

Now you shall command Bnei Yisrael... bring near to yourself Aharon your brother... and Aharon shall bear the judgment of Bnei Yisrael on his heart. (27:20; 28:1,30)

In his commentary to the beginning of this *parshah*, the *Baal HaTurim* notes that this *parshah* is the only one since Moshe *Rabbeinu's* birth in which his name is not mentioned. He attributes this to Moshe's declaration (following the sin of the Golden Calf) to Hashem, "If You will not forgive the people in their indiscretion, then *Micheini na miSifrecha*, "Erase me (my name) from Your Book." The power of Moshe's demand that his name be removed from the Torah was so strong that, regardless of the stipulation, his words had an indelible impact: his name was omitted from one *parshah*. The *parshah* of *Tetzaveh* was selected because it usually coincides with Moshe's *yahrzeit*.

Horav Tzadok, zl, m'Lublin (Pri Tzaddik, Tetzaveh) comments on the *Baal HaTurim* and suggests that *Tetzaveh* was selected because it really is "Aharon *HaKohen's parshah*." When one peruses the *parshah* contextually, we notice that the *parshah* deals primarily with the laws concerning the *Kohanim* and the priestly vestments. Moshe and Aharon were brothers – each one filling a position of prominence in *Klal Yisrael*. They were its hierarchy, setting the tone and example for those who would follow in their respective roles. Moshe was the *Rabban shel kol Yisrael*, the symbol of Torah, the quintessential *manhig*, leader, of the nation. Aharon was the *Kohen Gadol*, Patriarch of *Kehunah*. The priesthood was reserved exclusively for him and his descendants. Thus, it makes sense that the *parshah* which is dedicated to Aharon would be the one from which Moshe's name is omitted.

Rav Tzadok delves deeper into the distinctiveness of the *Kohanim*; their unique role and mission within *Klal Yisrael*. The *Kohanim* serve in the Sanctuary as the ones who offer up the *korbanos*, offerings, on behalf of the nation. *Korban* is derived from the word *karov*, which means close/near. In the process of offering the *korbanos*, all aspects of Creation are fused together: salt represents the inanimate; meal (offering) represents the plants/vegetation; the cattle, sheep and fowl represent man, who brings the offering. Everything coalesces together upon the *Mizbayach*, Altar.

This concept sheds light on a seeming anomaly concerning the *Mizbayach HaKetores*, the Altar upon which the Incense was burned. The laws regarding this *Mizbayach* should appropriately have been in the previous *parshah* which details all the *klei HaMishkan*, vessels used in the Sanctuary.

Instead, it is placed following the *Bigdei Kehunah*, the enjoinder regarding the priestly vestments. *Rav Tzadok* explains that a unique *halachah* applies with regard to the preparation of the *Ketores*, which was composed of eleven spices – one of which was the *chelbinah*, a foul-smelling spice. Why would a noxious-smelling spice be included? *Chazal* explain that pleasant-smelling spices symbolize the righteous Jews, and the foul-smelling *chelbinah* alludes to the wicked, whose actions emit a noxious spiritual odor. We must include all spices – even if one is far from fragrant. Likewise,

all Jews must be included; the Jewish people in its entirety must be embraced in our national destiny. No Jew should be left behind. The *Kohen's* function is to be the vehicle for effecting atonement for all of *Klal Yisrael*. A Jew is a Jew, regardless of his indiscretions. Indeed, the sinners need even more of our prayers, that they wake up and realize the spiritual damage they have caused to themselves and the ultimate pain they will experience when they confront the reality of their flawed lives. The *Kohanim* are charged with bringing close those who have lost their spiritual bearings. Why the *Kohen*? As a descendant of Aharon, who personified the attributes of *ohav shalom v'rodef shalom*, one who loves and pursues peace, he has in his DNA an abiding love for all Jews. What greater expression of love is there than saving the spiritual life of another?