



Parashat Tetzaveh

15 Adar I 5784 – February 24, 2024

“A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” This statement from Shakespeare has to do with names. A name is important, but for some people, it is all they have. They feel their “heritage name” will pave their way to the future. It may be true at times, but it will probably not make it through the long future. This is not to devalue a name, for a name can carry with history and family. However, a legacy is established by the effect one has on others.

A person’s identity can be defined by achievement as opposed to name. What a person contributes to society at large, which may have long-standing contributions for the future, is more significant than a name or title that was inherited.

With societal contributions versus titled with a name, we are challenged with the dilemma of Moshe’s name being left out of this week’s parashah. The reason explained is that when B’nei Yisrael sinned with the golden calf, HaShem wanted to destroy them. Moshe said to HaShem, “If You forgive them, good! But, if not, erase any mention of me from the Torah. I can not be a leader who failed to gain mercy for his people.” HaShem forgave B’nei Yisrael, but Moshe’s own words had to be carried out. His name was erased from Tetzaveh.

The message is that a person’s name is not what serves as a forerunner for a legacy. Moshe’s name was given to him by Pharoah’s daughter. His impact upon B’nei Yisrael as a prophet and leader is his legacy.

Good Shabbos!

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