



KINDER TORAH®

For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table
Parshas Tetzaveh



Guiding Light

"Don't worry Chaim, I'm right behind you."

"That's what I'm worried about, Shimi. No one is in front of me and it is pitch black in here. I can't see anything."

Boom!

"What was that Chaim?"

"I fell down. I must have tripped over something. I think I found a light. Yes, here is an oil lamp. Let's light it."

"Wow. One little lamp lights up this whole dark place. Look at that, Chaim. You tripped over a rock."

"I see Shimi. Boruch Hashem we have this light, or I could have fallen into that pit over there."

"Boruch Hashem."

"And they shall take pure, pressed olive oil for the light, to kindle the lamp continually" (Shemos 27:20). The Medrash Rabba (36:3) compares this oil and the light that it sheds to the light of Torah. A person without Torah is likened to someone walking in the dark. He trips and falls over all sorts of obstacles. The obstacles are sins, and he falls into their trap. However, one who toils in Torah is compared to a person walking with a lamp in his hand. He will not stumble because the light guides his way. Similarly, the light of Torah steers us clear of sin, and guides us on our journey through life.

Kinderlach . . .
B'ezras Hashem you will have many challenges, tests, and opportunities in your lives. The Torah will always steer you in the right direction. Hashem's Torah is the "guidebook" for living our lives. Without the "guidebook" we will surely get lost. With it, we will accomplish tremendous things. Always learn as much Torah as you can. And seek the advice of Rabbonim whose "Daas Torah" will keep you on the right path.

Holy Garments

"You shall make holy garments for Aharon your brother, for glory and splendor" (Shemos 28:2). Thus the Torah begins the description of the Bigdei Kehuna (Priestly Garments) worn by the Kohanim during their service in the Beis HaMikdash. The Ksav Sofer zt"l in his commentary on the Torah discusses these garments and also other types of Jewish

clothing. He cites that rabbinical garments worn by *talmidei chachomim* give glory to them (and the Torah they represent). Additionally, they serve as a constant reminder to them of the elevated stature of a *talmid chochom*. One of the distinguishing features of the Jews in Egypt was their clothing. They did not fall to the lowest level of impurity because they retained their clothing, their names, and their language. We see how important it is for a Jew to dress properly.

The Pele Yoatz sets down guidelines for proper dress. The middle path is the best. Clothing should not be too fancy or expensive, because this can bring out pride and arrogance in a person. Additionally, extravagant clothing sets a fashion trend and puts pressure upon those who cannot afford such expensive clothes. At the other extreme, clothing should not be ragged, torn or dirty. Such clothing does not honor the wearer. The Jewish people, Hashem's chosen nation, dress in a dignified manner that gives honor to their Creator and His Torah. We are not subject to the whims and styles of the fashions of the day. Our clothes remind us who we are, and what we are doing in this world.

Kinderlach . . .
Don't you feel good when you get dressed up in your best clothes for Shabbos? You almost feel like a different person. You see what a big effect clothes can have on a person. Perhaps you can ask Abba or Imma to review the halachos of tznius (dignity) in dress with you. Develop good dressing habits now, and they will stay with you the rest of your lives.

Better Than Gold

"The Torah of Your mouth is better than thousands of gold and silver" (Tehillim 119:72). Most people hold gold and silver in high regard. They spend huge amounts of time and effort amassing great fortunes of wealth. Something that is worth such a large investment must be valuable. Dovid HaMelech is telling us that Torah is more precious. Rabbeinu Bechaye illustrates two proofs from this week's parsha.

"They shall take for you pure pressed olive oil for lighting the eternal light" (Shemos 27:20). The first drop of pure oil that comes out

of the olive is for the Menorah in the Beis HaMikdash. That Menorah represents Torah. The remaining oil from the olive is used in the *Mincha* (grain) offerings, which are eaten. Normally, a person who has two grades of oil will put the better quality into his food, and save the lesser quality for lighting his lamps. The Torah instructs us to do the opposite. We must save our best oil for the lamp, which represents Torah. That is the highest priority. The lesser grade oil can then be used for food.

"Set in gold, they shall be mounted" (Shemos 28:20). The precious stones of the *Choshen* (Breastplate) were set in gold mountings. Written on the stones were the Hebrew letters of the names of the tribes. This shows us that the Torah is more valuable than gold and jewels. The gold is used as a basis to mount the jewels. Therefore, the jewels are more valuable than the gold. However, the jewels themselves are only a basis for the letters of the Torah! They are more valuable than everything. The world was created with these Hebrew letters. Therefore, everything is contained within them.

Kinderlach . . .
Put your best efforts into learning. Just as we give our best, purest oil to the Menorah, give your Torah learning your best efforts. You will be rewarded with a profit whose value is too great to be counted. A smart businessman will tell you to do the work that brings you the most profit. If you can earn gold instead of silver, take the job that pays gold. Precious stones are an even better wage. What is the most valuable thing you can acquire? Torah. More precious than gold, silver, and diamonds. Work hard learning Torah. You will become wealthy beyond your wildest dreams.

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