

On the robe's hem, they made pomegranates and of turquoise... They made bells of pure gold, and they placed the bells amidst the pomegranates on the hem of the robe... A bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate on the hem of the robe all around. (39:24-26)

Rashi explains that the *rimonim* were colored wool, shaped as a ball and hollow within. Between each two *rimonim* hung a gold *paamon* which served as the sound-maker to inform people that the *Kohen Gadol* was approaching. *Ramban* disagrees, contending that *rimonim* were not present to "hang around" between the *paamonim*. He feels that the *rimonim* were hollow for one purpose: so that the *paamonim* would be placed inside of them. Clearly, the *Bigdei Kehunah*, Priestly vestments, and indeed all of the *klei*, vessels, of the *Mishkan* were there for a lofty purpose, with concealed esoteric secrets to be derived from them.

The *Klausenberger Rav, zl*, observes that the *meil*, robe, was made of blue wool (the color of the sky), alluding to the Heavenly Throne Above. The *rimonim*, pomegranates (wool in the shape of a pomegranate), together with the *paamonim*, represent the *neshamos* of *Klal Yisrael* that are beneath the Holy Throne (*Zohar HaKadosh* 3:29). Some Jews are *paamonim*, and some are *rimonim*. To explain the hollow void within the *rimonim*, *Chazal* teach that the most distant and empty Jew is filled with *mitzvos* like a *rimon* (which has many seeds). Thus, the *rimon*, which to the naked eye appears hollow, is still connected to the Holy Throne, representing a Jewish soul that seeks a *tikkun*, something to be repaired.

Some Jews are likened to the pomegranate, those who have a way to go in their spiritual life. Some Jews are like the bells made of pure gold. Despite their spiritual elevation, they must remember that their position is enviable, but people fall when they forget where they are. The finest gold can become tarnished if it is not constantly polished. Both sets of Jews have a responsibility either to better themselves or to maintain their spiritual ascendance. When a person becomes too sure of himself, he can fall.

The *Rebbe* explained, "When I founded the observant community in Netanya, I was challenged to develop the community. Some of them were Jews who were like *rimonim*, with a burning desire to better themselves – but they had a way to go. Others of them, although they could be likened to pure gold, required preventative maintenance to keep them there. These two types of Jews are alluded to by the bells and pomegranates. The empty pomegranates were next to the bells. They were distinct from one another. This is what it was like when I first broke ground in Netanya. We have been blessed over the years that the pomegranates are no longer empty. They each have a gold bell within them." We may add that this applies to the individual who is starting out on his spiritual quest. He may be empty now – but one day he will have the spiritual void filled with a gold bell.