

בס"ד

# THE RASHI OF THE WEEK

Week of

# Parshas Acharei

29 Nissan, 5782 – April 30, 2022

Compiled from the works of  
**Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson**  
**The Lubavitcher Rebbe**

by  
Rabbi Shmuel Mendelsohn  
North Miami Beach, FL

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**An Outline of the Rebbe's Explanation of Rashi  
Parshas Acharei**

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**Rashi in His Own Words**

ויקרא ט"ז, ד': כְּתֻבָּת־בְּד קֹדֶשׁ יִלְבָּשׁ וּמְכַנְסֵי־בָד יִהְיוּ עָלֶי־בְּשָׂר׃ וּבְאֵבָנֶיט בֶּד יִחַזֵּר וּבְמִצְנָנֶפֶת בְּד יִצָּנֵף בְּגָדֵי־קֹדֶשׁ הֵם יִרְתֹּץ בַּיָּמִים אֶת־בְּשָׂר׃ וּלְבָשָׁם:

רש"י ד"ה כתנת בד וגו': מגיד שאינו משמש לפניו בשמונה בגדים שהוא משמש בהם בחוץ, שיש בהם זהב, לפי שאין קטיגור נעשה סניגור, אלא בארבעה, ככהן הדיוט, וכולן של בוץ:

**Vayikroh 16:4:** He shall wear a holy linen shirt and linen pants shall be upon his flesh. He shall gird himself with a linen sash and wear a linen cap, these are holy garments ...

**Rashi Heading – a linen shirt:** This tells us that he (the Kohen Gadol) does not perform the service inside (in the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur) wearing the eight garments with which he conducts the service outside (the Holy of Holies) because those (garments) contain gold, and a prosecutor cannot become a defender<sup>1</sup>. Instead, he wears four garments like an ordinary Kohen, all of which are linen.

**Synopsis**

This week we read Parshas Acharei, which begins with a description of the service conducted in the Tabernacle and the Temple on Yom Kippur<sup>2</sup>. The Kohen Gadol must perform the entire service. The Torah specifies the vestments which he must wear while performing this service. The Torah says, "He shall wear a holy linen shirt, and linen pants will be upon his flesh. He shall gird himself with a linen sash and wear a linen cap; these are holy garments ..." Rashi cites the words "linen shirt etc." He explains that this tells us that in the Holy of Holies, the Kohen Gadol does not wear the special eight vestments Hashem commanded him to wear the rest of the year. Instead, he only wears the four garments that a regular Kohen wears, made of linen. He explains that this is because a prosecutor cannot become a defender<sup>3</sup>.

Why does Rashi need to tell us that "he wears four garments?" The Torah enumerates each garment; by simply counting them, we know that there are four. Furthermore, why does Rashi need to tell us that they are all made of linen? While enumerating the garments, the Torah specifies that each was linen.

1. The Kohen Gadol enters the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur to atone for all the Jews. Therefore, he may not enter wearing gold, which is reminiscent of the sin of the golden calf.

2. This description begins with our Parshah, Vayikroh 16:1.

3. For the explanation of this, see footnote 1.

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Rashi needs to explain this to understand the answer to a different question. We know from the context that the Kohen Gadol serves with only four garments on Yom Kippur. However, a Kohen who lacks the proper number of vestments is not permitted to serve in the Bais Hamikdosh. Rashi's explanation that "a prosecutor cannot become a defender" does not explain why the Kohen Gadol was allowed to serve with fewer than eight garments.

To answer this question, Rashi specifies that on Yom Kippur in the Holy of Holies, the Kohen Gadol "wears four garments like an ordinary Kohen, all of which are linen." He is not wearing four of the eight vestments which he must ordinarily wear. Instead, at that time, he is serving "like an ordinary Kohen," who is only obligated to wear four garments.

### Rashi's Explanation

In this Shabbos, we read Parshas Acharei, which describes the High Priest's service on Yom Kippur in great detail. The Torah tells us which priestly vestments the Kohen Gadol had to wear while performing this service. The Torah tells us that<sup>4</sup> "He shall wear a holy linen shirt. Linen pants shall be upon his flesh. He shall gird himself with a linen sash and wear a linen cap. These are holy garments ..." Rashi cites the words "a linen shirt" and explains as follows. "This tells us that he (the Kohen Gadol) does not perform the service inside (in the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur) wearing the eight garments with which he performs the service outside (the Holy of Holies) because those (garments) contain gold, and a prosecutor cannot become a defender<sup>5</sup>. Instead, he wears four garments like an ordinary Kohen, all of which are linen."

The Torah told us earlier of the obligation for a Kohen to wear special garments while performing the service in the Tabernacle or the Bais Hamikdosh. It spelled out the commandment to fashion these vestments in great detail and the Kohen's obligation to wear them while serving. Moreover, the Torah tells us that he is liable to the death penalty if a Kohen performs the service without wearing these garments<sup>6</sup>. What need is there for the Torah to tell us of the garments worn by the Kohen Gadol *here*?

Therefore, Rashi explains that this verse does not come to command or teach us something new. Instead, it teaches us something new about those vestments worn on Yom Kippur by a Kohen Gadol. A regular Kohen wears four garments throughout the year, while a High Priest wears eight. We indeed know this from before. The Torah is teaching us that on Yom Kippur, the order changes, and the Kohen Gadol performs the service in its entirety. He wears only four garments for every service he performs within the Holy of Holies, the same as a regular Kohen throughout the year.

### Difficulties in Understanding Rashi

This explanation leaves us with several difficulties in understanding Rashi. Why does Rashi need to tell us that "he wears four garments?" All one needs to do is count the number of garments the verse lists! Furthermore, we need to

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4. Our Parshah, Vayikroh 16:4.

5. For the explanation of this, see footnote 1.

6. Parshas Tetzaveh, Shemos 28:43.

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understand why Rashi adds the words "like an ordinary Kohen?" The Torah taught us some time ago that a regular Kohen wore four garments<sup>7</sup>!

Additionally, what difference does it make that on Yom Kippur, a Kohen Gadol wears the same number of garments as an ordinary Kohen does during the year? Finally, we need to understand why Rashi tells us that "all of them are of linen." The verse specifies this regarding each garment.

### The Explanation

These questions can be understood in the following manner. Rashi is answering a different question that arises from this verse. Namely, why does the Torah choose to tell us *here* which garments the Kohen Gadol wore on Yom Kippur? One would think that it should appear in one of two different places. The Torah could either write it before the Torah told us of the service performed on Yom Kippur<sup>8</sup>. Or it could have been written after the Torah finishes telling us the details of the Yom Kippur service, which the Kohen Gadol must perform in white garments<sup>9</sup>. Why tell us of these garments in the middle of describing the Yom Kippur service?

The verse tells us of his wearing the four white garments immediately following the words<sup>10</sup> "with this shall Aharon enter the Holy of Holies; with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering." Therefore, one could have assumed that he *only* wears the four linen garments when he enters to bring the "young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering."

However, from the verses following ours, two things are clear. Firstly, his burnt offering – the ram for a burnt offering – must be brought while he is wearing the eight garments in which he serves all year<sup>11</sup>. There are other services that he must perform before offering his burnt offering. These include the two goats brought as a sin-offering on behalf of the Jewish nation and the incense offering. The Torah tells us of these *after* our verse. Yet clearly, these must be brought while wearing the four white garments.

To explain this, Rashi says that "this tells us that he does not perform the service inside wearing the eight garments with which he performs the service outside." From a simple reading of the verses, we see that the burnt offerings are described immediately before the injunction to wear the four white linen garments. It would seem clear that he must bring these while wearing the four garments. Rashi's comments explain that this is not the case. Our verse tells us that the Kohen Gadol must wear the four linen garments only for those services performed within the Holy of Holies. He wears the eight

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7. Parshas Tetzaveh, Shemos 28:40-42.

8. In other words, it should be written one verse earlier; our Parshah, Vayikroh 16:3.

9. It could have been written following 16:22.

10. Our Parshah, Vayikroh 16:3.

11. See our Parshah, Vayikroh 16:24 and Rashi's comments there.

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garments he wears all year for those he performs outside of the Holy of Holies. He brings the burnt offerings outside the Holy of Holies, in the sanctuary<sup>12</sup>. Hence, he wears all eight garments.

In contrast, the sprinkling of the goat's blood and the offering of the incense are performed within the Holy of Holies<sup>13</sup>, and therefore, he performs those in the four linen garments.

This is also why the Torah tells us of the special vestments for Yom Kippur after saying,<sup>14</sup> "With this shall Aharon enter the Holy of Holies, with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering." The Torah tells us that the change in clothing is not because of Yom Kippur, and it is because when Aharon enters the Holy of Holies, he may not enter with golden vestments.

The law is that a Kohen serving without all of the proper vestments is liable to the death penalty. If so, how can the Kohen Gadol enter with only four garments? He is seemingly in the category of what the Sages call a "Mechusar Begodim – Lacking (the Proper) Vestments." Rashi's explanation that "a prosecutor cannot become a defender" would not seem to suffice. That is not a reason to allow a Kohen Gadol to transgress the law!

To answer this question, Rashi specifies that on Yom Kippur in the Holy of Holies, the Kohen Gadol "wears four garments like an ordinary Kohen, all of which are linen." He is not wearing four of the eight vestments which he must ordinarily wear. Instead, at that time, he is serving "like an ordinary Kohen," who is only obligated to wear four garments.

This also explains why Rashi writes that "all of which are linen." He is not merely pointing out that his clothing does not serve as a prosecutor; he is emphasizing that on Yom Kippur, his service is comparable to that of an ordinary Kohen.

### A Deeper Lesson from Rashi

Rashi's comments provide us with a fundamental lesson in our service to Hashem. At times, a Jew strives to reach the level of<sup>15</sup> "you shall be cleansed of all of your sins before Hashem." He not only wishes to reach this level himself, but he would like to bring those around him to this level. He would like to get himself and those surrounding him closer to Hashem, His Torah, and His Mitzvos. The first step is that he must go "inside" the Holy of Holies. He must "enter," serve with the innermost, most profound parts of his soul. Only with this strength will he be able to affect another Jew.

How can he enter the depth of his soul? He must first take off his own "honor and glory"<sup>16</sup>, his golden clothing. One cannot reach the depths, the innermost intention of Hashem, as long as he is involved with his own "honor and glory." Only

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12. See the previous footnote.

13. Even a service which is not actually done within is done for the need of that which is done within.

14. Our Parshah, Vayikroh 16:3.

15. Our Parshah, Vayikroh 16:30.

16. Parshas Tetzaveh, Shemos 28:2.

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when he feels like an ordinary Kohen, with simple, white linen clothing rather than vestments of gold, can he accomplish his goal. It is only then that the pure simplicity of G-d and his soul shine<sup>17</sup>.

This alone entitles him to go "within." He accomplishes atonement and purity in this manner, not for himself alone. In the Torah's words<sup>18</sup>, "...he shall bring atonement upon himself, his household, and the congregation of Israel.

*(Adapted from talks given on Shabbos Parshas Acharei 5736)*

**I hope you gained as much by reading this as I did by translating and adapting it.**

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17. See Likkutei Torah, Vayikroh beginning with page 28 at the end of side 2. See also Atteres Rosh at length, in the section dealing with Yom Kippur beginning with Chapter 5.

18. Our Parshah, Vayikroh 16:17.

**DEDICATED IN HONOR OF  
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE**

\* \* \*

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF**

**Dr. Mindel Rivka (Muriel) bas Reb Menachem Mendel Shlomo ע"ה  
Stitt**

Passed away on Shabbat Parshat Lech Lecha, 10 Mar-Cheshvan, 5782  
**May Her Soul be bound in the Eternal Bond of Life**

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**DEDICATED BY HER FAMILY שיהיו**

\* \* \*

**IN HONOR OF**

The Soldiers of "Tzivos Hashem"  
**Chaim and Aiden Oded שיהיו**

**Morris**

May they merit to be a source of Chassidic pride  
to their family and a Torah light to their community

\*

**DEDICATED BY THEIR PARENTS**

Rabbi & Mrs. **Menachem M. and Chaya Mushka שיהיו**  
**Morris**

\* \* \*

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF**

**Mr. Yoel ben Reb Sholom Dovid Hacohe ע"ה Mankes**

Passed away on 28 Nissan, 5776

May His Soul be bound in the Eternal Bond of Life

\*

**DEDICATED BY**

Mr. and Mrs. **Yonatan Itsik Hacohe and Shaindel Miriam שיהיו Mankes**

\* \* \*

**IN HONOR OF**

**Mrs. Esther שתחי' Sharabani**

May she go from strength to strength  
in health, happiness, Torah, and mitzvot

\*

**DEDICATED BY HER SON**

**Mr. Gershon (Geri) שי' Bentov**

## **מוקדש לזכות**

**כ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו מליובאוויטש**

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### **לעילוי נשמת**

**מרת מינדל רבקה בת ר' מנחם מענדל שלמה ע"ה**

**סתית**

**נפטרה ש"ק פרשת לך לך, יו"ד מר-חשון תשפ"ב**

**ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.**

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### **נדבת בני משפחתה שיחיו**

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### **לזכות**

**חיילי "צבאות השם"**

**חיים ועדן עודד שיחיו**

**מאריס**

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### **נדפס ע"י הוריהם**

**הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וחי' מושקא שיחיו**

**מאריס**

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### **לעילוי נשמת**

**ר' יואל בן ר' שלום דוד הכהן ע"ה מנקס**

**נפטר ביום כ"ח ניסן ה'תשע"ו**

**ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.**

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### **נדפס ע"י**

**ר' יונתן איציק הכהן וזוגתו מרת שיינדל מרים שיחיו מנקס**

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### **לזכות**

**מרת אסתר שתחי' שרבני**

**לאריכות ימים ושנים טובות עד ביאת גואל צדק**

**ומתוך בריאות הנכונה ולשנת ברכה והצלחה בגו"ר**

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### **נדפס ע"י בנה**

**ר' גרשון שי' בן טוב**