



We Try Harder

Dear Parents,

The most prominent of the garments worn by *Aharon Hakohein*, the *Kohein Gadol*, was the *Choshen Mishpat*, the breastplate. In a miraculous fashion, it guided the leaders of *Klal Yisrael* in determining what *Hashem* wanted them to do when doubts arose as to the best course of action. Worn on the chest of the *Kohein Gadol*, it provided clear proof that *Hashem* was with *Klal Yisrael*.

There was another purpose to the *Choshen Mishpat*, which the Torah itself alludes to. The *Pasuk* tells us that:

... ונשא אהרן את משפט בני ישראל על לבו...

"and Aharon shall carry the judgment of Bnei Yisrael on his heart..." (Shemos 28:30). The *Seforno* comments on the fact that the *Choshen* was worn specifically over *Aharon's* heart: "In order that he (*Aharon*) will daven that *Klal Yisrael* should merit a good judgment." **By wearing the *Choshen*, Aharon will be inspired and motivated to daven for the Jewish People.**

Aharon needs more motivation to daven for *Klal Yisrael*?! This is the same *Aharon HaKohein* who was known for loving his brethren, going to any length to bring peace between husband and wife, between a fellow and his neighbor. He was an unfathomably great *tzaddik*, the leader of *Klal Yisrael* together with his brother, at the pinnacle of our people's greatness. **He was willing to give his life for his brethren and was completely devoted to their well-being.** He needed the *Choshen Mishpat* to be inspired to pray on behalf of his people?

It seems apparent that despite all of the *tzidkus*, greatness and love for *Klal Yisrael* that *Aharon* possessed, he had not reached the limits of his potential to love them even more. As much as he may have been head and shoulders above the rest of his generation in his connection and love for his fellow, there was more growth possible. He still had room for

a greater depth of feeling, a more pronounced connection to each member of *Klal Yisrael*. He could *daven* with even more emotion, when motivated by the *Choshen* on his heart.

In our efforts on behalf of our children, we may feel that we are doing all we can. We sacrifice our resources, time and leisure to raise our children properly. We love them more than anything and anyone in the world. Nevertheless, we see from *Aharon HaKohein*, that no matter how great your love and connection, there is an even greater closeness that could and should be pursued. **We cannot become complacent in how we are *Mechanech* our children.** We could always do more.

It is important to note that *Aharon's* ability to up his game in the area of being *mispallel* on behalf of the *Bnei Yisrael* didn't rely on his own efforts – which must have been exceedingly great in their own right. Rather, it was an outside stimulus, the *Choshen Mishpat* strategically placed on his heart, the seat of emotion, that propelled him to even greater heights in his *koach haTefila*. In the same vein, we should strive to find external motivation and guidance to improve our parenting. We can learn *Mussar* to help work on our own *midah* of patience and forbearance, and we can read and listen to experts to learn better techniques in childrearing.

By acknowledging our need to keep growing in all areas including where we have already achieved a significantly high level of connection, expertise and proficiency, we will be an ever-growing blessing in our children's lives.

Best wishes for a wonderful, growth-filled *Shabbos*,



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