

A MODEL OF POSSIBILITY

by Rabbi Label Lam

And you should make garments of holiness for your brother Aaron for glory and for splendor. (Shemos 28:2)

There is a difference between "glory" and "splendor" in that a man is honored because of his natural qualities but will only achieve "splendor" due to the quality of his choices. Regarding the spiritual dimension of the soul there is a place from which it is hewn which is called its "glory" while the light and splendor it attains through its hard work and holiness is called its "splendor". Both of these qualities will be included in the garments of holiness that Moshe will make for them. They will teach and help them to dress in clothing of glory and splendor and in this way they will become garments of holiness for the soul which is called "glorious" and the soul which is called "splendid". (The Malbim)

Why do we start off discussing the oil for lighting the Menorah before turning to the special clothing of the High Priest? Perhaps there is a comparison to be drawn to the previous Parsha when the instructions for building the Tabernacle begin from the Ark, the innermost vessel, and move outward to the building itself. What's the parallel?

Take a moment and stare at the sun. Don't do it! You can hurt your eyes! You need sun glasses to stare directly at the sun without being damaged, and we don't have to be rocket scientists to know why. We need a veil to see something so bright. The brighter a thing is the more of a barrier is required to actually behold it. The Tabernacle, in the dimension of "place", is the container of the Holy of Holies.

The High Priest would be in "person" the one to enter that holy of holy places. It would be dangerous for just anyone to go there including an unworthy Kohen Gadol- High Priest. He would have to match the task of confronting such a rich concentration of spiritual radiance. The garment of the Kohen Gadol and the flesh of the man himself are the compatible cover and vehicle for the carriage of that which is most valuable and noble about him, namely his Divine Soul. In order to merit the intensity of this meeting and to survive, two ingredients are necessary: 1) Profound Natural Gifts and 2) Plenty of Practice. He must have both inherent and developed greatness to the ultimate degree in order to properly represent and inspire the entire Nation of Israel.

I have observed and wondered why people tend to put either pictures of little children or Tzadikim on their walls. Rarely do you see a picture of a middle aged person propped up on a mantle piece. Why? Maybe it is for the same reason that the world is excited to about a bride and groom, at least

for the first week or a new born child for a time. After that, life goes back to normal. Nobody dances spontaneous when you enter a room. The celebrity status fades. Why the initial excitement, though? When people see a child or a newly wed couple, they see pure, as yet, unrealized potential. When we look at Tzadikim we behold actualized potential. In between anything can happen.

One simple but powerful way, amongst many, to gradually manifest that ocean of potential is simply to take a little time each day and: 1) Write down two things you feel grateful about! 2) Write down two things you feel accomplished by! Each day grow the list. By taking note of what we appreciate we are recognizing what HASHEM has done and is doing for us. By listing our successes we are granting ourselves tacit congratulations for the tough tasks we have done, obviating the need to perform for public approval and simultaneously taking active steps to complete our portion of life's work.

When the Kohen Gadol bears the Breast Plate, for example, with stones representing all the Tribes of Israel, he carries with him the natural love he has for his people with whom he is unified and also the graduated state of love of he has successfully learned to activate and access! He stands before us, then, as a living picture of glory and splendor and a model of possibility. Text Copyright © 2005 by Rabbi Label Lam and **Torah.org**.