

DRAWING CLOSE TO... YOU

by Rabbi Yisroel Ciner

This week's parsha, Tetzaveh, deals primarily with the appointment of the Kohanim {priests} and their garments.

Moshe is told: "V'atah {And you} hakrev elecha {should draw close to you} Aharon, your brother, and his sons, from amongst the Children of Israel to serve as kohanim {priests} to me. And you shall make holy garments for Aharon your brother, for honor and for glory. [28:1-2]"

Earlier in Shemos we learned that the kehunah was supposed to come from Moshe. However, when he repeatedly showed reluctance in his being sent to Paroah, Hashem said to him: "Aharon, your brother, the Levi . . . you will place the words in his mouth and he will speak on your behalf. [4:14-17]" At that point Aharon was appointed to be the Levithe kehunah was taken from Moshe.

The Ohr HaChaim explains that this is why the passuk {verse} stressed "V' atahAnd you!" Don't allow it to be done in a grudging, forced manner but rather, you do it. Accept My will as yours and in that way it will serve as atonement for your earlier hesitation to fulfill My will.

With this, the Ohr HaChaim affords a deeper glimpse into the words "hakrev elechadraw close to you." He explains that a person distances himself from an aspect of the essence of his neshama {soul} by going against Hashem's will. The degree of the distancing will depend on the extent of the infraction.

Moshe, by resisting Hashem's mission to Paroah, caused a breach between himself and an aspect of his neshama. Even with the result that Aharon and his descendants would now be the kohanim, Moshe needed to willingly accept this. "V'atahAnd you" should play the willing role in the official appointing of Aharon to this position.

"V'atah {And you} hakrev elecha {draw close to you}..."

By doing this you will fulfill the ultimate objective of a person who has gone against the will of Hashem. You will draw close to yourself. To that vital aspect of your essence that you have distanced yourself from. You will draw close to you. Your physical entity, the you of this world, will draw close to your spiritual essence the eternal you.

The Ohr HaChaim then goes on to say that this gives us an understanding in a very difficult passage of the Talmud. "One is obligated to bless Hashem for evil the same way that he blesses for good. [Berachos 54.]" The same happiness that we feel when things go well should be felt when things go

wrong.

He writes that the epitome of evil, the most sorry state that one can be in, is this state of being removed and out of touch with oneself. The recognition that the difficulties we encounter in life are there to enable us to reconnect to our priorities, goals and purpose. This can shed an entirely new light on our perception of these events and can even lead one to ultimately bless Hashem for evil the same way that he blesses for good.

Moshe showed his willingness to accept this decree of Hashem by making and giving those garments "for honor and for glory." By doing so, he was willingly accepting Hashem's will, correcting his previous hesitation to do so and thereby reconnecting to his true essence.

Throughout the years, the Jews in the diaspora have always expressed their solidarity with Israel - sympathizing and empathizing with the many crises that have been endured. Having recently moved from Israel, it is eerie to see pictures of N.Y. police checking bags before allowing people to carry them into a museum and hearing advisories to prepare sealed rooms. Perhaps this is a way for us to really connect to that greater entity of Israel and by doing so, to connect to ourselves.

Good Shabbos,

Yisroel Ciner

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