

כ"ה:כ"ט-ל' וְנִשָּׂא אֶהָרֶן אֶת־שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקֹשֶׁן הַמִּשְׁפָּט עַל־לִבּוֹ בִּבְאֹז אֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ לְזִכְרוֹן לְפָנֶיהָ תְּמִיד: וְגַם תִּתֵּן אֶל־הַקֹּשֶׁן הַמִּשְׁפָּט אֶת־הָאוּרִים וְאֶת־הַתְּמִיּוֹם וְהָיוּ עַל־לֵב אֶהָרֶן בִּבְאֹז לְפָנֶיהָ וְנִשָּׂא אֶהָרֶן אֶת־מִשְׁפַּט בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־לִבּוֹ לְפָנֶיהָ תְּמִיד:

Exodus 28:29-30 *So Aharon is to bear the names of the Children of Israel on the Breastpiece of Judgement over his heart whenever he comes into the Holy-Shrine for reminder, before the presence of God, regularly. And you are to put in the Breastpiece of Judgment the Urim and the Tummim that they may be over Aharon's heart, whenever he comes before the presence of God. So Aharon is to bear the Breastpiece of Judgment for the Children of Israel over his heart before the presence of God regularly.* Just as the tablets were placed in the Ark, the *Urim Ve-Tummim* were placed in the breastpiece pouch of the KG. There is remarkable symmetry here. The Ark is the heart of God's sanctuary. The KG has the people (and the planet by extension) upon his heart. The two hearts meet. Perhaps there is also a connection to tefillin here. Tefillin are bound next to the heart. More directly though, in the Sh'ma these words that I command you this day are to **be placed upon your heart**. Thus, while the High Priest places Israel on his heart, and the covenant words are located in the heart of the Sanctuary, God's words will reside in the heart of every Jew.

כ"ה:ל"ח וְהָיָה עַל־מִצְחָ אֶהָרֶן וְנִשָּׂא אֶהָרֶן אֶת־עֲוֹן הַקֹּדֶשִׁים אֲשֶׁר יַקְדִּישׁוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְכָל־מִתְנַת קִדְשֵׁיהֶם וְהָיָה עַל־מִצְחֹ תְּמִיד לְרָצוֹן לָהֶם לְפָנֶיהָ:

28:38 *It shall be on Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may take away any sin arising from the holy things that the Israelites consecrate, from any of their sacred donations; it shall be on his forehead at all times, to win acceptance for them before God.* The Kohen Gadol is like a lightning rod for atonement; the headdress is a symbolic "channel" of God to Israel. It "channels" Israel's supplication to God and God's atonement to Israel.

כ"ט:ל"ח-ל"ט וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שְׁנַיִם לַיּוֹם תְּמִיד: אֶת־הַכֶּבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד תַּעֲשֶׂה בְּבֹקֶר וְאֶת־הַכֶּבֶשׂ הַשֵּׁנִי תַעֲשֶׂה בֵּין הָעֶרְבָיִם:

29:38-39 *Now this is what you shall offer upon the altar: two yearling lambs each day, regularly.*

You shall offer the one lamb in the morning, and you shall offer the other lamb at twilight. The parasha includes some instructions for the consecration of the sanctuary, an event which will take place in Leviticus. But we point out this verse because it has come to mean something beyond its context. Quoted from time to time, it suggests that our spiritual lives are not defined as much by peak moments of transcendence as much as they are by the quotidian daily discipline of prayer, study, and observance of mitzvot. Like daily physical exercise, the discipline of every day activity is what builds us, intellectually, religiously, spiritually. The text often cited to support this idea is found in a midrash.¹ In a discussion about "the most comprehensive verse in the Torah," the teaching reads as follows: *Ben Zoma said: We found a verse that is more comprehensive, "Hear O Israel..." Ben Nanas said: We found a verse that is more comprehensive, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Shim'on ben Pazi said: We found a verse that is more comprehensive, "One lamb you should offer in the morning..." Rabbi Ploni stood up and said: The law is like Ben Pazi. (Netivot Olam, Netiv Ahavat Re'a 1:4)*

בן זומא אומר מצינו פסוק כולל יותר והוא שמע ישראל וגו'. בן ננס אומר מצינו פסוק כולל יותר והוא ואהבת לרעך כמוך. שמעון בן פזי אומר מצינו פסוק כולל יותר והוא את הכבש האחד תעשה בבוקר וגו'. עמד ר' פלוני על רגליו ואמר הלכה כבן פזי. So what is the Torah's most "comprehensive" idea? Declaring faith and love of God? Loving your neighbor? Or daily acts of devotion, study and service? It's a worthy debate. Perhaps the synthesis of all position is this: pronouncements of faith and mutual responsibility are meaningless without a discipline of daily practice. The day-to-day acts of devotion, study, and mitzvah are what matters most.

כ"ט:מ"ו וְיָדְעוּ כִּי אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לְשִׁכְנִי בְּתוֹכָם אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיהֶם:

29:46 *And they shall know that I am their God, who brought them out from the land of Egypt that I might abide among them—I, their God.* The whole purpose of the Exodus was so that God would abide among the people. To paraphrase Jeff Lebowksi: "The Lord abides."

Shabbat shalom! **(Sponsor a Parasha Sheet!)**

¹ The provenance of this midrash is not certain. It is apparently located in the introduction to Ein Yaakov, a 16th Century compendium of non-legal material in the Talmud. It is not found in the earlier sources. We

have to do a little more research here to pin it down. Perhaps it was made up altogether. Nevertheless, the wisdom it contains is instructive.