

INSIGHTS from the SEDRA

Insights from the Sedra is a project of the Scholar's Kollel of Great Neck. It aims to provide several questions and answers about the Sedra, culled from various commentaries, including the following: Baal Haturim, Darash Moshe, Vedibarta Bam by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky, Torah Treasures by Dov Furer, Wellsprings of Torah by Alexander Friedman, and Kol Dodi by Rabbi Dovid Feinstein, Great Torah Lights by Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Goodman, Something To Say by Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser, The Vilna Gaon, Growth Through Torah by Zelig Pliskin and The Call of the Torah.

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם

"They shall make Me a Sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them..." (25:8)

Hashem will dwell among them. The verse should have said "*b'tocho* – among it," meaning, Hashem will dwell in the *Mishkan*. *B'tocham* is referring to the hearts of every Jew. We need to make a place within ourselves for the *Shechinah* to dwell. (Ohel Torah)

ועשו ארון עצי שטים

"And they shall make an Aron from shittim wood..." (25:10)

Aron comes from a language of *ohr* – light. *Ohr* is referring to the Torah that is in the *Aron*, as it says, *כי נר מצוה ותורה אור* – *for the mitzvah is like a candle, and the Torah, light.* (Maharal)

אמתים וחצי ארכו ואמה וחצי רחבו ואמה וחצי קמתו

"Two and half amot its length, an amah and a half its width, and an amah and a half its height." (25:10)

Why do all of the measurements of the *Aron* have a half of a measurement – two and a half *amot* in length, one and a half *amah* in width, and one and half *amot* in height? The reason is to teach us that the only way to acquire the Torah is for the person to realize that he is not a complete person. There is no room for *ga'avah*. (Ba'al HaTurim)

הששה הנותרים

"The six remaining ones..." (28:10)

Once it said, "*six of their names on one stone,*" was it not obvious that six remained? Why does the Torah say, "*and the six remaining ones?*" To inform us that only twelve names (using *Yosef*) had to be engraved, not thirteen (using *Menashe* and *Ephraim*). This is also true for the twelve tribal installation stones. Although the princes of *Ephraim* and *Menashe* brought offerings as two distinct tribes at the Tabernacle dedication, only *Yosef* was engraved on the Breastplate and *Ephod*. When *Yaakov* appeared to *Yosef* during the *Potiphara* episode, he promised his son that if he overcame his evil impulse, his name would be engraved on the *Ephod* stones alongside those of his brothers. (Sotah 36)

הטור השני ויהלם

"The second row...yahalom." (28:18)

The stone of *Zevulun* was a *yahalom*. The people of *Zevulun* were the businessmen who supported the Torah study of *Yissachar*. What led them to this destiny?

The people of *Zevulun* transported merchandise on the sea. The Sages teach us that most sailors are pious (*Yerushalmi Kiddushin* 4:11), because their profession constantly puts them at great risk. As the saying goes, there are no atheists in a foxhole. The great piety of *Zevulun's* people led them to the realization that there would be no better way for them to serve Hashem than by using their resources to support the Torah learning of *Yissachar*. The letters of יהלם can also spell להים, *to the sea*, for it was because they were seafarers that they gained their spiritual strength.

(*Kol Dodi*)

ונתת אל חשן המשפט את האורים ואת התמים

“And you shall place in the breastplate the *Urim* and the *Tumim*.” (28:30)

QUESTION: What were the *Urim* and the *Tumim*, and how did they operate?

ANSWER: The *Urim* and the *Tumim* were two inscriptions of the Divine Name. When Moshe was in heaven studying the Torah, Hashem revealed to him the secret of how he should make the *Urim veTumim*. Only Moshe, to whom the secret was revealed, was able to make them, and he placed them into the fold of the breastplate. Therefore, it is not written anywhere that anyone should contribute to the making of the *Urim* and the *Tumim* or any instruction to the workers about how to make it. On the 12 stones of the breastplate were written the names of the 12 tribes, the names of the patriarchs, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, and also the words "שבטי ישראל" (*Yoma* 73b).

On each stone were six letters, including the name of the tribe, and thus there were 72 letters in total. When a question was brought before the *Kohen Gadol*, he would meditate on His Holy name of the *Urim*. This would cause the letters on the stones of the breastplate to light up or protrude. These letters spelled the answer to the question. However, since they were not in any special order, again the *Kohen Gadol* would have to meditate on the Holy Name of the *Tumim* and, thus, he would be given *Ruach Hakodesh* – Divine Inspiration – a level of prophecy lower than the one called “*nevuah*”, to arrange the letters properly and convey the correct answer.

(*Rashi, Ramban*)

Why were they called “*Urim* and *Tumim*?” *Urim*, that which lights (explains) their words; *Tumim*, that which completes their words (the words of the *Urim* and *Tumim* are fulfilled in their entirety and are valid forever). Another reason they are called *Urim* and *Tumim*: *Urim*, that they light the way for *Bnei Yisrael*. *Tumim*, that teach *Bnei Yisrael* to be pure and innocent in their behavior and their path of life. The *Urim V'Tumim* served as a guide for *Bnei Yisrael*, teaching them how to live properly.

(*Midrash Aggadah*)

SHABBAT SHALOM!

For future sponsorship opportunities or to receive this publication, please call Steve Zuckerman at 516 652 5266 or email zkster@aol.com or Rabbi Lichter at ilichter@qns.org. Sponsorships in memory of or in honor of someone are \$50.00 per issue.