרבין אותו בבגדים, לובש שמנה בגדים ופושטן וחוזר ולובשן למחר שבעת ימים יום אחר יום שנאמר (שמות כט/4⁴) שבעת ימים ילבשם הכהן תחתיו מבניו, וכשם שרבוי בגדים שבעה כך משיחה בשמן שבעה יום אחר יום...

² We read in Mishneh Torah LaRambam (Hilchos Avodas Yom HaKippurim Perek 1/Halachah 2):

עבודת כל חמש עשרה בהמות אלו הקריבין ביום זה אינה אלא בכהן גדול בלבד, אחד כהן המשיח בשמן המשחה או המרובה בבגדים, ואם היתה שבת אף מוסף שבת אין מקריב אותו אלא כהן גדול, וכן שאר העבודות של יום זה כגון הקטרת הקטורת של כל יום והטבת הנרות הכל עשוי בכהן גדול...

The service of the fifteen animals that are offered on Yom HaKippurim is performed by the Kohen Godol only, whether he is the Kohen Godol inaugurated by the anointing oil or by wearing the many garments. And if Yom HaKippurim falls on Shabbos, also the *musaf* offering of Shabbos is brought by the Kohen Godol only. Similarly, the other services such as the *ketores*-incense offering that is brought daily and the cleaning of the Menorah –they are all performed by the Kohen Godol.

³ The entire verse reads:

והכהן הגדול מאחיו אשר יוצק על ראשו שמן המשחה ומלא את ידו ללבוש את הבגדים את ראשו לא יפרע ובגדיו לא יפרם:

The Kohen who is greater than his brothers, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured and he was inaugurated to wear the clothes, he shall not let his head grow wild and not cut his garments.

⁴ The entire verse, found in this week's Parsha, reads:

שבעת ימים ילבשם הכהן תחתיו מבניו אשר יבא אל אהל מועד לשרת בקדש:

Seven days the Kohen from his sons who will come in his place shall dress them, he who will come to the Ohel Moed to serve in the Holy.

אין מעמידין כהן גדול אלא בית דין של אחד ושבעים

They appoint a Kohen Godol who is the head of all of the Kohanim and they anoint him with the anointing oil. They place the garments of the Kohen Godol upon him as it says, 'and the Kohen who is greater than his brothers that the anointing oil was poured etc. '

If there was no anointing oil then they place the many garments of the Kohen Godol upon him as it says, 'upon whom the anointing oil was placed on his head and he was inaugurated to wear the clothes...'

Just as he is inaugurated by the anointing oil so he is inaugurated by the many clothes⁵.

How do they inaugurate him with the many clothes? He dons the eight garments of the Kohen Godol and removes them and he again wears them the following day and does this for seven days as it says, 'Seven days the Kohen Godol, of his sons who will come in his place, shall don them.' Just like he wears the clothes for the seven days so is the anointing oil put upon him for seven days, day after day.

Only the Sanhedrin HaGedolah of 71 judges can appoint a Kohen Godol.

We would think that the entirety of the Jewish People would see the Kohen Godol as one of their most admired individuals. The Beis HaMikdash functioned for the welfare of Israel and the Kohen Godol was, among other things, its chief executive.

⁵ Nonetheless, the two inaugurations are not totally equivalent. Rambam writes there in Halachah 14:

אין בין כהן משוח בשמן המשחה למרובה בגדים אלא פר שמביא כהן המשיח אם שגג באחד מן המצות שחייב עליהן חטאת שנאמר (ויקרא ד/ג) אם הכהן המשיח יחטא וגו', אבל לשאר הדברים שוים הם.

The only difference between a Kohen Godol who was inaugurated with the anointing oil and the one who was inaugurated with the many garments is the sin-offering that the anointed Kohen Godol brings when he unintentionally violates a Mitzvah upon which one is required to bring a *Korban Chattos* as it says, 'If the anointed Kohen shall sin...'. [But the Kohen who was inaugurated with the many clothes only brings a Korban Chattos like all other private citizens.] In all other respects they are the same.

However there were individuals who, evidently, sought to pray with fervor so that the Kohen Godol would die! Who were those people?

Let us learn some background.

We learn in Parshas Mishpotim (Sh'mos Perek 21/P'sukim 12-13):

מִכָּה אִישׁ וּמֵת מוֹת יוּמָת: וְאִשֶּׁר לֹא צָדָה וְהָאֵל...לִיקִים אָנֹּה לְיָדוֹ וְשָׁמַתִּי לָהּ מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יָנוֹס שָׁמָּה:

If one hits a person and he dies, the one who hit shall certainly die. If the killer did not trap the victim and it was G-d Who forced the hand of the killer, I will put a place for you to where this unintentional killer can flee.

Where is that place that will be the destination of this unintentional killer?

The Torah continues in Parshas Mas'ei (B'midbar Perek 35/P'sukim 11-12):

וְהִקְרִיתֶם לָכֶם עָרִים עָרֵי מִקְלָט תַּהְיֶינָה לָכֶם וְנָס שָׁמָּה רֹצֵחַ מִכָּה נֶפֶשׁ בְּשִׁגְגָה: וְהָיוּ לָכֶם הָעָרִים לְמִקְלָט מִגָּאֵל וְלֹא יָמוּת הָרֹצֵחַ עַד עֲמֹדוֹ לִפְנֵי הָעֵדָה לְמִשְׁפָּט:

You shall establish cities, 'cities of refuge' they shall be for you; the unintentional murderer shall flee to there. These cities shall be a refuge for you from the blood-redeemer and the unintentional murder shall not die until he stands before the congregation for judgment.

The Torah continues there (Posuk 28):

כִּי בְעִיר מִקְלָטוֹ יֵשֵׁב עַד מוֹת הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדֹל וְאַחֲרֵי מוֹת הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדֹל יָשׁוּב הָרֹצֵחַ אֶל אֶרֶץ אֲחֻזָּתוֹ:

Because the unintentional murderer shall live in in the city of refuge until the death of the Kohen Godol; after the death of the Kohen Godol the murderer shall return to the land of his inheritance.

We will postpone the question of the connection of the death of the Kohen Godol to the unintentional murderer for the time being. Instead, at this juncture, we will ask if it is difficult to imagine what was likely to constitute the prayers of this unintentional murderer, confined to his city of refuge.

This unintentional murder is now confined within the city limits of his *Ir Miklat*, City of Refuge. He may choose to leave that city but, if he does so, he makes himself

liable for the revenge of the *Go'el Ha'dam*, the relative who is allowed to avenge the death of his loved one. That is what the Torah writes (ibid. P'sukim 26-27):

וְאִם יֵצֵא יֵצֵא הַרְצֵחַ אֶת גְּבוּל עִיר מִקְלָטוֹ אֲשֶׁר יָנוּס שָׁמָּה: וּמָצָא אֹתוֹ גַּאֲל הַדָּם מִחוּץ
לְגְבוּל עִיר מִקְלָטוֹ וַרְצַח גַּאֲל הַדָּם אֶת הַרְצֵחַ אֵין לוֹ דָּם:

If this murderer goes out of the border of his city of refuge that he fled to there and the blood –redeemer finds him outside of the border of his city of refuge and the blood-redeemer murders the murderer, he is not liable⁶.

The Mishnah in Massechet Makkos (11 a) teaches:

אחד משוח בשמן המשחה, ואחד המרובה בבגדים, ואחד שעבר ממשיחותו -
מחזירין את הרוצח...לפיכך, אימותיהן של כהנים מספקות להן מחיה וכסות, כדי שלא
יתפללו על בניהם שימותו.

Whether the Kohen Godol was anointed by the anointing oil or by donning the additional clothing or a former Kohen Godol – he brings back the murderer from the City of Refuge at his death. Therefore the mothers of the Kohanim Gedolim supply the murderers who are residing in the City of Refuge with food and clothing so that they should not pray that their sons shall die.

The Gemara there expresses astonishment regarding this need for the mothers of the Kohanim Gedolim to protect their sons from the prayers of the murderers in the *O'rei Miklot*. We read:

לפיכך אימותיהן של כהנים וכו'. טעמא דלא מצלו, הא מצלו מייתי, והכתיב: (משלי
כו/ב) כצפור לנוד כדרור לעוף כן קללת חנם לא תבא! אמר ההוא סבא, מפירקיה
דרבא שמיע לי: שהיה להן לבקש רחמים על דורן ולא בקשו:

Therefore the mothers of the Kohanim etc. – the reason that these mothers supply such a bounty to the murderers is so that they shouldn't pray. Does this mean that were the murderers to pray for their death that the Kohanim Gedolim would die? Doesn't the verse read, 'Like the bird that moves from

⁶ Literally, this phrase that we paraphrased as 'not liable' means 'he has no blood'. Rashi explains:

אין לו דם - הרי הוא כהורג את המת שאין לו דם:
He has no blood – this is like the one who kills a dead person who has no blood.

place to place, like the free-spirited one flies, so the undeserved curse will not come'⁷?

There was an elder who said, 'From the Torah gathering of Rovo I heard that the reason that the curse may take hold is that the Kohen Godol should have prayed for mercy for his generation and he didn't.'

So the Kohen Godol could be a victim of a curse that was deserved. It is true that from heaven the Kohen Godol is not punished for not praying for the requisite mercy. Evidently, in and of itself, that is not a sin. But, evidently as well, the failure of the Kohen Godol to do so is a shortcoming and the one who killed accidentally has a reason to hold a grudge against this Kohen Godol for not fully fulfilling his duty. Thus if the murderer offers a prayer for the death of the Kohen Godol, those bad wishes, a curse, is not considered undeserved and may be effective.

Certainly the Kohen Godol's mother must worry.

But we must ask ourselves, what is this power that is attributed to the Kohen Godol for us to think that his prayer would be more effective than the prayer of anyone else?

What unique powers does this Kohen Godol possess?

Now, we are certainly aware of the pivotal role that the Kohen Godol possesses. Both in his service in the Beis HaMikdash as well as in his personal life the Kohen Godol is to promote welfare and peace.

⁷ Rashi writes on this verse:

כצפור לנוד - שהוא נד וכדרור שהוא חוזר לקנו:

Like the bird to move – the bird moves and like the *dror* bird that returns to its nest.

כן קללת חנם לא תבוא - למי שהוציאה בפיו:

So the undeserved curse will not come – for he who spoke it from his mouth.

דרור - הוא עוף הנקרא רונדל"ע בלעז ונקרא דרור שדרה בבית כבשדה:

Dror – this is the bird called *rondelle* in French and its name is *dror* [which means freedom] because it lives equally at ease in the house as in the field.

In the Beis HaMikdosh, the Kohanim bring the Korban Shlomim and Rashi tells us why that particular offering has the term *Shlomim* as its name. He writes to Vayikro Perek 3 (Posuk 1):

שלמים - שמטילים שלום בעולם.

The *Korban Shlomim* brings peace to the world.

Rashi there does not explain how the *Korban Shlomim* brings peace to the world, but in our Parsha he clarifies. We read (Sh'mos Perek 29/Posuk 22):

...שלמים, שמשימים שלום למזבח ולעובד העבודה ולבעלים:

They are called *Shlomim* because they bring *Shalom* to the altar, to the Kohen who serves in the Beis HaMikdosh and to the one whose offering it is.

That is, the *Korban Shlomim* provides for three beneficiaries: the *mizbeach* gets its share from that which is offered upon it, the Kohen has a portion and so do the בעלים, those who owned the animal, which was brought as a Korban. Everyone gets their share – everyone is happy – there is no jealousy and that is *Shalom*, peace.

Furthermore, when we come to the fortieth year in the wilderness and Pinchos is appointed as a Kohen, we read (B'midbar Perek 25/P'sukim 12-13):

לִכֵּן אָמַר ה' הִנְנִי נֹתֵן לּוֹ אֶת בְּרִיתִי שְׁלוֹם: וְהִיְתָה לוֹ וּלְזָרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו בְּרִית כְּהֵנֶת עוֹלָם תַּחַת
אֲשֶׁר קָנָא לֹא...לִקְיֹו וַיִּכְפֹּר עַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Therefore, say, 'Behold I Hashem am giving Pinchos My covenant of peace. It shall be for him and for his seed after him a covenant of eternal priesthood because he was zealous for his G-d and he brought atonement for B'nei Yisroel⁸.

However, one may question these 'proofs'. First, the offering of the *Korban Shlomim* was not a task limited to the Kohen Godol. Any Kohen was eligible to bring that offering.

⁸ A careful study of the commentators on these verses will reveal differences of opinion whether or not the 'covenant of peace' and the 'covenant of eternal priesthood' are one and the same, with each term emphasizing a different aspect of that covenant, or two separate rewards that were presented to Pinchos.

Secondly, the nature of Pinchos was that he was heroic. Who is to say that every Kohen Godol was heroic? In fact, during *Bayis Sheni*, we know that many of the Kohanim Gedolim purchased their positions and were not known for their piety, to say the very least.

This is what we read in the Sifrei to B'midbar (Parshas Bolok 131):

בבנין ראשון שמונה עשר כהנים גדולים אבל בבנין אחרון עמדו ממנו שמנים כהנים
ובשביל שהיו שוכרין אותה בדמים התחילו שנותיהם מתקצרות.

In the first Beis HaMikdosh there were a total of eighteen Kohanim Gedolim who served during its five centuries of existence. But in the second Beis HaMikdosh there was a total of eighty who served during the five centuries of its existence because they bought their positions with money and their lives were shortened.

And, furthermore when we talk about the ability of a Kohen Godol to avert disaster and bring *Shalom*, we may have the first Kohen Godol as our model and most of us are familiar with the Mishnah in Masseches Ovos (Perek 1/Mishnah 12) that teaches us about the personality of that first Kohen Godol and writes:

הלל אומר הוי מתלמידיו של אהרן אוהב שלום ורודף שלום אוהב את הבריות ומקרבו
לתורה:

Hillel says, 'Be among the disciples of Aharon who loves peace, pursues peace, loves people and draws them near to Torah.'

Aharon was an exceptional person. Were all future Kohanim Gedolim expected to be an 'Aharon'? Could there have been such an expectation?

Of course, the future Kohanim Gedolim were to emulate Aharon, but it is hard to imagine that many, if any, reached his *madreiga*.

If there could not have been such an expectation, then by what standard are *all* Kohanim Gedolim measured so that the murderer residing in the *Ir Miklat* could blame them all for not praying to avert disaster?

And thus the expectation that this murderer has, that Chazal saw as being justified, must not be limited to the particular personality or righteousness of the individual

Kohen Godol. It must be an across-the-board expectation. What is the basis for that expectation?

We learn in Masseches Erechin (16 a):

אמר רבי ענני בר ששון: למה נסמכה פרשת בגדי כהונה לפרשת קרבנות? לומר לך:
מה קרבנות מכפרין, אף בגדי כהונה מכפרין;

Rabi Anani bar Sasson said, 'Why did the Torah write the section of the clothing of the Kohanim next to the section of Korbonos? It is to say to you that just like Korbonos bring atonement so do the clothing of the Kohanim bring atonement.

Rashi explains the question:

למה נסמכה כו' - בפרשת ואתה תצוה נסמכה ענין המילואים לבגדי כהונה.

Why was it placed near- In Parshas Tetzaveh the section of the offerings for the inauguration of the Kohanim is juxtaposed with the section that teaches the clothing of the Kohanim.

כתונת מכפרת על שפיכות דמים, דכתיב: (בראשית לז/לא⁹) ויטבלו את הכתנת בדם;

The tunic of the Kohen atones for murder as it is written, 'They immersed the tunic in the blood'.

מכנסים מכפרים על גילוי ערוות, דכתיב: (שמות כח/מב¹⁰) ועשה להם מכנסי בד לכסות בשר ערוה;

The pants atone for promiscuity as it is written, 'Make for them pants of linen to cover the flesh of their nakedness'.

⁹ The entire verse reads:

וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת כְּתֹנֶת יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁחָטוּ שְׂעִיר עִזִּים וַיִּטְבְּלוּ אֶת הַכְּתֹנֶת בַּדָּם:
They took the tunic of Yosef and they slaughtered a goat and immersed the tunic in the blood.

¹⁰ The entire verse, found in this week's Parsha, reads:

וַעֲשֵׂה לָהֶם מְכַנְסֵי בָד לְכִסּוֹת בְּשַׂר עֲרוֹה מִמִּתְנַיִם וְעַד יְרֵכִים יִהְיוּ:
Make for them pants of linen to cover the flesh of their nakedness, from the sides to the legs it should be.

מצנפת מכפרת על גסי הרוח, כדברי חנינא, דאמר רבי חנינא: יבא דבר
שבגובה ויכפר על מעשה גובה;

The hat atones for a coarse spirit like Rabi Chanina said, 'Let that which
is high¹¹ come and atone for an act of haughtiness.

אבנט מכפרת על הרהור הלב, אהיכא דאיתיה, דכתיב: והיה על לב אהרן;

The belt atones for inappropriate thoughts wherever they are, as it says, "It
shall be upon the heart of Aharon".

חושן מכפר על הדינין, דכתיב: (שמות כח/טו¹²) ועשית חושן משפט;

The *Choshen*-breastplate atones for errors in judging as it is written, 'Make a
choshen of judgment'.

אפוד מכפר על עבודה זרה, דכתיב: (הושע ג/ד¹³) אין אפוד ותרפים;

The apron-like *ephod* atones for idolatry as it is written, 'there was no *ephod*
or *terafim*-idols'.

מעיל מכפר על לשון הרע, אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא: יבא דבר שבקול ויכפר על מעשה
הקול;

The *me'il*-cloak worn underneath the *ephod* atones for *Lashon Ha'ra*. G-d
said, 'let that which has a voice¹⁴ come and atone for an act that was done
by voice.

¹¹ One who is coarse and unrefined has a sense of haughtiness.

¹² The entire verse, found in our Parsha, reads in its entirety:

וְעָשִׂיתָ חֹשֶׁן מִשְׁפָּט מַעֲשֵׂה חָשָׁב כְּמַעֲשֵׂה אֶפֶד תַּעֲשֶׂנוּ זָהָב תִּכְלֹת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ מְשֻׁזָּר
תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתוֹ:

You shall make a breastplate of judgment an act of thinking craftsmanship; it
should be made similar to the *ephod*; gold and *techeilis*-blue and purple and
scarlet and twisted linen strands you shall make it.

¹³ The entire verse reads:

כִּי יָמִים רַבִּים יֵשְׁבוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵין מֶלֶךְ וְאֵין שָׂר וְאֵין זָבַח וְאֵין מִצְבֵּה וְאֵין אֶפֶד וְתִרְפִּים:
[If you turn to idolatry] then many years Israel will dwell without a king and
without an officer and neither offerings or monuments or *ephod* or *teraphim*
[will save you].

¹⁴ Regarding the *me'il*, we read in our Parsha (Perek 28/P'sukim 33-35):

ציץ מכפר על מעשה עזי פנים, כתיב הכא: (שם כח/לו¹⁵) והיה על מצח אהרן, וכתוב התם: (ירמיהו ג/ג¹⁶) ומצח אשה זונה היה לך!

The *Tzitz*-headband atones for acts of brazenness. It is written in one place, 'It shall be on the forehead of Aharon' and it is written elsewhere, 'you had the forehead of a promiscuous woman'.

It is too facile to see the Kohen Godol as the chief executive of the Beis HaMikdosh and having technical responsibilities only. It is too facile to see the Kohen Godol that way just like it is too facile to see the Beis HaMikdosh as the site of Korbonos without contemplating the role of those offerings.

The Beis HaMikdosh is a pillar of existence. We learn at the beginning of Masseches Ovos (Perek 1/Mishnah 2):

וְעָשִׂיתָ עַל שׁוּלְיֵי רִמְנֵי תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי עַל שׁוּלְיֵי סָבִיב וּפְעָמַי זָהָב בְּתוֹכָם סָבִיב: פְּעָמָן זָהָב וְרַמּוֹן פְּעָמָן זָהָב וְרַמּוֹן עַל שׁוּלֵי הַמַּעִיל סָבִיב: וְהָיָה עַל אַהֲרֹן לְשֵׁרֶת וְנִשְׁמַע קוֹלוֹ בָּבָאוּ אֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ לִפְנֵי ה' וּבִצְאָתוֹ וְלֹא יָמוּת:

You shall make at the bottom of the *mei'il*, pomegranates of *techeilis*—blue and purple and scarlet on its bottom, all around and bells of gold in them all around. A bell of gold and a pomegranate, a bell of gold and a pomegranate on the bottom of the *me'il* all around. It shall be on Aharon to serve and its sound shall be heard when he enters the Holy before Hashem and when he goes out and he will not die.

There is a dispute if the 'bell' refers to the ringer that is inside the bell and thus the 'pomegranate' is the outer part, the shell, of the bell and the bell and the pomegranate are one complete entity or if the 'bell' is the entire bell, the shell and the ringer, and the pomegranates are decorations separate from the bell.

In any case the bells ring.

¹⁵ This Posuk, found in our Parsha, reads in its entirety:

וְעָשִׂיתָ צִיץ זָהָב טְהוֹר וּפְתִיחָתָּ עָלָיו פְּתוּחֵי חֹתָם קֹדֶשׁ לָהּ:

You shall make a headband of pure gold and you shall engrave upon it the words 'Holy for Hashem'.

¹⁶ The entire verse reads:

וַיִּמְנְעוּ רַבְבִּים וּמִלְקוֹשׁ לֹא הָיָה וַיִּמְצַח אִשָּׁה זוֹנָה הָיָה לָךְ מֵאַנֶּת הַכָּלִים:

Showers were held back and there was no heavy rain; you had the forehead of a promiscuous woman; you refused and you were shamed.

שמעון הצדיק היה משירי כנסת הגדולה הוא היה אומר על שלשה דברים העולם
עומד על התורה ועל העבודה ועל גמילות חסדים:

Shimon HaTzaddik was a remnant of the *Anshei K'nesses HaGedolah*. He would say 'the world stands on three things: Torah, the service of the Beis HaMikdash and interpersonal kindness.'

If when we read this Mishnah we remember that Shimon HaTzaddik was the Kohen Godol then we can appreciate even more his broad view of existence.

The Kohen Godol was not involved in his personal world of the Beis HaMikdash only. He was to have a worldview that was all-encompassing, including all of humanity, and not just Israel alone¹⁷.

The Kohen Godol could serve in the Beis HaMikdash only when he was wearing the eight garments about which the Torah teaches us in this week's Parshas Tetzaveh.

And as the Gemara teaches us in Masseches Erachim, in addition to the Mitzvah of wearing those garments, the fact that the Kohen Godol did wear them had the potential of having far-reaching effects over all of Creation.

And one of those affects was to bring atonement for killing.

At first it may seem, that if the Kohen Godol, through one of his garments, is able to atone for killing, why would it be that a person should be sent into exile, to a City of Refuge, while the Beis HaMikdash was functioning?

Tosfos there in Masseches Erechin (d.h. *ho*) explains:

שלא הרג ממש אלא שהלבין פני חבירו ברבים

Not that the person for whom the atonement is valid actually killed. Rather it is for someone who publicly gravely embarrassed someone.

We learn in Masseches Bava Metzia (58 b):

¹⁷ We read in Masseches Sukkah (55 b):

אמר רבי אלעזר הני שבעים פרים כנגד מי - כנגד שבעים אומות:
Rabi Elazar said, 'The seventy bullocks that are offered during the Seven Days of Sukkos – for whose benefit are they? They are for the seventy nations of the world.'

תני תנא קמיה דרב נחמן בר יצחק: כל המלבין פני חבירו ברבים כאילו שופך דמים.

An expert on Braisos taught a Braisa before Rav Nachman bar Yitzchok:
Anyone who publicly embarrasses someone is as if he has spilled his blood.

It appears that Tosfos was bothered by the question that we raised and thus explained that the atonement was for a sin akin to murder, not for actual killing.

However, I did find a Midrash that takes our Gemara literally and, at the same time, does away with our difficulty – if the Kohen Godol atones for unintentional murder, why is there a need for the City of Refuge?

The Midrash Vayikra Rabba (Parshas Tzav 10/6¹⁸) reads:

רבי סימון בשם רבי נתן אמר שני דברים אין להם כפרה ונתנה להן תורה כפרה ואלו
הן לשון הרע והורג נפש בשגגה לשון הרע אין לו כפרה ונתנה לו תורה כפרה במה
יתכפר לו בזגי המעיל הדא הוא דתימא פעמון זהב ורמון פעמון זהב ורמון והיה על
אהרן לשרת ונשמע קולו אמר יבוא הקול ויכפר על הקול, ההורג נפש בשגגה אין לו
כפרה ונתנה לו תורה כפרה במה יתכפר לו במיתת כהן גדול:

Rabi Simon in the name of Rabi Noson said, 'There are two sins for which there is no atonement and [nevertheless] the Torah provided an *opportunity* for atonement. These are the two sins: *Lashon Ha'ra'* and unintentional killing.

There is no atonement for *Lashon Ha'ra'* and the Torah provided an opportunity for atonement. How does that atonement take place? With the bells of the *me'il*. That is what the verse says, "a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate and it will be upon Aharon to serve and its voice will be heard". Let the voice come and atone for the voice of the *Lashon Ha'ra'*.

There is no atonement for one who kills unintentionally and the Torah provided an opportunity for atonement. How does that atonement take place? With the death of the Kohen Godol.

¹⁸ We find a similar Aggada in Masseches Zevachim 88 b.

That is, the Midrash refers us back to the verse of the Cities of Refuge and in that context of exile and the death of the Kohen Godol – that is when atonement may be accomplished.

I would like to suggest an additional way of looking at our subject, and focusing on the two questions that we have raised.

The first question was how can we blame the Kohen Godol for the murderer's misdeed? The second question was if the Kohen Godol provides atonement, why was the unintentional killer sent into exile?

In Masseches Shabbos (113 a) we read a discussion regarding the uniqueness of Shabbos. That discussion is based on P'sukim in Sefer Yeshaya.

One of those verses (Perek 58/Posuk 13) reads:

אִם תִּשְׁבֹּת מִשְׁבֹּת רַגְלֶךָ עֲשׂוֹת חֲפִצֶיךָ בְּיוֹם קִדְשִׁי וְקִרְאתָ לְשַׁבָּת עֲנֵג לְקִדּוֹשׁ ה' מְכַבֵּד
וְכַבְּדָתוּ מַעֲשׂוֹת דְרָכֶיךָ מִמִּצּוֹא חֲפִצֶךָ וְדַבֵּר דָּבָר:

If you refrain your feet on Shabbos, refrain from doing your desires on My Holy Day and you will call Shabbos 'oneg-pleasurable' and call the holy day of G-d 'Honorable' and you will honor it by refraining from finding your desires and speaking your matters.

One of the interpretations that we read there is:

וכבדתו - שלא יהא מלבושך של שבת כמלבושך של חול. וכי הא דרבי יוחנן קרי
למאניה מכבדוטי.

You will honor it – that your clothing for Shabbos will not be like your clothing for the weekday. This is like that which Rabi Yochanan said – he called his clothes 'that which honors me'.

Rashi explains:

מכבדוטי - שמכבדין בעליהן.

That which honors me – the clothes bring honor to their owner.

At first, these ideas seem difficult to comprehend. After all, we always focus on that which is spiritual. A person should be honored because of his spiritual attainments. Why should clothing, physicality, be related to a person's honor?

And, in fact, we can raise that same question on our Parsha itself. When we are introduced to the special garments of the Kohen, the Torah prefaces the specific Mitzvos and writes (Perek 28/P'sukim 1-2):

וְאַתָּה הַקָּרֵב אֵלַיךְ אֶת אַהֲרֹן אָחִיךָ וְאֶת בְּנָיו אֲתוֹ מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְכַהֵנוּ לִי אַהֲרֹן נָדָב
וְאַבְיָהוּא אֶלְעָזָר וְאַיִתְמָר בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן: וְעָשִׂיתָ בְּגָדֵי קֹדֶשׁ לְאַהֲרֹן אָחִיךָ לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת:

You, Moshe, draw near to you Aharon, your brother, and his sons with him from the midst of B'nei Yisroel to serve Me: Aharon, Nodov, Avihu, Elazar and I'somor the sons of Aharon. You shall make holy garments for Aharon, your brother, for honor and for beauty.

The very same question that we raised on the Gemara in Masseches Shabbos can be asked here – and since these are explicit verses in the Torah their message is even stronger. How can we understand the Torah's praise of the physical?

Maharal in his commentary on the Aggados, explains there in Masseches Shabbos:

שלא יהא מלבושך כו'. פירוש זה, כי השבת הוא קודש כדכתיב (שמות לא/יד¹⁹) קודש
היא לכם, כל דבר שהוא קודש נבדל מן עיני החמרי,

Your clothes should not be etc. – the explanation is that Shabbos is holy as it is written, 'It is holy for you'. Any object that is holy is separated from matters of physicality.

It is not difficult at all to extrapolate the Gemara in Shabbos, with the commentary of Maharal, and apply it to the Beis HaMikdosh and to Aharon.

Although all Kohanim have special clothes, the verse that says that those garments bring honor and are for beauty refers to Aharon, the Kohen Godol only, as we read above.

¹⁹ The entire verse reads:

וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת כִּי קֹדֶשׁ הוּא לָכֶם מִחֻלְלֶיהָ מוֹת יוּמָת כִּי כָּל הָעֹשֶׂה בָּהּ מְלָאכָה וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ
הַהוּא מִקֶּרֶב עַמִּיהָ:

You shall observe the Shabbos because it is holy for you; those who profane it shall surely die because anyone who does *melachah* on it – his soul shall be excised from the midst of his people.

That is, the Kohen Godol in particular is to be aware of the effect of his garments upon him. He is to be moved by them just like in any situation where people receive honor and respect.

Thus, while a *hedyot*, a non-holy person, should not see his clothes as making him 'special', a person who is involved in holiness, someone like Rabi Yochanan who eschewed physicality²⁰, can let the physical add to his honor because the physical is imbued with spirituality.

And when a day is imbued with holiness and spirituality – Shabbos, then the physicality of the clothing pale in comparison with the holiness of the day and the physical can serve the spiritual, enhancing its holiness and bringing even more honor to it.

And what happens when the person himself is designated to be uniquely spiritual and is in a uniquely spiritual place – as it was with Aharon the Kohen Godol whose service before G-d occurred in the holiest of places, the Mishkan/Mikdash? Certainly the clothes served to honor him and enhance his spirituality.

But, what would happen if the Kohen Godol is oblivious to the unique garments that he is wearing and the power that they have? Can they be as effective as they would be if he was constantly aware of their presence and their potential to bring atonement? Can we imagine that there is no difference between the Kohen Godol having *kavana* and not having *kavana*?

Perhaps this is the explanation. Had the Kohen Godol been sufficiently aware of the 'honor and beauty', that is the enhancement of the physical to the spiritual in the auspicious role that he fulfills, then in fact, he could have prevented the act of killing that took place. The consciousness and the intentionality of the Kohen Godol had the potential to overcome the lack of consciousness and the lack of intentionality of the one who killed.

The Kohen Godol could have supported this killer and awoken him to the circumstances into which he was entering and changed his mindset so that he would not be oblivious to his actions that brought about such a calamitous event.

²⁰ That Rabi Yochanan dismissed his own physicality is particularly remarkable when we learn that Rabi Yochanan was uniquely handsome and was aware of his good looks. See Masseches B'rachos 5 b.

What would have happened had the Kohen Godol been more aware and more conscious of the garments that he was wearing?

We read earlier that the *me'il* of the Kohen Godol was decorated with pomegranates and bells and that the bells rang as the Kohen Godol moved.

Why did the bells ring? The Torah writes, as we saw before:

וְנִשְׁמַע קוֹלוֹ בְּבֹאוֹ אֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ לְפָנָי ה' וּבְיֵצֵאתוֹ וְלֹא יָמוּת:

Its sound shall be heard when he enters the Holy before Hashem and when he goes out and he will not die.

As we explained, 'its' refers to the sound of the bells.

However, Rabbenu Bachye to that verse tells us a very different explanation. *קולו*, he says, does not mean 'its' voice, referring to the ring of the bells, rather *קולו* means *his* voice, referring to the Kohen Godol who enters the *Kodesh* with a prayer on his lips.

This is how Rabbenu Bachye expresses it:

וְנִשְׁמַע קוֹלוֹ בְּבֹאוֹ אֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ. קוֹלוֹ שֶׁל אַהֲרֹן, כִּי בְּבֹאוֹ אֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּלִבִּישַׁת שְׁמוֹנֵה בְּגָדִים בְּטַכְסִיסֵי הַזֶּה יִשְׁמַע קוֹלוֹ וְתִהְיֶה תַפְלֹתוֹ מְקוּבֶלֶת:

His voice shall be heard when he enters the Holy – the voice of Aharon will be heard when he is wearing his eight garments. When the Kohen Godol does these tactics, his voice will be heard and his prayer will be accepted.

Do not think, teaches Rabbenu Bachye, that the clothing that the Kohen Godol wears have magical powers. Not at all. The clothing of the Kohen is to enhance *his* awareness, *his* consciousness, in addition to their many other different functions. He becomes aware of the potential that he possesses and turns to the Ribbono Shel Olom with enhanced *kavana* so that the potential that he has should be realized²¹.

²¹ In this context, it is interesting to consider the *machlokes* that we learn in Masseches Yoma (7 b):

תְּנַאי הִיא. דְּתַנִּיא: צִיץ, בֵּין שִׁישְׁנו עַל מַצְחוֹ בֵּין שְׂאִינוֹ עַל מַצְחוֹ - מֵרַצָּה, דְּבֵרֵי רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: עוֹדָהוּ עַל מַצְחוֹ - מֵרַצָּה, אֵין עוֹדָהוּ עַל מַצְחוֹ - אֵינוֹ מֵרַצָּה.

We can now have a different view of that which we read in Yerushalmi Masseches Yoma (Perek 7/Halacha 7):

ונשמע קולו בבואו - תניא, רבי סימון בשם רבי יונתן אומר, והיה על אהרן לשרת
ונשמע קולו בבואו אל הקודש, יבא קול ויכפר על קול ההורג נפש בשגגה:

His voice will be heard – the Braisa taught: Rabi Simon said in the name of Rabi Yonoson: it shall be upon Aharon to serve and *his voice will be heard* when he enters the Holy. *His voice will be heard* to bring atonement for one who kills unintentionally.

There is a dispute among the Tannaim. The Braisa teaches: the Tzitz, whether or not it is on the forehead of the Kohen Godol –brings expiation for some aspects of inappropriate events during the offering of Korbonos, these are the words of Rabi Shimon. Rabi Yehuda says: When the Kohen Godol is wearing the Tzitz on his forehead –it is effective. If it is no longer on his forehead, it is not effective.

It may appear that Rabi Shimon's opinion, that the Tzitz is effective even when not being worn, is in opposition to the thesis that we are developing.

Perhaps, in fact, that thesis is not in consonance with his opinion.

However, we may suggest that the discussion of effectiveness of a garment of the Kohen Godol is found only in regards to the Tzitz, but not in regards to any of the other seven garments.

It may be that the Tzitz, which has the words *Kodesh LaShem* (with the Name of G-d spelled out) has a unique status and is more powerful than the other garments and thus the discussion is only about it. Perhaps it could be effective when it was not worn. The same is not true of the other seven garments. It is obvious that they would not be effective if they were not being worn. If this explanation is correct, then Rabi Shimon's opinion would not be contrary to our thesis.

In any case, Rambam (Hilchos Bi'as HaMikdosh Perek 4/Halachah 8) paskens like Rabi Yehuda as we read:

ואין הציץ מרצה אלא בזמן שהוא על מצחו שנאמר והיה על מצחו תמיד לרצון להם לפני ה'.
The Tzitz is only effective when it is on the forehead of the Kohen Godol as it says, "It will be on his forehead always to find favor for them before G-d".

What atonement is there? In its highest level, it is the removal of the potential of the individual to kill because the consciousness and the intent of the Kohen Godol can have a unique influence.

What are we to learn from our Parsha and those unique gifts that were bestowed upon every Kohen Godol? And what is our role? We do not have the garments of the Kohen Godol and we are not imbued with the potential with which he was imbued.

Of course, when we daven for the restoration of the Beis HaMikdosh and its service, we now know to add the aspects of the garments of the Kohen Godol to our repertoire of prayer and its content.

But what are we to do now, in the meantime? Of course, one response is to avoid those *aveiros* that in the absence of the Kohen Godol their atonement is distant, at the best.

But there is an additional piece of advice as well. We have learned that just because a person is chosen to be the Kohen Godol that does not mean that he will fulfil his tasks in the best possible manner.

The Kohen Godol could be a true *Tzaddik* and *Chosid*, achieving to the maximum.

Or the Kohen Godol could be far from a status of *Tzaddik* and *Chosid*.

Or a third possibility - he could be an outwardly appearing righteous Kohen Godol, offering the Korbonos, avoiding impurity and following the outward prescriptions of his position. But, as we have learned, if the inner consciousness and cognition of what he was capable was not part of his awareness, it was legitimate for select individuals, not *Tzaddikim*, to pray for his demise! The reason is:

רחמנא ליבא בעי²²

G-d wants our heart in addition to our actions.

It is not only the heart of the Kohen Godol that the Ribbono Shel Olom wants – He wants the hearts of us all.

²² Zohar-Ray'a Mehem'no Parshas Ki Setze 281 b.

Perhaps that is the *Tikkun* that we may accomplish in our state of *Churban Beis HaMikdosh*- paying more attention to our hearts along with our actions.

Perhaps we will start with the next Shemoneh Esreh that we will daven. Perhaps we will think of tactics so that we do not lose concentration immediately, with whatever type of sign or reminder that works for us.

We may not wear the garments of the Kohen Godol so we cannot substitute for that aspect which is absent from our national life. But, we all have hearts and now is the time to empower them to accompany our acts of Mitzvah with the Kavanah that is such an inherent part of our *Avodas Hashem*.

Perhaps that is the missing touch and if we approach Hashem כאיש אחד בלב אחד, with a oneness in body and oneness in heart, then we can restore ourselves as individuals and our nation as a whole to the heights that we once reached and are capable of attaining once more.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Pollock