

YOU SHOULD FEEL LOVED – BECAUSE YOU ARE!

PARSHAS TETZAVEH

Reb Yaakov Toisig lived in Be'er Sheva. He went to shul to daven for his father's yahrtzeit but there were only 8 other men there. Needing one more for the minyan, he went outside. The street was empty, except for an irreligious man with long shaggy hair. Reb Yaakov approached the man and asked him to join the minyan. After many attempts at convincing him, the irreligious man finally said that he couldn't join because he did not know how to daven. Reb Yaakov said that he would show him what to say. Then the man said, "But I don't keep mitzvos. Will G-D even listen to my prayers?" Reb Yaakov responded, "You should know that **every Jew has a lofty soul that was carved from underneath the Throne of Glory. Hashem desires the prayers of every Jew. Every tefillah is beloved by Hashem. Yours too.**" Those words pierced the young man's heart, and he joined the minyan. Those heartfelt words changed this young man's life as he eventually became religious. (102 Stories That Changed People's Lives, Vol 2 by Rabbi Tzvi Nakar)

Hashem's love for Bnei Yisroel is infinite. "And now, if you obey Me and keep My covenant, you shall be to Me a treasure out of all peoples ..." (Shemos 19:5). **Rashi** says that Bnei Yisroel will be like the treasures of the kings; like costly vessels and precious stones, which kings store away. **Targum Onkelos** explains that Bnei Yisroel will be more beloved before Hashem than all the other nations!

Hashem showed how much He loves us, even when we sinned and reached the 49th level of impurity. "They saw [a vision of] Hashem, and under His feet [there was something] like a brickwork of sapphire..." (Shmos 24:10). **Rashi** says that while the Jewish People had been enslaved in Egypt, Hashem had placed a brickwork of sapphire under His throne to constantly bear in mind their suffering (which was symbolized by the brick work). Hashem wanted to constantly bear in mind the pain and suffering that His treasured nation was undergoing while in Egypt.

"The stones shall correspond [in number] to the names of the sons of Israel: twelve, corresponding to their names. They shall be engraved like seals, each with its name, for the twelve tribes."
(Shmos 28:21)

The bricks symbolized their affliction. After Bnei Yisroel were redeemed, the sapphire brickwork sparkled with clarity and light. There was now light and joy before Hashem because of Bnei Yisroel's redemption.

This week's parsha describes the *Choshen Hamishpat*, the breastplate, that the *Kohen Gadol* wore. The *Choshen* contained 12 precious stones. Each stone was engraved with the name of one of the *shevatim*, the tribes. The names of the Avos were added as a supplement to the names of the *shevatim*. The letters of the Avos, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov were interspersed on the different stones. The words, "שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל" were also inscribed on the stones. These names and words that were added in addition to the names of the *shevatim* ensured that all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet were inscribed. Hashem answered urgent questions posed by the Kohen Gadol by causing the appropriate letters on the *Choshen* to be

illuminated. Thus, the *Choshen* had to have all the letters.

The **Sforno** (Shmos 28:2) says that when the *Kohen Gadol* entered the *Kodesh*, the Sanctuary, wearing the names of Yaakov's 12 sons on the *Choshen*, Hashem would remember their righteousness and, in their merit, bring peace and blessing to their children.

The **Kedushas Levi** is troubled by this. Generally, we ask Hashem for mercy in the merit of our forefathers and not in the merit of the children. Why weren't

the names of the *Avos* the primary engravings on the *Choshen*?

The **Kedushas Levi** gives a beautiful answer. The Kohanim were chosen by Hashem from all the other tribes, to serve Hashem. As the pasuk states, "*For him [shevet Levi] did Hashem choose from all your tribes to stand and perform the service in the name of Hashem, he and his sons for all time.*" (Devarim 18:5) The other *shevatim* may have felt less loved by Hashem. To counter that mistaken feeling that they may have had, the names of ALL the *shevatim* were engraved on the *Choshen*. The purpose was to show that all the *shevatim* were beloved equally by Hashem. The Kohanim were merely intermediaries between the people and Hashem.

Rav Pam zt"l said, "We see from this that every Jew, no matter what his background, lineage, or station in life, is beloved by Hashem. No Jew should ever feel that he is worthless before Hashem or that Hashem does not take an active interest in his existence and accomplishments."

([Messages from Rav Pam](#) by Rabbi Sholom Smith)