

## Lofty Learning...

וְאַתָּה הִקְרַב אֵלַיךְ אֶת אֶחָיוֹן אָחִיךָ

“And you draw near to yourself Ahron your brother.” (28:1)

Shmuel was a tremendous Talmid Chochom and a wealthy man. He and his wife had also been blessed with several sons who were each a credit to their father's devotion to Torah and Mitzvos. Shmuel had employed a Melamed by the name of Berel to tutor his sons, and each was progressing very positively. The Melamed reported that they were fast learners, and their father was always suitably impressed when he tested them. However, when Shmuel's youngest son was ready to start school, he hired a new Melamed, whose time would be devoted to this youngest son. Berel was understandably quite upset, and he approached Shmuel to try and find out the reason for bringing in this third party. Berel explained to Shmuel that he was quite surprised Shmuel had felt a need to bring in someone else to tutor his last son, after all he said, haven't I proved my worth with all your other sons? Shmuel hastened to appease Berel, and explained to him that his decision was not intended as a slight against Berel in any way. Rather, he explained that Berel was indeed a brilliant teacher, but that the problem was with his brilliance! Whilst he was able to teach the older boys, who were already on a reasonable standard, and indeed was successful in raising them to the heights of Torah learning, Shmuel didn't feel that teaching Aleph Beis to a three year old would be Berel's forte. The same way, he said, that I simply cannot teach my own sons because I am just too sharp and learned and they would not benefit from my tutelage, so too, relatively, my three year old would struggle to learn from you.

The Dubno Maggid uses this Moshul to explain a Midrash on the above Possuk. The Midrash relates that Moshe was saddened by Hashem's decision to appoint Ahron as the Kohen Godol. Hashem responded somewhat esoterically and by way of consoling Moshe said, “The Torah was Mine, I gave it to you.” The Maggid writes that the answer of Hashem was based around the answer that Shmuel gave Berel in the above story. Hashem explained to Moshe that his non-appointment as Kohen Godol was not an insult; rather it was a compliment as it emphasised the high esteem in which Moshe was held. Hashem considered Moshe to be too great to be the Kohen Godol, since he was such an elevated individual that he was not part of the people, an essential aspect of being the Kohen Godol. Hashem explained this point to Moshe through the response regarding the Torah. Hashem was giving the explanation that Shmuel gave at the end of the Moshul; that he himself could not teach his children because he was too wise. Similarly, Hashem told Moshe that the Torah had been given over to Klal Yisroel precisely because Hashem is simply too wise and profound for us to understand Him, and therefore He could not act as our teacher. The only means via which human beings can learn Torah was through the Torah being given to us, just as Shmuel had to hire Berel to teach his sons for him. We see this, adds the Maggid, through the famous opinion of Chazal that all of Klal Yisroel died when Hashem recited the first two of the ten commandments. The lofty nature of Hashem and His Torah was simply too great for Klal Yisroel to cope with, necessitating its being given via Moshe. Hashem therefore consoled Moshe through the compliment of comparing Himself to Moshe, and explaining that just as Hashem was too lofty to teach Klal Yisroel Himself, so too was Moshe too lofty to be the Kohen Godol.

## Torah Reality

וַעֲשִׂיתָ חֹשֶׁן

“You shall make a Choshen.” (28:16)

Rabbeinu Bachya comments on this Possuk that the twelve stones which were placed in the Choshen represented the twelve root precious stones in the world. He cites the, “Wise men of nature,” that there are fundamentally only twelve precious stones, and that all other precious stones merely belong to the ‘family’ of one of these twelve.

Harav Shimshon Pincus cites this Rabbeinu Bachya and comments that this idea contains a fundamental rule which defines all of life. The Torah, he writes, is not only the epitome of perfection; it is also the definition of perfect existence. As such, everything the Torah deals with and relates to is perforce perfect as well. Therefore, every time the Torah counts something, or provides a definition, the Torah is revealing that this number or definition is the reality of whatever it is that is being defined, and every other aspect of whatever is being discussed, is included within that. By way of example, he repeats the point of the Rabbeinu Bachya. Although there would appear to be more than twelve precious stones in the world, since the Torah tells us that twelve precious stones were used in the Choshen, that defines the number of precious stones in nature as being twelve and no more. Everything else must then fit into a sub-category of these twelve, since the Torah is true and defines reality.

## All Day... Every Day

שְׁנַיִם לְיוֹם תָּמִיד

“Two each day perpetually.” (29:38)

The Baal HaTurim comments on this Possuk which commands the perpetual twice daily Tamid offering. He notes that the Hebrew words can form the acronym, תשל, which is the numerical equivalent of 730. This number represents two offerings brought each day for three hundred and six five days a year; seven hundred and thirty.