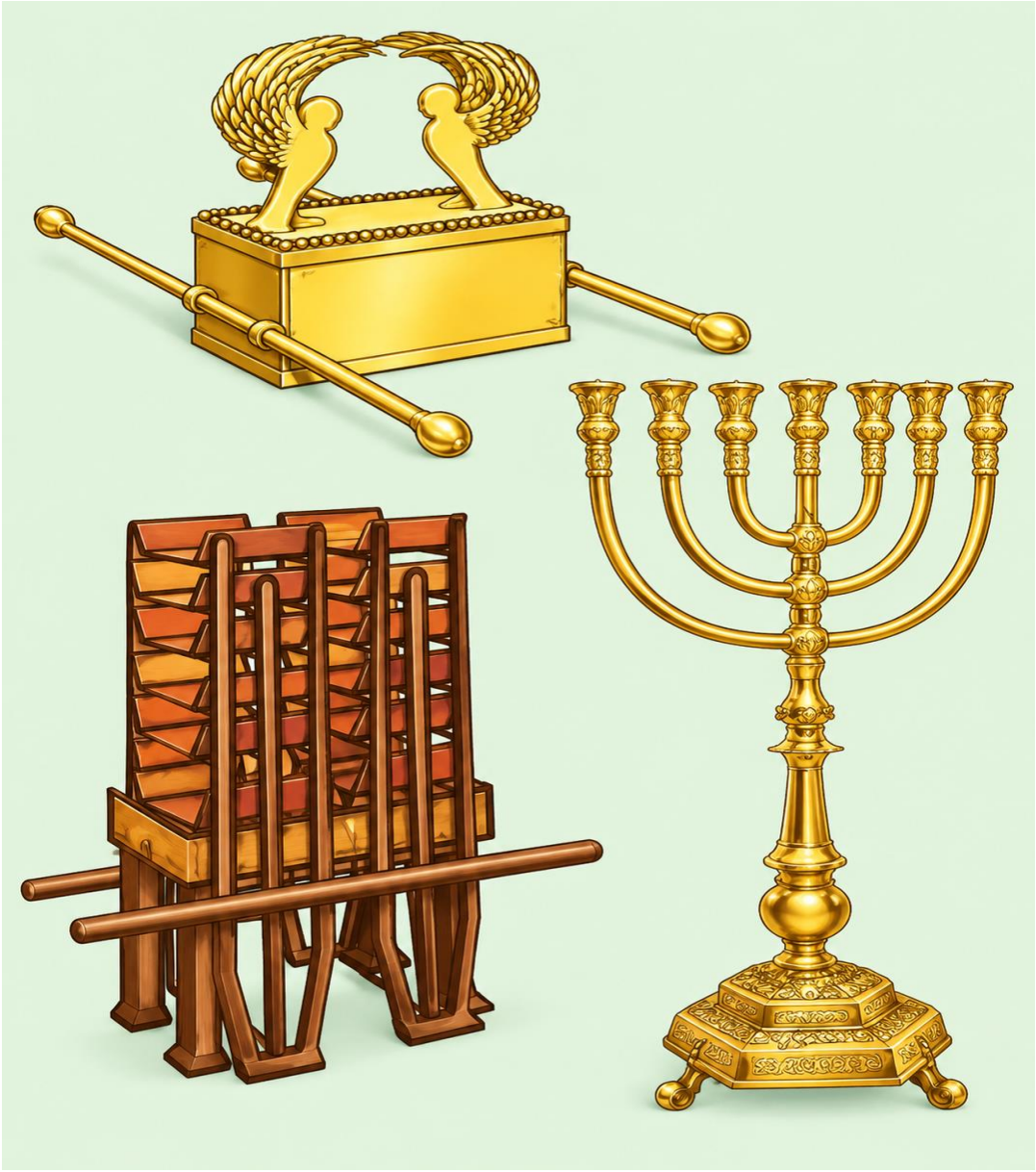
TORAH TREATS

An Anthology of Short Divrei Torah & Stories

Compiled by Yitzchok Henry



תרומה

לעילוי נשמת



אבי מורי ר' גדליה דוד ב"ר איסר הענרי ע"ה

ר' איסר ב"ר זרח הענרי ע"ה

ואשתו מרת גאלדא ב"ר יצחק אהרן ע"ה

ר'יעקב שמואל ב"ר צבי הלוי גרינספעלד ע"ה

ואשתו מרת חנה ב"ר דוד ע"ה

ר'שרגא פייביש ב"ר מרדכי צבי ערליך ע"ה

ר'יעקב ב"ר שלום הלוי פרידמאן ע"ה

ר'חיים דוד ב"ר אלכסנדר הכהן ריטשמאן ע"ה

ת*נ*צ*ב*ה

Yitzchok's Collections אוספי יצחק

תרומה

Hamaayan -The Torah Spring ~ Edited by Shlomo Katz



Hamaayan is prepared by laymen and published weekly for the edification and enjoyment of the reader who is lacking the time or ability to study the weekly parashah on his own. Hamaayan's goal is to acquaint the reader with a broad spectrum of traditional Torah commentary — classical, recent and "obscure" — as well as with aspects of Jewish history and thought. The editors hope these brief 'snippets' will engender further study and discussion of Torah topics ("lehagdil Torah u'leha'adirah")

וְהָאַמָּה מִזֶּה וְהָאַמָּה מִזֶּה בָּעֹדֵף בְּאֹרֶךְ יְרִיעֹת הָאֹהֶל יִהְיֶה סָרוּחַ עַל־צִדֵּי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִזֶּה וּמִזֶּה לְכַסֹּתוֹ - *"And the cubit on one side and the cubit on the other side, that are extra in the length of the curtains of the Tent, shall hang over the sides of the Tabernacle on one side and the other, to cover it." (26:13)*

Rashi z"l comments: **לִמְּדָה תּוֹרָה דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ שֶׁיְּהֵא אָדָם חָס עַל הַיָּפֶה** -"*The Torah here teaches you Derech Eretz / a rule of life that a person should take care of beautiful things.*"

R' Yosef Tendler z"l (1932-2012; Menahel of Mechinas Ner Israel in Baltimore, Maryland) writes: I heard from **R' Avraham Yaakov Pam z"l** (1913-2001; Rosh Yeshiva of Mesivta Torah Voda'ath in Brooklyn, N.Y.) that Rashi's comment applies as much to spiritual beauty as to physical beauty. For example, if someone studied in

yeshiva for many years and acquired a certain aura of holiness, he should make sure that when he leaves the yeshiva to enter the workforce or to find a spouse, he takes care to maintain his "beauty" and not to fall from his level. (**Od Yosef Chai**)

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמָתִי - "*Speak to Bnei Yisrael and they shall take for Me a donation, from every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion*." (25:2)



R' Elazar Lew (1758-1837; rabbi of several towns in Poland) writes: Many commentaries have asked why the verse says "*they shall take for Me a donation*" rather than "*they shall give for Me a donation*." Moreover, he asks: Why does the first part of the verse say "*they shall take*," while the second part says, "*you shall take*"?

He explains: The famous answer to the first question is that giving charity really is taking, because G-d repays generously those who give charity. Therefore, if you give Hashem a donation, you also are taking from Him a donation.

However, this is true only if one gives magnanimously, but not if one gives begrudgingly. And, since Hashem does not want there to be a desecration of His Name if someone gives and is not compensated, He commanded in the second half of the verse, "*[Only] from every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion*." (**Sama D'chayei: Drush 11**)

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם - "*They shall make a Sanctuary for Me — so that I may dwell among them.*" (25:8)



R' Yisrael Meir Hakohen z"l (the Chafetz Chaim; died 1933) quotes a midrash: When Hashem showed the prophet Yechezkel the structure of the future Bet Hamikdash and commanded him to describe it to Bnei Yisrael, the prophet replied, "Master of the Universe! As of now, we are in exile in the lands of our enemies. Yet You are telling me to inform Bnei Yisrael about the structure of the Temple and to write it before them so that they may guard it and its laws! What are they able to do [with this information]? Let them be until they leave the exile, and then I will tell them."

The midrash continues: Hashem replied, "Just because they are in exile, My Temple should be nullified? Their study of its laws is as great as building it! Go tell them that they should study the laws of building the Temple, and, in that merit, I will view it as if they built it." (**Torah Or p.10**)

"Emunah is the heart of the spiritual body – pumping life into all other mitzvos." ~ Maharsha.



כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מַרְאֶה אֹותְךָ אֶת תַּבְנִית הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת תַּבְנִית כָּל־כֵּלָיו וְכֵן תַּעֲשׂוּ "***Like everything that I show you, the form of the Mishkan and the form of all its vessels; and so shall you do.***" (25:9)

Rashi comments: וְכֵן תַּעֲשׂוּ : לְדוֹרוֹת - "***And so shall you do"-for future generations***.

R' Eliezer Zusia Portugal z"l (1898-1982; the Skulener Rebbe) asks: How can building a Temple be a mitzvah for future generations when, at least according to some opinions, the Third Temple will descend from Heaven as a building of fire?

He answers: The Temple that will descend is being constructed all the time from our mitzvot. Every good deed adds a course of "bricks" to that Temple. - This verse is commanding us to do those good deeds. (**Noam Eliezer**)

The Skulener Rebbe

One of the great chasidic Rebbes who immigrated to the United States from the Socialist Republic of Romania was **Rav Eliezer Zusia Portugal, zt"l**, the Skulener Rebbe. Revered throughout the Jewish world for his indescribable piety, as well as for having cared for hundreds of Jewish youth and orphans, he passed away on 29 Av 5742 (August 18, 1982).

Rabbi Eliezer Zusia Portugal (17 October 1898–18 August 1982), the first Skulener Rebbe, was revered by his followers in Russia, Romania, Israel, and the United States for his personal warmth and

his care for hundreds of Jewish youth and war orphans, whom he personally adopted as his own children. He established the Skulener dynasty in America in the 1960s. His only biological son, Rabbi Yisroel Avrohom Portugal, succeeded him as Rebbe.

Rav Eliezer Zusia did not become a Hasidic Rebbe until he was well into his sixties. His first public position was as Rabbi of the Bessarabian town of Sculeni (Yiddish: Skulen), his birthplace. He was appointed to this position at the age of 17 after the death of his father, Rabbi Yisroel Avrohom, who was the town's rabbi.

He was successful in his dealings with both young and old community members in Skulen (present-day Moldova) due to his unusual warmth and compassion for others.

He was especially effective in reaching Jewish youth, who were rapidly assimilating and throwing off mitzvah observance. Rather than give up on them, he engaged them with love and intellectual discussions about the deeper meaning and importance of Judaism, which convinced many to re-embrace their heritage.

When the **Sadigerer Rebbe, Mordechai Sholom Yosef Friedman**, visited Skulen and saw Rav Eliezer Zusia's achievements, he urged him to move to the much larger city of Czernowitz, Bukovina. Although Czernowitz's Jewish population numbered approximately 21,500 Jews out of a total population of 68,400, this city too was suffering rampant assimilation.

Together with the nearby Chassidic courts of Sadigura, Vizhnitz and Boyan, the religious Jews of Czernowitz appointed Rav Eliezer Zusia as their chief rabbi to help preserve what they could.

During World War II, Portugal resided in Czernowitz. As part of Northern Bukovina, Czernowitz was annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940, then occupied by German and Romanian forces during World War II until the liberation by the Soviet army in April 1944.

Beginning in 1945, Rav Eliezer Zusia began adopting dozens of war orphans and caring for hundreds of others. When he was able to move to Bucharest, Romania, he smuggled his "family" in with him and proceeded to adopt even more children, establishing an orphanage for their care.

Years later, he wrote in his will that his "children" should show their appreciation to him by remaining loyal to Judaism and studying Torah at every possible moment.



In February 1959, the Skulener Rebbe was imprisoned together with his only son, the future Skulener Rebbe, **Rabbi Yisroel Avrohom Portugal**, who passed away at the age of 95, on trumped-up charges of spying for Israel and the United States.

For years Rabbi Rosen had cooperated with the government in his quest to aid the country's Jews, although as he later admitted to a reporter, his success came at the cost of legitimizing the brutal Communist regime. "This was my sin: I saved the synagogues. I brought food so that Jews wouldn't starve. I brought education for Jewish children. I sent hundreds of thousands to Israel. If I could have shaken hands with Hitler, I'd have been happy to do it to save 100,000 Jews. And I will be happy to be judged for these sins. I gave my hand to the Devil, but I saved Jews," he concluded.

Mr. Harry Goodman, Rabbi Eliezer Silver and Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson led an international effort to free the Skulener Rebbe and his son. Eventually, through the intervention of United

States Department of State, the two were freed in the August of 1959.

In April, Goodman described the efforts that had gone into securing the Skulener Rebbe's freedom. "Many are those who concerned themselves with the problem of the release of Rabbi Portugal: the Foreign Office in London, the State Department in Washington, and the esteemed **Rabbi M.M. Schneerson of Lubavitch** in New York [by] whose wise guidance this action finally achieved a successful conclusion."

The Rebbe later said that he chose the United States over Israel so he could better help those who remained in Romania.

The Rebbe settled in Crown Heights and continued his efforts helping the underprivileged. As the Jewish population in Crown Heights began to diminish, his followers left to Boro Park and Williamsburg. However, the Skulener Rebbe remained in Crown Heights in deference to the Lubavitcher Rebbe's requests of the Jewish population to stay.

The Rebbe settled in Crown Heights, a few short blocks away from where the Lubavitcher Rebbe resided, where he continued his efforts to help Jewish families trapped behind the Iron Curtain.

Due to his long schedule of prayer, and the absence of Skulener followers in his proximity, a daily minyan was formed for him in his house with Lubavitcher students. Later, he moved to Williamsburg.

When others urged him to open a yeshiva, he responded, "What would my yeshiva add to all the others? A person who wants to do a mitzvah must ask how he can give the most pleasure to G-d." Instead he inaugurated a network of schools called Chesed L'Avrohom.

In Israel, his schools competed with those of the secular leftists for the children of immigrants to that country.

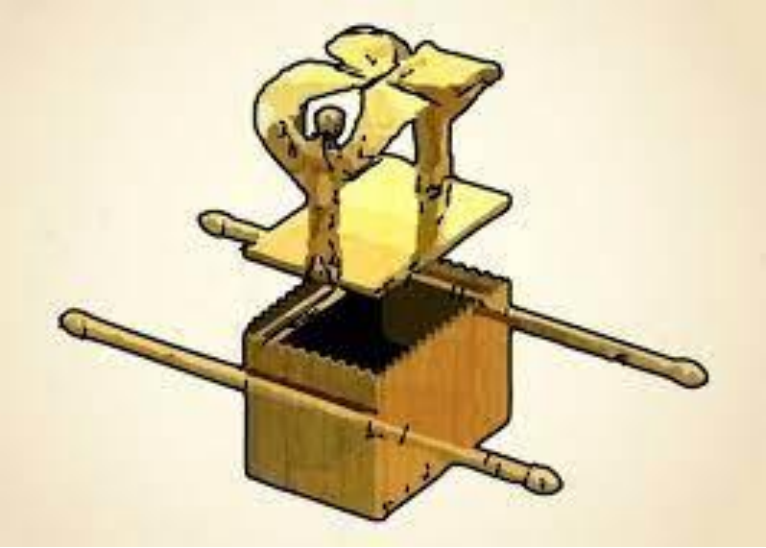
In 1961, Rav Eliezer Zusia visited Israel for the first time. He took a side trip to a leftist kibbutz to forgive a Romanian socialist who

had been one of his fiercest opponents years before. (That man's descendants became observant Jews.)

Rav Eliezer Zusia authored Noam Eliezer and Kedushas Eliezer, as well as composed many popular Hasidic tunes. He died on 18 August 1982 and was buried in the Vizhnitzer Cemetery in Monsey, New York.

May the merit of the tzadik Rabbi Eliezer Zusia Portugal protect us all. Amen.

וְנָתַתָּ אֶל־הָאָרֹן אֵת הָעֵדֻת אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ - "***You shall place in (literally: 'give to') the aron / ark the Testimonial-tablets that I shall give you.***" (25:16)



R' Moshe Alshich z"l (Turkey and Israel; 1508-1593; known as the **Alshich Hakadosh**) asks: Why did the Torah use a word that literally means, "You shall give to the aron"?

He explains: The aron was made of wood plated with gold. As pretty as it was, it was hardly a fitting receptacle for the holy and priceless Torah! Therefore Hashem said to Moshe, "Give the Torah to the aron as a gift. Likewise, I will give the Torah to man as a gift, although he is not worthy of it."

Indeed, notes R' Alshich, the Gemara (Shabbat 89a) applies to Moshe Rabbeinu's sojourn on Har Sinai the verse (Tehilim 68:19), **עָלִיתָ לַמָּרוֹם שָׁבִיתָ שֶּׁבִי לָקַחְתָּ מַתָּנוֹת** - "***You ascended on high . . . you took gifts.***" (**Torat Moshe**)

וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאִתָּם זָהָב וָכֶסֶף וּנְחֹשֶׁת - "***This is the portion that you shall take from them: gold, silver, and copper . . .***" *(25:3)*



R' Nosson Sternhartz z"l (1780-1845; foremost student of **R' Nachman of Breslov**) writes: Colours represent good qualities, as we read (Shir Ha'shirim 1:5), שְׁחוֹרָה אֲנִי וְנָאוָה - "***Though I am black with sin, I am beautiful [i.e., not black, but multi-colored] with virtue***."

Each Jew has a unique color, i.e., virtue. Moshe's task was to find the virtue within each Jew and to combine those virtues into an abode for the Shechinah. (**Likkutei Halachot**)

6 Mitzvos That A Jew Is Obligated To Fulfil At All Times

Every moment that a person thinks about them, he fulfils a positive commandment. They are:

(1) To believe that there is one G-d that created everything, and that everything that occurred in the past, that occurs in the present and that will occur in the future is in accordance with His will, and that He took us out of Egypt.

(2) To not believe in any false gods – rather, to believe that Hashem rules over everything. Also, to believe that He is the All-Powerful and that nothing else has strength to do anything against His will.

(3) To believe that G-d, the Ruler of all, is One, without any partner.

(4) To love G-d, which includes contemplating His commandments and His handiwork until one comes to feel joy when coming close to Him.

(5) To fear G-d, so that one does not sin, if only out of fear of punishment.

(6) Not to stray after what the "heart" thinks or what the eyes see, but to think only about truth and the ways of the Torah, which are good. (**Chayei Adam 1:1**)



וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים חֲמֵשׁ אַמּוֹת אׇרְכּ וְחָמֵשׁ אַמּוֹת רׇחַב רָבוּעַ יִהְיֶה הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְשָׁלֹשׁ אַמּוֹת קֹמָתוֹ - *"You shall make the Mizbei'ach / Altar of acacia wood, five Amot long and five Amot wide — the Altar shall be square — and three Amot high." (27:1)*

The Ba'alei Ha'Tosafot z"l (12th and 13th century; France and Germany) comment: "**מזבח** / Altar" is an acronym of "Mechilah / Forgiveness," "Zechut/ Merit," "Berachah / Blessing," and "Chaim / Life."

They continue: "Five Amot [long and five Amot wide]"–paralleling the Aseret Ha'dibrot / Ten Commandments–five on one tablet and five on the second tablet.

Finally, "Three Amot [high]"–paralleling the three redeemers: Moshe, Aharon, and Miriam. (**Da'at Zekeinim Mi'Ba'alei Ha'Tosafot**)

R' Chaim Zaichyk z"l (1906-1989; Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Bet Yosef-Novardok in Buchach, Poland; later in Israel) asks: Where do we find Miriam playing any role in the redemption of the Jewish People?

He explains: First, Miriam was the catalyst for Moshe's birth. Our Sages teach that, when Pharaoh decreed that all newborn boys be

killed, Miriam's father, Amram, separated from his wife Yocheved. Miriam rebuked him, saying, "Pharaoh only decreed against the males. Your action will result in no girls being born either." Amram then reunited with Yocheved and Moshe was born.

Also, when Moshe was placed in a basket in the river, it was Miriam who kept watch over him, and it was she who went to bring Yocheved to nurse Moshe on behalf of Pharaoh's daughter. Because of Miriam's devotion to, and self-sacrifice for, Moshe, she is considered a partner in his redemption of Bnei Yisrael.

R' Zaichyk concludes: One who participates in Bnei Yisrael's suffering will be a participant in their joy. One who is an accessory to the performance of a Mitzvah is given credit as if he did the Mitzvah. These statements describe Miriam's role vis-á-vis her brothers, the redeemers. (**Ma'ayanei Ha'Chaim**)

בְּטַבְּעֹת הָאָרֹן יִהְיוּ הַבַּדִּים לֹא יָסֻרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ - ***"The poles shall remain in the rings of the Aron/Ark, they may not be removed from it."*** *(25:15)*

R' Yaakov Kamenetsky z"l writes: The Aron represents those who study Torah, and the poles represent their financial backers. The



prohibition to remove the poles from the Aron alludes to the teaching of the gemara (Pesachim 53b) that those who support Torah study will be seated in Heaven right next to the scholars they supported.

But how can this be? R' Kamenetsky asks. In Heaven, souls "sit" and "discuss" Torah topics. And, since Torah knowledge can be acquired only with much toil, how will a person who spent his whole life toiling in business (and not in Torah) take part in the discussion with the great scholars that he sits amongst?

He explains: When a baby is in the womb, it is taught the entire Torah. Then, just before birth, it forgets what it learned. Why? Because, in the words of the prophet (Iyov 5:7), "Man was born to toil." Man must toil in this world to reclaim the Torah knowledge which he forgot at birth.

A person who toils in business during his lifetime so that he can support Torah scholars has also toiled, R' Kamenetsky observes. Because he has toiled for the sake of Torah study just as the Torah scholar has, he, too, is able to reclaim his lost Torah knowledge. (**Emet Le'Yaakov: Shmot 25:15 & Devarim 33:18**)

וְעָשִׂיתָ מְנֹרַת זָהָב טָהוֹר מִקְשָׁה תֵּיעָשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה יְרֵכָהּ וְקָנָהּ גְּבִיעֶיהָ כַּפְתֹּרֶיהָ וּפְרָחֶיהָ מִמֶּנָּה יֵהְיוּ - ***"You shall make a menorah of pure gold, hammered out shall the menorah be made, its base and its shaft, its cups, its knobs, and its blossoms shall be hammered from it."*** (25:31)



R' Eliezer Papo z"l (1785-1828; Bosnian rabbi; author of **Pele Yoetz**) writes that this verse alludes to the manner in which one should give charity. This may be seen as follows:

"Menorat"/"a menorah of" – The letters of this word can spell "matan" (leaving over the letter "reish"). "Matan" means "giving" and"rash" means pauper.

"Of pure gold" – Charity should be given from gold which is pure, and not from wealth which is ill-gotten.

"Mikshah"/"hammered out" – This word shares the same root as "kasheh"/"difficult." No matter how difficult one's own circumstances, he still should give charity.

"Yereichah"/"its base" also means "its thigh." Just as a person's thigh is meant to be hidden, so one's charity should be given discretely.

"Kanah"/"its shaft" shares a root with the word which means "to acquire." When one gives charity, he actually acquires wealth for himself, for Hashem will repay him.

"Ve'kanah, gevi'ehah"/"its shaft, its cups" – The letters of these words can be reordered to spell "kenei be'yegi'ah"/"acquire through toil." This alludes to the fact that the highest form of charity is to give the poor person a job or to establish him in business so that he can earn a living through the toil of his hands.

"Kafto'rehah"/"its knobs" alludes to "kaparah"/"atonement," which is what a person achieves through performing acts of charity.

"Its blossoms" – One who gives charity will blossom in This World and in the World-to-Come. (**Elef Ha'magen**)

The Aron

R' Pinchas Halevi Ish Horowitz z"l (18th century: Frankfurt, Germany) writes that the entire construction of the Aron alludes to the founding fathers and leaders of the Jewish people:

The two keruvim allude to Avraham and Yitzchak. Two times the gematria of "keruv" equals 456, the gemtria of "Avraham" and "Yitzchak."

The Aron itself alludes to Yaakov, who said (Bereishit 28:17): "How `nora' / awesome is this place." The letters of "nora" are the same letters that spell "Aron." [In addition, Yaakov is the Patriarch most associated with Torah study, and the Aron housed the Torah.]

The four walls of the Aron allude to the twelve tribes, which traveled in a four-sided formation. [Ed. note: In addition, the combined area of the four walls of the Aron was 12 square amot.]

The two poles for carrying the Aron allude to the two leaders — Moshe and Aharon.

Finally, the Luchot Ha'berit / Tablets of the Covenant inside the Aron allude to Yosef because a person who guards his morality, as Yosef did in the face of Mrs. Potiphar's seductions, is traditionally referred to as a "Guardian of the Berit." (**Panim Yafot**)

וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁים לַמִּשְׁכָּן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים עֹמְדִים – *'You shall make the planks of the mishkan of acacia wood, standing erect.'* (26:15)

The midrash comments: "From those acacia trees which were already standing for this purpose. Avraham had planted these trees in Be'er Sheva. When Yaakov went to Egypt, he transplanted these trees there. Then, before he died, he told his sons that Hashem would one day command that they build a mishkan, and they should use these trees."

Surely there were suitable trees in Egypt! Why did the Patriarchs go to all this trouble?

R' Yaakov Kaminetsky z"l (died 1986) explains that the Patriarchs acted thus in order to raise the spirits of their descendants who would be enslaved in Egypt. It was not enough to promise the Jews that they would be redeemed; the groves of acacia trees that Yaakov planted in Egypt were a tangible reminder to the enslaved Jews that their eventual salvation was a reality.

Similarly, R' Kamenetsky writes, this is one reason that the authors of the siddur included the order of the korbanot/sacrifices in the daily prayers. The more we are familiar with what took place in the Bet Hamikdash, the more real that the eventual rebuilding of the Bet Hamikdash will seem to us. (**Emet Le'Yaakov**)

Tehilim

Siddur Avodat Yisrael cites a custom to recite Psalm 26 on the Shabbat on which Parashat Terumah is read. Accordingly, we present here verses from, and commentaries on, that Psalm.

אֶרְחַץ בְּנִקָּיוֹן כַּפָּי וַאֲסֹבְבָה אֶת־מִזְבַּחֲךָ ה׳ - "I will wash my hands with cleanliness and circle Your Mizbei'ach Hashem." (Verse 6)

R' Samson Raphael Hirsch z"l (1808-1888; Germany) writes: A striving for purity, for blamelessness in one's dealings with one's fellow-men, is a prerequisite if one is to approach the Sanctuary and join that group which is united around G-d's altar. One must not enter the House of the Lord and join the congregation around His altar if one's hands are sullied by selfishness, ill-gotten gains and moral inadequacy.

I first wash my hands in purity–the hand being that which holds possessions–before joining the others in circling the Mizbei'ach. (**Commentary on Tehilim**)

The Gemara (Berachot 14b) teaches: "If one takes care of his personal hygiene, puts on Tefilin, reads Kri'at Shema, and recites Shemoneh Esrei, it is as if he built a Mizbei'ach and offered a sacrifice upon it."

Why does the Gemara liken this person to someone who built an altar? Isn't that secondary to the fact that he who offered a sacrifice?

R' Shimshon Dovid Pinkus z"l (rabbi of Ofakim, Israel; died 2001) explains: The Gemara is teaching about the importance of preparing before performing a Mitzvah, not just jumping into it. That is why the Gemara mentions taking care of one's personal hygiene before praying and building an altar before offering a sacrifice.

At a minimum, R' Pinkus writes, a person should pause before performing a Mitzvah and reflect, "I am about to perform a Mitzvah." - Only a person who prepares himself before reciting

Kri'at Shema will truly accept the yoke of Heaven upon himself, which is the sentiment that Kri'at Shema expresses. Not so, someone who "stumbles" into the Mitzvah with no preparation. (**Nefesh Shimshon: Tiferet Tehilim p.270**)



וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב - ***You shall make two Keruvim of gold.*** (25:18)

Rashi writes: **דְּמוּת פַּרְצוּף תִּינוֹק לָהֶם** -"They had the form of a child's face.

Why were the Keruvim made with a child's face?

R' Eliyahu z"l (1720-1797; Vilna Gaon) explains: Midrash Vayikra Rabbah observes that when a chicken is young, its mother willingly feeds it, yet, when the offspring gets older, the mother swats it away from her food. The reason for this change of behavior is that the "child" chicken has become self-sufficient and now views itself as its mother's competitor, and the mother reacts in kind.

Similarly, writes the Vilna Gaon, when a person is young, he trusts in Hashem, but as he gets older, he becomes more self-confident and places less trust in Hashem. In response, Hashem, in fact, watches over him less.

The same thing happened to Bnei Yisrael–at the time of the Exodus they understood that they were entirely dependent on Hashem, but, over time, they trusted in Him less and He responded by watching over them less.

The Keruvim were given the faces of children, concludes the Vilna Gaon, to remind us that we should base our relationship with Hashem on the attitude of trust that we had as children. (**Beurei Aggadot B.K. 92b**)



וְשַׂמְתָּ אֶת־הַשֻּׁלְחָן מִחוּץ לַפָּרֹכֶת וְאֶת־הַמְּנֹרָה נֹכַח הַשֻּׁלְחָן עַל יֶרֶךְ הַמִּשְׁכָּן תֵּימָנָה וְהַשֻּׁלְחָן תִּתֵּן עַל־יֶרֶךְ צָפוֹן - *"You shall place the Shulchan / Table outside the Partition, and the Menorah opposite the Shulchan on the south side of the Tabernacle, and the Shulchan you shall place on the north side." (26:35)*



The verse begins to speak of the Shulchan, then it tells us where the Menorah should be placed, and, only then, it tells us where the Shulchan should be placed. Why?

R' Yissachar Dov Rokeach z"l (1851-1926 Belzer Rebbe) explains: The merit of the Shulchan, on which the twelve loaves of Lechem Ha'panim / bread were placed, brings down Hashem's material bounty. The Menorah, in contrast, alludes to the light of the Torah. Thus, the Gemara (Bava Batra 25b) teaches: "If one wants to become wise, he should face slightly southward when he prays," because the Menorah was in the south.

The purpose of material bounty, continues the Belzer Rebbe, is solely to enable us to study and keep the Torah. Otherwise, there is no reason for it. The Shulchan needs to be opposite the Menorah. Therefore, the Torah needs to tell us first where the Menorah is to be placed. (**Quoted in *Lekket Imrei Kodesh***)

"To be kind is more important than to be right. Many times, what people need is not a brilliant mind that speaks, but a special heart that listens." ~ Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

Shabbos



וְקָרָאתָ לַשַּׁבָּת עֹנֶג -You shall call the Shabbat a 'delight'" is a Mitzvah fulfilled specifically through physical pleasures, such as eating and drinking. What does it mean to "call" Shabbat a delight, and what does that teach us about how to perform this Mitzvah?

Rabbeinu Bachya ben Asher z"l (Spain; 1255-1340) writes: The word "V'karata" has the same implication as in (Tzephaniah 1:7), "**הִקְדִּישׁ קְרֻאָיו**" / "He invited his guests." (**Kad Ha'kemach: Shabbat**)

R' Yeshayah Halevi Horowitz z"l (the Shelah Hakadosh; rabbi of Prague and Yerushalayim; died 1630) elaborates: The Gemara (Shabbat 118a) speaks of "One who gives the Shabbat 'Oneg'," not one who gives himself Oneg, because a person's intention [when he prepares and consumes Shabbat delicacies] should not be to give himself pleasure. Rather, it should be to enjoy himself in honor of Shabbat.

This may be likened to hosting an honored guest and making a big meal in his honor. In such a situation, one exerts himself more than he would do for himself. (**Shnei Luchot Ha'brit)**

How does one know if he is enjoying himself in honor of Shabbat or just paying lip service to Shabbat and satisfying his own desires?

R' Eliezer Papo z"l (1785-1827; rabbi in Sarajevo) answers: If one does not pursue delicacies and worldly pleasures during the week, and on Shabbat he eats a little more than he is accustomed to, then he is honoring Shabbat and giving it pleasure. (**Pele Yo'etz: Oneg**)



מִקְשָׁה תֵּעָשֶׂה אֹתָם - "*hammered out shall you make them . . .*" *(25:18)*

R' Shimon Shalom Kalish z"l (1883-1954; the "**Amshinover Rebbe**") observes: This verse may be translated: "If it is **קשה** / difficult, you shall do it."

Do not shy away from a task because it is difficult. The more difficult it is to do G-d's Will, the greater the reward. (**B'yishishim Chochmah**)

Letters from Our Sages



The letter below was written by **R' Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler z"l** (1892-1953), one of the leading figures of the mussar movement in the 20th century, first in London and Gateshead, England, and then at the Ponovezh yeshiva in Bnei Brak. The author's son, to whom the letter was addressed, was then living in Cleveland, Ohio, where he later served as a leading educator until his passing in 2011. The letter is published in Sefer Zikaron L'ba'al Michtav M'Eliyahu.

Wednesday, the 11th day of Tevet in the year 5705 [1944]

Dear and beloved children, Nachum Zev and Miriam, may Hashem guard and protect you,

I received your two letters, dear Nachum Zev. It is now two days before your formal engagement. I could see the joy in your heart reflected in every letter [as in letters of the alphabet] which you wrote, and my heart was uplifted from joy and pleasure. May my heart be like a threesome with yours, through my love as a devoted father, which will be with you always. Certainly, that day will be a yom tov for me; it will give me joy and fill the void within me . . . [Ed. note: Due to the war, R' Dessler had not seen his wife or children for five years and had never met his daughter-in-law-to-be, Miriam.]

Know, my dear children, that I am not writing pretty expressions, but only the actual facts. . . Does only simple love, the love of a father to a son, bind me to you? Also, a unity of the soul, a spiritual union, connects me to you. There is no connection like a spiritual connection, and no union like the union of the spirit. When we share common aspirations and goals, then our lives are truly unified, carrying and uplifting each other with a love that does not end and does not change.

It is my hope that the two of you are united by love of the Torah, and that your life's goal is to study and teach, to work in the field of Torah without interruption and with all your energy. It is my hope that this is what you have found in each other–a holy and pure fire which has fused your hearts into one. It is my hope that when you are of one heart, you will climb higher and higher on the steps toward a lofty life of the spirit; then you will be happy always.

Do not be simple people, not like the people in the streets. Do not let small things fill your home. No and no! Rather, build a house of Torah, with an atmosphere of a happy spirit. Rise, do not fall, nor stand still; rather, march forward to come close to Hashem from the depths of your heart . . . Could there be any Gan Eden on earth more beautiful than this? . . .

וְנָתַתָּ אֶת־הַכַּפֹּרֶת עַל־הָאָרֹן מִלְמָעְלָה וְאֶל־הָאָרֹן תִּתֵּן אֶת־הָעֵדֻת אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ - ***"Into the Aron you shall place the Luchot Ha'edut / Testimonial-tablets that I will give you." (25:21)***

Had not the Luchot already been given? Why is the phrase "that I will give you" in future tense?

R' Pinchas Naftali Schwartz z"l (1828-1885; Sofer and Darshan / preacher in Khust, Hungary) writes: Our Sages teach that everything that any Torah scholar was or is destined to say was taught to Moshe Rabbeinu.

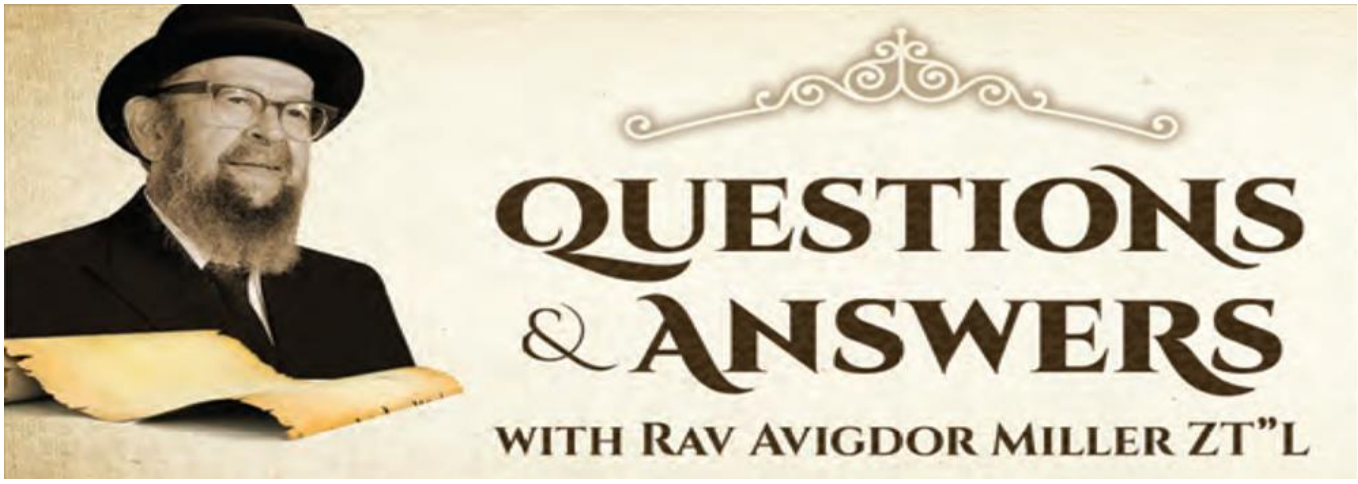
Our verse therefore hints that even the Torah "that I will give you," in the future, belongs with the Luchot in the Aron. (**Nefesh Tovah**)

וְנָתַתָּ אֶל־הָאָרֹן אֵת הָעֵדֻת אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ - ***"You shall place into the Aron the Testimonial [i.e., the Luchot] that I shall give you." (25:16)***

וְנָתַתָּ אֶת־הַכַּפֹּרֶת עַל־הָאָרֹן מִלְמָעְלָה וְאֶל־הָאָרֹן תִּתֵּן אֶת־הָעֵדֻת אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ׃ וְנוֹעַדְתִּי לְךָ שָׁם וְדִבַּרְתִּי אִתְּךָ מֵעַל הַכַּפֹּרֶת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִים אֲשֶׁר עַל־אֲרֹן הָעֵדֻת
"***Into the Aron you shall place the Testimonial that I shall give you. It is there that I will set My meetings with you, and I shall speak with you from atop the Cover [of the Aron]*** ..." (25:21-22)

Why was Moshe Rabbeinu told twice to place the Luchot into the Aron? And why does the first verse mention Moshe ("you") before the Aron, while the second verse reverses the order?

R' Shlomo Kluger z"l (1785-1869; rabbi of Brody, Galicia) explains: The Shechinah already had rested on Moshe before he made the Aron. Thus, before the Luchot were placed into the Aron, he was more significant than it, so he is mentioned first. After Moshe would place the Luchot in the Aron, it would become the place from which Hashem's "voice" would emanate to Moshe; therefore, it is mentioned first. (**Chochmat Ha'Torah**)





How does one cope with the stress of having chovos, debts?

Number one, is that you have to have a job. It's very important to learn a parnassah. There are so many ways of making a living. America is the land of opportunity. You will only have a problem if you think you're a choshuve person and that it's beneath your dignity to work. You want to act like a talmid chochom and live on charity and live in debt! You should know, Hakodosh Boruch Hu is not satisfied with you.

יָפֶה תַלְמוּד תּוֹרָה עִם דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ, שֶׁיְּגִיעַת שְׁנֵיהֶם מְשַׁכַּחַת עָוֹן – '*You have to work and make a living, together with learning, because that will keep you far away from sin.*' (Avos 2:2). And if you work, you'll pay off your debts. But if you don't work, your debts will increase and multiply.

It's a very important principle in life to not live a life of idleness. So you'll tell me, "I'm learning all day long. I have bitachon." No, no. That's not bitachon. It's just wildness. Just wildness. It's just yielding to the yetzer hora. And therefore, it's so important for people to learn a parnassah.

Now, you might say, "That's a contradiction to our function in life. We should sit and learn all day long, all our lives." No! You're

contradicting the Torah. It says **הַרְבֵּה עָשׂוּ כְּרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחַי, וְלֹא עָלְתָה בְּיָדָן** - Many people didn't succeed in following the path of **כְּרַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחַי** by dedicating their lives completely to limmud hatorah at the expense of a parnassah (Brachos 35b).

It's not for many people. It's for a small minority. The majority of people cannot do that. And therefore, it's necessary for people to be honest with themselves and go out and make a living. - The best way to deal with debt is by not getting into debt in the first place.



What should we be thinking about when we hear that the stock market has reached an all-time high?

Well, you should be thinking that the market prices are very high right now but it's very possible for them to fall and become very low again. And therefore, it's nothing new. Many people have been ruined by the stock market. And therefore, I would say to put your money in the bank, in a savings account. And daven. Always be mispallel.

And I want to tell you something. One of the most important reasons why the stock market fluctuates is just for that – so that you should call out to Hakodosh Boruch Hu. When it's high, you should be calling out to Him in gratitude. And when it's low you should be calling out to Him that it should go up. And if you don't do that, the whole experience was a waste.

Even if you made a lot of money, you wasted a valuable opportunity. And if you lost money, chasv'shalom, but you were forced to daven, then you gained. You gained da'as Hashem, Awareness of Hashem, which is more important than all the money in the world.

Who knows what can happen?! I know a man who has been losing tremendous sums in the stock market. He told me that he lost over three hundred thousand dollars so far in the stock market. So I said to him, "What about stopping maybe?" He said, "No, I'll get it back. I'll get it back," he says. - The poor man is still hoping!



Is it an aveirah to speed through a red light?

The answer is that it's a very big sin – one of the biggest sins. First of all, you're endangering your life. And a person who endangers his life should know that even though Hakodosh Boruch Hu has saved that man's life, He will be collecting that man's *mitzvos* from him. It will cost that individual many years of *tefillin*! Many years of *tefillin*! Many years of *kriyas shema*! - **מְנַכִּין לוֹ מִזְכִיּוֹתָיו** – Hashem deducts from a man's *mitzvos* when He saves him from a dangerous situation that he had put himself into. (Taanis 20b)

You'll find out that making that red light wasn't worth it at all.

In addition to that, you have put other people in danger as well which is a very severe crime. It's considered as if you are a *shoifech damim*, even if you didn't kill anybody. Because you put yourself in a situation where you could have killed someone, you're considered a *shoifech damim* – potentially. And that's a tremendous sin.

You must understand that. Just because nothing happened doesn't mean that you're not guilty. People who are reckless in their driving are doing something that is opposite from the will of Hashem and they are *asidin li'tein es hadin;* sooner or later they will be punished.



It says that in the month of Adar we have to be marbim b'simcha. How does one acquire more happiness during this month?

So the question is where do you go to get simchah? Does it mean you have to order it from Kedem Wine Company? No. The answer is that it's right in here; you have it in you.



You have to know that Hakadosh Baruch Hu has made in each person a fountain of simcha, a very deep fountain of simcha. Only that the pump has to be primed. Once you open up the fountain and it starts gushing forth, you'll be surprised how much simcha there is in us.

We are born with the ability to be full of happiness. Now, once you start thinking how good it is this month of Adar when Hakadosh Baruch Hu showed us a picture of *l'asid lavo*, of what the future holds for the Am Yisroel – Haman is hanging with all his sons! That's what's going to happen l'asid lavo.

That's the real truth – that's how it's supposed to be; all the reshaim should be hanging and the tzaddikim should be looking up and enjoying the sight.

We have so many enemies today – we always had enemies, but we have enemies today too – and the time will come when our enemies will be hanging. I'm not saying we will do it, but Hashem will do it for us. They'll be hanging and it will be a pleasant surprise.

That's what happened then. They took a look. "Who is hanging there? Haman is hanging!" It was a surprise, a shock. They went out of their minds with happiness.

So utilize that happiness; think about what happened then and about what's going to happen again in the future and experience that happiness.

In addition to that, enjoy the fact that spring is around the corner. We'll have nice balmy weather soon and soon the trees will have green leaves. You can also think about how good it is to be alive. Oh what a pleasure it is to be alive! It's a big simcha to be alive!

So keep on thinking happy thoughts and Hakodosh Boruch Hu will open up the fountain of happiness that's in your mind and it will start gushing forth in the month of Adar.



וְעָשִׂיתָ מְנֹרַת זָהָב טָהוֹר מִקְשָׁה תֵּיעָשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה 'You shall make a Menorah of pure gold, hammered out shall the Menorah be made.' (25:31)

All of the Menorah's varied shapes and forms had to be hammered out of one large ingot of gold. Nothing could be made separately and later attached.

Chazal (**Midrash Tanchuma**) teach that this feat (the making of the Menorah) proved to be difficult for Moshe Rabbeinu to conceptualize. He simply could not visualize how the Menorah should appear. Hashem showed Moshe a Menorah made of fire. Still, our leader and Rebbe could not properly create the Menorah.

Hashem instructed Moshe to fling the ingot into fire, and a completed Menorah emerged. This miracle is alluded to by the

words, "shall be made," rather than "shall you make," since Moshe did not actually make the Menorah.



Obviously, much commentary has been written concerning the creation of the Menorah. For our purposes, however, we wonder why Moshe found it so difficult to make the Menorah. In contrast, Betzalel immediately proceeded to make the Menorah. Why?

The Gerrer Rebbe, zl (Chidushei HaRim), related that this question (why Moshe had such difficulty with making the Menorah) had troubled him for forty years. How could it be that Moshe was stymied, and Betzalel, his student, approached the job as if it was just another job?

It happened that the Rebbe's son-in-law required a surgical procedure in Warsaw. The Rebbe went to visit him during his recuperation. While he was there, the Rebbe inquired concerning the surgeon's health and welfare. (Apparently, this was a difficult procedure that required a master surgeon. The Rebbe felt that it was appropriate to visit him).

The surgeon was honored to meet with the saintly Rebbe whose reputation as a world leader had reached even his ears. The surgeon told the Rebbe that, although he had performed this same surgery numerous times, this time he was very nervous and had gone through every aspect of the procedure, reviewing it many times. - He explained this with an analogy:

The king had a beautiful diamond. No one could place a number on the diamond's value, due to its extraordinary appearance. There was, however, one tiny flaw – one minute spot which was almost undetectable – but, nonetheless, present. It had to be removed, otherwise the diamond's value would severely depreciate.

Due to the diamond's great value and the fact that its owner was the king, no expert was willing to touch the stone. One mistake and the stone would be shattered.

The king's advisors came up with an insightful plan. They gave the diamond to a simple cutter who had no idea of its value or to whom it belonged. He did a wonderful job of removing the blemish – all because he was clueless about its value or the identity of its owner.

The surgeon continued, "Napoleon's wife was experiencing severe pain during childbirth, to the point that unless something would be done immediately, the doctors despaired for her life. Every midwife that they called suddenly demurred. No one was willing to risk their reputation by undertaking treating such a celebrity. The margin for error was zero. The ramifications resulting from a mistake on their part were serious.

Napoleon's aides sought a rural midwife who had no idea who Napoleon was and certainly was unaware of the identity of his wife. This midwife treated the wife of the king, and mother and child came through the ordeal in good health. All this was because she was not anxious about the identity of her patient.

The surgeon continued, "This is the reason that I was anxious before the surgery. I have successfully performed this procedure many times – but that was on regular patients – not the pedigreed son-in-law of the Gerrer Rebbe. My anxiety level rises when I must work on a celebrity."

The Rebbe explained Moshe's predicament as opposed to that of Betzalel. Moshe was acutely aware of the profound esoteric meaning

and hidden secrets surrounding the Menorah. Thus, due to his elevated spiritual plateau, he was anxious concerning the creation of the Menorah – realizing the spiritual void that would be created by the slightest error on his part. - Betzalel was not on Moshe's madreigah, plateau. Therefore, he did not find it as difficult to make the Menorah.

Bearing the above in mind, I remind myself of an important lesson that **Horav Nochum Zev Dessler, zl**, shared with me almost four decades ago. I believe he related it in the name of the Lomza Mashgiach, **Horav Yehudah Leib Chasman, zl** (the Ohr Yahal).



The Mashgiach observed that every professional works with various materials endemic to his profession. A plumber works with metal and steel pipe; a carpenter works with varied types of wood; a glazier works with glass. In the course of their work, shavings, splinters, sawdust and pieces of metal fall to the ground under the feet of the professional. Thus, he stands and treads on them. The carpenter has particles of wood under his shoes, and it is these shavings upon which he steps all day.

This idea, likewise, applies to every profession. One who enters the field of Torah chinuch, who assumes upon himself the lofty mission of educating the next generation of Torah Jews, works with Yiddishe neshamos, Jewish souls.

As can happen sometimes (hopefully rarely – but it does happen), a neshamah falls to the side. Hopefully, it is a temporary condition, but, during the interim, the rebbe must be acutely aware that he is

treading upon a Yiddishe neshamah. Frightening – but true. Therefore, one must approach the mission of Torah chinuch with enormous trepidation. The satisfaction is awesome, only as long as one does not forget the meaning and ramification of failure.

We have no dearth of stories extolling the incredible devotion that rebbeim throughout the ages have manifested towards their talmidim.

Moshe Rabbeinu is given this title because he was – and continues to be – Rabban shel Kol Yisrael, the quintessential Rebbe of all the Jewish People.

While rebbeim often go out of their way to impart knowledge and skills to their students, how many empathize with the various issues that their students must face? Furthermore, how many of these rebbeim are gedolei hador, leaders of their generation, individuals who keep a close eye on the pulse of the generation, whose every collective Jewish challenge is their personal challenge?

The Ponovezher Rav, zl, was such a leader and such a rebbe, not only to the senior students of his yeshivah, but also to the young boys, the children of the Batei Avos Orphanage which he established following the European Holocaust.

One day, **Rav Yehoshua Zelig Diskind**, the Rav of Pardes Chana, received an urgent call from the Rav, asserting that he needed to borrow a significant sum of money for the Yeshivah. This was during the formative days of the Yeshivah, when money was scarce and expenses were many. The money was to be placed in his office since he would be unavailable all day. He needed to go to Yerushalayim for a meeting with some of the gedolei Yisrael, the Brisker Rav among them.

Rav Diskind secured the funds and quickly went to the Rav's office. Knowing that the Rav was away, he knocked and immediately opened the door. How surprised he was to see the Ponovezher Rav in his

office talking to a young student who was crying bitterly. The Rav was attempting to console the boy. Rav Diskind apologized profusely for disturbing the Rav, claiming that he was under the impression that he had gone to Yerushalayim to attend a meeting.



The Rav explained, "Whenever I leave for Yerushalayim, I make a point to stop at the orphanage located on the outskirts of the city (Bnei Brak). This time, when I entered, I noticed a young boy crying bitterly in the corner. When I inquired about him, I was informed that this boy, who had lost both parents in Auschwitz, had just been informed that his best friend had also been murdered there. It was simply too much for the child to absorb."

The Ponovezher Rav's eyes were as red and swollen as that of the boy. He, too, had been crying along with him. He said, "I approached this young boy and asked what was wrong. He attempted to tell me but was too overwhelmed by his tears. He just could not stop crying.

The boy's words came out slowly, his speech slurred, as he sobbed his way through the story. I have tried to console him, but I am having difficulty in succeeding to do so.

My meeting? The gedolim will have to wait. This child needs me now! I cannot leave." - With these parting words, the Rav held the boy tightly as they continued to cry together.

וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ וְעָשִׂיתָ עָלָיו זֵר זָהָב סָבִיב – '***You shall cover it with pure gold, from inside and from outside you shall cover it, and you shall make on it a golden diadem all around.***' (25:11)



Rashi explains that the zer, diadem, was a sort of crown, going all the way around to the top of the Aron, above its edge… This zer, crown, is a symbol for the Kesser Torah, Crown of the Torah.

In Pirkei Avos 4:13, Rabbi Shimon says: "There are three crowns: the crown of Torah; the crown of Kehunah, the Priesthood; the crown of Malchus, Kingship; and the crown of a shem tov, a good name, goes above them."

The question is obvious. The Mishnah states that there are three crowns, and then mentions a fourth crown, the crown of a good name.

One who merits – who is worthy of achieving – the crown of Torah is considered as if he has acquired the other crowns as well. This indicates that the crown of Torah achievement is the most prestigious of them.

A shem tov, good name, is acquired by performing maasim tovim, good deeds. Pirkei Avos is teaching us that the good deeds one carries out must rest upon the crowns of Torah, Kehunah and Malchus. One who studies Torah, but does not perform good deeds; learns, but ignores the plight of those who are unfortunate; his crown of Torah is not considered to be a crown. He is unworthy of such an honor.

Likewise, the coronation of an individual who has either been born into or has ascended the throne of monarchy, is of no merit if he does not act kindly to those in need.

The Kohen who is born into the Priesthood has been cast into a distinguished, illustrious lineage. He is heir to the most prominent familial role in Klal Yisrael – to serve in the Bais Hamikdash. Without maasim tovim, however, he is undeserving of the crown.

Alternatively, the first three kessarim, crowns, are transformative. A king is different in his very essence. He is royalty. A Kohen is different in that his bloodlines have a spiritual component which allows him to serve in the Bais Hamikdash; he is a spiritual aristocrat.

One who learns Torah becomes transformed into a Torah personality, a totally different person. On the other hand, one who performs good deeds garners for himself a crown al gabeihen, upon them/upon his head. He has been transformed. He now wears a crown of shem tov. - This is his transformation. Same person – new look.



דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת־ תְּרוּמָתִי - '*Speak to Bnei Yisrael and let them take for Me a terumah/tithing/portion, from every man whose heart motivates him*.' (25:2)

Nedivas ha'lev, a donation from the sincerity of one's heart, is the loftiest level of generosity. It is easy to write a cheque – if one has the money to back it up. Easy come – easy go. Generosity of the heart demands sincerity; it is not about the amount of money that one gives. It is how much of himself he gives with that money. The purity of money is based upon the sincerity behind it.

When one seeks to establish an abode for Hashem, a place where the Divine Presence will repose, it must be the result of funds that are spiritually and ethically pure, that emanate from an individual whose desire to participate in this davar she'bikedushah, holy endeavor, is sincere.

The following story underscores this idea. **Horav Avraham Yaakov, zl, m'Sadiger**, was one of the nineteenth centuries' chassidic

Rebbes. Chassidim flocked to him from all over Europe. His shul was a majestic edifice which looked like the palace of a king. Its entrance way was flanked by two large pillars. Its windows were colorful works of art in stained glass. One ascended wide marble steps on the outside of the shul prior to entering the cavernous sanctuary in which 3,000 people were able to sit. Its walls were hand - painted with artwork that was surrounded by the finest wood. Hundreds of candelabras, which illuminated the shul, provided a well-lit and relaxed backdrop for prayer.



The Sadigerer Rebbe was the son of the **Rizhiner Rebbe**, who felt that his son possessed the neshamah, soul, of the **Baal Shem Tov HaKadosh**. The Rebbe was challenged by much adversity, emerging each time stronger and holier. Indeed, following each challenge, his chassidic following would increase and expand. Tzaddikim would comment that the very holiness of the Rebbe was contagious.

Now, for the story behind the magnificent shul of Sadiger: Amongst the Rebbe's thousands of chassidim was a poverty - stricken melamed, Torah teacher. He lived in a tiny village far from the beaten path of mainstream chassidim. He had heard so much about the Rebbe that it became his dream, his obsession, that he must

travel there to give the Rebbe a kvitel, written petition, accompanied by his pidyon, donation. Unfortunately, it was easier said than done. Since the man was so poor, it took an entire year until he had saved up one ruble (a small, almost insignificant sum) to bring to the Rebbe.

The man left for his trip, which took quite some time, considering that his two legs were his only means of conveyance. After he finally arrived at the Rebbe's house, the gabbai, Rebbe's secretary, told him that the earliest possible time to meet with the Rebbe was Friday night following davening, when the Rebbe greeted all the guests who had come for Shabbos.

The melamed was grief-stricken. After saving and scrounging for a year, he finally had a pidyon, money. This was followed by a long, difficult and tiring journey. All of that for what? To be told that he should wait in line Friday night with all the guests.

Our melamed had reached his breaking point. He felt that had he had money or had been dressed in more impressive attire, he might have been welcomed by the gabbai in a more embracing manner. - This is life, and the movers and the shakers are treated differently.

The melamed, however, just could not wait any longer. He had a meltdown. Tears streamed down his cheeks, as he began to relate his tale of woe to the gabbai. Sadly, the gabbai heard such stories a few times each day. People came from all over to petition the Rebbe's blessing. Everyone was experiencing some form of adversity; everyone was in need of a yeshuah, some form of salvation.

The melamed would not be stilled, to the point that his incessant weeping reached the Rebbe's ears. After inquiring of his gabbai concerning the source of commotion, he instructed the gabbai to show the melamed into his study.

When the melamed entered the room and gazed upon the Rebbe's holy countenance, he almost passed out. Finally, he gathered up his

courage and related to the Rebbe that he had saved all year to bring his 'one-ruble' pidyon to the Rebbe. He then asked the Rebbe for his blessing:

The Rebbe accepted the man's coin, held it for a moment, then said, "You may have this coin back. Use it however you want. It will bring blessing and success to anyone who will use it."

The melamed graciously thanked the Rebbe and left.

When word got out that the Rebbe had blessed the man's coin, everyone wanted to purchase it. Soon, a public auction was held during which the 'one-ruble' coin blessed by the Rebbe sold for 10,000 ruble! The Rebbe's blessing had achieved fruition.

That is not, however, the end of the story. The melamed immediately returned to the Rebbe's home. This time he was not asked to wait. He was now a member of the elite. Although still attired in his beggar's garb, the money jingling in his pocket more than made up for his lack of impressive attire.

The gabbai ushered him in as soon as the Rebbe was available. "Rebbe!" the melamed said excitedly. "The Rebbe's brachah materialized! I immediately was able to sell my ruble for more money than I ever dreamed of. Now, I would like to give the Rebbe maaser, one tenth (tithe) of my earnings. I am overjoyed to do this!"

The Rebbe looked at the melamed and was silent for a moment. Finally, he spoke, "For a while now I have been thinking of building a new, large bais hamedrash to glorify Hashem. This should be a bais hamedrash that would inspire prayer, where people would feel comfortable to spend time. I wanted the money that would pay for this edifice to be the result of ahavas Hashem, love of the Almighty, and from the generosity of one's heart. The money that you have given me serves as the perfect donation for this cause."

- This is how the magnificent shul came into being.

וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה – '*And they shall take for Me a Portion*.' (25:2)

Rashi adds: **לִי – לִשְׁמִי** - "***Take for Me – for My Name***."

What is Rashi teaching us by adding **לִי: לִשְׁמִי** – for My Name? Obviously, if a person contributes to the Mishkan which will serve as the repository for the Shechinah, Divine Presence, the person is doing so for Hashem. What does adding His Name add to the equation?



The Chavos Yair offers a penetrating explanation which has powerful ramifications for the way we should give tzedakah, charity. He quotes the **Shlah HaKadosh** who posits that one who gives charity to a poor man – even an amount as miniscule as a perutah, penny, actually partners with Hashem, as the Shem Havayah, Divine Name, of Yud Kay Vov Kay, combine together with him in the act of giving tzedakah.

How does this occur?

The perutah, smallest denomination of coin, resembles the yud, the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This is followed by the hay, or kay (since we do not articulate Hashem's Name), the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, alluded to by the hand with its five fingers that holds the penny and gives it to the poor man. The ani, poor man's, outstretched arm bears resemblance to the vov, the sixth letter of the alphabet, and shaped like a vertical straight line. Last, we have the poor man's outstretched hand – once again, with the five fingers alluding to the hay.

Thus, when one gives tzedakah, his act of giving embraces the Name of Hashem – Yud, Kay, Vov, Kay.

The Chavos Yair parlays this exposition with a frightening addendum. One must be careful not to ignore the ani, poor man, when he seeks alms. One who waits for the poor man to beg, to stretch out his hand in solicitation, is creating a situation whereby the poor man's outstretched hand, the "vov" and "hay" of the beneficiary precede the "yud" and "hay" of the benefactor. This causes Hashem's Name to be spelled out of its proper sequence! This is the underlying meaning of כִּי־צַדִּיק ה' צְדָקוֹת אָהֵב יָשָׁר יֶחֱזוּ פָנִימוֹ -"***For righteous is Hashem, those of righteous deeds He loves, those who are upright will behold His Face.***" (Tehillim 11:7).

As Hashem performs acts of tzedakah constantly and at all times, even before one supplicates Him, Hashem wants His people to act likewise – whereby they give the poor man his due, before the man resorts to begging. - יָשָׁר יֶחֱזוּ פָנִימוֹ, "*those who are upright (straight) will behold His Face*." This is what Rashi is teaching us when he writes לִשְׁמִי, for My Name. The act of giving tzedakah should symbolize Hashem's Name in its proper sequence. This means that one should give before the poor man must suffer the indignity of stretching out his hand to beg.

One morning, following Shacharis, the holy **HoRav Meir, zl, m'Premeshlan**, one of the early Chassidic Masters, sat in his "office" accepting people and soothing the hearts of those who came to him to confer his blessing on them. Suddenly, a poor widow entered the anteroom and demanded to see the Rebbe immediately.

An argument ensued, as she demanded to go ahead of the line, while the gabbai, attendant, claimed that this was exactly the purpose of a line: there was an order of sequence. She would enter when it was her turn.

The woman was not accepting "no" for an answer. Her needs were great – and immediate. She could not wait.

Suddenly, the Rebbe called out, "Arye! Allow her to enter. She is in need of alms and must have them immediately."

The woman entered as the Rebbe lifted a large denomination of coin from his table, held it momentarily, and transferred it from one hand to the other. Afterwards, he placed the coin on the table and motioned for the woman to take it.

He later explained his seemingly strange behavior. - "You should not think that "Meir" (as he would refer to himself) was playing with a coin. We are taught that one's intention upon giving tzedakah to a poor man should be on Hashem's Name." He then explained that the penny is the yud; the benefactor's hand, the hay; the poor man's outstretched arm, the vov, and his hand the concluding hay.

If the beneficiary is a woman, it presents a problem, since the benefactor may not place it in her hand. Physical contact with a woman is prohibited. Thus, Rav Meir transferred the coin from one hand to the other so that he would have the "benefit" of the second hand/five fingers, to allude to the second hay.

This gives us something to reflect upon at the next opportunity we have, to give tzedakah.



וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ – *'From every man whose heart motivates him, you shall take My portion.'* (25:2)

Much has been written in praise of those who generously open their hearts and their wallets to help those who are in need. What about those who volunteer to raise funds for people and organizations in need?

The commentators write that he who contributes charity, receives his due reward regardless of his motivation – be it l'shmah, for the sake of the mitzvah or the person and organization in need, or he is acting beneficently to promote himself.

The same does not hold true with regard to the one who has the "fun job" of raising money. He must do so l'shem Shomayim, for the sake of Heaven; otherwise, his reward is very limited. This is derived

from V'yikchu Li, they shall take for Me – LiShmi, for My Name, l'shem Shomayim.



Horav Shimshon Pincus, zl, explains the tzedakah process and its benefits with a meaningful analogy: The world we live in may be compared to a stormy sea, its waters raging. Man sits in his boat being thrust up and down with the rising and descending waves.

Torah and mitzvos are the boat that protect man from the raging world. They are his boat of salvation, his only line of protection from the dangers of the sea. One who sins, inevitably cracks his boat and falls prey to the destructive elements. He is thrown into the water, cast about by the waves, and, ultimately, becomes their victim.

There is, however, one way to have one's life spared, even as his boat capsizes: a lifeline. He grabs hold of that lifeline and literally holds on for dear life until the storm subsides, and he is able to make his way to dry land.

Man's lifeline is the mitzvah of tzedakah. When all else has failed and he is drowning in the raging waters, the mitzvah of tzedakah allows him to hang on. Even if the Heavenly Tribunal has issued negative decrees against him, he may continue to cling for dear life to his lifeline of tzedakah.

One who inspires another Jew to perform mitzvos is certainly performing an enormous favor for him. It may, at times, appear to be a thankless endeavor, but it is not. Hashem will pay him gratitude, and perhaps, at one point, the person whom he inspired will also remember his origins.

With the mitzvah of tzedakah, however, it is different. Then, he is quite possibly saving one's life. Availing someone the opportunity to give tzedakah is tantamount to throwing him a lifeline.

Imagine that the Heavenly Tribunal has issued a decree that has severe negative – even drastic – implications for a person. It could be a dread illness, a car accident, a severe financial crisis, and it appears that the decree will be carried out.

Out of His infinite compassion and love for all of us, Hashem sends a poor man, or someone representing either a group of people in need, or an organization that is hurting. Hashem is thereby sending him a lifeline, an opportunity to be spared from the crisis, the accident, the illness.

Tzedakah tatzil mi'maves, charity saves from death, is a very real and absolute dictum. It really does save. Perhaps if we kept this in mind, the next time we are approached with an opportunity to give tzedakah, we might respond with a more appealing countenance. Rather than looking at the person in need as if he was someone about to rob us of our hard-earned wealth, let us make believe that he is here to throw us a lifeline to the future.

Horav Yaakov Galinsky, zl, relates an incident which took place during one of his many fundraising trips abroad on behalf of his yeshivah. He attempted to obtain an appointment with a well-known philanthropist. He made the call, asked to speak with the man of the house, and received a negative reply:

"The man of the house is not home." - When will he be home?" Rav Galinsky asked.

"In a few hours," was their response.

A number of hours elapsed, and Rav Galinsky presented himself at the man's doorstep.

"I am sorry; the man of the house was delayed. He is not yet home," was the curt response he received.

"When do you expect him?" he asked.

"We have no idea," was their way of "graciously" dismissing him.

Rav Galinsky returned to his waiting car and dialled the man's home. "Hello, I have an important message for Mr. "so and so". Is he available?"

"One moment," was the response.

A few seconds went by and lo and behold, the elusive man of the house came on the line. Rav Galinsky introduced himself and said, "According to halachah, I really must apologize and beg your forgiveness."

"Forgiveness?" asked the man, "What did you do to me that requires my forgiveness?"

Rav Galinsky explained, "At first, when you instructed your family to inform me that you were not home, I suspected you of uttering a falsehood. After all, I asked for the man of the house, and I was told that he was not home."

At first, I perceived this as an outright lie. But then I realized it was the sad truth. The baal ha'bayis, true master of this house, is the yetzer hora, evil-inclination, who is in absolute control over here. I erred in thinking that you were in charge. Sadly, you are withholden to the yetzer hora - You have my sympathy."

The whole purpose of a fall is often to prepare the way for a spiritual climb. The intention is to give you a jolt in order that you marshal all your strength and focus your entire consciousness on serving G-d. For the essence of the service of G-d is to find new life and new strength every moment of the day. ~ R' Nachman of Breslov zt"l.

וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ - "***And they shall take for Me a portion, from every man whose heart motivates him.***" (25:2)

Horav Menachem Mendel, z.l., m'Kotzk and Horav Yitzchak, z.l., m'Vorke were both great tzaddikim and chassidishe Rebbeim of distinction. They differed, however, in their approach towards serving the Almighty. The Kotzker isolated himself from people, having very little patience for common talk, for mundane relationships. Rav Yitzchak, in contrast, was very much involved with his chassidim, more than once imbibing a l'chaim and dancing joyfully with them.

It happened once that these two great rebbes met on Parashas Terumah. Rav Yitzchak asked the Kotzker, "Rav Mendel, why do you choose to seclude yourself, to run away from your chassidim?"

Rav Mendel answered, "My derech, way of serving Hashem, is alluded to in this week's parsha, where it says, "And they shall take for Me." Chazal infer from here that one must act solely for Hashem's sake. If one seeks to serve Hashem correctly, he must make a terumah, uplifting and raising himself above and out of the community, "from every man whose heart motivates him." He must separate himself even from the finest, most virtuous and generous people. Only then can he serve "לִי" – "Me."

Rav Yitzchak countered, "My derech is also implied by the same pasuk: 'If you want to serve לִי, Me, then you should bring a terumah, a portion, from every man whose heart motivates him.' Take the good from all men. Every person has a positive aspect. For some, it is a character trait, while for others, it is a special act of kindness. The only way to garner this good is by being among the people, talking to them, listening to them, and interacting with them."

Two diverse approaches – two great men. Who is right? It depends on the individual.

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם - "***They shall make a Sanctuary for Me, so that I shall dwell among them***." (25:8)

A popular Yiddish maxim which is often related to a young couple who has become engaged or married is: "**דער זיווג זאל עולה יפה זיין**" - "*The zivug, couple, union, should be good.*"

The word "**עולה**" has a number of definitions. The popular translation is "go up," which would connote that "things should work out well for the young couple." - There are always "issues" when a young couple unite: personal, family, material. We hope that in due time, the situation will be a good one.

The Satmar Rebbe, z.l., applied another definition of the word "**עולה**," using gematria, numerical equivalent/value. We ask in Hebrew, "**כמה זה עולה?**" How much does this cost?" This means, "What is the value/monetary equivalent of this object?"

Likewise, when one says, "The zivug should be oleh yafeh," he is, in turn saying, "The zivug should have a gematria of **יפה**," which is 95. What is the significance of the number ninety-five?

The Rebbe says that if we were to look at the minyan ha'mitzvos, number/order of the 613 mitzvos, number 95 is the mitzvah of building a Sanctuary, a place holy enough where the Shechinah will repose. - That is the hope for the marriage of a young couple. They should build a bayis ne'eman b'Yisrael, a home that is holy, that is virtuous, that is a credit to Klal Yisrael. - What greater manifestation of "yafeh" is there than this?

Let us extend this exegesis further. Regarding the injunction to build a Mikdash, the Torah says, "**וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם**," "I may dwell among them." - The Torah should have said, "b'socho," "in it." Why does it say in them?

This teaches us that Hashem will reside in the heart of every Jew who permits Him to enter. Commensurate with our nedivus ha'lev, heartfelt motivation and contribution, He will reside in the Mishkan

we build for Him in our own hearts. - Every Jew has the opportunity and ability to become a Mishkan for Hashem.

Ramban explains that the Mishkan should reflect the glory of Hashem that was demonstrated and felt by all at the Revelation on Har Sinai. As Hashem's Glory rested on and emanated forth from Har Sinai, so, too, should the Mishkan be the repository and exemplar of this glory. It is to be a continuation of Har Sinai. It spurs the emotion and awe, the feeling of closeness with the Almighty that was experienced at Har Sinai.

Marriage should be like that. When there is harmony in a home, Hashem rests His Name on that home. He is a part of that relationship. This should be manifest. When one looks at the home, we should see the Shechinah's Presence reflected throughout. It should be a home where the Shechinah would want to repose, where He would want His Name represented.

We wish the young couple that they establish a relationship, a home that is a veritable Mishkan, that reflects Har Sinai, that will serve as yet another link in the chain of transmission of Torah from Har Sinai. - This is the Torah's definition of a beautiful home.



וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁים לַמִּשְׁכָּן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים עֹמְדִים - "***You shall make the beams of the Mishkan of shittim wood, standing erect.***" (26:15)

Rashi notes that it should have said, "You shall make beams." Why does the Torah write ha'Kerashim, the beams?

He explains that it refers to specific beams, from trees planted by Yaakov Avinu. He carried them down to Egypt and transplanted them there, telling his children to take these trees with them upon their departure from Egypt.

The Midrash says that these trees were originally planted by Avraham Avinu. Targum Yonasan ben Uziel says that the Briach Ha'tichon, Middle Bar, which miraculously extended from one end of

the Mishkan to the other was Yaakov Avinu's "makeil," staff, with which he crossed the Yarden River. Hashem wanted to lend kedushah, sanctity, to His Sanctuary. He used Yaakov's staff, Avraham's trees.



Was it necessary to employ these materials? Was not the mere fact that this edifice was being built l'shem Shomayim, for the sake of Heaven, significant? What about the fact that Hashem desired this Sanctuary as the place where His Presence would repose? Does that not lend some sanctity to the Mishkan? Why was it necessary to use these foreign materials to assist in establishing the Mishkan's sanctity?

Horav Zaidel Epstein, zl gleans from here that the most important thing is man's endeavor, his work that he sanctified through holy intent or purpose. When man sanctifies the material, when he consecrates the mundane, elevating it to a higher spiritual plane, Hashem is pleased. He rests His Shechinah on such an edifice.

The foundation stones of this edifice are the chesed, kindness, of Avraham Avinu which is represented by the poles derived from his cedar trees and Yaakov Avinu's ability to suffice with whatever he received from the Almighty. He had no gold, no silver; he had only his staff, a piece of wood – but it is his – which he sanctifies to Hashem.

The greatest endeavor is the one that is pure and virtuous. That catalyzes kedushah.

וְעָשׂוּ אֲרֹן - "*They shall make an Ark*." (25:10)

The use of the plural "they" implies that Hashem's command to make an Aron is directed towards the entire nation. Notably, this is the only instance where we find the command given in the plural; the rest of the chapter is in the singular.

Chazal derive from here that everyone should be involved and, therefore, deserves a share in the Aron HaKodesh, Holy Ark, the symbol of Torah. The other vessels can be made by individuals.

In order to bequeath Torah to the entire nation, it is incumbent that everybody be involved in the making of the Aron. What about the Menorah – the vessel that symbolizes the light of Torah and its ability to illuminate the minds and hearts of the nation?

Horav Nissan Alpert, z.l., distinguishes between the Aron, which denotes the concept of Kabolas HaTorah, receiving the Torah, and the Menorah, which alludes to nesinas HaTorah, giving of the Torah.

Each member of Klal Yisrael is commanded to become a vessel for receiving the Torah. Every Jew should prepare himself so that he can receive the Torah.

Not everyone, however, is fit to be a pipeline for transmitting Torah to others. The ability to reach out and inspire others, to study Torah, to teach and disseminate Torah to the masses, is not something that anybody or everybody can successfully achieve. Therefore, in regard to the Menorah, the Torah writes **וְעָשִׂיתָ**, and you shall do (singular), denoting the exclusiveness of he who disseminates and inspires Torah to others.

Furthermore, we derive from here the importance of first preparing the vessel for receiving the Torah. In other words, we must first prepare the student by imbuing him with a desire for Torah – then we will be able to light the Menorah and illuminate his life with the Torah.

וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁים לַמִּשְׁכָּן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים עֹמְדִים – *'You shall make the planks of the Mishkan of shiitim wood.'* (26:15)

The Midrash Tanchuma tells us that these wooden planks were actually the result of Yaakov Avinu's foresight. He anticipated that his descendants would one day erect a Mishkan.

Aware that such lumber did not exist in the wilderness, he brought them with him to replant them in Egypt. He instructed his children that when they would be liberated from the Egyptian exile, they should take these trees along with them. - Yaakov taught his children that the future edifices of Klal Yisrael must be built upon the foundations of the past.

We must keep in mind the mesiras nefesh, devotion to the point of self-sacrifice, of our ancestors as we build for our children. The dedication of those who lived before us should serve as a beacon of light to guide and inspire us.

We suggest another reason for Yaakov's decision to bring along the the shittim trees: Yaakov sought to underscore the importance of hakoras ha'tov, appreciation/ gratitude, for what others have done for us.

All too often we conveniently forget who has helped us when we needed it most. We must always remember the origin of the atzei shittim, as well as the mesiras nefesh involved in transporting and caring for them.

With this in mind, we will view every aspect of the Mishkan, which is a microcosm of the world, as a source of Hashem's beneficience. We will then be imbued with a sense of hakoras hatov to Hashem for all that we receive from Him.

What better foundation blocks could there be for any edifice than the attribute of hakoras hatov?

וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁים לַמִּשְׁכָּן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים עֹמְדִים – '***You shall make the planks of the Mishkan of Shittim wood, standing erect***.' (26:15)

The walls of the Mishkan were formed of huge planks of Shittim, acacia wood. The Midrash relates that Yaakov Avinu foresaw that one day Bnei Yisrael would build a Mishkan in the wilderness, in a place that evidently did not have such trees growing. He took trees with him when he left for Egypt. He planted these trees in Egypt, instructing his children to take the trees with them when they leave Egypt.

It is interesting to note that Yaakov was not concerned about obtaining the various other materials necessary for the Mishkan. **Targum Yonasan** explains that these materials were "delivered" to them miraculously by the Heavenly clouds.

Why was Yaakov concerned about the pillars, but not about the other materials? Why did he not rely upon a miracle to provide the atzei Shittim?

We suggest that a valuable lesson can be inferred from this pasuk. The Kerashim, planks, formed the foundation of the Mishkan. They constituted the walls of the Mishkan. - When one builds a Torah edifice, he should not rely upon miracles. He must apply blood, sweat and tears. He must devote himself totally to creating a makom Torah. Then, Hashem will provide the rest.

To build a Torah institution, one needs more than money. He needs mesiras nefesh, self-sacrifice. After one has toiled assiduously and prepared the foundation, he can then anticipate that Hashem will sustain the makom Torah that he has built.

The raw materials which served as the foundation of the Mishkan had been with Bnei Yisrael for hundreds of years. Their care and devotion to these materials prepared them for the first makom Torah.



וְעֲצֵי שִׁטִּים - "***And shittim wood***." (25:5)

Rashi cites the Midrash that explains how Bnei Yisrael were able to secure shittim wood in the desert. These trees did not grow in the wilderness. Yaakov Avinu had brought these cedars to Egypt. He "saw" that one day his descendants would leave Egypt and build a Mishkan which would require this type of wood for its construction.

Let us take a moment to think about Yaakov's foresight. He prepared for his children's spiritual future. What about their material/physical existence? What did he provide for them?

Nothing! - Indeed, Bnei Yisrael are lauded for following Hashem into the desert, trusting in Him for sustenance and relying on Him for their physical needs.

Horav Eliyahu Meir Bloch, zl, derives a profound lesson from here regarding the Torah's perspective in distinguishing between spiritual and physical needs.

In regard to spiritual needs, concerning building a Mishkan or any edifice that serves a spiritual function, one should not rely on a miracle. He must go out and act, doing whatever is in his power to create a m'kom kedushah that will inspire himself and others with spiritual ascendancy.

When it comes to material necessities, however, one should be **בוטח בה'** - trust in the Almighty, that He will sustain, support and provide for his needs.

Yaakov Avinu concerned himself with the spiritual needs of his descendants. For the fulfillment of their physical needs, he relied upon Hashem.

בְּטַבְּעֹת הָאָרֹן יִהְיוּ הַבַּדִּים לֹא יָסֵרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ *'the rings of the Aron shall remain the poles, they may never be removed from it.'* (25:15)

Rashi adds one word, **לְעוֹלָם**, forever, which according to **Horav Yitzchak Goldwasser, Shlita**, implies a profound thought.

The badim, carrying poles of the Aron Ha'Kodesh, were **never** to be removed from the Aron. Thus, the badim were an integral part of the Aron. The Leviim who carried the Aron by "the badim" were carrying the actual Aron. There is no distinction between the Aron and its badim; they are one and the same.

We may add to this thought. Badim serve as a metaphor for the supporters of the Torah. They can never separate themselves from the Torah which they support. - Indeed, by establishing an irrevocable bond with the Torah they will come to realize a basic truth. They are not the supporters of the Torah but rather it is the Torah which supports and sustains them throughout their continued relationship with it.

As the badim are part of the Aron, so, too, are the supporters of the Torah to be considered part of the lomdei Torah, those who study Torah.

For the Torah supporter to be bonded with the Torah, he must respect those whom he supports, be it the institution or its disseminators. The supporter of Torah views this opportunity as a privilege by which he is able to repay Hashem for the good he has received. - When the Torah's supporters attempt to dictate policy or impose their own orientation upon the Torah, they are actually severing their relationship with it.

This respect should be reciprocal. This is not only due to the sense of gratitude which the lomdei Torah must have, but also because they are two sides of a single bond. Each side must merge together with the other in order to develop a healthy symbiotic relationship.

וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאִתָּם זָהָב וָכֶסֶף וּנְחֹשֶׁת - "***And this is the donation you shall take from them, gold, silver and copper***." (25:3)



In the Midrash, Chazal infer that these three metals represent the three Patriarchs. Gold is symbolic of Avraham Avinu in that he was tested like gold in the fiery furnace. Silver alludes to Yitzchak Avinu, who was purified on the altar in the same manner that silver is refined. Copper, which in Hebrew is "nechoshes," brings Yaakov to mind. [Lavan was referring to Yaakov when he said, "**נִחַשְׁתִּי**" I have observed the signs that Hashem has blessed me for your sake" (Bereishis 30:27).]

This Midrash begs elucidation. First, what relationship is there between the Patriarchs and the various metals used for the Mishkan? Second, the Midrash seems to imply that Avraham is compared to a very precious substance, Yitzchak to something of a lesser value, and Yaakov to a metal inferior to both of them.

This idea is inconsistent with the fact that Yaakov was the **בכיר האבות**, the chosen of the Patriarchs. Third, Yaakov is compared to copper only because of a single word used by Lavan in his conversation with Yaakov. This is hardly a reason for equating Yaakov with copper.

Horav Shimon Schwab, z.l., offers a homiletic rendering of the Midrash, which explores the parallels between the qualities of these metals and the predominant characteristics of the Patriarchs.

By nature, gold is pure and brilliant. Silver, however, must be cleansed of impurities and polished in order to bring out its sparkle.

Copper has a unique feature. At first glance, it looks uninspiring. When it is polished, however, it begins to glisten almost like gold!

This is the meaning of the Midrash. Avraham Avinu's reputation was undisputed. His greatness and nobility were manifest to all. When Avraham miraculously escaped certain death from the fiery furnace, his prominence was conveyed to the world. Kings from all over came to pay homage to Avraham. His natural brilliance shone forth like gold.

Yitzchak Avinu did not immediately achieve such consummate distinction. Indeed, when he was traveling to the Akeidah with his father, accompanied by Yishmael and Eliezer, it was not readily apparent which of the three "youths" was the most distinguished. Eliezer was a tzaddik, the prime student of Avraham, and Yishmael had already repented. Indeed, some of the pre-eminent Kohanim, Gedolim, and Tanaim, were named after him. Only when they arrived at Har Ha'Moriah did Yitzchak alone notice the unique cloud hovering over the mountain. Thus, his distinction became unequivocal. It was now apparent that he and his future descendants were imbued with a special sublimity -- a kedushas ha'guf. They were to be physically consecrated as a korban. This "process" of clarification, which resulted in the revelation of the purity of the "true" Yitzchak, can be compared to the refinement of silver which brings out its shining splendor.

The third metal, copper, reflects the persona of Yaakov Avinu. During a major part of his life, Yaakov was engulfed in anguish and distress. His pre-eminence as a tzaddik was veiled, so that even Lavan who spent so many years with Yaakov did not recognize his virtue and saintliness. Lavan attributed his remarkable success to his own good fortune. This is apparent from Lavan's statement to Yaakov, "nechashti, I have observed the signs", referring to Lavan's ability to perceive that Hashem blessed him because of Yaakov. Lavan required sorcery to see that Yaakov brought him success, and

he still credited it to his own good fortune! - Yaakov, like copper, had to go through many "polishings" until his natural brilliance shone forth.

Am Yisrael is comprised of various types of Jews, represented by the three characteristics of our Avos. These distinctions are reflected by the three metals used to build the Mishkan, so that it would embody the divergent attributes of all Jews.

וְעָשׂוּ אֲרֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים. וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ - "***And they shall make an Aron of shittim wood... and you shall cover it with pure gold from within and without***." (25:10,11)

Although in the eyes of the beholder, the Aron appeared to be made completely of gold, it is a well-known fact that this was only an overlay. The actual Aron was made of wood, sandwiched between outer and inner layers of gold.

This seems enigmatic. It would be appropriate that this most sublime vessel, which housed the Torah, consist entirely of gold. Certainly, gold would more readily reflect the magnificence and majesty of the Almighty.

Horav Dovid Feinstein, zl, who raises this question, offers the following lesson to be derived from this "wooden" Aron.

Wood is a living substance which grows and reproduces. In contrast, gold, which captivates its beholder with its beauty, is inanimate. Which one would make a more suitable repository for the Torah?

The Torah was given to human beings, who are made of flesh and blood. They are subject to the seductive influence of their yetzer hora, evil inclination, and must exert amazing strength to avoid falling prey to its constant blandishments. Nonetheless, this is life. One must live and grow in order to overcome these obstacles. Thus, a wooden Aron teaches us that the Torah, a tree of life, was not to be contained by the cold inert gold, regardless of its beauty. Rather,

the Torah was given to living breathing, growing, human beings in order to enable them to attain eternal life.

Why then, asks Horav Feinstein, is the Aron covered from within and without with gold?

The answer is that while a Torah scholar is subject to the same weaknesses as others, he must, nonetheless, attempt to purify himself to the greatest extent possible. Although he is human, he should aspire to reach the purity of an angel.

Thus, the gold is also within to teach us that, even in privacy, a ben Torah should be pure. In the innermost parts of his private life, he should mirror the virtue he has achieved though Torah study. The gold within and without serves as the structure for the inner growth of the Torah scholar.

וְהַבְּרִיחַ הַתִּיכֹן בְּתוֹךְ הַקְּרָשִׁים מַבְרֵחַ מִן־הַקָּצֶה אֶל־הַקָּצֶה - "***And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall pass from end to end***." (26:28)



The Targum Yonason explains that this middle bar originated from Avraham's famous "inn" from which he would provide food and drink for wayfarers. The angels cut it down and threw it into the sea, where it floated until it was retrieved by Moshe.

Horav E. Muller, Shlita, notes the significance of this statement. Everyone was requested to contribute their heartfelt donation towards the construction of the Mishkan. In order to maintain this

structure, however, it was essential to have as the middle bar a pole which was derived from a house which exemplified the highest level of chesed. - The Mishkan, in which the Shechinah "rested," was built from and maintained upon chesed.

We should take serious note of this ethical lesson. The Mishkan depicted the type of sanctity required of Klal Yisrael. All of the vessels served to demonstrate the various attributes which should combine to produce the Torah Jew. A person imbued with such noble qualities must exemplify the middah of chesed in order to maintain them.

וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב - "***And you shall make two cherubim of gold***." (25:18)



Rashi explains דְּמוּת פַּרְצוּף תִּינוֹק לָהֶם - that they had the form of the face of a child.

The Holy Ark which contained the Torah, symbolized the importance of the proper attitudes necessary for the study of Torah. The faces of the Keruvim which were placed above the Ark had the form of children.

There are various lessons to be derived from this.

Rabbi Yosef Ber Soloveitchik Zt"l inferred that educating children is the foundation for the Divine Presence to dwell among us, since children are the guardians of the Torah, and therefore the security of maintaining the Jewish people as an eternal nation.

Rabbi Reuven Margalios Zt"l viewed the proximity of their being above the Ark as an emphasis of educating one's children as taking precedence over one's personal educational development.

The Alter of Kelm Zt"l viewed the facial form of the Keruvim as a lesson in one's necessary attitude to Torah study. Even one who is thoroughly versed in the Torah should approach its study as a young child, with an unquenchable thirst to study even more, to reach greater depths of knowledge and erudition. One must seek to enhance his studies and not view himself as having achieved an end to his studies.

One does not graduate in Torah studies. With the realization of one goal, there is a greater demand for the accomplishment of yet another goal. In the event of a shortage of gold for the construction of the various vessels, it was permitted to use silver, except in regard to the Kruvim, which could only be formed from gold (**Mechilta**).

Rabbi Meir Shapiro Zt"l noted that the Kruvim symbolize the education of Jewish children in Torah and mitzvos. To build Torah institutions for the education of our children and the perpetuation of our people, there can be no substitute; only pure gold can be used. One cannot economize and be frugal at the expense of educating our children properly.

"Hashem's tests are not like the ones that we take in school. Those are for the benefit of the teacher, to discover what level the student is on.

Hashem knows everything. His tests are not for His sake, they allow us to discover how much is inside ourselves – how far we can go – how committed we are to Avodas Hashem." ~ The Rambam.

Fascinating INSIGHTS

Extinction of Distinction



Since the inception of the Gaza war, the Jewish people have been saying special Tehillim. In the paragraph we say after Tehillim, we say **אַחֵינוּ כָּל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנְּתוּנִים בַּצָּרָה וּבַשִּׁבְיָה... הַמָּקוֹם יְרַחֵם עֲלֵיהֶם וְיוֹצִיאֵם מִצָּרָה לִרְוָחָה** - 'Our brothers, the entire family of Israel who are in distress and captivity…Hashem should have mercy on them and remove them from distress to relief.'

This formula seems problematic. Why does it say **כל בית ישראל**, if not all Jews are in distress and captivity?

The answer is that when a slight number of Jews are in trouble, we feel their pain as if we are all in that situation.

In the early 1950s, a large group of Yemenite Jews left their native land and immigrated to Israel. Since this took place shortly after the establishment of the state of Israel, there was little money available. As a result, the Israeli government erected rows of tents for the new immigrants. This is where they lived in the harsh winter doing the best to skirt the ubiquitous thick mud.

Hearing about the newcomers' dire situation, **R' Yitzchak Dovid Grossman's** parents—R' Yisrael Grossman and his wife—traveled to Rosh Ha'ayin where these immigrants were and went from tent to tent introducing themselves to every family. They offered to take

care of their children in Yerushalayim (where the Grossmans lived) for as long as they need if the families didn't feel capable of caring for them at that time. This offer was despite the fact that the Grossmans had ten kids of their own in a small apartment!

Fifteen Yemenite children came with the Grossmans to Yerushalayim. Two slept in the Grossman house while the rest were divided among the neighbors. R' Yitzchak Dovid Grossman recalled that for the next few years, he slept in the same bed as two Yemenite boys!

There was a father, who was religious on a rudimentary level, whose daughter became ill. He sent her to the hospital. He said that from the moment his daughter arrived at the hospital he came to the realization that being born Jewish is equivalent to winning the lottery.

He said that the patients in hospital beds near where his daughter was were for the most part alone. One child had a visit from her mother every other day because she was busy taking care of the other children since she was unable to find someone to babysit.

This contrasts with his situation where once it became known in the Jewish community that this daughter was in the hospital, many people showed solicitude and began to act. This included babysitters that were arranged, health advisors offering their advice, food coming in bulk and people who came to visit his daughter. - He remarked, "I didn't do anything to deserve it. I was just simply born Jewish."

[*Mark Twain observed: "The Jew is not a burden on the charities of the state or of the city; these could cease from their functions without affecting him. When he is well enough, he works; when he is incapacitated, his own people take care of him. And not in a poor and stingy way, but with a fine and large benevolence. His race is entitled to be called the most benevolent of all races of men"*]

A well-known Rabbi, who was raised with little money, related that when he was 10, he once heard his mother say to someone on the phone, "I sometimes wish I was wealthy." - He was flabbergasted when he heard this because wealth was never a value to his mother. - Then he heard the next words his mother uttered: "There are so many people I wish I could help who don't have what they need. But I just don't have the money."

Providential Passing

The Midrash (Tanchuma Pikudei 3) tells us that before a person is born a malach shows him where he will die and where he will be buried. In this way we can understand the pasuk **תצא רוחו ישב לאדמתו** , when his spirit departs he returns to **his** earth. (Tehillim 146:4)

R' Chaim Kanievsky when comforting bereaved families would say based on this that it seems that one's burial ground is predestined as is the place where one will die.



In certain circumstances people may blame themselves for the death of a loved one believing they could have done a more intense medical intervention or they shouldn't have traveled to the place where their loved one died. -They must understand that all that transpired was previously put in place by Hashem.

Once, **R' Yeruchom Levovitz** heard of a tragic accident in which people traveling in a wagon were killed. He viewed the tragedy with Divine Supervision and remarked, "Look how Hashem placed all these people who all needed to meet their fate, on the same wagon, at the same time."

The Weekly Vort

● **הבדים לא יסרו ממנו** - ***The badim [staves] they may not be removed from it*** (25:15). This prohibition is not mentioned in the description of the *badim* used for the *Shulchan* and two *Mizbe'chos*. All of the *badim* were meant for the transportation of the sacred objects of the *Mishkan*, yet only the ones supporting the *Aron* were never allowed to be removed.

This implies that the *Aron*, symbolizing the Torah, must be ready to be moved at any moment, so that it will accompany *Bnei Yisroel* throughout all of its wanderings. The Torah is as vital to *Bnei Yisroel* as the light of day, as the oxygen we breathe. However, the *Shulchan*, the symbol of material well-being, and the *Micbe'chos*, symbolizing the sacrificial service, are not as indispensable.

R' Shamshon Raphael Hirsch adds that the *badim* expressed the idea of mobility, an independence of space and time. The Torah is not meant to be bound to one specific place; Klal Yisroel must be prepared to act as its bearers in all times and places. (Kol HaTorah - R' Elie Munk)

● **והיה המזבח קדש קדשים** – ***And the Mizbe'ach (of copper) shall be holy of holies*** (29:37). It seems odd that the Torah twice refers to the copper *mizbe'ach* as holy of holies when it was situated outside of the *Kodesh Kodashim*. This is in contrast to the *mizbe'ach ha'ketores*, which was placed opposite the *Aron* and is described merely as *Kodesh*.

R' Moshe Feinstein explains: The placement of the *Mizbe'chos*, inside or outside, symbolizes the *talmid chochom* when he is inside or outside of the *Beis Medrash*. A *talmid chochom* should be cognizant that while he is *Kodesh* in the Beis Medrash, he must be *Kodesh Kodashim* (doubly holy) when he leaves this sheltered environment, where he will come in contact with people of unfavorable repute who could sway him from the path of Torah.

His virtue should be so well developed that it inspires whomever he meets. Every action he performs is amplified because of his exalted image in the eyes of others. (Peninim on the Torah, Vol. 3)



A Unique Form of Life Insurance

Chesed is a unique form of life insurance. Not only does it protect the doer, but it safeguards his offspring in ways that sometimes – as in the following story – become abundantly clear.

The story takes place in a small Hungarian town, several decades before World War II. The townspeople employed a rebbi to teach their boys, but they were unable to pay him any money. Instead, the parents took turns providing meals for him and his family. After many years, the rebbi's wife died, his children moved away and he was left alone.

No longer able to teach, he was replaced by a new rebbi. Those who had brought meals to the old rebbi turned their attention to the new one. Only one woman felt a continued obligation to support the man who had taught her children so well, albeit many years ago. For five years, until the end of the rebbi's life, she repeated her daily climb of the stairs to his small apartment to bring him his lunch.

Time passed, and the war crushed the small Jewish community's tenuous existence. The woman, however, was saved from witnessing the worst of the destruction; she died of natural causes.

Most of the townspeople were herded away to their deaths, but this woman's grandchildren somehow found help. They were led to a small apartment, where a brave gentile woman risked her life to hide them behind a false wall that she built for them. She provided their meals, each day weaving a tortuous path among the shops to purchase only small portions that would attract no suspicion. Her apartment sustained several raids and searches, but her "fugitives" were never discovered.

When they emerged from hiding, the children learned that their refuge had once belonged to a different tenant – the old rebbi their grandmother had fed. The same stairs the gentile woman climbed, bearing their provisions, had born their grandmother upward as well, on a mission of chesed that, decades later, saved their lives. [~ Chofetz Chaim – Loving Kindness.]

Bitachon Brings Salvations

וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב... וְהָיוּ הַכְּרֻבִים פְּרְשֵׂי כְנָפַיִם לְמַעְלָה - "***You shall make two golden keruvim… The keruvim shall have their wings spread upwards…***" (25:18-20)



Chazal tell us that the word **כרובים** comes from the words **כרביא**, "like children." This is because the faces on the *keruvim* appeared like two young children.

The Divrei Binah says that the young faces on the keruvim were to represent the merit of bitachon. It states (Tehillim 131:2) אִם־לֹא שִׁוִּיתִי וְדוֹמַמְתִּי נַפְשִׁי כְּגָמֻל עֲלֵי אִמּוֹ כַּגָּמֻל עָלַי נַפְשִׁי, "***I swear that I stilled and silenced my soul like a suckling child at his mother's side like the suckling child is my soul***."

Dovid HaMelech says that he stilled and silenced his soul, and he was calm and unworried because he trusted in Hashem like a young, nursing child who relies on his mother to feed him.

The Malbim writes, "A nursing child places his entire trust on his mother to feed him and to take care of him, so do I place my entire trust on Hashem. A nursing child doesn't trust in himself at all because the child knows that he is weak unable to do anything, so do I know that I am weak and unable to do anything on my own."

The next pasuk explains whom he trusts: יַחֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־ה׳ - ***'Yisrael trusts in Hashem***.' Hashem teaches and leads us like a mother takes care of her children.

We aren't like infants who only need their mothers when they are small. Yisrael trusts and relies on Hashem מֵֽעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם, ***'for this time and forever***.'"

This outstanding level of bitachon is represented by the keruvim.

When someone asked the **Vilna Gaon zt'l** to describe bitachon, the Vilna Gaon responded that Dovid HaMelech already described it with the words אִם־לֹא שִׁוִּיתִי וְדוֹמַמְתִּי נַפְשִׁי כְּגָמֻל עֲלֵי אִמּוֹ כַּגָּמֻל עָלַי נַפְשִׁי. '*It is to trust in Hashem as an infant relies on his mother*'.

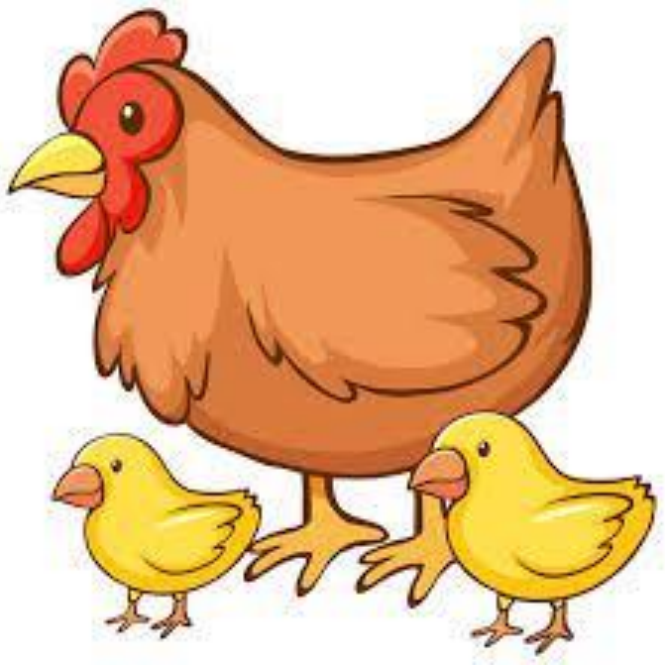
Many people say that they understand how they manage their minor expenses of day-to-day living, but they don't know how they will handle the more significant expenses that come up from time to time, such as when they have to marry off children.

The Shinover Rav zt'l said that he understands how people marry off children but doesn't understand how they manage the day-to-day expenses.

He understands how people marry off children. They know that they can't manage on their own, so they trust in Hashem, and Hashem helps them.

However, they think they can manage the day-today living on their own. So, for daily life, they don't trust in Hashem. - Therefore, for everyday living, without trust in Hashem, how do they manage?

The Sfas Emes said, "No simcha can compare to the joy of the person who trusts in Hashem."



There's a Midrash that discusses the difference between small and large chickens. When a chicken is small, its mother feeds it and cares for it. When the chicken is large, the mother doesn't care for it anymore. She even pecks at her children and banishes them away when there is food that the mother wants to eat alone.

The Vilna Gaon zt'l says that the same occurs with people. When they are young, they trust in Hashem, and Hashem takes care of them. When they get older, they think they can support themselves, and then they lose the special hashgachah pratis that they once had.

Shabbos Brings Yeshuos

The Shem MiShmuel (*Shelach* 5677) writes in the name of his father, the **Avnei Nezer zt'l**, "Even if someone has an ill person in his home if he can refrain from complaining and from thinking about his troubles on Shabbos, the sick person will certainly be healed."

This is based on the Gemara (*Shabbos* 12.), "When one visits the sick on Shabbos he says, **שבת היא מלזעוק ורפואה קרובה לבוא** - ***'Shabbos we don't shout, and the refuah is quick in coming***,' and Rashi explains, "*The merit of Shabbos can bring you compassion if you honor Shabbos by refraining from feeling tzaar on this day.*"

The Gemara discusses an ill person. However, the same applies to all kinds of troubles and problems. If one doesn't have *tzaar* on Shabbos, the *tzaar* will disappear.

The Eliyahu Rabba says that this is *midah kneged midah*. He doesn't feel distress on Shabbos, so Hashem removes all tzaar from him.

The Menoras HaMaor writes a story of a woman who had two children who fell into a deep pit on Shabbos. She waited until her husband came home from the beis knesses.

When he arrived, they ate and drank, and when they finished the meal, she said, "If you want, I will tell you something."

"Go ahead."

She said, "For ten years, I was guarding two gold crowns. Now, the owners are asking for the crowns back. What should I do? Should I return them?"

"Return them."

She said, "Your two sons fell into a pit and died. Now honor Hashem and don't be *mechalel* Shabbos by being sad today."

They weren't sad that Shabbos. When it turned dark, they went to the pit to take their children out and bury them. - Lo and behold, their children were alive and well!

They didn't have tzaar on Shabbos, so they merited this *nes*.

Shevet HaKahasi writes that **Rebbe Yissachar Dov of Belz *zt'l*** didn't put on new shoes on Shabbos. He first wore them during the weekdays so that they would be broken into before Shabbos. - He didn't want to feel the pinch of wearing new Shabbos shoes.

We should also seek to avoid feeling any distress on Shabbos.

Shabbos is **יוֹם שִׂמְחַתְכֶם** (*Bamidbar 10:10*), a day of joy, and when we are happy on Shabbos, the *tzaros* will disappear and never return.

"If you cannot explain it, you do not understand it." ~ R' Chaim Soloveitchik zt"l.

Kedushah



This week's parashah discusses the building of the Mishkan. We want every person and Jewish home to be a sanctuary where Hashem resides. - How does one create a place for the Shechinah?

Shach al HaTorah zt'l writes that the answer is found in the word **מקדש**. The pasuk doesn't state **ועשו לי משכן** ; it states **ועשו לי מקדש** - a sanctuary. This implies that when one sanctifies himself, Hashem resides with him.

A photographer was offered a well-payed job to take pictures at a major event. He realized that he would have to compromise some of his boundaries related to guarding his eyes, so he turned down the offer.

A few days afterwards, he was at an event. **Reb Chaim Kanievsky zt'l** was there, and Reb Chaim motioned for him to come. - The photographer looked around, trying to understand who Reb Chaim was calling because he couldn't imagine it was him.

Reb Chaim motioned again to him, implying, "I mean you."

He approached the front table, and Reb Chaim told him, "I am jealous of you." - The photographer asked, "Why? What did I do?" - Reb Chaim replied, "They don't know, but I know!"

The photographer understood that it was because he passed the test and turned down the lucrative offer to guard his eyes. He thought to himself, "If Reb Chaim knows, heaven certainly knows."

This is an example of turning oneself into a Mishkan, a sanctuary for Hashem. - His good deed wouldn't be forgotten.

Beis Medresh with a Minyan



Chazal call a beis medresh a **בית מקדש מעט**, a miniature Beis HaMikdash. That is our Beis HaMikdash in galus.

Ramban (parashas Bo) writes "The purpose of a minyan - **תפלת הרבים** is that people should have a place where they gather to praise Hashem Who created them and proclaim before Him, 'We are your creations.'"

The Gemara (Brachos 7:-8.) brings several sources that one should daven with a minyan.

Reb Chaim Volozhiner writes that when the Mishnah (Avos 2:13) says **הוי זהיר בקריאת שמע ובתפילה** ... , "Be cautious with saying Shema and tefillah," it means to be cautious to daven with a minyan.

The Mishnah explains, **ואל תהי רשע בפני עצמך** which can be translated as, "Don't be a rasha, by davening alone." - When you daven alone, Heaven will judge you, and you are at risk of being deemed a rasha. - It is better to avoid this scrutiny and to daven with a minyan.

There is a great benefit to daven with a minyan because the tefillah is more likely to be accepted. Even if it isn't the best tefillah, nevertheless, since many are saying it, the merit of the group is great and the tefillah won't be rejected.

Therefore, in our times, when there is so much on people's minds, and who can say that he davens perfectly, one should be cautious to daven with a minyan so his tefillah is not rejected.

The Beis Aharon zt'l of Karlin had to undergo a surgical procedure. He requested that the operation be scheduled for early afternoon so he could daven minchah before the operation and then daven maariv at night.

Ten people waited to daven maariv with the rebbe; however, when it became late and the rebbe wasn't yet ready to daven, the minyan davened on their own and left.

When the Beis Aharon was ready to daven, he asked the gabbai if there was a minyan. The gabbai replied, "Definitely, there is a minyan. We will daven outside the rebbe's room, and the rebbe can daven from his room."

The gabbai said kaddish and barchu out loud and pretended that there was a minyan, although no one was there.

Some days afterwards, the gabbai apologized to the rebbe. "There really wasn't a minyan. I am afraid I sinned because I said kaddish and barchu without a minyan."

The Rebbe told him that after the surgery, he was frail. Had he known there was no minyan, he wouldn't have been able to endure the tzaar. - "You acted correctly, because for pikuach nefesh, it is permitted."

"A person who tries to practice trust in Hashem while leaving himself a back-up plan, is like a person who tries to learn how to swim but insists on keeping one foot on the ground." ~ The Alter of Novardok.

"Bitachon is the realization that all we have, all we are, and all that will be, is a gift from Hashem." ~ Rabbi Noach Weinberg.

Creating a Mishkan in Your Individual Way

Reb Moshe Feinstein zt'l (Darash Moshe) clarifies that there is a fundamental difference between Hashem's dwelling place in the desert, in the Mishkan, to Hashem's dwelling place in our times, which is in the neshamah of a Yid and the Yiddishe home.

He explains that the Mishkan has set laws, exactly how it should appear. However, when one turns his neshamah into a sanctuary for Hashem, and likewise, when one turns his home into a Mishkan for Hashem to dwell there, there are no set, rigid laws. Each person serves Hashem somewhat differently, and each person, in his individual way, creates a place for Hashem.

This brings us to the important discussion of serving Hashem according to your abilities. One shouldn't copy others. Instead, he should recognize the strengths, talents, and skills that Hashem gave him and use them for avodas Hashem.



Reb Meir Shapiro was a chassid of **Rebbe Yisrael of Chortkov zt'l**. One Shabbos, when Reb Meir Shapiro was in Chortkov, the Rebbe asked him to daven before the *amud* (*Rosh Chodesh benching* and *Musaf*). After the *tefillah*, the Rebbe invited Reb Meir Shapiro to eat the Shabbos *seudah* with him.

When the meal was over and Reb Meir Shapiro left the Rebbe's home, people saw Reb Meir beaming joyfully. They asked him what had happened at the meal that made him so happy.

He told them the Rebbe praised him for the tefillos he had *davened* before the *amud*. The Rebbe was saying, "Ah! Reb Meir! Your tefillah! Your *Rosh Chodesh benching*! The *musaf*! It was so beautiful."

Reb Meir Shapiro said to the Rebbe, "If the Rebbe enjoys my tefillah so much, perhaps I should leave Sanik, where I'm the Rav, and I should become the *chazan* here?"

The Chortkover Rebbe explained to Reb Meir Shapiro that everyone has his primary life mission. "You are a *talmid chacham*, a talented teacher, and you have all the talents to be a *Rosh Yeshiva*. Therefore, that is your life's mission."

Soon afterward, Reb Meir Shapiro opened the Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin, where he channeled all his abilities to teach Torah to Yidden. He understood that this was his life's calling and invested all his energies into succeeding in his personal mission.

Once, Reb Meir Shapiro was asked to represent the Jewish community in the Polish parliament. Reb Meir Shapiro asked Rebbe Yisrael of Tchortkov *zt'l* whether he should accept this position.

The Rebbe replied in a letter, "I received your letter, and I will tell you my opinion: "A person can determine his life's assignment and the service that Hashem wants from him based on the talents Hashem endowed him with. Hashem granted you a sharp mind, the acuity to delve into Torah and draw out beautiful diamonds and teach students. You have already established many outstanding students.

If you accept this government position, it will take away from your *avodas hakodesh*. On the other hand, in this political role, you will be able to do a lot of good for the community.

Therefore, my advice is: Don't do any *hishtadlus* towards attaining this governmental position. But if the Agudah committee asks you to take on the position, accept it."

Everyone must serve Hashem in his own way, according to the talent and nature Hashem gave him. If you try to do what others do, you will fail and never accomplish your mission.

Reb Chaim Brim *zt'l* once asked the renowned *baal teshuvah*, Reb Uri Zohar z'l, "Who influenced you to do *teshuvah*?" - Reb Uri Zohar replied, "What difference does it make?"

Reb Chaim Brim replied, "I'm asking because I also want to do *teshuvah*. Tell me who helped you do *teshuvah*, and I will go to him. Perhaps he can influence me to do *teshuvah*, as he influenced you."

Reb Uri Zohar replied that he was influenced by **Reb Yitzchak Shlomo Zilberman *zt'l***. - Reb Chaim Brim went to Reb Zilberman and requested that he inspire him to do *teshuvah*.

Reb Zilberman replied, "I'm sorry. I cannot help you. When I meet someone far from Torah and mitzvos, I can easily show him that he is on the wrong path and must change his ways. But you daven and learn Torah. You think you are doing everything correctly, so how can I show you where to improve?"

One of the reasons people think they are doing everything correctly is because they copy what they see others do. They say, "I am doing everything others are doing; what could be wrong?"

But the problem is that Hashem gave each person an individual mission. We must identify it and use all our talents and abilities for Hashem's service. And when we do so, we have created a Mishkan for Hashem in this world, in the neshamah of a Yid.

"The world considers forgetfulness a bad thing, but in my view, it has certain advantages. Without forgetfulness, it would be impossible to serve G-d. If a person remembered all the difficulties he has been through, and all the challenges he faces, he would never find the strength to serve G-d. Thoughts of those events would completely unsettle him. But now, these pains can be forgotten. This is very important advice for following the way of G-d." ~ R' Nachman of Breslov.



משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה
The first thing that we must do in Adar, is to increase our simcha – happiness. - How do we accomplish this? How do we feel more happiness?

The Sefas Emes asks, "Is there a special button that we can press that will create and increase our simcha? That would definitely be great! So how do we become truly happy?

The Sefas Emes explains that it actually begins the other way round. As the Mishna says: **בְּאֶחָד בַּאֲדָר מַשְׁמִיעִין עַל הַשְּׁקָלִים** – '***On the first of Adar the court proclaims re- the collection of shekalim.***'

What prevents a person from being happy? Being constantly absorbed in himself, always thinking about his own needs. – This doesn't allow him to be happy. However, the moment that he starts thinking about others, (by giving the shekalim) he will feel simcha.

So long as he is busy thinking about himself, he obviously gets frustrated as things don't always go his own way. But the second he starts to think about others, and how to give to others, he is able to experience true happiness!

There was once a Yid who came to the **Beis Yisroel**. He was a very wealthy man, and he was blessed with fine children. He said, Rebbe, you know that I am blessed with a wonderful family and that I am not lacking in material things, but where can I get some simcha?"

Beis Yisrael replied quoting the pasuk: **פִּתַּחְתָּ שַׂקִּי וַתְּאַזְּרֵנִי שִׂמְחָה** – '***You loosened my sackcloth and girded me with joy.***' (Tehilim 30:12)

Open up your sack (pocket) and start giving – this will infuse you with simcha! Leave your own comfort-zone and start sharing with others! – That will bring you joy!

When We Did Not Have the Kosel, We Still Had #12 Ibn Shaprut by Rabbi Yissachar Frand



In the beginning of Parshas Teruma, the pasuk says **וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם** – ***"And you shall make for Me a Sanctuary and I shall dwell in their midst."*** (Shemos 25:8). Rashi comments: "*And you shall make for My Name a House of Holiness*." That is the essence of the Beis HaMikdash – a House of Holiness!

Rav Yosef Buxbaum, who was the founder of Machon Yerushalayim, was once walking in Yerushalayim, when he passed the house of the Tchebiner Rav. **The Tchebiner Rav was Hagaon HaRav Dov Berish Weidenfeld** (1881-1965). The terminology 'world class scholar' and 'great personality' are not sufficient to describe who he was.

Going back to my youth (circa 1960), before my Bar Mitzvah, my shul Rabbi, Rav Sholom Rivkin, z"l, told me that "the Tchebiner Rav is the Gadol HaDor!" (literally 'greatest person in the generation').

That was a time when **Rav Aharon Kotler** was alive, **Rav Moshe Feinstein** was alive, **Rav Eliezer Silver** was alive, **Rav Henkin** was alive. Nevertheless, Rabbi Rivkin told me that the Tchebiner Rav was the Gadol HaDor! Now, at that time I did not know what the term "Gadol HaDor" meant!

But it always remained in my mind that the Tchebiner Rav was the Gadol HaDor. He was a Rosh Yeshiva. He was a Posek. He was a Tzadik. I can go on and on describing who the Tchebiner Rav was.

Rav Buxbaum was once walking past the Tchebiner Rav's house, which was at Rechov Ibn Shaprut #12 in the Shaarei Chessed

neighborhood of Yerushalayim. He saw that **Rav Aryeh Levin** (1885-1969), the Tzadik of Yerushalayim, was standing and crying in front of the Tchebiner Rav's house.

Rav Yosef Buxbaum walked over to Rav Aryeh Levin and asked why he was crying. "Are you in pain? Why are you are standing in front of the Tchebiner Rav's house, crying?"

Rav Aryeh told him that one of his children was sick. "If I could go to the Kosel Ma'aravi, I would go. (This was pre-1967, when the Jews did not have access to the Old City of Yerushalayim or the Kosel Ma'aravi) Since I cannot get to the Kosel, I need to pray in another makom kadosh. The Tchebiner Rav's house is that makom kadosh."

This is what Rashi means here "You shall make for me a Sanctuary" – a House of Holiness! If someone thinks of all the Torah that was learned in the house of the Tchebiner Rav and the chessed that was done there and the tzidkus that was practiced there – the Tchebiner Rav's house was a makom kadosh. If the Kosel Ma'aravi was not available, a person could at least go to this makom kadosh to pray.

Rav Buxbaum was so impressed with what Rav Aryeh Levin told him that he went and related the conversation to the great sage **Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach**, who also lived in the Shaarei Chessed neighborhood. Rav Shlomo Zalman reacted without astonishment "Certainly that is appropriate. I, too, whenever I pass by that holy dwelling place, lift my eyes heavenward in prayer."

Rav Shlomo Zalman also used the opportunity of being in the proximity of such a makom kadosh to petition the Almighty in prayer. Which person does not say a Tefilla when he goes to the Kosel. Religiously sensitive individuals considered the holy home of the Tchebiner Rav a similarly holy place.

This gives us practical insight into Rashi's comment "And you shall make Me a Sanctuary" – a House of Holiness.

Give & Take by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

After an entire portion filled with commandments regarding man's obligation toward his fellow man, the Torah focuses on a very spiritual aspect of our existence. Hashem commands His nation to build a Tabernacle in which He would figuratively dwell. Thus, the Torah begins this week's portion with a mainstay of Jewish life — the appeal.

The Torah instructs the Jewish nation to contribute gold, silver, and an array of other materials to the great cause of erecting and furnishing a Mishkan. However, the appeal is worded very strangely.

Hashem does not ask the people to **give**; he asks them to **take**. דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה - "***Speak to the children of Israel and let them <u>take</u> a portion for me***." (25:2)

The question is obvious. Why does the Torah tell the people to **take** a portion when in essence they are **giving** a portion? What is the message behind the semantic anomaly?

Max and Irving went fishing on an overcast afternoon. About two hours into their expedition a fierce storm developed. Their small rowboat tossed and tossed and finally flipped over into the middle of the lake. Max, a strong swimmer, called to save Irving, but to no avail. Irving did not respond to any plea and unfortunately drowned. Max swam to shore to break the terrible news to Irving's poor wife.

"What happened?" she screamed. "Tell me the whole story!" - Max recounted the entire episode in full detail.

"But what did you do to try to save my Irving?" she shrieked. Max explained once again. "I kept screaming to your husband, 'Irving, give me your hand — give me your hand — Give me your hand! But Irving just gave me a blank stare and drifted away."

"You fool!" shouted the widow. "You said the wrong thing. You should have said, '**take** my hand.' Irving never gave anything to anybody!"

We often make the same mistake that Irving made. When we hear the word "give" we recoil. In its first solicitation, the Torah is teaching us a lesson. When you give with true heart, you are not giving anything away. You are taking a share for yourself. Materialistic pleasures in which many people indulge are eventually digested and forgotten.

The new cars become old ones, the glorious homes fall to disrepair, and the newest gizmos become outdated. The only items that remain are those that we give. They remain in a storehouse of merits and eventually will repay us and our descendants.

The Montefiores and the Rothschilds are not forever cherished for opulence and indulgence. They are remembered for their great benevolence and charity. They not only gave for eternity. They received for eternity as well.



Parshah Pearls (Adapted from the Riva)

The Staves Shall Not be Removed

בְּטַבְּעֹת הָאָרֹן יִהְיוּ הַבַּדִּים לֹא יָסֵרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ – *"In the rings of the Aron the staves shall be (placed), they shall not be removed from it*" (25:15).

To reconcile this Pasuk with the Pasuk in Bamidbar (4:8) **וְשָׂמוּ אֶת־בַּדָּיו** "... ***and they (the B'nei K'has) shall place its poles***" (implying that the staves were not affixed to the Aron), the Riva, citing the Gemara in Yuma, explains that, on the one hand, they fitted loosely into the rings of the Aron, in that they were thin and could be moved along, whereas on the other, the ends were thickened, so that they could not be removed from the Aron.

What the Pasuk in Bamidbar therefore means is, not that the B'nei K'hassuch a wayed the staves, but that they positioned them in the rings in such a way that the front and back sections that protruded from the Aron were equal in length.

The Ram from Coucy however, commenting on the current Pasuk (without entering into the above discrepancy) explains that the staves needed to be firmly wedged in the rings, so that when climbing a hill, the weight of the Aron should not slide down the pole and hit those who were carrying it at the back (and those in front when they descended).

In view of Chazal however, who explains that the Pillar of Cloud flattened all the mountains and hills in their path (see Rashi Parshas Chukas 20:22), it is unclear which hills the Ram from Coucy is referring to!

The Menakiyos (The Side-Frames)

וְעָשִׂיתָ קְעָרֹתָיו וְכַפֹּתָיו וּקְשׂוֹתָיו וּמְנַקִּיֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר יֻסַּךְ בָּהֶן זָהָב טָהוֹר תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם

"And you shall make its bread forms … its half-tubes and its side-frames …" (25:29).



Rashi explains that the golden side-frames protruded above the Shulchan, riding above the height of the six Loaves that comprised one row of Lechem ha'Ponim.

Each one contained six clefts, on which they placed the ends of the half-tubes, which in turn, held the six loaves, thereby preventing each loaf from weighing down on the loaf below, causing it to break.

That is why **Unklus** translates it as 'Mechiloseih' (which means to bear/support the weight).

The Riva, cites a question that he heard. Why, the questioner asked, were six clefts needed? Why would five not have sufficed, seeing as the bottom loaf rested on the Table, as Rashi himself explains in Parshas Emor (24:6)?

And even if we take on that the half-tubes needed to be placed under the bottom loaves, to allow air to circulate (to prevent them from going bad, as Rashi explains here with regard to the other loaves), the cleft would have been unnecessary, seeing as they would have rested on the Table, and unlike the other half-tubes, would not have needed the clefts in the side-frames to support them?

The Riva answers by pointing out that the sixth cleft was not for the bottom half-tubes, but for the top ones, as we shall now explain.

Each row of loaves had one bowl of Levonah (frankincense), which the Kohen placed on top of the top loaf. And it was to hold the bowl of Levonah that they placed two half-tubes (instead of the usual three) above the top loaf. And it was to hold those two half-tubes that they added the top cleft in the side-frames.

Obeying G-d's Instructions

וְנָתַתָּ אֶל־הָאָרֹן אֵת הָעֵדֻת אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ - ***"And you shall place in the Aron the (Luchos of) Testimony which I will give to you***" (25:16).

How could Moshe justify breaking the Luchos, asks the Riva quoting the **Ib'n Ezra**, since by doing so, he contravened G-d's specific instructions to place them into the Aron?

Perhaps, he suggests, that is what prompted Moshe to place the broken Luchos inside the Aron too, as Chazal have taught, thereby fulfilling that command after all.

Alternatively, he explains, Moshe fulfilled the Mitzvah when he placed the second Luchos in the Aron.

Highlights From The Da'as Zekeinim Mi'ba'alei Tosfos

וְעָשׂוּ אֲרוֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים - *"And they shall make the Aron*" (25:10).

By all the other 'Keilim', says the Da'as Zekeinim M.T. the Torah writes "And you (Moshe) shall make … ". Only here does it use the expression " … they shall make!" This is because the Aron housed the Torah, and when it comes to Kavod ha'Torah, everybody is obligated to participate.

How much more so, he adds, are the residents of a city obligated to honour the local Talmidei-Chachamim, by seeing to all their needs, thereby enabling them to spend their time studying Torah, as the Gemara explains in Yuma (72:).

Another reason for the communal participation in constructing the Aron, he adds, is to enable everybody to receive a share in the reward that the Torah which it housed has to offer.

וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ " … *Inside and outside you shall overlay it* (with gold)" (25:11)

Based on this Pasuk, Rava teaches us that a Talmid-Chacham whose inside does not match his outside (i.e. his behaviour is not consistent with his learning) is not a Talmid-Chacham.

וְעָשִׂיתָ עָלָיו זֵר זָהָב סָבִיב - *"And you shall make on it a golden rim"* (25:11).

It seems, comments the Da'as Zekeinim, that this rim was purely ornamental, and that it resembled a crown.

It is a hint, he adds, to the Crown of Torah, and he cites the Gemara in Yuma (72a), which refers to the three rims, representing the three crowns; the rim of the Mizbei'ach ha'Zahav - representing the Crown of Kehunah (which was taken by Aharon); the rim of the

Shulchan - representing the Crown of Malchus (which was taken by David), and the rim of the Aron - representing the Crown of Torah (which lies open and is available to anyone who studies it).

וְנָתַתָּ אֶל־הָאָרֹן אֵת הָעֵדֻת אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ - " ***and you shall place into the Aron the Luchos which I will give to you***" (25:16).

The Da'as Zekeinim points out that the command to place the Luchos inside the Aron comes later, in Pasuk 21, and that the Torah only mentions it here, to explain the previous Pasuk, which forbids the removal of the staves from the Aron.

This Pasuk now ascribes that prohibition to the fact that the purpose of the Aron was to house the Luchos. Consequently, it had to be treated with the utmost respect; and this included leaving the staves intact and not being able to move them around. [See Parshah Pearls]

וְהָיוּ הַכְּרֻבִים פְּרְשֵׂי כְנָפַיִם לְמַעְלָה - ***"And the K'ruvim shall spread their wings upwards*** (above their heads)" 25:20.

Because this is how one stands before G-d (whose Shechinah 'lived' in the Kodesh Kodshim), the Da'as Zekeinim explains - with a combination of humility and awe.

"Shabbos is the wellspring of all blessings – both material and spiritual – for the upcoming week. We must therefore accord much more honor to Shabbos than to the weekdays. Since the mitzvah of Shabbos is the source of blessing for the upcoming week, we should sanctify it in the best possible manner with the most delectable food and drink." ~ Divrei Menachem.

Parsha Points to Ponder by Oizer Alport

Among the items Moshe was instructed to collect for the construction of the Mishkan were **זהב וכסף ונחשת** – gold, silver, and copper (Shemos 25:3). In what way do the names of these valuable materials allude to three different categories of charitable donors?

Rabbeinu Ephraim suggests that just as gold, silver, and copper are listed in descending order of value, so too do they correspond to three different motivations possessed by those who contribute to charitable causes, also in descending order of praiseworthiness.

The highest level is represented by **זהב**, which is an acronym for **זֶה הַנּוֹתֵן בְּרִיא** – this one gives charity while he is still healthy, out of the genuine goodness of his heart. The next level is symbolized by **כסף**, which is an acronym for **כְּשֶׁרְאֶה סַכָּנָה פּוֹתֵחַ** – only when he sees danger approaching does he open his wallet and donate.

The lowest form of charitable giving is represented by **נחשת**, which is an acronym for **נֶדֶר חוֹלֶה שֶׁיֹּאמַר תְּנוּ** – a person who is gravely ill who is inspired to make a charitable pledge in the hopes that it will be a merit for him to recover from his sickness.

Rashi writes (25:40) that Moshe struggled to understand how to craft the Menorah, so Hashem showed him a fiery illustration of its appearance. Nevertheless, Rashi writes (25:31) that despite this, Moshe still had difficulty making the Menorah.

Ultimately, Hashem told Moshe to throw a block of gold into fire, and the Menorah miraculously formed itself and emerged complete.

If Hashem knew that Moshe would be unable to make the Menorah in the end, why did He initially show him the fiery image and teach him all the intricate laws regarding its appearance?

The Sfas Emes explains that for Moshe to merit Hashem's assistance in miraculously making the Menorah, he first needed to

demonstrate his total desire and try his utmost to successfully see the project to completion.

Therefore, he first needed to be shown a picture of how the Menorah should look so he could invest his energy and desire into trying to create it. Only after he had done all he was capable of doing did he merit Divine aid to finish the project.

Rav Shmaryahu Arieli adds that this concept also applies to Torah study, which is symbolized by the Menorah.

Properly understanding the depths of the Torah is a gift from Hashem that only comes after a person has exerted himself to the limits of his ability.

The Sfas Emes suggests that this principle is not limited to Torah study and applies to all mitzvos. Alternatively, the **Brisker Rav** answers that even though the Menorah was produced in miraculous fashion, Moshe was unwilling to rely on this alone as proof that it was made properly.

He insisted on personally examining it to ensure that it complied with all the legal requirements and specifications, and in order to do so, he needed to have a visual image against which to compare it.



Understanding Why Many People Find Themselves After They Visit the *Kosel*

Parshas Terumah introduces us to the *Mishkan* that Hashem commanded us to build as a resting place for the Shechinah [Divine Presence]. Although the Shechinah could not be seen, its presence could be experienced through the daily miracles that took place

(*Avos* 5:5) and palpable connection that could be perceived there. Although we no longer have the *Mishkan* or *Beis HaMikdash* today, the ***Zohar HaKadosh*** teaches (*Shemos* 5b) that the Divine Presence permanently remains at the *Kosel Ha'maaravi*.



Rav Yisroel Reisman notes that the *Kosel* is renowned for its ability to melt the hearts of people who come to visit, even those who are irreligious and shocked to find themselves moved by the experience. Where does this power come from?

Rav Nota Schiller, Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Ohr Somayach, explains that the prevalence of *ba'alei shita* is one of the primary challenges of our generation. A *baal shita* is someone who is arrogantly convinced that his choices and decisions are always right. Because he lacks humility, he is unwilling to listen to others, and it is virtually impossible to convince him to even consider the possibility that his path in life could be wrong.

One of the few ways to shake up a *baal shita* is an encounter with the Divine, but the Gemara says (*Sotah* 5a) that the Shechinah departs when it encounters haughty people, commenting that it cannot coexist with them. As a result, the *baal shita* misses out on one of the rare opportunities to have his worldview called into question and critically examined, and he blindly continues down his chosen path.

The *Kosel* is unique in that it is the one place on Earth that Hashem promised His Divine Presence will never leave. As a result, when an arrogant person goes to the *Kosel*, he is exposed for the first time

to the Shechinah that usually avoids him. Because the Shechinah remains at the *Kosel* eternally, it can overpower and melt away the *baal shita's* overconfidence, leaving him vulnerable and receptive to contemplating other perspectives for the first time in his life.

As an allusion to this concept, the **Imrei Chaim of Vizhnitz** points out (Brachos 17a) that the first letters in the words: **וְנַפְשִׁי כֶּעָפָר לַכֹּל תִּהְיֶה** - "*may my soul be like dust to everyone*" – can be rearranged to spell **כותל**.

This reveals to us that the *Kosel* is intrinsically linked with humility, as it possesses the unique power to subdue the haughtiness of visitors and open them up to reevaluate their priorities and life choices, an opportunity that we should also strive to take advantage of the next time we go there to *daven*. (**R' Ozer Alport**)



HAPPY THOUGHTS

● Thinking Properly

The lights and sirens of hatzalah broke through the quiet of the neighborhood. Nineteen-year-old Simchah had been severely injured, and the paramedics tried their best to revive him. After a few strenuous minutes, Simchah was able to be transferred to a local hospital.

The doctors at the hospital weren't convinced that prolonging his life was worth it. "The quality of life he is looking at," they said, "is nothing to compare to what he was used to. He won't be able to perform even basic tasks. He will have to undergo many long years

of physical therapy and surgeries just to give him a chance. Why give him that suffering?"

They all conceded to this grim outlook except for Doctor Fried, a Yid. "Who are you to decide on his quality of life? Who said **your** quality of life is any better? Do you really have a good life? Is your life so good that it's worth living?"

He went around the table, asking the doctors to rate their quality of life from one to ten. As expected, the answers weren't so positive. Some said that they had lawsuits lingering against them that didn't give them any peace of mind, while others had various troubles at home. Eventually, Doctor Fried calculated that the average quality of life from among the doctors there was a paltry six. That was how happy they were with their quality of life.

He then suggested they ask Simchah what he felt was his quality of life, and thus they proceeded to the ICU. Simchah could barely speak, but when asked to rate his quality of life, he responded, "Ten."

"Ten?!" they repeated, astonished.

"Ten plus!"

Even in his semi-comatose state, Simchah was completely satisfied with the life that Hashem had given him! Doctor Fried had made his point.

One of the disproven doctors asked Simchah how he could be so happy knowing his bleak future. Simchah answered: "How can I not be so happy?! Hashem is giving me life. I'm able to do mitzvos. What more could I ask for?!"

Life is as you perceive it. Two people can go through the same situation. One will be calm and happy, and the other will be nervous and sad. The difference between them isn't their situation but rather how they react to it and how they perceive it. (*The Joy of Emunah*)

[On Friday night, we sing the song of *L'cho Doidi*, which contains ten stanzas. The *minhag* is to sing the first six with one tune, and the remaining four with a different one. Usually, the first tune is more emotional and heartwarming, while the second is more upbeat.

Why is this so? There's no clear difference between the two halves to warrant a shift. Most of the stanzas speak about the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash, so what changes that we go from a heartwarming tune to a dancing one?

Perhaps this teaches us a lesson. Though nothing changed from the first part, we still shift to show that the same situation can be faced however we choose to face it. We can sing it with excitement or with sorrow.

This is the lesson that comes with the onset of Shabbos. Now is the time that we set ourselves aside from whatever we are dealing with in this world. How do we do that? By remembering that every situation can be sung however we choose to sing it. It is up to us.]

● "Look What I Was Spared!"

We continue our discussion of "happy thoughts" with another *tzaddik* of Yerushalayim, **Reb Zalman Brazil** *zt"l*.

Once, his son asked him how his day was. Reb Zalman responded, "Don't even ask. It was an extremely difficult day…"

"What happened?" the son asked with concern.

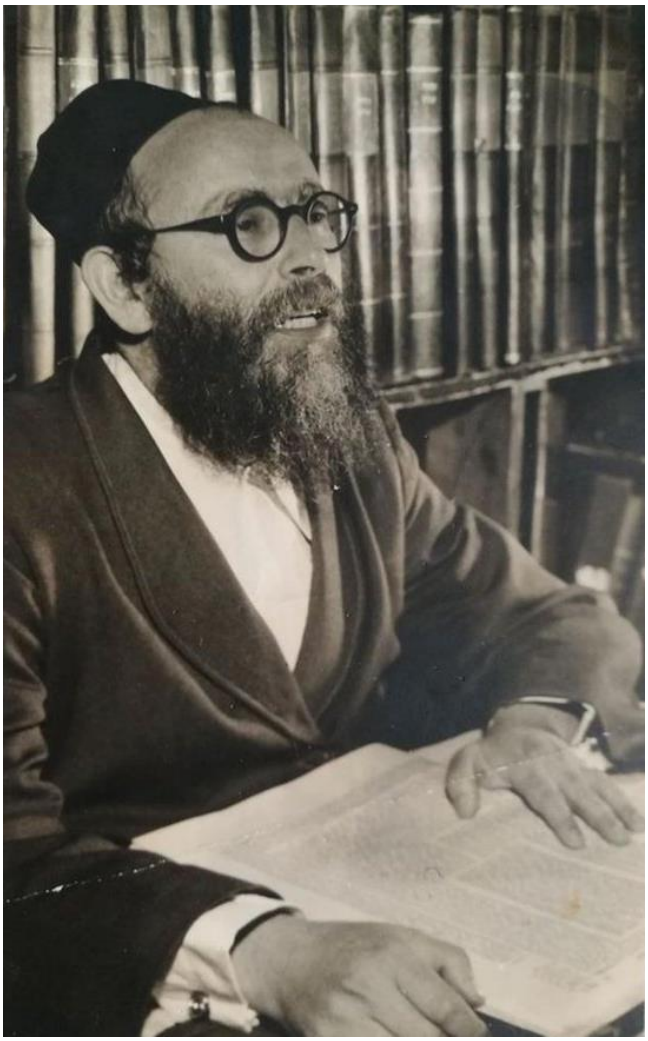
"Don't even ask. I awoke at 3 AM, like every morning, but my shoelaces weren't in my shoes. It took me two hours until I found them. I had to search all over the house…Apparently, one of the grandchildren played with my shoelaces. - "Then I went to the *mikvah*, and someone came and stole my clothes! It took a long time before someone brought me clothing so that I could leave the *mikvah*."

The son moaned about the difficult time his elderly father endured, but Reb Zalman then said, "Actually, none of that happened. My shoes had their shoelaces in them, and no one stole my clothes at the *mikvah*…"

Reb Zalman imagined difficult scenarios to help him be happy with Hashem's *chessed*. Through visualizing such scenarios, he'd build an appreciation for what he did have.

These stories help us to think about life in a healthy, happy manner, as it is important to look at life correctly.

● Notebooks Save Lives



The Rosh Yeshiva walked out puzzled from the physiologist's room. The professional had told the Rosh Yeshiva that the burden of the finances of the yeshiva was endangering his life. "Take your pick," he'd said. "Either continue what you're doing and endanger your life, or resign as Rosh Yeshiva and get back your health."

The Rosh Yeshiva immediately approached **R' Shlomo Zalman** for his guidance. Hearing the situation, R' Shlomo Zalman questioned him, "Have you ever had more challenging times when carrying the finances of the yeshiva?"

"Yes" was the response.

"Did you pull out of it?" asked R' Shlomo Zalman.

"Most definitely. Every month, I go through the same challenge in some form or another, and each time miraculously we pull through."

Said R' Shlomo Zalman: "You see how Hashem is running your life? You see that all the months you're challenged with the same challenge, and yet Hashem pulls it through. This is something that all *roshei mosdos* face. You're not the only one challenged with it.

"What's the ultimate solution? The tangible solution is to be thankful. But how do you get to this? Go buy yourself a notebook, and every time you encounter *hashgachah* in how Hashem helped you, write it down. By doing so, you'll be conscious of the *brachah* Hashem gives you.

"Also, when you get to *Modim* in *Shemoneh Esreh*, take one thing that you'd like to be thankful for and focus on it. If you do so, I **guarantee** you that the worries will disappear, and you'll live a peaceful life." (*Chachmas Ha'nefesh Ha'yehudis*)

● Positive Approach

R' Yechiel Perr remembers being told by **Rav Aharon Kotler** more than half a century ago about an experience he had. When repeating the story, R' Aharon didn't remember clearly if it took place before his marriage or immediately after his marriage, but it seemed to him that it was before.

His father-in-law, **Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer**, took him along to visit a certain sick man. This person was just a simple Yid who lived in Slutsk. Rav Isser Zalman told Rav Aharon on the way that the doctor said that the man was suffering unimaginable pain.

The sick man greeted his two visitors with a smile and seemed to be very happy. Rav Isser Zalman asked the patient how he could be so happy while suffering, and the man replied, "Imagine if I had been sentenced to die but was later 'let off' with a beating instead. Wouldn't I be full of joy?" (A letter he wrote on 2 Elul 1966)

When we face a situation we would rather not face, we are used to saying: "*Gam zu l'tovah*!" by some people the connotation can be: "Terrible. I'm so upset that this happened! I would have much rather this not happen."

But this is not the real understanding. Rather, it means: "Wonderful! Hashem knows what's best for me and is only doing this for my best!"

This is hinted to in the words themselves. We say "*Gam zu l'tovah*." Why do we say "*gam* – also"? Shouldn't we just say "*zu l'tovah*" - this is for the good? Why do we add that this **too** is for our good?

It could be teaching us the fundamental way to accept the challenges facing us. By thinking of all the *brachah* in our lives, and how Hashem at that very moment is giving us great things, enables us to accept the situation willingly.

That is why it says *gam*. *Gam* here means to remind us that we have so much good. When we encounter challenges, we come and say that this too is for our good. We include the challenge in the things that we see openly, and with this, we can accept everything gladly.

● The Enormous Loss



News came to **R' Aryeh Schechter** about a person who had a heart attack after being informed that one hundred thousand dollars of his had been stolen.

When he heard the news, he responded that he too had been robbed once of half a million dollars. It had been on Erev Shabbos, and he was staying somewhere far from home. His host that week recalled that R' Aryeh hadn't acted any different that Shabbos. Only when people came and told

the host what had happened to R' Aryeh did the host believe that R' Aryeh had lost so much money.

"We see from here," concluded R' Aryeh, "that two people can encounter the same situation. One lives with Hashem and understands that this is from Hashem and is for his best, while the other simply can't handle it and collapses from the distress."

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Rabbi Yoel Gold - Daily Giving

Rav Moshe Holcer was born in Korets, Ukraine in 1912. His family was very poor, and he learned in the local cheder. As the years wore on and he grew older, he started teaching as a rebbi in that very same cheder he had attended years before.

He taught little children how to read aleph-beis, until the Russians found out. "You're doing something subversive," they accused. "You're not allowed to be teaching anything religious." They took every teacher in the school, and right there and then, placed them on a train. The next thing they knew, they were in Siberia. He never saw his brother, his sister or his parents after that. He slept in a carved-out tree trunk for the next seven years, starving and working in a slave labor camp.

He made a pact with Hashem that if he survived, he wouldn't talk about all the pain and suffering he underwent, but would only talk about the miracles that he experienced. Years later, he would keep his promise and would always repeat the following story.

There were men in the gulag that were six-foot-two, six-foot-three, and he was a small man, barely five feet. He saw them fall like flies, and he couldn't handle that. He just couldn't bear to see them that

way. He saw what food they were giving everybody and noticed that they all received the same amount. Realizing this, he said to one of the taller men, "I'm a small man, and I don't need as much as you do. You work much harder than I do. I'm going to give you part of my ration." He would do it with one person one day, and another person another day. The people began to see what a human being he was, and they began to love him. He undoubtedly felt starving himself too, given that he was all of 67 pounds when he came out.

One morning, the Russians woke everyone up earlier than usual and they caught R' Moshe putting on his Tefillin that he had managed to hide and take with them to Siberia. They tore the Tefillin off him, ripped them open, and found pieces of parchment in a foreign language, immediately accusing him of espionage.

The next morning, they woke everybody up once again, and this time, put my father in the center with the entire camp surrounding. Two soldiers were at the ready, prepared to shoot. "Why do you have a smirk on your face?" the soldiers yelled at my father, irate at the good disposition R' Moshe was maintaining despite being moments away from death.

"Do you think this is funny? We're going to kill you." "I'm not afraid of you," replied R' Moshe. "Who are you afraid of?" the solider barked back. Without a word, Rav Moshe lifted his finger heavenward, revealing how he could remain so poised. Hashem.

Witnessing this terrifying moment was an entire group of people, who began screaming, "You can't kill him! No, no, no!" R' Moshe was so beloved and respected amongst the prisoners that they didn't want him to die. The generosity and kindness he had showed them during those freezing cold months had made him a dear friend to so many. Frightened, the two guards felt that shooting might lead to an uprising, so they let R' Moshe free.

When the camp was finally liberated after the war, he met his wife Freida in the DP camps and they got married and had three girls. A

few years later, R' Moshe and his family immigrated to America, where they settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts, right near Harvard and MIT. And for more than forty years, R' Moshe worked as the shamas (attendant) of the Tremont Street shul. He was the baal korei, baal tefilla, baal tokei'a, and even gave classes. The people that came in and out of the shul grew close to Judaism and wrote letters to him years after they left the shul, telling them about the children they have now because they became religious.

Another one of his hallmarking qualities was that despite not being a man of much financial means, he still found a way to teach his children about the importance of giving tzedaka every single day, even if it was just a small amount.



One day, a young man came to the house, a salesman, and he was selling Columbia mutual Life insurance. "For just a quarter a day," he said "you can save up enough money and have life insurance in case something happens to you or your spouse. Your children will benefit by having all this money coming back to you."

Before the salesman left, he took out a Columbus Mutual Life Insurance coin bank and gave it to R' Moshe as a gift for listening to him. It's a box that you put a coin in, and turn the lever, and it counts how much money you put in.

R' Moshe's kids thought it was the cutest thing, and he decided that this was going to be his tzedaka box. Every day he would sit his children down at the table and say, "Who wants to put the quarter in today?" They loved it. This was the highlight of the day. You would

put the quarter in and you get to push the lever and see the numbers change as the quarters would go in. It was a treat to come home from school and ask, "Who's doing the tzedaka box today?"

When the coin bank would fill up, he would take a handkerchief, spread it over the table, and open the coin bank with a special key. He would then spill out all the coins into the handkerchief, tie it up, put it in his pocket and take it to the bank. He had a special charity account from which he would send money to poor families living in Israel.

Eventually the little piece that you pushed around so that the coin would register broke. From that point on, R' Moshe would take a screwdriver and manually operate the coin bank. His family loved watching him do it. He continued putting money into that coin bank every single day, rain or shine, healthy or sick, until the last day of his life. When he passed away at 92, he was so beloved and admired that he was even memorialized in a famous mural where they featured him on a bus with other leaders and influential figures of Cambridge.

One of the most important lessons R' Moshe taught his children was about the importance of never missing a day of giving tzedakah. And indeed, such sensitivity carried over to the next generation. When his oldest daughter, Paulette, got married and had children of her own, she taught them about the importance of giving tzedaka every day. Her son, Jonathan, remembers how his mother would make sure to always send them to school with a penny or a nickel to put into the tzedakah box at school.

By the time Jonathan grew up, the concept and value of giving tzedaka every day was embedded in his DNA.

Fast forward 30 years.

Jonathan had just listened to a class about how even small mitzvos matter. Literally minutes after he finished the class, he went to put

a dollar into the tzedakah box like we always do. There, he had this epiphany that no matter how much tzedaka he gives, he still gets a mitzvah for this one dollar. He then thought to himself, "How can I guarantee myself the mitzvah of tzedakah, no matter what?" That's the idea that popped into his head.

And that's when Daily Giving.org was born.

He ran home and googled it, looking for any organization doing this. But he couldn't find anyone trying to automate daily giving. So he called his website designer, Shaul, and said, "What do you think of this idea?" He loved it right away. "Can you build me a website?" "Absolutely" was the response.

In less than five years, there are over 15,000 Jews from 39 different countries signed up to dailygiving.org, and they distribute more than $5 million a year to over 75 different organizations across the Jewish global community.

It's a diversified portfolio. For $1 a day, you get to help organizations that help others with poverty, families with children with special needs, substance abuse and mental health, those with cancer, and Torah learning. And it's just a dollar. But when we come together, it leaves its massive impact.

When they gave out their tenth million in tzedakah, Jonathan received a very special gift from his aunt. It was his grandfather's tzedaka box.

The tiny seeds of tzedaka that R' Moshe Holcer deposited into his tzedaka bank every day have now grown into a multimillion-dollar empire of cheded, fueling dozens and dozens of organizations that are dedicated to bringing yeshuos and refuos to Jews all over the world.

One day, this gentleman signed up for a dollar a day. Thirty seconds later, he signed up again with a different email address. And then a third time, and then a fourth time, and a fifth time, all in a matter

of minutes. Jonathan assumed that he was signing up his children, so he called him up and said, "Thank you so much for joining Daily Giving. Were you signing up for children?" "Yeah," he said. "They're one, two and four." Jonathan couldn't believe it. "In six, seven, eight, ten years when I give them their password, they're going to open their email and they're going to have one email repeated hundreds or thousands of times. 'Thank you for your donation.' And they're going to see that they did mitzvos every single day since they were children."



One morning, **The Klauzenberger Rebbe, Horav Yekusiel Yehuda Halberstam זצ"ל**, noticed two bochurim learning, and they were drinking coffee without milk. The Rebbe asked them why they were drinking their coffee without milk, and they answered that the yeshiva didn't have any more milk.

When the Rebbe heard this, he went to get the bochurim a bottle of milk from his house.

"There is no word in Hebrew for the English word charity. Look up the word for charity in an English-Hebrew dictionary and you'll find the word tzedaka. Tzedaka doesn't mean charity. It means righteousness. Doing what's right.

Judaism says the person who gives charity doesn't deserve a slap on the back. Someone who doesn't give charity deserves a slap on the wrist." ~ **Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair.**

The Toronto Sephardic Kollel

Sephardic Centre for Advanced Torah Study



The Parasha Question

Why was the bread placed on the Shulchan for the week called *Lechem Hapanim*?

The **Targum Yonatan** calls it "inside bread". He translates *panim* as "inside", meaning this bread was inside the *Hechal*.

Rashi explains that the word *panim* means face, and the bread was formed in a way that the two edges faced each other. Therefore, it was called *Lechem Hapanim*– the bread of faces.

The **Rambam** understands that it is called *Panim* because it is square, and had numerous sides.

The **Rashbam** answers that the term *Panim*– face was a term of specialness, meaning that the bread was worthy for kings and ministers.

The **Ibn Ezra** explains that the bread was in the *Hechal* in the presence of Hashem during the week. Therefore, it was called *Lechem Hapanim* because it was in front of Hashem's 'face'.

Others explain that it was named so because the Gemara states that a face is not smaller than a *tefach*, and this bread was a *tefach* thick. Therefore, it was called *Lechem Hapanim*– bread the size of a face.

Miracle in the Shomrei Shabbos Shul in Boro Park



The outside of the iconic Boro Park – Shomrei Shabbos shul.

Rav Yitzchok Zilberstein related a story that a man from Boro Park shared with him. The man said: One night, I went to daven Maariv at the Shomrei Shabbos Shul in Boro Park, when a man approached me and introduced himself as a visitor from Eretz Yisroel. He showed me a check that had been made out for a very large sum, and he asked if I knew the person who had written the check.

I told him that I knew the man. He is a wealthy individual who lives near the Shul, but I also knew that he was not in the habit of giving out such large donations. I asked him , "How did you get that check?"

The man told me a story that was completely incredible. He said, "I live in Eretz Yisroel and I have fallen into terrible debt. After being pursued continually by my creditors, I realized that I had no choice but to come to America to collect money, simply so that I could have a way to feed my family and to pay off my debts.

"I have been here for two weeks already, and I barely managed to cover the cost of my airfare. Today was a particularly hard day, and I didn't manage to collect even one penny. At the end of the day, I

felt that I had reached the edge of despair, and I began to lose hope. However, I knew that I couldn't go home without having collected a decent amount. On the other hand, I couldn't simply stay here forever.

"My family is waiting for me in Eretz Yisroel. For a while, I walked around in a state of depression, and I couldn't imagine how I would be able to help myself and my situation. Suddenly, a thought came to me. 'Am I alone in the world? I know that I have a great Father in Shamayim, and He can do anything!'

"I decided that I would simply pour out my heart before Hashem. I came to this Shul and I began to prepare for Maariv. When I began davening, I felt a sense of elevation, the sort of feeling I experience only during Maariv on Yom Kippur. When I was in the middle of the brachos of Krias Shema, someone tapped me on the shoulder. I didn't even look around to see who it was. I was completely immersed in my davening.

"I davened Shemoneh Esrei with more feeling and enthusiasm than I have ever felt before. I cried to Hashem that only He can save me, and that there is no true power in the world other than Him. When I finished davening, I felt as if a great weight had been lifted from my heart. The next thing I did was to rub my eyes in astonishment. Right next to my Siddur was this check, which was made out for the exact amount of money that I had hoped to collect throughout my stay in America!"

"I said to him, "I know the man who wrote that check very well, but this is totally uncharacteristic for him. He is generous and he gives a lot of Tzedakah, but he would never normally do something like this."

I decided to make my way to this donor's house and to find out the real story. I mentioned about the visitor from Eretz Yisroel, and asked if he knew the man, and he replied that he didn't. I told him, "I saw this man with a check from you that was made out for a very

large amount of money, and I wanted to find out if you really wrote that check."

When the man heard my question, he paled and his hands began to tremble. I asked him what had happened? In response, he told me this story. "I went to daven Maariv in Shomrei Shabbos and I saw a man standing off to the side and davening. It immediately occurred to me that he must be a visitor from Eretz Yisroel who had come to raise money.

"I presumed that he had probably left a family with children behind in Eretz Yisroel, and I imagined that he longed to be with his family, but his financial situation left him no choice but to remain here. It also seemed, based on his appearance, that he couldn't have been very successful in collecting more than a small sum. I assumed that he was probably disappointed and dejected over not being able to raise more money, and I imagined his wife's reaction when he returned home with only a small amount.

"I found myself overflowing with compassion for this person, and I tapped him on the shoulder and asked if he had come from Eretz Yisroel, but he didn't answer me. I decided to write a check and leave it on the table in front of him, and I left. After I wrote the check," he continued, "I started thinking about what I had done, and I began wondering if I had made a mistake. Maybe this man wasn't from Eretz Yisroel? Why did I assume that he was poor? What if he didn't even have a family? I began having some feelings of regret for what I did, and I went somewhere else to daven Maariv. Even now, I am surprised at myself when I think about it."

I quickly corrected his bad feelings and reassured him, and I said, "Don't worry, the situation is exactly as you thought it was before you wrote that check. This is just like the story in the Gemara of the man who gave his friend the benefit of the doubt, and it turned out to be correct in every detail. The man you saw in Shul is indeed a Talmid Chacham who has many debts to many creditors, but he was

very ineffective in raising money. It's true that he was feeling broken, and your check came at precisely the right time. That check saved him, and as soon as he received it, he began preparing to return to his family in Eretz Yisroel."

This made the wealthy man very happy, and he acknowledged that it could only be Hashem who had guided the events in this, and in every situation! [*Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Tefilah.]*

True Hatzlacha!



A boy suffering severe headaches was brought to the **Steipler Gaon** for chizuk by R' Michel Silber. The Steipler asked him if he's being matzliach, succeeding, in learning.

"No" was the response.

"That the source of the headaches," said the Steipler. "The Sefer Chassidim teaches that whatever a person learns in This World, even though he may not understand it, in the Next World he nevertheless will understand with all its depth. Acknowledging this will give you chizuk and encouragement to persist, and ultimately prevent the headaches from returning.

"If you retain an appreciation for what you have and what you do, it will give you an inner satisfaction from learning, which will prevent the unwarranted headaches from returning, since there'll be no need for the mind to be distracted from any emotional pain he won't be encountering." (Noam Hashem, p. 164) [*Heartwarming Stories for the Shabbos Table.]*

Chazan Tzvi Hersh Tsatskis a"h



Chazan Tzvi Hersh Tsatskis getting a kos shel yayin (cup of wine) from the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, circa 1980s.

Chazan Tzvi Hersh Tsatskis, who learned music in the Soviet Union and went on to sing Jewish songs in America and sang many times while the Rebbe distributed kos shel bracha, passed away on Shabbos, 10 Shvat, 5784/January 20th. He was 85 years old.

Tzvi Hersh was born on Yom Kippur in 1938, in the city of Kazan, Tatarstan, then part of the Soviet Union. In his youth, he was educated in Torah by Chabad chassidim, who would come to his house in secret to teach him, despite the danger of imprisonment.

In this oppressive environment, his parents tried their best to be Torah observant. Even after the war, when the Tsatskis family moved to Moscow, where Jewish life was even harder, they took great pains to keep kosher, and against all odds they succeeded.

In Moscow, young Tzvi Hersh attended public school and tried to avoid desecrating Shabbos as much as he could. He also "played hooky" on the Yomim Noraim. After that, in 1955, he went to university—the Moscow Conservatory of Music—to become a pianist, and was arrested twice while trying to attend the great Moscow Choral Synagogue. He was questioned and held in jail a few days each time, but he suffered no further fallout from those incidents.

From that time on, the Tsatkis family were actively trying to leave Russia. Finally, in 1970, a Chabad emissary went to the Lubavitcher

Rebbe to ask for the Rebbe's bracha that they get out. And less than a year later, at a time when this was near impossible! —they received the green light to go. As soon as the family arrived in America, they traveled to see the Rebbe to express our gratitude.

That was the first time Tzvi Hersh participated in a farbrengen and saw thousands of Jews gathered together—something which was forbidden in Russia. "It was amazing to hear the Rebbe speak and to see everyone so happy, singing with such joy. For me, it was an unbelievable experience," he recalled.

"During the farbrengen I was sitting by the door as far away from the Rebbe as you could get, and I couldn't hear him very well from there. But even if I could have heard him, I wouldn't have understood much," he said.

Then, at the end of the farbrengen, the Rebbe began to distribute kos shel bracha, and Tzvi Hersh, seeing people lining up to receive it and say l'chaim, began debating with myself whether I should join them.



Chazon Tsatskis

"I wanted to, but not being a Chabad chassid, I wasn't sure if I should, until I saw the line coming to an end. And then, on an impulse, I got up and stood at the back of the line. Before long I found myself in front of the Rebbe holding my cup," he recalled.

The Rebbe gave him a big smile, poured wine into my cup, and he said l'chaim. He then started to walk away, but the Rebbe called him back.

"So, I came back, and he gave me an even bigger smile and poured a bit more wine into my cup. I said l'chaim again, and then he spoke to

me in Russian: 'Don't have any more doubts.' I was so shaken that I almost fainted. Then he said, 'Sing!' And I started to sing the Pesach song, 'Who knows one?' except I sang it in Russian: 'Ech Ti Zemlyak . . .'" he related.

After that, he was privileged to sing many, many times at the Rebbe's farbrengens.

At one point in time, Chazan Tsatkis was invited to give a concert of Jewish melodies in Manhattan for the Workmen's Circle, a secular Jewish organization. During the

first intermission, somebody approached him and asked me to take off my yarmulke, and he refused. And then, during the second intermission, another person came over to him. He said he was the vice president of the organization sponsoring the concert, and his organization was very happy that I was performing for them, but they were not comfortable with him wearing a yarmulke. "Would I please remove it?" the man asked.

Chazan Tsatskis got very upset, and told him, "You are the second person to come to me and ask me to take off my yarmulke. And if someone else comes, then I will not only not take it off, but I will also take out my tzitzit and make sure no one has any doubt that I am a Torah-observant Jew." That put an end to that.

When he later came to see the Rebbe, he told him about this upsetting incident. As he was relating the story, he said, "I was giving a concert to a Jewish audience that was not observant . . ."

At that, the Rebbe interrupted me: "Why do you say that they were not observant? They are observant; they just don't know that they are observant!"

He related one story with the Rebbe that stood out in his mind.

"Let me preface: I once brought my son to a farbrengen, but I did not bring my daughter. And right away the Rebbe asked, 'Where is she? Where is Tanya?'

"When my son heard the Rebbe asking for Tanya, he ran to a make a call to my wife. She brought her right over—Tanya was then just a little girl—and when the Rebbe saw her, he waved to her. After that, I would bring her to Chabad events on many occasions.

"One time the Rebbe was distributing wine at the end of a festival, and many of the yeshivah students were singing chassidic songs. Standing on the stage not far from the Rebbe, I led a song, and Tanya, who was seven or eight years old at the time, began to sing along. When she did that, the Rebbe's secretary indicated to me that she should stop, as the men present should not listen to the voice of a girl singing.

"The Rebbe noticed this and, concerned that she might be upset, put down his cup of wine, turned to her and motioned to her to clap. He was encouraging her to participate, and he did this for some time. I was amazed! That the Rebbe should consider the feelings of a child, and that he should take so much trouble to engage her!

"He had a tremendous love for every Jew and every person. In fact, what he felt was beyond love—it was a feeling of unity. He united us with him and with G d.

I experienced this feeling, and I will never forget it," Chazan Tsatskis remembered. [anash.org]

"Love is a consequence of giving. When a person gives, it is as if he is giving part of himself. He therefore loves the recipient because he finds in him something of himself. If his giving assumes great proportions and he lavishes loving-kindness on his neighbour with abundance, he will find himself included entirely in the other. Then he can love his neighbour as himself – completely as himself – without any distinction." ~ R' Eliyahu Dessler zt"l.



Jewish Man, What Are Your Deeds?

One of the students of the **Brisker Rav Zt'l** came to visit the Rebbe after many years. The Brisker Rebbi asked his student, "What are your deeds?"

The student answered, "Baruch Hashem, I am healthy, I am happy with what I have and I am doing business and am very successful".

The Rebbi continued to talk with the student and asked again after a few minutes, "So what are your deeds".

The student answered again, "Baruch Hashem, I see blessings in my business."

An hour passed and the Rebbi again asked him, "What are your deeds"?

The student was surprised and said, "Rebbi, this is the third time you are asking me the same question. I already answered you before".

The Rebbi was distressed, and he told the student, "You did not answer my question. I asked you what are your deeds and you are telling me about your health, your wealth, and your success, but these are not your deeds. These are things given to you by Hashem. I am asking you about your deeds: Do you give charity? Do you support the widows and orphans? Is your house open to poor people and those who are having difficulties…

"If you are sincerely interested in having a guarantee for a happy life, learn to accept what cannot be changed. ~ R' Zelig Pliskin.

וְעָשִׂיתָ מְנֹרַת זָהָב טָהוֹר מִקְשָׁה תֵּיעָשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה - "***And you shall make a Menorah of real gold. The Menorah shall be made of hammered work.*** (25:31)

Rashi explains -"The Menorah shall be made" – by itself. Moshe had a difficult time figuring out how to form the Menorah. Hashem told him, "Throw the gold into the fire and it will be made by itself".

The Sfat Emet asks, "If the Menorah was made by itself, then why did Hashem command Moshe to throw the gold into the fire; the Menorah would have been made by itself?

The Sfat Emet explains that when a person puts effort into doing a Mitzvah according to his capability, then he merits assistance from Above that the part of the Mitzvah that he is not able to complete is completed by itself. He should not worry about the part of the Mitzvah that he is not able to complete because it is promised that it will be taken care of by Hashem – "Throw the gold into the fire, and it will be made by itself".

This is the truth, the Sfat Emet adds, for every single Jew and for each and every Mitzvah. For certain, a person cannot fulfill every Mitzvah in its entirety and so whatever he cannot do, he is not held accountable for. In heaven, they expect from him only what he can do, but if a person puts in all his effort to fulfill a Mitzvah and does not complete it, then he merits help from Hashem to complete the Mitzvah. - "One who comes to purify himself, gets help from Above".

The rule is that Hashem is asking from every person to begin and then when he begins to do the Mitzvah, he sees that the rest is taken care of for him. Every person can testify about himself that when he comes to fulfill a spiritual mission which on first glance looks too difficult for him to accomplish, that if he puts in all his energy and effort into it, then he sees after a short while help from Above and it is as if it was done on its own…

Divrei Torah, Ba`er Heitev

"From every man whose heart is motivated."

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמָתִי - '***Speak to the Children of Israel, and let them take for Me a portion, from every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion***.' (Shemos 25:2)

Reb Zusha of Anipoli ZY"A, the everyday teacher of his generation, penetrated to the heart of man's problems by profound interpretations of the commonplace and the ordinary.

One morning, as he was going to the synagogue, a peasant, whose wagon had broken down, asked Reb Zusha to lift it so that he might replace the wheel on the axle. "I can't," said Reb Zusha.

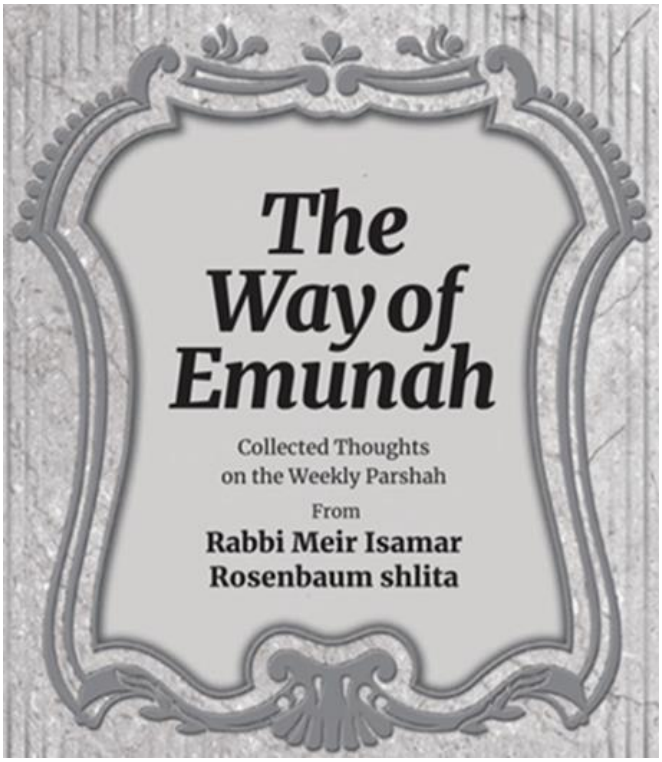
"Oh, yes you can," the peasant shouted, "but you don't want to".

Whereupon Reb Zusha, thinking of all of human life, and its failures began to weep and cried out, "O, Master of the Universe, we can, but we must desire to!" – [Sipurei Chassidim.]



מִשֶּׁנִּכְנַס אֲדָר מַרְבִּין בְּשִׂמְחָה – '***When Adar arrives, we increase in happiness***.' (Taanis 29a)

The Talmidim of Yeshiva of Staten Island – Mesivta Tiferes Yerushalayim, asked their Rosh HaYeshiva, the Godol Hador **Rav Moshe Feinstein ZY"A** how to fulfill the obligation of being happier in the month of Adar. - To this Rav Moshe answered them, they should learn more Torah, and drink a little wine every day.



וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ – '***And you shall take for me a donation from every man whose heart inspires him to give.***' (25:2)

● After Falling, One Must Strengthen Himself to Try Again

The Medrash (Shemos Rabbah 33:6) says: "וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה. This is as stated (Mishlei 4:2): 'For a good deal I have given to you. My Torah, you shall not abandon it.'"

The Kotzker Rebbe zy"a explains that one must always seek to strengthen his avodas Hashem. Even if he stumbles and falls at times, he should not become disheartened. Rather, he should strengthen himself again and continue to try to serve Him correctly, and Hashem will have mercy on him and help him fulfill his desire to serve Him.

The Medrash compares Torah to a business deal and says not to abandon this deal. If a businessman does a deal that is unsuccessful, would he abandon his business completely? Certainly not. He would get up and try another deal and daven to Hashem for success.

This is how we are meant to serve Hashem. Even if we fall, we must not give up. We must get up and try again, as is stated (Mishlei 24:16) כִּי שֶׁבַע יִפֹּל צַדִּיק וָקָם - "***A tzadik falls seven times and gets up***."

A wealthy man was once asked how he merited success in business. He answered, "I failed 100 times. Each failure was a step in the ladder to success. I tried my luck over and over again, and never gave up. If I failed, I tried again, and I learned important lessons from each failure, until I finally succeeded."

● Tzedakah Transforms Middas Hadin to Middas Harachamim

The Chida zt"l (Sefer Ruach Chaim, Drush 8) learns from this pasuk that tzedakah has the power to transform Hashem's middas hadin into middas harachamim.

The name of Havaya used in this pasuk, symbolizes the middah of rachamim. The pasuk is saying that if one takes a terumah, which is a reference to tzedakah, he will arouse the Divine trait of rachamim.

● If One Wants to Give Tzedakah, Hashem Helps Him

The Sar Shalom of Belz zy"a (Sefer Midbar Kodesh) says that this pasuk is a guarantee from Hashem that He will help anyone whose heart desires to give tzedakah, in order to ensure that he will not lack anything and he will be able to give as much as he wants.

The pasuk says that if a person has a heart that inspires him to give, "it will be taken from him his donation", meaning that Hashem will ensure that he has the ability to fulfill his desire to give.

The daughter of the **Tzemach Tzadik zy"a** – the wife of **Rav Shmuel of Skohl zy"a**, who was a son of **Rav Yehoshua of Belz zy"a** – excelled in her performance of good deeds, specifically in the middah of tzedakah. She personally supported many of the "yoshvim" in Belz and provided them with all of their needs. All she asked of them was to bless her that she should have the ability and the desire to continue to give tzedakah.

When her son reached the age of bar mitzvah, a beautiful new hat was purchased from him. However, his righteous mother took the new hat off his head and said, "If the son of the Rov wears an old hat, it won't hurt him at all, and he won't be embarrassed. But there is a poor bochur who will be very embarrassed to walk around in an old hat, so you should give him your hat."

● Tefillos Accepted in the Merit of Tzedakah



Sefer Imrei Noam explains this pasuk by citing the Gemara (Bava Basra 10A) that says that Rav Elazar would first give a coin to a poor man and then daven.

He explains that through the power of tzedakah, all Heavenly gates were opened for him, and his prayers were able to ascend directly to Hashem and provide much goodness for Klal Yisroel.

The pasuk (Eichah 3:44) says that there is a cloud that stands in the way of our tefillos. Only tzedakah can remove this cloud. This idea is hinted to in the words "vayikchu li terumah", as the gematriah of "vayikchu li" is the same as the word "anan" (cloud), while the gematriah of the word "terumah" is "kol tefillah" (the voice of prayer).

This indicates that there is a cloud that blocks our tefillos, and the way to remove it is to have a giving heart and to give money to tzedakah.

וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאִתָּם זָהָב וָכֶסֶף וּנְחֹשֶׁת – '***And these are the donations that you shall take from them: gold, silver and copper***.' (25:3)

● Donations Permeated With Ahavas Hashem

The Dubno Magid zt"l (Sefer Ohel Yaakov) writes as follows: When Hashem asked for donations of gold, silver, etc., it was obviously not because He wants gold and silver. Rather, it was because these items are precious in the eyes of man, and when a person donates to Hashem something that is dear to him, it is a show of love to Hashem.

When many people come together to display their love of Hashem, they can build a dwelling place for the Shechinah, as is stated (Shir Hashirim 3:10): "Its pillars he made of silver, its couch of gold, its curtain of purple, its interior inlaid with love."

Everyone should really have been asked to donate their love, if that were possible, but since there is no way to donate love itself, they were told to donate physical items that express their love. - By giving away things people naturally love, they were, in essence, donating their love.

● The Poor Man Who Gives a Little is More Beloved Than the Rich Man Who Gives a Lot

The Chasam Sofer (Toras Moshe) writes that "gold, silver and copper" symbolize three types of people who give tzedakah, with each one representing a higher level than the last.

"Gold" represents someone who has a lot of money and gives a lot of tzedakah, but it is not difficult for him to give because he is still left with a lot of money after he gives some away. This is not such a high level.

"Silver" represents a "middle-class" person. It is a bit harder for him to give away money than it is for a wealthy person and, therefore, his mitzvah is greater.

"Copper" represents a poor man who does not have much money. He must deny himself of some of his needs in order to give tzedakah. Therefore, his mitzvah is the greatest of all.

Chazal say (Chulin 46A) that wealthy men tend to have a stingy nature. This is actually for their benefit, as Hashem makes it hard for them to give so that they should obtain more reward for giving.

● Cutting Live Skin

The Baal Hatanya zy"a would say that the desire for gold and silver permeates all of a person's 248 limbs and 365 veins. When one gives away his money to tzedakah, it is as if he is cutting off a piece of his own body and giving it to Hashem.



וְנָתַתָּ עַל־הַשֻּׁלְחָן לֶחֶם פָּנִים לְפָנַי תָּמִיד – '***And you shall place on the table showbread before Me at all times***.' (25:30)

● Hashem Only Asks For a Little

The famed Magid, **Rav Yaakov Galinsky zt"l**, related that **Rav Zalman Sorotzkin zt"l** told him that when his father-in-law, **Rav Eliezer Gordon zt"l**, established the yeshiva in Telshe, he traveled to Kiev, where he met with a very wealthy man. The gevir welcomed Rav Eliezer into his home with much honor and asked why he had come. Rav Eliezer told him, "I would like to ask you to donate 500 rubles to our new yeshiva."

This was a very large amount of money at the time. Rav Yaakov related that when half of the city of Radin burned down, the **Chofetz Chaim** organized a campaign to raise funds to rebuild the city. He raised 200 rubles, which was enough to rebuild half the houses of the city. Thus, 500 rubles was truly a fortune of money.

The wealthy man told Rav Eliezer, "Rebbi, you must be exaggerating. Did you really think I would give that much?"

Rav Eliezer said, "I am 100% serious. I am not exaggerating at all."

The rich man now became angry and said, "They say that you are a 'gaon' in Torah. This means that you are able to understand the two sides to every argument. We now have two sides before us. Your side is that you want me to give you a huge amount of money. My side is that you are asking for way too much. Please, explain to me with your 'gaonus' why your claim is correct?"

Rav Eliezer answered, "Hashem commanded us to give maaser beheimah. We are told to make a small opening and pass all of our sheep through it. We count: 1, 2, 3…9, and the tenth sheep is struck with a stick that has red dye on it to identify it as maaser.

"This leads to a question. Wealthy men have huge flocks of sheep. For example, the Gemara says (Shabbos 54B) that Eliezer ben Azariah gave 12,000 calves for maaser a year! This means that 120,000 sheep had to pass under his stick. It certainly is a huge chore to count so many sheep and that certainly takes a very long time. He knew how many sheep he owned, so why couldn't he just take out 10% and designate it as maaser? Why can't every wealthy man do that?

"The answer is that if we would just go to a wealthy man and tell him that he must give 12,000 of his sheep to maaser, he would be very upset. He would ask: How can you tell me to give away such a huge number of sheep? Therefore, the chochomim said that the rich man should bring his entire huge flock to one place and count them all. He should say: This one is for me, this one is also for me…and the tenth is for the kohen…In this way, he will understand that he gets to keep so much of what Hashem gave him, and he only is expected to give a small percentage to the kohen."

Rav Eliezer concluded, "That is what we are arguing about. I asked you to give me 500 rubles to support Torah, and you said that I was asking for too much. Let's count all of the money and possessions you own and see what percentage I am asking for."

It goes without saying that the wealthy man conceded and gave the 500 rubles.

"Don't become sad just because you are unhappy." ~ R' Nachman of Breslov.

● Tzedakah is Always Considered a Mitzvah

Tzedakah has a benefit over other mitzvos in the sense that even if one gives charity with a personal agenda – such as a desire for honor, etc. – it is still considered a mitzvah.

The Baal Hatanya zy"a was once told that there was a wealthy man in Russia who built a large and beautiful mansion to host guests, whom he provided with very nice rooms to stay in. He made doors on each side of this house, just like Avrohom Avinu did. He would personally stand by a door and dish out food to all comers.

The Baal Hatanya said that he needs to see this for himself, and he traveled deep into Russia to get to this man's guesthouse. When the wealthy man saw the Baal Hatanya, he recognized that he was an exalted person. Therefore, he gave him a private room to stay in.

The Baal Hatanya watched this man and saw how he greeted his guests with a smile and waited on them all day, taking care of all of their needs.

In the evening, the man came to the Baal Hatanya's room and began to cry. When the Baal Hatanya asked why he was crying, he said, "Rebbe, you saw how hard I work for my guests. But I am worried that my intentions are not fully l'sheim shomayim. How can I know if Hashem is pleased with my actions?"

The Rebbe replied, "You have no reason to worry. As long as the poor people are deriving sustenance, and you are the one providing it, Hashem is happy with you."

"Bitachon is the antidote to fear. When we trust in Hashem, we are able to let go of our fears and embrace the journey of life with joy and peace." ~ Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky.

Pearls of Wisdom…A Word for the Ages

The Ben Ish Chai writes that the nature of people is such, that when they donate to a cause, the first time they donate, they do it with Simchah and enthusiasm. As time goes on, this feeling fades away and the person gives with less and less happiness.

However, one should have the opposite outlook to this. Each time we have the opportunity to give again, even if it is for the same cause, we should multiply our happiness.

The Ben Ish Chai says that this concept is hinted to in the word **כסף** , money. In Gematria, **כ** equals 20, **ס** equals 60, and **ף** equals 80. Each letter successive letter in the word **כסף** has a higher numerical value than the one before it, which hints to this idea that each time one gives Tzedakah, he should become more and more B'Simchah!



שמואל זנויל כהנא Shmuel Zanvil Kahana Zt'l (Chief Rabbi of Persian Jewry)

Everyone Must Build The Closet

וְעָשׂוּ אֲרֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים - "***They shall make an ark of acacia wood***" (25:10)

In our parasha there are twenty-nine commandments in the singular related to the construction of the various vessels of the Mishkan. On the other hand, the commandment "וְעָשׂוּ אֲרֹן" is in the plural.

The various pieces of furniture for the tabernacle can be made by a single person; But the ark should be built by the people as a whole. The ark, in which the Torah resides, is the result of the action and responsibility of the entire community; The things that the Torah teaches us should be cultivated both individually and collectively.

Today we do not know where the 'Ark of the Covenant' is; But the spiritual ark must be within us. We are the 'coffin'. By studying the Torah and keeping its commandments, we carry the Torah in our hearts. The integrity of the ark is the result of the efforts and investment of all of us.

Leaky Roof



A contingent of government officials came to Rimanov to find a suitable storage warehouse for the army's food and supplies. After combing the city, the only place they came up with was the local Shul.

When the heads of the Kehila heard, they ran to **R' Mendele of Rimanov** to ask him what to do. One person stood up and said that as soon as they told the officials that the roof leaks and all their supplies would be ruined, they would change their minds and not use the Shul as a storehouse.

Everyone agreed that this seemed a good plan of action. R' Mendele, however, heard this and said they were sorely mistaken. In fact, he said, it was because of the leaky roof that this Gezeira befell them. - "If we don't actively take care of our own Shul, and degrade its honour by allowing the roof to leak, what do you expect of the non-Jews? Go fix the roof right away and everything will be fine."

"Don't expect your tefillos should be answered when it rains, if you don't also daven when the sun shines." ~ Torah Tavlin.



The design of the structure of the *Mishkan*, with all its myriad details and fine points, was a Divine design. This applies not only to the general plan, but also to its vessels, including the finest details regarding the construction materials, and all the various parts that connect the boards to the curtains, as well as all the details of the various vessels. - Knowing how to bring all the materials together to consummate the Divine plan took a human with a deeper understanding of *Torah* insight.

At the turn of the 20th century, members of the old *Yishuv* of Jerusalem embarked on an ambitious initiative to build a new Jewish hospital, the first one to be constructed outside the Old City.

Concerns over hygiene and public health plagued the daily lives of the residents in the *Yishuv*. Grinding poverty, malnutrition, squalid living conditions and a dearth of adequate health care facilities, facilitated the spread of disease.

A plot of land was purchased on the outskirts of the small *Sha'are Tzedek* neighborhood and the hospital built on it would eventually assume the name of the neighborhood.

One of the residents of *Meah Shearim*, **Reb Yaakov Mann**, was well known in Jerusalem as an architect and builder of homes. Reb Yaakov had arrived in *Eretz Yisroel* around his *Bar Mitzvah* age, but he had already earned a reputation as a genius and a *Torah* scholar. He captivated the resident *Talmidei Chachamim* of Jerusalem even at so young an age and he was accepted as a *talmid* of the **Kutna Rov *zt"l***. His brilliant mind understood architecture, planning, materials and contracting and he had a hand in the construction of almost all

the neighborhoods in Jerusalem which were built after the Jewish settlement began leaving the city-within-the-walls, gaining new expertise with each additional project.



While working on the construction plans of *Sha'arei Tzedek* Hospital, built for the eminent **Dr. Moshe Wallach**, Reb Yaakov maintained a fluid correspondence with the hospital administration in Germany. The officials there marveled at his excellent blueprints and comprehensive knowledge in building.

One of the members of the administration wrote to him, asking where he had studied the advanced architecture and engineering necessary for his profession. - In all due respect, Reb Yaakov felt obliged to answer but his reply was curt and pointed: "My school of higher education was *Masechet Eruvin* with the commentaries of *Rashi* and *Tosfos*."

When the actual construction was completed, Reb Yaakov affixed the *mezuzos* upon all the doorposts but contrary to custom, nailed them vertically instead of diagonally.

When the pious Dr. Wallach noticed this aberration, he brought him to task. Reb Yaakov replied, "To the best of my knowledge, the

entire building lies on a slant due to the topography here. I did my best to put the *mezuzos* straight so that they would lie on the true diagonal - and you wish to improve on this?"

Dr. Wallach was not satisfied with this reply for he complained to the Chief Rabbi, **R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld zt"l**.

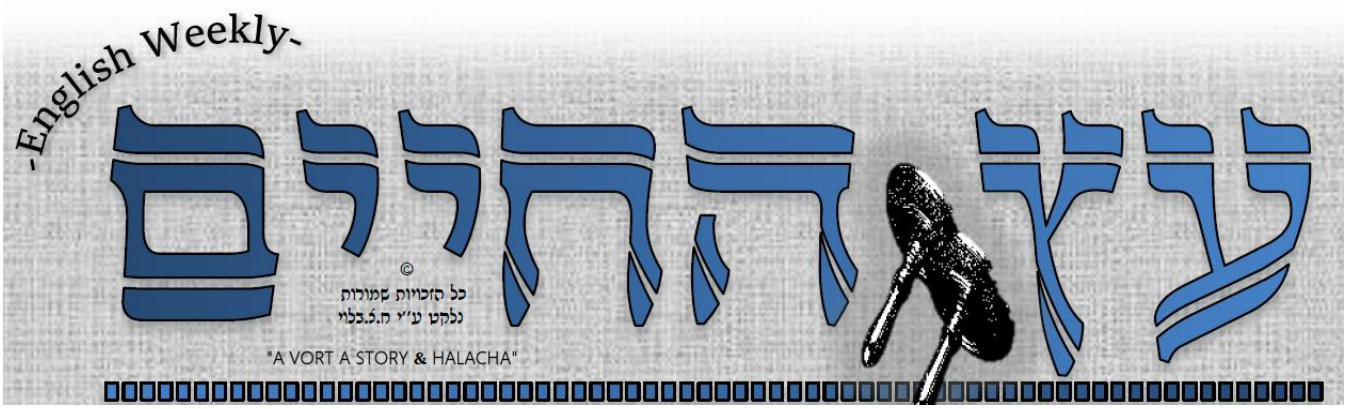
Upon hearing that Reb Yaakov was in charge of the construction and that he had placed the *mezuzos* in an unusual position, the latter dismissed his concerns and replied, "When Reb Yaakov does something, he knows what he is doing."

Upon completion, *Sha'are Tzedek* was the most beautiful building in Jerusalem, and its spacious wards and grounds made it the largest state-of-the-art facility in the city. The ceremonial opening took place on January 27, 1902, the birthday of Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II. Dr. Wallach was appointed the general director and chief physician of the hospital. His dream to have the most modern medical facility in the country, with high hygienic standards, a quarantine ward for infectious diseases, vaccinations, and even a dairy to provide fresh milk for the patients, was finally coming true.

According to the original building plans, the construction should have taken four years to complete but for a number of reasons, it dragged out for over six years.

As the contractor in charge of the building project, Reb Yaakov Mann was compensated for five years of work, however, he returned the salary of the fifth year for fear that his laxity had perhaps caused the delay. Since returning the money in a lump sum was too difficult, he repaid it in monthly instalments.

We are one people. When a Jew gossips in Kovno, a Jew in Paris desecrates the Shabbos. ~ R' Yisrael of Salant zt"l.



Chinuch

In Parshas Beraishis, Rashi brings that the word *keruvem* refers to *malachei chavala*. Whereas, in this week's parsha, Rashi refers to them as the faces of children. What is the geder hadevarem?

Rav Meir Shapiro זצוק״ל, says that we can learn from here a major yesod in chinnuch. In Parshas Bereshis the keruvem were holding a sharp sword preventing Adam from entering into Gan Eiden. If Adam would have gotten close to the sword, he would have been killed and sent to sheol tachtia. Therefore, those faces of the *keruvim* represent faces of malachai chavala. Whereas, the *keruvim* that were placed in the holy of holies, give a resemblance to the faces of young and pure innocent children.

Zokt Rav Meir Shapiro, "Children are like a mold, whatever surroundings you will place them in, that is how they will turn out. If you place them in a makom of kedusha, they will become pure and kadosh v'tahor. Whereas, if you place them by the sword, that would be the entrance way to gehenom, so they will resemble malachai chavala!

It is the same children but where you place them will cause a result that will be two total apposing outcomes.

● When **Rav Boruch Ber** was little boy, his father was once looking for him urgently. Apparently, there were these two goyim brutally fighting and he did not want the eyes of his little Boruch Ber to even see such a sight. He wanted to keep him pure.

● **The Chasam Sofer** had a sister who would cover her eyes every time they would pass a tiflah [cross] so her eyes should not even see the tiflah for a moment!

● In a certain place there was a shortage of babysitters, so a group of women got together and hired a goyish Mexican [most likely a christian] lady to babysit their children!

A shiksa lady all by herself watching yidisheh children?!

I thought to myself, "I wonder what kind of lullabies do Mexican shiksahs sing and are imbuing into these holy neshamos?"

"Would anyone be surprised if she has a cross dangling from her neck?"

We as parents are obligated and responsible to safeguard the sanctity of our children from the day they are conceived and there is zero justification for giving a Jewish child solely over into the care of a shigsa goy. Period. Do we want to create malachei chavala or kedusha?



● **Harav Pesach Eliyahu Falk זצוק״ל** shows how this idea is **מרומז** in this week's **פרשה** by the **כפורת** and the **כרובים** that were on top of the **ארון**.

Rashi says that the faces on the **כרובים** were the faces of children. Rashi explains that the **כרובים** were not soldered on to the **כפורת** after they were made, rather they were formed together from one piece of gold.

Rav Falk explained, this too can be hinting to the upbringing we should be giving our children. It can't be that later, once everything is set, you can just "solder" the children to the **ארון אלקים**.

You cannot wait until later on in life and assume that you will be able to "attach" them to Yiddeshkeit at that point. Rather, the **כפורת** and the **כרובים** had to be all one piece, carved out slowly to form the **כרובים** together with the **כפורת**.

By children, too, it must be a "carving out" process of raising and forming children to live a life connected to the **ארון אלקים** from the start.

● **Tefillah works.**

So even though **ע"פ טבע** one will get influenced by bad surroundings, by continuously davening hard to be protected, one can protect himself and his family from all the negative influences. [**ח"ו** this does not mean to put one's self in the situation in the first place, this is just the "medication" in the face of **נסיון**, as we daven everyday **ולא לידי נסיון**]

Harav Eliyahu Brunner שליט"א told over as follows: "One of the times that I took **Rebbetzin Kanievsky** to visit her father **Hagaon Rav Elyashiv זצוק"ל**, **Rav Avrohom Elyashiv** told me, "On this floor tile over here the Rebbetzin stood in her single years and very single night without fail she would recite the entire Tehillim, cover to cover!"

When we drove back to **בני ברק**, I gathered the courage and I asked the Rebbetzin, "What caused the Rebbetzin to recite the entire Tehillim every night without fail?"

At first, she tried to refuse to answer, but in the end, she agreed to tell me. "In my father's house there was no money. My mother **ע"ה** did not desire anything. Her only desire and goal was that my father's learning should be able to be without any disturbances.

This was her life's work. I was the oldest daughter, and at that stage I already understood how to manage parnassah, so I found a job and went to work in order to help support my family. However, since naturally the atmosphere of the workplace practically had no

Torah atmosphere, therefore, I decided to wake up very early every morning to stand and say the entire Tehillim in order that I should merit that the coming day should pass by with complete goodness and joy, and with faithfulness to Hashem, in the way I was **מחונך** in my father's home. And that I should not **ח"ו** be influenced by any negative surroundings that I may face in the working world."

Reb Yoel Rotenstein On The Parsha

רבי משה מרדכי אפשטיין

וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב - "***And make two golden cherubim***..." (25:18)

'***They had the likeness of a child's face***.' (**Rashi**).

We find the subject of the cherubim twice in the Torah: (1) *Gan Eden;* (2) the *Mishkan*. The ones in *Gan Eden* are **מלאכי חבלה**, *destructive malachim* who are there to guard the way to *Gan Eden* (*Bereishis* 3:24). The ones at the *Mishkan*, though, were **מלאכים קדושים**, *malachim of holiness*.

In raising children, parents need to know that it is possible to make them *malachim* of holiness or, *chas veshalom*, destructive *malachim*. Everything depends on where you put them: outside, or inside within the *Mishkan*, a place of *kedushah*.

FACEBUKER SHABBOS TABLE TALK

Continuing the Legacy of Rabbi Dovid Winiarz of blessed memory

The Perfect Gift

The Parsha begins by saying that Moshe should tell the Jews to offer donations to Hashem and the Mishkan. It then says, "And this is the offering you shall accept from them: gold, silver and copper." The words for these metals allude to the days throughout the year upon which we read the Torah publicly in the synagogue:

זהב - The days of the week: 7th, 5th and 2nd - Shabbos, Thursday and Monday

כסף - Yom Kippur, Sukkos, Pesach/Purim

נחשת - Nairot (Chanukah), (Rosh) Chodesh, Shavuos/Shmini Atzeres, Taanis (fast days).

Why is this? Why does the Torah allude to Torah-reading days?

Perhaps it is because one cannot give a gift until he gets to know the recipient. For a gift to bring a closer relationship between two parties, it must be thoughtful and geared towards that which the receiver would value and enjoy. Therefore, the first thing to do when donating to Hashem is to study His Torah so we get to know Him and understand Him and what he wants from us. Because everything in the Universe is His, the desire to come close to Hashem and the wish to do His will is the only thing we can "give" to Him.

לְכֹל֙ כְּלֵ֣י הַמִּשְׁכָּ֔ן בְּכֹ֖ל עֲבֹדָתֹ֑ו וְכָל־יְתֵדֹתָ֙יו֙ וְכָל־יִתְדֹ֣ת הֶחָצֵ֔ר נְחֹ֖שֶׁת - '***All the implements of the Mishkan for all its labor, and all its pegs and all the pegs of the courtyard [shall be] copper***.' (27:19)



The very last line of the parsha discusses the copper pegs of the Mishkan which were used to hold down the sides of the covering.

At first, Rashi states that he is unsure whether the pegs were staked into the ground, or whether they were merely tied to the flaps of the Mishkan's fabric and held them down against the wind by virtue of their own weight. **וְאֵינִי יוֹדֵעַ אִם תְּחוּבִין בָּאָרֶץ אוֹ קְשׁוּרִין וּתְלוּיִין וְכָבְדָן מַכְבִּיד שְׁפוֹלֵי הַיְרִיעוֹת שֶׁלֹּא יָנוּעוּ בָּרוּחַ**

From this question, **R' Moshe Feinstein z"l** learns an important lesson about life and how to prepare ourselves to be proper Jews.

A person, he says, must be strong enough in his own Torah, faith, and knowledge to withstand the wild winds of popular opinion and trends which threaten to push people away from where they should be. This is represented by the thought that the pegs would simply hold down the flaps by their sheer weight.

On the other hand, the idea that the pegs might have been staked into the ground, teaches us that at the beginning, when a person is not that strong yet, he must endeavour to surround himself with teachers and friends who will be a support system for him and reinforce the ideals and principles for which he stands. - This will enable him to remain strong in the face of the fiercest winds until he has reached the point where he can stand on his own.





DIVREI TORAH ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA AND HOLIDAYS FROM THE TEACHINGS OF RABBEINU SHIMSHON DOVID PINCUS ZT"L

The Shul is a Holy Place

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם – '***They shall make a Sanctuary for Me.***'

The *parshah* talks about building *Beis Hamikdash*. And *Chazal* say, based on the verse **וָאֱהִי לָהֶם לְמִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט** – "***I will be a small***

sanctuary for them" (Yechezkel 11:16). – that in our times, the *shuls* and *batei midrash* stand in place of *Beis Hamikdash*.

This is not just a mere allusion. It is a full-fledged *halachah d'oraysa*. **The Chofetz Chayim** quotes *Sefer Yere'im* regarding this. It says in Sefer Yere'im that the *mitzvah* of *mora Midkash,* which means being in fear and awe of Heaven's glory that rests in *Beis Hamikdash,* and behaving respectfully there: this *mitzvah* is a Biblical obligation even in our times, and it applies in our *shuls* and *batei midrash.*

For this reason, we may not behave frivolously in *shul* or *beis midrash.* We may not joke around or engage in idle talk. We surely may not speak *lashon hara* or other forbidden forms of speech there. And it says that, as this would seem as if one is rebelling against the King in His own Home, right in front of Him.

And we may not go into a *shul* or *beis midrash* just in order to get out of the rain, or to talk to someone, or to take a shortcut to somewhere else. But if one stays there a short while, and learns or *davens* a little, it is permitted.

There is also a Biblical prohibition on destroying anything of the *shul* or *beis midrash,* including its equipment. The Shul is a Holy Place. For this reason, we should take care not to scratch up the tables, benches or walls of the *shul.* This would be a Biblical prohibition. And mainly, we need to warn the children not to do so.

All these *mitzvos* show how careful we should be about the *kedushah* of *shuls* and *batei midrash,* and to show them proper respect.

We see in the *parshah* that the Jewish people showed honor to the House of *Hashem,* and were very, very excited about beautifying it, in order to magnify and glorify the House of our G-d. They thus donated gold, silver, jewels and all kinds of precious materials in order to make it magnificent.

In all generations, Jews went out of their way to show their affection for the *shul* and make it beautiful. And today, in our

generation, like every matter of *kedushah,* there is much less excitement over this *mitzvah.*

One of the reasons for this is because our simple, pure faith in *Hashem* has weakened greatly. Someone who has full, living *emunah* in the Torah and the teachings of *Chazal* will know that these matters are to be taken literally.

The *shul* and *beis midrash* are the home, so to speak, of the *Borei Olam.* Our life, *parnassah,* health and everything else are from Him. Someone who knows this will surely not be lax about honoring and glorifying this great house. He will treat it at least as carefully as he treats his own home.

Even dignified people need not be concerned about their personal honor in this regard. They should lend a hand themselves to caring for the *shul* and *beis midrash* so it is nice and orderly and well taken care of. As *Shlomo Hamelech* said, אַל תִּתְהַדַּר לִפְנֵי מֶלֶךְ – "***Don't be concerned about your own dignity when you are before a king***." (Mishlei 25:6.)

Caring for the *shul* is a sign of the purity of one's *emunah* and love of *Hashem.* These are very lofty traits, and the source of all blessings.

Harav Yosef Dov Pincus - Kollel Nefesh Shimshon

Over the years, I have met a lot of people who knew or heard my father zt"l, and a lot of them told me that he had a very significant influence on them. Even now, decades after his passing, his Torah and his words continue to influence them.

People ask me: What was his secret? How did he do it?? How did he influence me so much???

This is a good question. There are several possible answers, but I will tell you the one I think is the real reason.

Everything he spoke, all the chizuk he gave, was about matters that he personally was holding by. If he spoke about it, that means he was on that madreigah. It was something he lived.

There are people who will stand up to speak about lofty matters that they have no or little personal experience with, about madreigos that they are simply not holding there. They speak well, and the subject is important, and what they say is all true! But they are talking from their head because they are not holding there.

When my father spoke, it wasn't theoretical. He was talking about real life. No matter how high and lofty the subject, it was always down-to-earth, because he really lived it. Otherwise, he wouldn't talk about it. This is why his words penetrated people's hearts with such surprising force.

This whole idea came to my mind right now because the first devar Torah in this week's parsha sheet is about showing respect for the shul, as this is where the Shechinah dwells nowadays. So that reminded me of an unforgettable story:

I was about twelve years old, and I was with Tateh in the shul in Ofakim, and suddenly he says to me, "Please go home and bring me a mop and soap, and some rags."

I didn't understand why in the world he needed a mop and soap when he was in shul, but I brought them for him, and as soon as I returned, he went into the bathroom of the shul and started cleaning up!

I couldn't believe it. It just didn't look like a normal thing for the Rav of the shul to do! Isn't there a cleaner?? So I asked him why he is doing this, and he said with utter simplicity, "This is a shul. It needs to be clean and nice."

Here he took all the lofty ideas he spoke about, and just did them. Because that is where he was holding. - So it doesn't surprise me that his words had an influence.

Chabad.ORG

From our Sages

זָהָב – 'Gold.' (25:3)

The world was not considered worthy to make use of gold. So why was it created? - For the Mishkan. (**Midrash Rabbah**)

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם – 'They shall make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell within them.' (25:8)

The verse does not say "and I will dwell within it," but "and I will dwell within them"—within each and every one of them. (**Shaloh**)

וְעָשׂוּ אֲרוֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים אַמָּתַיִם וָחֵצִי אָרְכּוֹ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי רָחְבּוֹ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי קֹמָתוֹ – 'They shall make the ark . . . two cubits and a half shall be its length, a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height.' (25:10)

The measurements of the ark were all in fractions, indicating that to become a vessel for Torah, a person must first "break" his ego. (**Rabbi Natan Adler**)

וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ... וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ נְחֹשֶׁת - 'You shall make an altar . . . and you shall overlay it with copper.' (27:1–2)

Why copper? Just like copper tarnishes and then can be scrubbed clean, so the people of Israel, although they sin, they repent and are forgiven. (**Midrash HaGadol**)

The measurements of the ark were all in halves, indicating that no matter how much one studies Torah, one never masters its whole; אֲרֻכָּה מֵאֶרֶץ מִדָּהּ וּרְחָבָה מִנִּיהֶם – "*Longer than the land is its measure, and broader than the sea*" (Job 11:9). (**Pardes Yosef**)



Rabbi Shlomo Kluger zt"l

● **How did Rashi know that the tachashim were only temporary creations?**

וְעֹרֹת אֵילִם מְאָדָּמִים וְעֹרֹת תְּחָשִׁים וַעֲצֵי שִׁטִּים (25,5) "***Red ram skins, skins of tachashim, and acacia wood.***"



Rashi explained that tachashim were a species of animal which existed only temporarily and had many colours, and therefore the Targum Onkelos translates it **סַסְגּוֹנָא**, a contraction of words which mean that it rejoices and prides itself about its colours. Why did Rashi need to tell us that they existed only temporarily?

It seems that it bothered Rashi that the Torah wrote "skins of tachashim", because in the previous posuk it wrote that they donated "goats" even though they only needed the hair of the goats, so why did it not write also here that they donated "tachashim" even though they only needed the skins. Now, the fact that it wrote in this posuk "ram skins", and not just "rams", is not a problem, because it wanted to say that they were **מאדמים**, which means that they were

red, and if it had said "rams **מאדמים**", it would have implied that the rams themselves should be red. But really the intent is not that the rams should be red, but the skins. But with the tachashim it a problem that it mentions the skins and not just the tachashim.

The explanation is that if tachashim always existed in the world, then the Torah would have mentioned them and not their skins, because they are more important than their skins. But since they were only created temporarily for the sake of the skins which were needed for the Mishkan, therefore it says skins of tachashim, since they were the main thing and not the tachashim themselves.

Rashi brings proof for this from the Targum, from the fact that it rejoices in its colours. Only because its multicoloured skin was needed for the Mishkan was it created. Therefore, it rejoiced about its colours, since through them it merited to come to the world. But if anyway it would have come to the world, it would not have rejoiced about its colours, and this the proof that Rashi brings that it was only a temporary creation.

"Every person must realize and remind themselves, 'I with all my abilities, potentials and talents - both physical and spiritual - am unique in the universe. Amongst all those alive today there is no other me. In past generations too there was no other me. And until the end of time there will be no other me. - And if so, the Master of the universe certainly has sent me here on a special mission that could be fulfilled by no one else but me - with all my uniqueness." ~ Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe (1914-2005).

"No good deed is ever considered small or insignificant. Anything you do for Hashem and for other people will live on for eternity." ~ Rabbi Avigdor Miller (1908-2001)



◣ Because It's His Will - Chiddushei Harim

וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה - "***They shall take for Me a portion.***" (25:2)

'For Me - for the glory of My Name.' (Rashi)

This means that you shouldn't make the offering because you want your gifts to cause the Shechinah to dwell in your midst, but only for the glory of My Name, for no other reason but that it is G-d's will.

There is more merit in the resolve to obey G-d's command simply because it is His will that we do so than there is in any other high resolve, no matter how noble.

◣ Creating A Home For Hashem - Alshich Hakadosh

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם - "***and I will dwell among (lit. within) them.***" (25:8)

Shouldn't the text read: "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell within it (i.e., the sanctuary)"?

"That I may dwell within them" refers to the Jews, and implies that it is the duty of each and every Jew to make a sanctuary within his or her own heart - a place in which the Holy Presence may dwell. - If all the Jews build such a tabernacle within their hearts, G-d would dwell within the heart of every one of them.

◣ Emulating The Child - Chida

וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב - "***And you shall make two golden Keruvim.***" (25:18)

The Sages relate that the Keruvim had the form of a child's face. Thus, the two Keruvim on the Aron were to remind those who study the Torah that they must be like a child in two respects: They must accept the Torah's authority like an obedient child who has not yet begun to study, and they must be pure and innocent of sin just like a child.

◣ Undercover Tzaddik - Premishlaner Rebbe

וְעָשִׂיתָ יְרִיעֹת עִזִּים לְאֹהֶל עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן - "***You shall make curtains for a tent over the Mishkan.***" (26:7)

There are two kinds of tzaddikim: On the one hand, there is a tzaddik who is the same on the outside as on the inside. When you look at him, you know he is a tzaddik. On the other hand, there is a tzaddik whose righteousness is hidden. To the casual observer, this tzaddik is nothing special, a "regular" person.

Which way is preferable?

The pasuk states: "You shall make curtains for a tent over the Mishkan." This teaches us that a tzaddik should try to "cover" himself, for it instructs us to make a curtain to cover our inner Mishkan - our inner holiness.

"Always be happy. Know and believe with perfect faith that the Divine Presence is always near you and is watching over you. When you look toward your Creator, He will be there looking back at you." ~ The Baal Shem Tov, Yisrael Ben Eliezer (1698-1760).

◣ Overturning Falsehood - Reb Elimelech Lizhensk

וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁים לַמִּשְׁכָּן עֶשְׂרִים קֶרֶשׁ לִפְאַת נֶגְבָּה תֵּימָנָה - "...***twenty boards for the south side southward***." (26:18)

The letters of the Hebrew word keresh ("board") can be rearranged to spell sheker ("falsehood"), indicating that if you succeed in overturning falsehood, you will achieve the highest level of holiness - you will be worthy of becoming a part of the Sanctuary.

Story of the Week Compiled by Aaron Leitner



Among the passengers in JFK waiting for a flight to Los Angeles was **Rabbi Ezriel Tauber, zt"l**. There was some time before the flight, so Rabbi Tauber found a comfortable place to sit and took out a small *gemara*, from which he began learning. Suddenly, an announcement echoed through the terminal with the news that his flight would be delayed for 40 minutes due of a technical problem. Most of the other passengers were visibly upset. They expressed their consternation, angrily, saying that they had meetings to attend, they were losing money and so on, but Rabbi Tauber continued, calmly, learning from his *gemara*.

The 40 minutes passed, and a second announcement was made, this time saying that the flight would be delayed an additional 60 minutes. Now the passengers' reactions were even more intense. Many of them began yelling their complaints to anyone who might

hear them, though they all knew that it wouldn't help at all. But not Rabbi Tauber. He remained silent and continued learning.

One of the passengers who was extremely upset – fuming, in fact – was a tall, stocky, intelligent-looking man with the air of a professor. As the minutes ticked by, his fury increased. When the 60 minutes turned into two hours, and then three, it wasn't only the "professor" who was furious. By this point, almost all of the people who were waiting were acting out uninhibitedly – expressing their frustration to each other despite the fact that they were strangers, making angry phone calls, and yelling at the airport personnel to express their stress and distress (and hopefully get some answers). All the while, Rabbi Tauber remained seated, unfazed, learning quietly.

Many people noticed Rabbi Tauber's peaceful demeanour and behaviour, including the professor. In fact, he was so intrigued by Rabbi Tauber's serene manner that he kept looking over at him to see if there was any change. But there wasn't; Rabbi Tauber continued learning without even the slightest sign of agitation. Eventually, Rabbi Tauber became aware that this man was watching him. But no words were exchanged, and Rabbi Tauber continued to focus on his *gemara*.

Finally, after three and a half hours, there came the announcement that everyone was waiting for: It was time to proceed to the gate. The plane was ready to take off.

There were many sighs of relief, but they were accompanied by yet more grumbling, complaints and anger over the inconvenience and various other problems that the delay had caused. Now, the truth is that the very thing that caused those hours of frustration probably saved these people's lives. During the time that they were waiting to board the plane, a technical problem was being corrected, ensuring that they would arrive at their destination safely. But agitated people don't always think clearly.

As the group made its way to the plane, most of the passengers continued expressing their irritation, the professor included. Everyone boarded and looked for their seats, put their carry-ons in the overhead compartments, and settled in for the late flight. And where was the professor's seat? Right next Rabbi Tauber – who was back to learning within a few minutes of sitting down. The professor eased into the seat next to him and could hardly keep from staring. *How is this man so completely immersed in his book? Why on earth is he so calm? We waited three and a half hours to get on this plane! Doesn't he care?*

Rabbi Tauber was well aware of his companion's stares. After a short while, he turned to the man and said, "What do you want to say? Let it out." Finally, the professor spoke. "I've been watching you since we were in the terminal," he said. "I've come to the conclusion that you're either crazy or an angel. How can you be so calm when the rest of us are all losing our minds over this delay? And what's in that book that you find so absorbing?"

Rabbi Tauber smiled good-naturedly. "This book is part of the Torah, the teachings of G-d. The Torah is not just something we learn as an intellectual pursuit. Studying Torah changes the spirit. It makes a person calmer and more relaxed because it puts us in touch with a much higher reality."

He continued, "Maybe you think that I able to remain calm because I didn't have anything planned for today, so the delay didn't matter to me. So let me tell you – my name is Rabbi Ezriel Tauber, and I'm a well-know lecturer among Orthodox Jews. I'm on this flight because I was on my way to a major conference at which I was to be the main speaker. But by the time I get there, the conference will be over. They'll probably set up something for me tomorrow, but it won't compare to what I was supposed to do today. So how am I so calm? It's because I've learned from the Torah that everything that happens is from G-d, and everything He does is Good."

The professor interrupted. "If everything is good, then why is G-d making you miss your lecture?" Rabbi Tauber answered, "I don't know, but I do know that everything is for the best, even if we can't understand it." The man was silent, so Rabbi Tauber reopened his *gemara* and resumed learning. When the plane landed in LA, the two men politely parted ways.

Fifteen years later, Rabbi Tauber was on one of his lecture tours in Eretz Yisrael. One night, a dignified-looking rabbi came up to him at the end of a lecture. He had a long beard and wore a frock coat. The rabbi stood in front of Rabbi Tauber for a few moments and then asked, "Do you remember me?"

Rabbi Tauber looked at him, tried to place him, and then replied, "I'm sorry, but I don't."

"Do you remember that 15 years ago, you were stuck in an airport in New York waiting for a flight to Los Angeles, and it was delayed for three and half hours?"

"Of course!" said Rabbi Tauber.

The rabbi continued, "And do you remember that man who sat next to you on the plane, the man who couldn't understand how you were so calm?"

Rabbi Tauber nodded. "Were you also on that flight?" he asked.

The rabbi answered quietly, "*Kevod harav,* I am that man."

Rabbi Tauber was astounded. After a moment, he said tactfully, "I don't remember you looking like this."

The rabbi smiled. "I'm from a totally assimilated family, but my mother is Jewish. When I saw how you studied so calmly in that exceedingly stressful situation, I couldn't ignore you. And when we ended up sitting next to each other and you answered my questions the way that you did, I was even more amazed. Back at home, I couldn't put you out of my mind. I made several inquiries to verify

what you had said – that you really are a prominent rabbi who was flying to a conference in LA where you would be a main speaker. I confirmed that every detail was true.

"I have a wife and two sons; at the time, my sons were in university. It hit me that were all living with no connection to Judaism at all. I told my family that if the Torah can affect a person the way it affected you – if a person could remain calm and centred in the midst of a difficult situation – then we had to look into it for ourselves. We couldn't just continue living our lives as we had always done."

"We attended a three-day Arachim seminar. We were hard nuts to crack, believe me. We all asked lots and lots of questions, many of which we thought were deal breakers, but the rabbis all had answers. We are not people who can be won over easily. We're deep thinkers and we want to know the truth. So we asked and asked, thinking that our questions might reveal a hole in the explanations."

"But there were no holes. It was all truth. By the end of the seminar, we knew that the Torah is true and that, therefore, we have to live by it. I closed my business, and my family and I moved to Eretz Yisrael. Today I'm a *rosh Kollel.* Just two days ago, I had the merit of making a *siyum haShas*, and *Baruch Hashem,* both of my sons are learning in good *yeshivas.*"

Rabbi Tauber looked at man, eyes shining. "Do you remember that you asked me why G-d would cause that delay, which in turn caused me to miss the conference? Do you remember that I told you that everything that Hashem does is for the best, even if we can't see the reason?" The rabbi nodded.

Rabbi Tauber met his gaze intently. "Now, my friend, can you see the reason?" - *[Sometimes, one small deed can be worth more than a thousand words and can change someone's life].*

Good Shabbos

Parsha Knowledge

STORIES & INSPIRATION ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA

The Late Phone Call



In this week's Parsha, Hashem instructed the Jewish people to build a Mishkan (Tabernacle). The pasuk says "V'Asu Li Mikdash v'Shachanti b'Socham-"And they shall make me a Mishkan and I shall dwell in them." The wording in this pasuk seems incorrect. Seemingly, Hashem should have said that He "will dwell in it", meaning that the Shechina will dwell in the Mishkan itself. Why does Hashem instead say, "And I will dwell in them"? What does this mean?

I would like to share with you a beautiful answer that I heard from my father Rav Yitzchok Fingerer shlita: **Rav Menachem Mendel of Kotzk** answers that the Shechina is not limited to a physical space where the Mishkan is. He says that rather every Jew has the ability to be a living and breathing, walking and talking Mishkan, in which the Shechina can reside! This is why it says, "I will dwell in them" – meaning every person who allows the Shechina into their lives! We have such an incredible opportunity!

One morning, a young man living in Eretz Yisroel had an important question and he decided to call **Rav Moshe Feinstein** in America. Rav Moshe picked up, and from the way Rav Moshe answered the phone, the man was able to tell, that Rav Moshe had just woken up. Suddenly he remembered that there was a time difference, and he had called Rav Moshe when it was 2 am for him in America. The man was very

embarrassed. He quickly apologized to Rav Moshe and said that he was calling from Eretz Yisroel and forgot the time difference.

He was about to hang up, when Rav Moshe said, "Please don't hang up yet. Give me a few minutes, I'll be right back." The man understood that Rav Moshe probably needed to wash his hands and say the birchas Hatorah (the blessings of the Torah). A few minutes later, Rav Moshe came back on the line. Rav Moshe apologized for keeping him waiting and asked how he could help. The man asked his question, and Rav Moshe gave an answer. Afterward, Rav Moshe asked the man for his address. The man wasn't sure why Rav Moshe was asking but he gave the address.

A few weeks later this man received an envelope in the mail from Rav Moshe. Enclosed was a check, with a note attached. Rav Moshe wrote the following: "I know that I kept you waiting for a few minutes on a long-distance call. The check is to cover the extra charge that you incurred as a result." The man was shocked. Not only did Rav Moshe not get upset at him for disturbing his sleep, but Rav Moshe also felt that since he needed a few minutes to prepare to answer the question he needed to pay for the extra time on the long-distance call. Only someone who allows the Shechina in their lives can act like this. We all must strive to be a living and breathing, walking and talking Mishkan, in which the Shechina can reside!

"The Jewish people draw their strength from their unity. Like a flame that grows stronger when fed, so too do the Jewish people shine brightest when bound as one." ~ Based on the teachings of The Maggid of Mezritch, Reb Dovber (1704-1772).

'The struggles of today prepare us for the triumphs of tomorrow.'

Toras Avigdor Snippets

A sampling of previous Toras Avigdor booklets



● The Shechinah Rests on Yisroel

This we must know; that there is such a concept, a fact, that although Hashem is everywhere, there is such a thing as Hashem concentrating His Shechinah in a certain place. **וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם** –'And I will reside among them,' He told us. Hashem chose that He should rest His Presence by the Am Yisroel. It's an especial afflatus, that Hakadosh Baruch Hu comes to rest in the Mishkan, among His people, in an especial way that is not found anywhere else.

Now among all the statements found in the Torah, none could be as breathtaking as that one: "I will dwell among My people!" The Creator of the Universe, the One Whose Presence fills the remote distances of space, is coming down to live among us?! Yes, that's exactly what the Torah states, "Make Me a home, and I shall dwell in their midst. I have chosen the Am Yisroel as that place where I will take up residence." - Hashem forsakes the high heavens and moves into the encampment of the Am Yisroel!

● House of Thanksgiving

Dovid Hamelech wrote a song that he intended to be sung at the occasion of the inauguration of the Beis Hamikdash. We're all familiar with it — if you come on time, you say it every day in shul:

מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר חֲנֻכַּת הַבַּיִת לְדָוִד— A song for the inauguration of the House of Hashem, composed by Dovid (Tehillim 30:1). However, when we examine this mizmor it seems like there's a mistake here, because except for the title not even one word is mentioned about the Beis Hamikdash. אֲרוֹמִמְךָ ה׳— 'I will exalt You, Hashem,' begins Dovid.

With these first words Dovid is teaching us a very big chiddush — that the Beis Hamikdash was dedicated to the function of giving gratitude to Hakadosh Baruch Hu. "I will exalt You, Hashem." The purpose of the Beis Hamikdash was to be a place to raise up Hashem. Exalt means to raise up high, from the root "alt," like in altitude. And as you read the whole shir, you see it's one long narration of gratitude, of hakaras hatov.

"You want to know why I'm doing all of this?" sings Dovid. "You want to know why I applied myself to gathering together all the materials for the building of the Beis Hamikdash? I did it for one purpose! To thank Hashem!" That's what the Beis Hamikdash is for.

● The Jew, a Sanctuary

Everybody knows that from the beginning of time, Mankind always offered sacrifices. Adam brought korbanos – Kayin and Hevel and Noach too; it's written openly in the Torah that they brought offerings. When Mankind still had some seichel – before they were bamboozled by ignorant writers and "philosophers" who belittled the offerings – everyone understood that bringing offerings was a form of expressing devotion to the Creator.

And yet we note that all of these offerings throughout the history of man were olos, burnt offerings; it means an animal was burnt in its entirety on the mizbeiach and the smoke carried heavenward the product of the combustion as if to feed, kiv'yachol, Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

But never in history did it occur to anyone that a human being should eat from an offering. It would have been a sacrilege to even imagine

such a thing! That someone should take what is dedicated for the table of the Creator and he should profane it by putting it into his mouth? It was out of the question!

And then came the night of the korban pesach and a revolution occurred. On the night that Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim to be His nation the entire picture of history changed. What happened? We were commanded to eat from the korban Pesach. **וְאָכְלוּ אֶת־הַבָּשָׂר**. Shemos 12:8

When they put the korban into their mouths, that was the mizbeiach. When a Yisroel consumes a korban it's like the fire of the mizbeiach is burning it! And that's the answer to how it could be such a thing now that never happened before, that a human being eats from a korban. Because a Yisroel is not a human being! He's much more than a human being! That's a very important lesson. - At that time Hashem declared that the Jewish body is kodesh kodoshim.

● **Images of Youth**

The Gemara (Sukkah 5b) says – "what did they look like, the keruvim?" So the Gemara says "keravya, they looked like children." Why children? Why not old men with long beards, ziknei Yisrael? If it was me, I would have said it should be a figure of an old talmid chochom, an eved Hashem with a long white beard, with his hands upraised to Hakadosh Baruch Hu in tefillah. Oh! That would have been some image to have on top of the aron habris! But little children?

Youth has a certain vitamin in it. No, I take that back – vitamin is not the word. It's more than that – it's an enzyme, a catalyst. Youth has a catalytic agent, a dynamo that is able to transform all things into idealism, into true achievement. And that's why the best time to make progress — especially in remembering the Borei — is then. The days of your youth are when you have the most enthusiasm and energy.

The 'days of youth' are an important tool given to us for the purpose of self-perfection. It's intended to be used for the purpose of throwing ourselves into the great Torah ideals with all our energy. And that's why Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave youth a great gift of enthusiasm. You need energy to succeed with Hashem! You need youthfulness to fight against yourself too. - You have a big enemy within yourself; the yetzer hora is always on the job and you have to fight against it.

Now, as soon as somebody hears this, a young fellow of sixty years hears this, so he settles back now and decides it's too late. He thinks he's justified in retiring; he heard already that it's no use. No, no. It doesn't mean that a man cannot start even at an advanced age. You need never surrender that youthfulness.

Of course it won't be so easy but there's no question that everyone can draw forth from his reserves of youthful energy and throw off the artificial lassitude which elderly people adopt when it comes to good things.

● Artificial Man, Golden Heart



When they made the aron habris they first covered up the outside of the wooden box with gold and then afterward they covered the inside (Rashi Terumah 25:11). It was gold-plated inside and out but there's a lesson here, a lesson about what comes first. The way to do it is first by means of the outside.

Of course, what matters most is what's doing inside. – that's what Hashem is looking for; your pnimiyus, the inside of your heart. But how to change your inside, that's the question. And that's what the Torah is telling us here.

Get started by covering up your outside with gold. Be artificial! You know, our Sages tell us (Yuma 72b) a rule for proper living and if we study their words, we'll see that this is the advice they give: A person should always make his inside be like his outside.

Now the question is why say 'your inside like your outside'? It should say baro ketocho; his outside should be like his inside. You should make yourself a tzaddik, an eved Hashem, and then, once you're an authentic servant of Hashem then you can be one on the outside too. Then you can reveal yourself to the world. Otherwise you're a fraud. You're going to make believe you're good when really you're not so good yet?

The answer is, absolutely! Chas veshalom if a person will make his outside like his inside. Whatever he feels inside, he should show in public? Chas veshalom!

You know, somebody was once talking to the Lubavitcher Rebbe; I think it was the previous one, Rav Yosef Yitzchak, zichrono livrachah. And he was complaining to him. "Your talmidim," he said, "are deceiving everyone. They're putting up a front as if they are very frum Jews, the way they dress and act. But I don't think it's so true. I know some of them and I think it's a deception."

So Rav Yosef Yitzchok told this man, "The Mishnah (Peah 8:9) says that if someone deceives the public in order to get charity – for example, he acts like he has a swollen belly, like he's suffering from starvation; or if he acts like his foot is chopped off, he bends his knee up to make it appear like he's one-legged – so the Sages tell us that someone who does that, he presents himself with an artificial behavior on the outside, so he's guaranteed that the end will be that's how it will turn out. One day he'll be in a smash up and he'll lose his leg. Or he'll be stranded somewhere with no food and he'll suffer from starvation.

The way you behave on the outside to deceive people, that's how it's going to turn out in the end. "And so," Rav Yosef Yitzchak said, "Let

my students, my chassidim, keep faking their tzidkus, their piety. Let them act that way on the outside until it actually happens to them. The way they behave, that's how it'll turn out in the end."



102 Stories That Changed People's Lives – Rabbi Tzvi Nakar - Mistaken Identity

Max Cohen* was a native of Morocco who moved to France and built his fortune there. His late father, a simple, devout Jew named Avraham Cohen, had nursed a lifelong dream of settling in Eretz Yisrael. Despite numerous attempts, he was never able to fulfill this yearning, and sadly, passed away before he could fulfill his dream. Reb Avraham was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Meknes, the former capital of Morocco.

Eager to fulfill his father's last wish, Max, a real estate mogul and multimillionaire, paid one hundred thousand dollars to bring his father's body to Eretz Yisrael and bury him in the Holy Land. Max arranged a huge and respectable funeral for his father on Har Hazeisim in Yerushalayim, in close proximity to venerable sages of generations past. The funeral was attended by leading rabbanim and public dignitaries' generous patron of the Torah world, and who praised the son for his who came to pay their respects to the father of a philanthropist and efforts to fulfill his father's last wish and bring him to kevurah in the holy soil of Yerushalayim.

Several years later, Max met a fellow native Moroccan who mentioned that he had recently visited Morocco and prayed at Max's father's grave in the Meknes Jewish cemetery.

"My father?" Max replied, bewildered. "I buried him years ago in Israel." Yet the man insisted that he had stood at Avraham Cohen's grave and could even direct the son there if he wished. Distressed, Max traveled to Morocco to investigate the strange rumor, and upon arriving in the cemetery discovered that, indeed, his father's grave

and headstone were still standing exactly where they had been close to a decade earlier.

Furious, he contacted the chevrah kaddisha. "I paid a fortune to transfer my father to Israel. The body was sent by plane to Israel, we held a massive levayah, and we performed the burial. How is it that I am now standing here in Meknes facing my father's grave?"

A brief investigation revealed the shocking mix-up. The Meknes cemetery held at least two men by the name of Avraham Cohen, and the chevrah kaddisha had accidently transferred the wrong body to Eretz Yisrael!

Distraught, Max set about exploring the identity of the other Avraham Cohen. A brief investigation revealed that the man never married and had passed away lonely and childless. Despite the lack of his own family, Cohen had made it his special mitzvah to attend weddings and bring joy to the brides and grooms, as one who brings joy to a chattan and kallah is considered as one who rebuilt the ruins of Yerushalayim. At every wedding he attended, he would entreat the chattan and kallah, "Please bless me that I should be buried on the Mount of Olives in Yerushalayim! I want to see some of the ruins I merited rebuilding!"

Many secretly wondered about the man's bizarre penchant and request and were tempted to reply that he was a childless pauper, and how would he be buried anywhere but Mekenes? Yet, pitying him, they would inevitably reply with a heartfelt blessing that his wish be fulfilled.

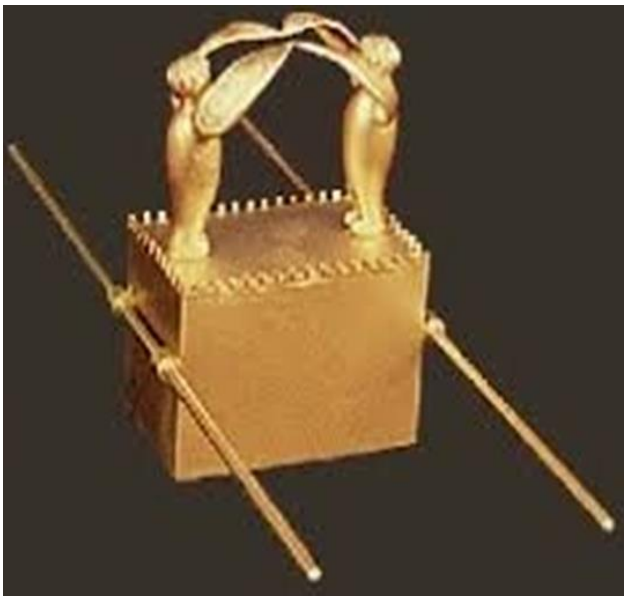
When this Avraham Cohen passed away, penniless and without a living family member, the local chevrah kaddisha buried him in the poor section of the Mekenes cemetery.

Years later, the son of another Avraham Cohen set about the monumental task of bringing his father's body to Israel. It was then that the niftar's great zechuyot prevailed; the chevrah kaddisha

exhumed the wrong body, flew it to Eretz Yisrael, and it was reburied with great fanfare and the attendance of distinguished rabbanim of the Torah world. Ultimately, of course, the philanthropist brought his father's body to Israel and buried him on Har Hazeisim.

We learn from here the amazing power of tefillah and see what a person can receive in its merit.

Rabbi Jeremy Golker – Giving your all



This week's sedra deals with the vessels of the mishkan with perhaps the most famous being the Aron which houses the Luchos.

The pasuk says **וְיָצַקְתָּ לּוֹ אַרְבַּע טַבְּעֹת זָהָב, וְנָתַתָּה עַל אַרְבַּע פַּעֲמֹתָיו וּשְׁתֵּי טַבָּעֹת עַל צַלְעוֹ הָאֶחָת וּשְׁתֵּי טַבָּעֹת עַל צַלְעוֹ הַשֵּׁנִית. *'And you shall cast four golden rings for it, and you shall place them upon its four corners, two rings on its one side, and two rings on its other side.'*** 25:12

The dimensions of the Aron was 2½ amos by 1½ amos. Which side were the rings affixed for the poles to be inserted to enable it to be carried?

Rashi says **שְׁתַּיִם מִכָּאן וּשְׁתַּיִם מִכָּאן לְרָחְבּוֹ שֶׁל אָרוֹן, וְהַבַּדִּים נְתוּנִים בָּהֶם, וְאָרְכּוֹ שֶׁל אָרוֹן מַפְסִיק בֵּין הַבַּדִּים, אַמָּתַיִם וָחֵצִי בֵּין בַּד לְבַד, שֶׁיִּהְיוּ שְׁנֵי בְנֵי אָדָם הַנּוֹשְׂאִין אֶת הָאָרוֹן מְהַלְּכִין בֵּינֵיהֶם** - *'two from here and two from there, across the width of the ark, and the poles were placed in them [the rings]. The length of the ark separated the poles, two and one-half cubits between [one] pole and [the other] pole, so that the two people carrying the ark would walk between them [the poles].'*

The gemara in **מנחות צח:** says that the reason is because a person takes up 1 amos space, so for there to be sufficient room for 2 people, it would have to be in this orientation. It must be that the badim were placed on the width as two kohanim couldn't fit in 1.5 amos.

Sfas Emes asks: But you don't need 2 full amos for the two kohanim, as it just needs their shoulders to be inside the space! Therefore the lengthwise orientation could work equally well?

Rav Leib Gurvitz says that when it comes to supporting Torah [which is what the kohanim were literally doing], or any communal enterprise – a person needs to give his full self, not just his shoulders and not just his money! – There needs to be total dedication! You need to use your whole body!

Gold Standard

The pasuk says, וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב – '***And you shall make two golden cheruvim***.' 25:18

Regarding the Keruvim, the **Mechilta** says: If you add more than two cheruvim, it becomes like idols. Also, when it comes to all the other vessels of the Mishkan, if there would be a shortage of gold, you could substitute the gold with any other material. But with the cheruvim, it had to be made of gold only, otherwise it would be considered as idols.

What's the message?

R' Meir Shapiro was the originator of the Daf Hayomi and the builder of the Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin. His whole life perspective was that he felt that the yeshiva bachurim of his time were not appreciated for what they stood for. Life was tough for them, so he wanted to raise their prestige. Therefore, he built this famous Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin, which at the time was a state-of-the-art building with all the associated facilities and amenities – beis

hamedrash, libraries, dormitories and dining rooms. – The bachurim were treated like kings.



Rav Meir Shapiro set the gold standard for chinuch. It is therefore very appropriate that he says the following idea:

When it comes to all the other vessels of the Mishkan, if there would be a shortage of gold, you could substitute the gold with any other material. But with the cheruvim, it had to be made of gold only, otherwise it would be considered as idols. -Why?

Says Rav Meir Shapiro – Because the cheruvim represent children learning Torah. As such, when it comes to learning Torah, there is no such thing as silver standard - it has to be the gold standard!

And that's why the cheruvim had to be made out of gold!

Trumpets

Dayan Yechezkel Abramsky asks – How long did the vessels of the Mishkan last for?

He says that all the vessels lasted for all generations - except for the חֲצֹצְרֹת which had to be renewed every generation.

What is the lesson from this?

[We are all familiar with the sound of trumpets. Throughout the ages, they heralded the approach of kings and the call to battle.

Hashem had special trumpets made for the Mishkan that would serve these purposes as well as other purposes.



In the desert, their blasts would alert the camp to pack up and begin moving. Enumerating the uses of the *chatzotrot*/trumpets, Hashem says, **עֲשֵׂה לְךָ שְׁתֵּי חֲצֹצְרֹת כֶּסֶף מִקְשָׂה תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם וְהָיוּ לְךָ לְמִקְרָא הָעֵדָה וּלְמַסַּע אֶת־הַמַּחֲנוֹת. וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְחֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם** - *'Make yourself two silver trumpets; they shall be used by you to summon the congregation and to announce the departure of the camps.' - "It shall be for you an eternal decree for your generations.'*]

Dayan Abramsky says that the Torah doesn't change – There is a mesorah, and the Torah is infinite, and for all times. However, what does change though is the method of transmission of the Torah to each generation.

In my generation, we had blackboards with white chalk. My children had whiteboards with black markers. Now we have interactive whiteboards. - It's the same gemara, chumash, halacha that we are learning, but the method by which we are learning changes from generation to generation. – The transmission process has to change.

And therefore, the **חֲצֹצְרֹת** represent the method to communicate to the people. They were the transmission process.

"The strength of the Jewish people is their ability to hope even in the most hopeless situations." ~ Rabbi Yehuda Amital (1924-2010).



Rabbi Shlomo Landau – A Message from Shelly Shem Tov the Mother of Hostage Omer Shem Tov

"First of all, nothing in this world is happenstance. Everything comes from Hashem, and we are all messengers of Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

Literally to the day a year ago, erev Shabbos parshas Mishpatim **תשפ"ד**, I was invited to a Shabbaton that was arranged by an organisation called 'Kesher Yehudi' [see below] – This organisation brought together families of the hostages. It was a Shabbos that I will never forget for the rest of my life. It was the first Shabbos that I had observed according to halacha. It was a Shabbos with so much power and energy. The connection between the families of the hostages and the chareidi religious families that were there, who hugged us, embraced us, sang with us and prayed with us, made it an unforgettable Shabbos.

And on that Shabbos, I accepted upon myself going forward that I would keep Shabbos properly. And you should know that until today, a full year later, that I have kept Shabbos. But more than I have kept Shabbos, the Shabbos has kept and safeguarded me. With Hashem's help, this Shabbos I will have the merit to hug my son… Omer, exactly one year after I started keeping Shabbos.

That is spectacular. Everything is working out so perfectly. Thanks to the families of Kesher Yehudi, and a Shabbos that was incredible and the ongoing relationship that still continues until today.

Thank You Borei Olam – Master of the World, for the protection and safeguarding of me and Omer - "**אין עוד מלבדו**" - Shabbat Shalom."

[Omer Shem Tov was released Shabbos 22nd Feb 2025 from Hamas captivity]

KESHERYEHUDI
CONNECTING WORLDS

Kesher Yehudi is a social movement unifying Israeli society by creating real and lasting friendships between different types of Jews in Israel.

We bring together Jews of secular and religious backgrounds, and through intentional meetings, they build long-term friendships based on mutual respect and understanding. We are deeply committed to our mission of unity and compassion among the Jewish people. During the current war, we have launched new programming to support the families of the hostages and survivors of the Hamas atrocities. We continue to offer them programming, friendship, and comfort as they endure unimaginable pain.

We stand in solidarity with them, offering a shoulder to lean on during these challenging times.



Rabbi Shlomo Landau – Freed hostage Ohad Ben Ami's powerful words!

"Inside we possess very deep inner strength - And that which unifies us all is our emuna/belief in Hashem. At least personally my emunah is what strengthened and saved me. It is only due to Hashem that I was saved and brought back home from captivity.

Seems like there were certain things in me that needed to be rectified and repaired. This experience just served to strengthen me!

This is my message to the Jewish people our emunah/our belief is what unifies us. It is that which gives us strength in our absolute lowest moments. We must continue to fight until every last of our hostages is back home with Hashem's help."

[Ohad Ben Ami was released Shabbos 8th Feb 2025 from Hamas captivity]



Baba Sali's Wish to Live Near the Lubavitcher Rebbe

The pious and holy **R' Yisrael Abuchatzeira** known as the Baba Sali once wrote a letter to the **Lubavitcher Rebbe**. In the letter, the Baba Sali asks the Rebbe whether to move to live with him in the United States. He begins:

"In honor of the Holy of Holies, the pillar of the world, the light of the Jewish people and its Torah, the like of whom has never arisen, the minister of Torah and teaching, beloved in heaven and on earth, our teacher and rabbi R' Menachem Mendel of Lubavitcher, I am your little servant, Yisrael."

Then he writes, "I emigrated from Morocco to Eretz Yisrael, and people here have not given me any peace; they come to me at all hours of the day and night, and I am unable to serve Hashem as I was in the past, where days and nights I wasn't *mevatel Torah* even for a moment. And now I am asking if I can come to you in the United States to live with you in a place close by and hide from the eyes of everyone. I have taken upon myself that that which our great

teacher (referring to the Lubavitcher Rebbe) instructs me to do I will do since he is the pillar of the world and that's what they proclaimed in the Heavens."



The Lubavitcher Rebbe begins his response with the exalted praise to the Baba Sali in third person out of great respect for him:- "Since Hashem honored you to be a leader among the Jewish people whose voice is heard by hundreds and thousands, it is certain that you have also been given the powers…

Since you are in close proximity to the places where our Sefardic brothers are, who are thirsty for the word of Hashem and eager to receive instructions in Avodas Hashem, and to accept *ol malchus shamayim* (the yoke of the kingdom of heaven) and the yoke of Torah and mitzvos, this is your *tafkid* (role), obligation and privilege. A great and immense privilege has fallen in your portion, where you will use the talents and segulos that Hashem has bestowed upon you, and the treasures of kings that were handed down to you by your holy ancestors generation after generation…"

Rav Kalman was once with Rav Elyashiv privately and he asked Rav Elyashiv how one can become so great like Rav Elyashiv.

Rav Elyashiv after being pressed answered, "Learnen, learnen and learnen".



Beneath the Surface By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

(כו:א) ואת המשכן תעשה עשר יריעת שש משזר – '***You shall make the Mishkan-spread of ten panels – twisted linen***.' (26:1)

Much gold was used in the Mishkan – the Aron was coated with pure gold inside and out, the cover and the Cherubim were made of gold, the Shulchan (table) was covered in gold, its dishes, spoons, tubes, and supports were all made of pure gold. Even the Menorah and its decorative knobs and flowers were made of pure gold.

However, there were spreads on top of the gold, coverings of linen and hides. This was done so that one standing outside the Mishkan would not see the gold, the luxury would not be seen at all. This teaches us a great fundamental lesson – that even if you have a lot of gold and much wealth, do not put it on public display. - Enjoy it, appreciate it, but quietly. Definitely, do not show it to the world. (Umatok HaOhr)

Parshah Thoughts – Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

The Medrash (Shemos Rabbah 33:1) relates a parable where a king asks his son-in-law to make sure that there is always a room for him to stay in when he visits his daughter and son-in-law. - Hashem asked us to build a Mishkan for Him to "dwell" amongst us.

Rav Meilich Biderman explains based on the **Alshich**, that we should ensure that Hashem has a presence in our lives, no matter where we are!

Story of the Week Compiled by Aaron Leitner

Family Circle

וְהֵשִׁיב לֵב־אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים וְלֵב בָּנִים עַל־אֲבוֹתָם- *(And he will return the hearts of the fathers to the sons, and the hearts of the sons to their fathers) Malachi 3.24*



The Malbim explains this passuk to mean that before the arrival of Moshiach, Hashem, our Father in Heaven, will cause the children to repent, and these children will then return to the righteous ways of their earthly fathers.

In this story, Hakodosh Baruch Hu orchestrated a magnificent chain of events through which the prominence of an ancestor brought his wayward descendants back to the path of Torah.

As one drives through the Matzliach neighbourhood in Ramle, the 20-story buildings indicate that the residents are most likely not religious, because the stairs would be unfeasible on Shabbos. The neighbourhood, completed some 20 years ago, houses a melange of Chalabis (Jews from Aleppo, Syria), Moroccans and other Sephardim of different nationalities. At the time of this story, the majority were not religious but nevertheless had a traditional streak where many attended tefillos in the local shul, which was called "Chazon Yechezkel".

Although the shul held a daily minyan for Minchah and Maariv, the building remained unused for the rest of the evening. Lev L'Achim, an outreach organisation which provide unaffiliated Jews with educational programs, received permission from the residents to

launch a 'Beis Merach Erev' (evening learning centre) in the shul, where they would provide homework help for the youngsters, as well as Torah classes for any men and women who might be interested.

Although there is little or minimal rent paid for these programmes, the costs are high. Lev L'Achim provides a manager who oversees the various programmes, hires yungeleit to learn with the attendees, and, of course, supplies refreshments, because nothing does well on an empty stomach. The cost for each of the Batei Merash Erev, of which Lev L'achim currently fields some 168 around the country, runs into $30,000 annually.

The Beis Medrach Erev in Matzliach attracted a nice crowd on any given evening, and the manager was always looking for ways to expand its reach. One evening, as he took a stroll outdoors, he noticed an obviously *chiloni* (nonreligious) young man, peering over the fence at what was taking place in the shul. The same man reappeared the next two nights, so the manager invited him in to take a look.

"I'm actually just in the area temporarily," said the onlooker. "My apartment in Ashdod is undergoing renovations, and my friend who lives in the area lent me his apartment for myself and my family, to use in the meantime. I saw this shul and was curious to see what goes on here. "I have a question for you," he continued. "Obviously, the residents of the neighbourhood do not come from Russia or Lithuania. Why is this shul named after Harav Yechezkel Abramsky, who hailed from Eastern Europe?"

"That's a good question," the manager replied. 'I'll try and find out. Meanwhile, what is the reason you want to know this?"

"You see, I am a descendant of Rav Abramsky," the young man answered, to the shock of the manager. Could it be that Rav Yechezkel Abramsky, one of the Gedolei Hador of his time, had descendants who were not religious?

The story, which is well-known, begins with the arrest of Rav Abramsky by the Russian government in 1929 for his opposition to the government's attempts to suppress Yiddishkeit. He was sentenced to five years of hard labour in Siberia; upon his release in 1031, Rav Yechezkel immediately left Russia, as his life was in danger. Although he desired to go to Eretz Yisroel, he settled in London, where he was appointed the Av Beis Din, a position that was recognised by the government. His intention was to use his official post as a means to pressure the Russian government to release his children, who were denied permission to join their father in England.

It took some 20 years until he was finally reunited with his family. In the interim, they had grown up in atheistic Russia without any knowledge of Yiddishkeit. Rav Yechezkel moved to Eretz Yisroel, where he began educating his children from alef-beis onwards. While he was able to save his offspring, the next generation did not fare as well, and his descendant in Ashdod was irreligious.

While researching the choice of the name "Chazon Yechezkel" for the shul, the manager discovered a most fascinating reason for the surprising choice.

In Israel, when a Kaplan (contractor) secures the bid to build housing, he is required to supply a *Matnas* (Merkaz Tarbut Noar u'Sport), a community centre for the residents. While the *Matnas* usually contained a gym or a pool, the Kaplan who built Matzliach supplied the neighbourhood with a shul instead, as a cost saving measure. A gym or pool would have to be furnished by the Kaplan, but the shul would receive its furnishings, including the Aron Kodesh and Sefarim, through the Ministry of Religion and the Rabbanut.

While the local residents were not necessarily religious, as it turned out, they shared a traditional streak, and when the shul opened, a nice showing of a variety of Jews came for the inaugural davening. When it came to naming the new Shul, each group suggested it to be

named after a tzaddik from their native land. When they could not agree on a name, one resident made a novel suggestion.

Among the sefarim supplied by the Ministry of Religion and the Rabbanut was a sefer that listed the *yahrtzeiten* of *Tzaddikim* for every day of the year. "Let's see which *Tzaddik* is listed for the day the shul was inaugurated, and we shall name the shul in his memory," he proposed.

The residents were amenable to this suggestion, so they looked up which tzaddik's yahrzeit was for that day – 24th Ellul. They discovered that that day was the yahrtzeit of Harav Yechezhel Abramsky zt"l. Thus, the shul was named Chazon Yechezkel after Rav Abramsky's seforim.

"The manager befriended his notable guest, and eventually, this young man enrolled his son in a Torani school run by Chinuch Atzmai," says Rabbi Yosef Carmel, National Director of Lev L'Achim. "Yet it was a while later that I learned just how much Divine intervention was the catalyst for this move. I chanced upon a sefer of *yahrtzeiten*, and I looked up 24 Ellul. On the second page was a list of several Tzaddikim, Rav Yechezkel Abramsky included. However, that was the second page listed for 24 Ellul. The entire first page was taken up with the *yahrtzeit* of the holy Chofetz Chaim zt"l, who was also niftar on 24th Ellul 5793 (1933). (Rav Abramsky was niftar in 1976). It was, obviously, divinely decreed that the residents of Matzliach should open to the second page and name their shul 'Chazon Yechezkel', thereby leading a descendant of Rav Yechezkel Abramsky to come full circle and return to the path of Torah.

"The measure of a person's greatness is not in what they possess, but in how much they give of themselves to others." ~ Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler (1892-1953).

The Weekly Vort

כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ – '***Whose heart prompts him.***' (25:2). - Each man shall give as much as his heart desires.

Toldos Yitzchak asks why *tzedakah* is connected with the heart, rather than another organ.

Toldos Yitzchak answers that just as the heart nourishes all the other organs and is the sole organ which receives no nourishment from others, so one who gives charity will be rewarded. He will always be in a position to give and never have to receive.

The *pasuk* specifies **לבו**, *his heart*, because there are people who, when they see others giving *tzedakah*, give also, but their hearts do not really prompt them to do so. They give only because they are shamed into it. - Men should give because their own heart prompts them to do so. (Tz'enah Ur'enah)

Splendid Quote with Rabbi Menachem Lomner

"Give some thought about the miracle of our bodies."

One of the miracles that the Jews saw every day in the desert was the fact that the Mishkan was able to stand. The middle bar that ran through the boards of the structure was miraculous in that it bent to go through them all.

It is brought down that the Mishkan represents the body of a Jew. We also have many miracles that happen every day for us to stay intact and alive. Human nature is that since we are used to seeing it, we are not impressed.

The Shulchan Aruch (Siman 6) explains the Bracha of Asher Yatzar and what *umafli la'asos* means. Let's take some time to think about the miracles that happen to us at all times.

בראתי יצר הרע ובראתי לו
תורה תבלין
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During the war years, **R' Avraham Kalmanovitz *zt"l***, *Mir Rosh Yeshivah,* was unceasing in his efforts to raise money for the Jews suffering in Europe. He was a talented orator, but even more than that, he was a gifted "fainter" – a skill he would employ to direct attention to the plight of the Jews. He didn't care that his *schnorring* (solicitation) during the war years made him unpopular, and he never missed an opportunity to make an appeal for life-saving funds.



At one synagogue function, he was spotted approaching the building, and measures were immediately taken to prevent him from entering. But they weren't quick enough. R' Kalmanovitz entered the building, and everyone knew that an appeal would soon follow. As they scrambled for a way to prevent him from reaching the podium, the rabbi put the crowd at ease. "I don't want to speak," he pledged to a swarm of unbelieving eyes. "All I want to do is say one word."

One word? Why, even the greatest fund solicitors in history could not crack open wallets with just one word. It was a safe gamble, they reasoned, and he certainly had them intrigued!

R' Kalmanovitz ascended to the podium and waited for the crowd to fall silent. Then, in a terrifying shrill, he belted out: "AAAHHH!!" and fell to the floor in a dead faint. - "*Breng vasser*!" (bring water) they screamed as everyone looked on in anxious horror.

R' Avraham regained conscious, lifted one eye and raised his voice: "*Vasser brengt mir? Breng gelt!*"

The art of soliciting money for charity is quite old. *Hashem* himself solicited funds for the building of the *Mishkan*! So next time we are approached by an uncanny and unrelenting solicitor - give him the benefit of the doubt, because he is most likely a worthy individual!



Harav Shalom Shwadron זצוק"ל said over the following story: Reb Donish was one of the wealthiest Jews in all of Russia. He was a tremendous **בעל צדקה** and a very wise man. He had top **בני תורה** as sons-in-law, one of them being Harav Yosef Leib from Telz. At the end of Reb Donish's life, he moved to Eretz Yisroel and was buried there.

When the great **Saba from Novardok** would come to collect money from Reb Donish, he would open up his "kupah shel kesef" and tell the Saba, "Take whatever you desire."

One time a great Rov who was raising money for a worthy cause came to his home to collect, yet the amount that he received was not so satisfying in the Rov's eyes. – The Rov said to Rav Donish, "Excuse me Reb Donish, and please don't be angry with me, but can I ask you a question?"

"You can ask whatever you wish," Rav Donish replied.

"Tell me, why is it that when the Saba of Novardok comes to ask for **צדקה** you give him huge amounts of money, but to me you give very little in comparison? It's possible I am not as great as the Saba, but one thing is for sure, I'm definitely not one who does nothing, I too came to you for a very important and worthy cause. Why is it that you saw fit to give the Saba so much more than me?"

Rav Donish smiled and answered, "I'll explain it to you. I could see by the way you are dressed what probably happened before you came to my home. You put on your finest Shabbos clothing, and you asked, "Nu, do I look put-together? I'm about to go the famous **גביר** Rav Donish, it's not a simple thing, Reb Donish is Rav Donish." And then when you came to my house, you knocked on the door softly, making sure not to knock too hard so you wouldn't look like a **מחוצף**. And then when I opened the door and you entered my home, you were careful not to sit before I sat down, to show me honor.

Tell me please, all this honor for me?! For what? What is it that I have? I have money! So I'll tell you, if this is what money does it must be **חשוב** to have, therefore, it's hard for me to part with it and I'd rather keep it for myself.

The Saba has an entirely different approach. When the Saba comes to visit my home, he knocks on the door. When I open, the Saba sits down and he begins to speak to me in a niggun, "Donishelah, Donishelah, what will be with you? Besides for money, what is it that you possess? You **have** nothing!"

From the holy Saba's words, I understand that money is hevel; The Saba sits, and he is not afraid to tell me the truth. He shows me the *emes*, and therefore, for the Saba, I open my "kupah shel tzedakah" and say, "Rebbe, take whatever you desire."..."



When R' Yonoson Eybschutz was a newly-married man, he heard of a tremendous mitzvah opportunity. A fellow was wrongly imprisoned and only a payment of 5,000 rubles would buy his freedom. Normally the community would have put the money together but R' Yonoson had gotten a large dowry when he married - 5,000 rubles to be exact! He paid the entire amount for the man's liberty.

A week or so later, he was walking near the sea and a trunk washed up on the shore near his feet. Inside were silver coins – 5,000 rubles! His wife was overjoyed at the miracle but R' Yonoson was saddened. - He explained, "Because I was selfish and didn't share this mitzvah with others, Heaven has rejected it and cast it back in my face."

It says in this week's Parasha... **בְּטַבְּעֹת הָאָרֹן יִהְיוּ הַבַּדִּים לֹא יָסֻרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ** "***In the rings of the Ark shall be the poles; they shall not be removed from it.***" (25:15)

Q: Instead of "mimenu" — "from it" which could also mean "from him" — why does it not say "They shall not be removed, meihem" — from them (the rings)?

A: **The Alshich** comments that the Ark housed the Tablets and represents the Torah scholar. The poles represent the philanthropists who support the Torah scholar and enable him to study in tranquillity. At all times it is incumbent upon the benefactors to stand alongside the Torah scholar and never leave him without financial resources.

SEFAS TAMIM
FOUNDATION • Emphasizing Everyday Emes

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ - "***Speak to the Bnei Yisroel, and they shall take for Me, Terumah, from every person whose heart is so moved***…" (25:2)

The words "take for Me, Terumah" would appear to be the incorrect words to use. The correct words to use would be "give to me, Terumah".

Rav Eliyahu Dessler ZT"L in his Michtav M'Eliyahu explains that the best way that one can become close to another individual is to give something to him. When one gives to another, one forms a close bond with that person.

Based upon this Michtav M'Eliyahu, perhaps we can say that when one gives Terumah to Hashem, one becomes close to Hashem and there is no greater gift that one can receive from Hashem than becoming close to Him. Therefore, when Bnei Yisrael were enjoined to give Terumah to Hashem, the correct term to use was "take" because Bnei Yisrael were taking from Hashem far more than they were giving Him, because of the benefits that they would be receiving by becoming close to Him.

The benefits of closeness to Hashem are manifold. **Rav Nosson Wachtfogel ZT"L**, the Mashgiach of the Lakewood Yeshiva, explains that Hashem has generously provided each person with vast amounts and various forms of wisdom, qualities, and capabilities. To access all that Hashem has bestowed, one must achieve closeness to Hashem – Deveikus. This closeness is contained deep within the soul of man and is part of the nature of man. However, one does not readily feel and cannot readily achieve closeness to Hashem because there are barriers that stand in the way.

The essence of our service in this world is to remove these barriers. One of the barriers that stands in our way is caused by dishonesty. Working on our honesty and integrity is a sure way to remove this barrier and become closer to Hashem.

Perhaps this is also alluded to in the verse we quoted above, "… take for Me, Terumah, from every person whose heart is so moved…" The word in Hebrew for the word "from" in this verse is "**מֵאֵת**". The Kabbalistic works say that this word refers to truth, because if you unscramble the letters, you get "**אֱמֶת**". In other words, the verse could be read to mean that one should come close to Hashem by giving Terumah (as in our first thought above – giving creates a close bond between the giver and recipient) or through "**מֵאֵת**" which is "**אֱמֶת**".

Carrying Through

Many of the keilim in the mishkan were designed with 'badim' - staves, which were used to help transport them. When the B'nei Yisroel wandered in the desert, they had to disassemble the tabernacle and carry the pieces, but the keilim were transported as whole items, and many of them, such as the mizbayach and shulchan, had to be transported by people holding poles, suspending them above the ground as they walked.

The aron which held the luchos was no different, but there was one exception. Unlike the poles which carried the shulchan and mizbayach, the badim of the aron were considered part of the aron itself. Although they were theoretically removable, the Torah prohibits their removal.

Rav Shlomo Gantzfried notes that Chazal tell us that the truth of the matter is that the badim were not really needed to lift the aron. On the contrary; the people who held on the badim were lifted and carried by the aron, and it only appeared as if they were carrying it.

Thus, he surmises, that the requirement that the badim never separate from the aron is to teach us that not only must we hold onto the Torah by continually supporting it, but it is our support of Torah which carries us through life.

In Their Merit

You can't imagine the greatness a woman has by caring for her children and taking care of her home to follow in the ways of Hashem. The world stands on these women, and Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim in honour of these women.

The holy chachamim said (Yalkut Rus Remez Daled) that Moshiach will come only in the merit of the Ehlicher women of the generation. Chazal also said (Sota 11) that in the merit of the women who put everything on the side when it comes to the will of Hashem, they help their husbands and raise their children – in their merit we will be redeemed. (Atzuso Emunah)



Why Was A Special Collection Needed for the Sockets?

Our reading begins with, "[And G-d spoke to Moshe, saying,] Speak to the children of Israel and they shall take for me an offering…" [Shemos 25:1-2]. Rashi cites a teaching of the Rabbis to the effect that the pasuk is alluding to 3 different offerings. The first collection was called the "Collection for the Sockets," which raised funds for the receptacles into which the boards of the Mishkan, the Tabernacle, were placed.

Why was it necessary to have a special collection for the Adanim [Sockets]? Why weren't the Adanim included like any another item within the overall building campaign? The Adanim were not even a particularly glorious item within the Mishkan.

The Beis Av writes that the Torah is delivering a very important message. It is a message that bears repeating even if we are familiar with it.

Building the Mishkan required the highest level of intent and motivation. If we want a place where the Divine Presence of G-d will dwell, it must be proper and holy and pure from the word 'Go.' We are dealing with nothing less than G-d Himself showing His Presence in that building. That is why the Adanim needed a special collection. The Adanim were the foundation of the entire structure, crucial to its vitality and viability. No matter how magnificent or glorious a structure a person can erect, if the foundation is rotten or weak — the structure will collapse.

The Torah is hinting at the fact that the fund collection for the Adanim had to be done in a most fitting and appropriate manner, even though they were one of the least glorious and exotic of the Mishkan's components. The foundation of a structure must be built properly!

The rule that no building is stronger than its foundation is a particularly important lesson to remember when we are trying to raise children. We hope that our children will grow up properly and go on to erect their own buildings, so to speak. We must realize that if the way we raise them is not correct, we will have a detrimental effect not only on their lives, but also on the lives of future generations.

Our Sages tell us that Doeg HaAdomi was a great man and a wise scholar. But if we read Tanach, we see that he was an evil, plotting, and very sinister person. Despite his scholarship, he had very imperfect character traits (Midos). He was a jealous person. He was

a hateful person. His foundations were not good. Consequently, as glorious as the building of his scholarship became — such that he was the premier Talmid Chochom of his generation — it nevertheless all collapsed. The sockets were not right.

If the foundation is not good, the whole building is not good.

"And You Shall *Take* for Me Teruma" — Doing for Oneself

When the Jewish people were commanded to bring a donation to Moshe Rabbeinu for the purpose of erecting a Mishkan, the *pasuk* uses the expression, "*v'yikchu Li* (and take for Me) a donation…" (Shemos 25:2). The obvious question is that this is a peculiar choice of words. The more appropriate expression would have been "*v'yitnu Li* (and give to Me) a donation…"

On a simple level, since *Hashem* really owns everything (as it says "…to Hashem is the Earth and all that it contains…" (Tehillim 24:1)), it is impossible to give Him anything. Giving usually implies that I have ownership and I transfer that ownership to someone else. Therefore, when we talk about giving to *Hashem*, we don't use the expression "giving." Instead, we use the expression "taking." In other words, *Hashem* already owns everything, we are merely 'allowing' Him to take that which is already His.

In Parshas Vayera, **Rav Shlomo Breuer** shares a beautiful thought on this concept of "*v'yikchu Li*." Whenever we 'give,' whether by doing *chessed* with our bodies or with our money, every giving is actually 'taking.' Whenever a person performs *chessed*, he is really doing more for himself than for the person to whom he is giving.

The Medrash in Parshas Vayikra says, "More than what a *ba'al habayis* does for a poor person, the poor person does for the *ba'al habayis*." (Literally, a *ba'al habayis* is the master of the house, but in this context, it means a benefactor.) When someone gives a donation, the money is very temporary. Perhaps it pays for the next

meal. Perhaps it pays for the rent. In actuality, it is very, very finite. On the other hand, a person who 'gives,' in addition to acquiring *olam haba*, he accumulates something else as well… He acquires that which giving does to his personality, his soul, and his self-esteem. A person who helps another person is taking far more than he is giving.

Rav Breuer points this out the first time that the Torah describes an act of *chessed*: by Avraham Avinu and the *malachim*. The invitation extended by our Patriarch Avraham to the *malachim*, offering them a place to eat and sleep, is the first overt mention of an act of *chessed* in the Torah.

In that *parsha*, the Torah repeatedly uses expressions such as "*yukach nah me'at mayim*" (let water be taken) (Bereishis 18:4) and "*va-ekcha pas lechem*" (I will take bread) (18:5)? What kind of expressions are these? Avraham should have said "I will give water. I will give bread."

The answer is that Avraham Avinu is instructing and teaching his children, "My children, you should know for all future generations, that when you help someone else, you are not giving. You are taking!"

When a person helps someone, he does more for himself than he does for the other person. This is what the Torah is teaching us with the expression "*V'yikchu Li 174eruma*." Whether a person gives to an individual or to an institution, he is really receiving more than he is giving.

A Jew once came to the Sefas Emes (1847-1905). He was a widower who had just lost his wife. He had been married for decades and now he complained to the Sefas Emes, "Rebbe, I'm lonely." - The Sefas Emes told him "When a Jew has a page of Talmud, he is never alone."

A Person Who Has Torah Has Everything

The verse at the end of last week's parsha says, "Moshe was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights" [Shemos 24:18].

The Yalkut on those words quotes the following Medrash:

Rav Yochanan was travelling from Teveria to Tzipori, and he was riding on the shoulders of Rav Chiya Bar Abba. They passed by an orchard and Rabbi Yochanan remarked to Rav Chiya Bar Abba that he used to own this orchard, and then he sold it so that he would be able to spend his time learning Torah.

The Medrash then says that they walked a little further and they passed an olive grove. Again, Rabbi Yochanan said that he used to own this olive grove and he sold it to be able to spend his time learning Torah. They came to a vineyard and he again said that it used to be his, but he sold it so he would have the money to sit and learn Torah.

Rav Chiya Bar Abba was so overcome by this knowledge that he put Rav Yochanan down and started to cry. Rav Yochanan asked him why he was crying. Rav Chiya Bar Abba responded, "I am crying because you will not have anything left for yourself for your old age."

In other words, "Where is your retirement fund?" Rav Yochanan responded, "Are you so upset that I sold something which took only six days to create, and exchanged it for something which took forty days and forty nights to acquire (i.e.– the Torah)?"

Rav Yochanan protested, "I am not left with nothing. I have everything! I have all those years that I sat and learned Torah."

"What do you mean I have nothing? I have everything!" A person who has Torah, has everything.

The Love Of Torah — Father of the Ridbaz

The Ridbaz (Rabbi Yakov Dovid ben Ze'ev Willowski; 1845-1913) was a very interesting personality. At one point in his life, he lived in Chicago. At the end of his life, he lived in Tzfas. When he was a very old man, someone came into his Beis Medrash in Tzfas and he saw the Ridbaz hunched over his shtender, crying. This person asked the Ridbaz why he was crying. The Ridbaz answered, "It's my father's Yahrtzeit today". At the time of this incident, the father of the Ridbaz might have been dead for over 50 years, so the observer asked him further as to why he was crying.

The Ridbaz explained that he remembered the love of Torah that his father demonstrated. "I remember how much my learning meant to my father." He recounted that when he was six years old, his father hired a melamed to teach him Torah. But his father could not afford to pay the tutor and he was two months behind in the tutor's payment. One day, the tutor sent home a note with the Ridbaz giving the father an ultimatum. If the tutor did not get paid, he would need to find other employment and stop learning with the child.

The father was beside himself with anxiety. He went to shul and overheard a wealthy man saying that he wanted to build a house for his future son-in-law who just got married, but he could not find the necessary bricks to make the chimney. Without a chimney, he could not build the house. The father of the Ridbaz went home and dismantled his own chimney brick by brick, sold the bricks to the wealthy person, paid the tutor the back wages and then had enough money to pay him for the next six months.

The Ridbaz said that he remembered the bitter cold of those winters. There was no heat in the house. The father took apart the chimney so that the son could learn Torah. This, he explained, was why he was crying on the Yartzeit. He was not crying over the loss of a father fifty years after the fact. He was crying for the love of

Torah that his father had, to the extent that the whole family should shiver through the winters so that the son could learn Torah.

We have opportunities galore. We have the Torah there waiting for us in all forums and all shapes — chavrusas, shiurim, all kinds of media — we have it! As with many things in life, we fail to appreciate what we have. Our attitude must emulate that of G-d: "I am unable to separate myself from it."

Rabbeinu Ephraim /Maran Rabbeinu Ovadia Yosef zt"l

Rabbeinu Ephraim was one of the early Talmudic commentators. Tosfos quotes him many times in Shas. Rabbeinu Ephraim makes the following comment: The first time the materials used in the construction of the Mishkan are listed, the Torah enumerates them in descending order: Gold, silver, and copper.

Rabbeinu Ephraim and Rabbeinu Ovadia Yosef say that "gold, silver, and copper" is a reference to three types of individuals who donate to charitable causes. Zahav (zayin-hay-beis) is an acronym for "Zeh Hanosen Bari" – this is the one who gives charity when healthy. This is the highest level of charity giving. Kesef (kaf-samech-peh) is an acronym for "K'shera-ah Sakanah Poseach" – this is the one who gives charity when he sees danger approaching. A person who does not "open up his wallet" until he perceives danger on the horizon is demonstrating a lower level of generosity. Finally, Nechoshes (nun-ches-shin-taf) is an acronym for "Nadar Choleh Sheyomar Tenu) — someone who is already sick and perhaps even on his death bed before he is prepared to give charitably so that he will recover from his illness. This is the lowest level of charitable giving.

זהב – ראשי תיבות זה הנותן בריא; כסף – ראשי תיבות כשרואה סכנה פותח; נחושת – ראשי תיבות נתינת חולה שאומרתנו.



In this week's parsha we begin discussing the various materials that were required for the construction of the Mishkan. There was gold, silver, copper, wool, oils, skins and all sorts of things that were used.



And then the Torah tells us that there were the **אַבְנֵי־שֹׁהַם וְאַבְנֵי מִלֻּאִים לָאֵפֹד וְלַחֹשֶׁן** – *'shoham stones and filling stones for the ephod and for the choshen.'* Rashi explains **כְּמִין גֻּמָּא, וְנוֹתְנִין הָאֶבֶן שָׁם לְמַלֹּאוֹת הַגֻּמָּא** - that there were indentations that were made in the choshen and ephod, and these stones filled these cavities.

Asks **Rav Shmuel Birnbaum Zt'l** a penetrating question… "Isn't it strange, these were beautiful valuable precious stones, they had such intrinsic value, and yet, the Torah only refers to them as 'Filling Stones?'"

Says Rav Shmuel Birbaum, they are called filling stones because they signify that life isn't all about ourselves, but rather what we can do for others! As great a value these stones had intrinsically, it's nothing compared to what they were doing, which was filling the hole of another. There were gaps waiting to be filled, and these stones

did the filling. That's why the Torah refers to them as the **אַבְנֵי מִלֻּאִים**.

The Torah is spelling out to us very clearly in this week's sedra – 'As great the value we have, it doesn't compare to the value of what we can give to another Yid.'

Have an amazing Shabbos!

Yehoshua Alt – Power of Tehilim



I just want to tell you a very powerful story that just happened, that gave me the chills about the power of saying Tehilim. I know a lot of people get together to say Tehilim on group chats etc. Just to be *mechazek* the *inyan*, I want to share this tremendous story that just happened on parshas Yisro during the Corona virus epidemic.

There is a well known Rav in Mexico, a talmid chochom called **Rav Michoel Peretz** and this story happened to his grandson. He says that he gets a call from a person who is around 60 years old, who wants to invite him for a *Seudas Hodaya.* (to celebrate a miracle through making a festive meal.) He recognized the voice, but he didn't really know the person. He was vaguely familiar with him but didn't really know him that well. So, he wasn't sure why he was being invited. But of course, if I am invited to a *Seudas Hodaya,* then I will come. What is the *Hodaya* for? So, he tells him that he survived the

Corona virus. "I almost passed away, I was one month in the hospital and almost died. I survived Corona and want to make a *Seudas Hodaya.*

He still wasn't sure why he was invited, but he comes to the *seuda* anyway. He sees 18 other people at the meal. This group of people were very random, from a wide range of backgrounds, shuls and communities. They didn't match. There was something strange here. Why specifically those 18 people? So, the grandson of Rav Peretz asks the person next to him, "It's so nice that he is making a *Seudas Hodaya,* but tell me, why were you invited? He replied, " I don't know, I just got a phone call to come, but I don't really know the fellow". So the grandson says, "yeah, same thing with me, I don't know the guy, I was just invited, therefore I'm here". This scenario is repeated with other guests as well. So, everybody is puzzled and they weren't sure why they were invited.

The person who the *neis* happened to gets up and starts speaking. He says, " The reason why I invited all of you is as follows:

When I was lying there in the hospital, I was basically dead. I went up to *Shomayim*- to heaven. I saw my mother, who had already passed away a few years ago. My mother tells me", "What are you doing here? Go back down. And I tell her, "Mam, I want to go back down, but I can't". I am having this conversation when basically half dead and my *neshama* has already gone up to Shomayim. His mother tells him, "no you can go down, look look." He looks down, as he is in Shomayim and what does he see? He says at the party that he saw all the 18 people saying Tehilim for me. At that moment, every single one of you were mentioning my name and saying Tehilim for my *refuah*, even though you didn't know me personally. You were all in 18 different places, but from shomayim I saw all your faces all at one time, saying Tehilim for me. My mother told me, "look down, look, they are giving you the power to go back down!" And that is what happened.

This is why I have invited every single one of you to the party. I saw you all saying Tehilim for me.

This is a tremendous story- The power of Tehilim. Every time we daven for and mention someone's name, even if we don't know who they are, it has a tremendous effect, and is a huge z'chus for them. Keep on saying Tehilim and never stop davening for others.

Drinking the wine of Torah



A) **אדר** is a contraction of **א דר** – the month that Hashem- **אלופו של עולם** lives in. **אדר** is related to **ואדור ביניכם** - I will live among you. Indeed, the Parshios we read now deal with the Mishkan, Hashem's dwelling. Hence, it is a time of Simcha-

משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה - as Chazal teach the Shechina dwells amidst Simcha and as it says **רוני ושמחי בת ציון...ושכנתי וגו'**

B) Torah is synonymous with Simcha as it says

פקודי ה' ישרים משמחי לב -- the orders of Hashem are upright, gladdening the heart. The Gemara states **במקום גילה** - in the place of rejoicing, which refers to Matan Torah. For this reason, Torah is not learned in a house of mourning as well as on Tisha Bav.

The grandson of **R' Akiva Eiger** wrote a story that his grandfather once stayed in an inn and asked the innkeeper if he had any Seforim since he didn't have any with him. The innkeeper had one Sefer – a **רשב"א** on a **מסכת** in Shas and he lent it to him.

After the Gadol left the town, the people heard he had stayed at this inn. They went there and asked if he had left any remnant to which the innkeeper showed them the **רשב"א** that he learned from. As they reached the end of the Sefer, they saw two pages with his handwriting. There had been two pages missing from the Sefer and he had written them out by memory. The author said that he wrote this story to show that R' Akiva Eiger absorbed what he learned due to his sweetness for Torah.

In Volozin there was always a shift learning in the Beis Midrash in order that there would always be Torah being learned over the 24 hour day. **The Netziv**- Rosh Yeshiva in Volozhin- who slept next to the Beis Midrash was asked how he could sleep at night as there was always noise coming from the Beis Midrash. He replied that when one who owns a factory hears the noise of the factory knows that is when he can sleep. The same applied with the Netziv and the noise of the Beis Midrash.

Torah is compared to wine as is shown in the following:

1) The Gemara uses the phrasing **יינה של תורה**.

2) Osiyos Drebi Akiva tells us **יין** yields a Gematria of 70 hinting to the 70 facets of Torah.

3) **מסכת** is rooted in **מסכה יינה**; mixed her wine.

4) The Yerushalmi relates that in regard to a dream by a Talmid Chacham with wine it refers to Torah (see there).

Wine makes one happy as it says **ויין ישמח לבב אנוש** and as in **אין שמחה אלא ביין**. So we see **שמחה** in relation to Torah and wine. Drinking wine on Purim also means drinking the wine of Torah. After all Purim is a Matan Torah as it is when **קיימו מה שקיבלו כבר**

Esther made a three day fast. How many hours is this? Multiplying 24 by 3 we get 72. How many Pesukim are there in Parshas Yisro, the Parsha of Kabalas HaTorah? 72!

With this we can understand what it means that **רבי** planted a **נטיעה של שמחה** on Purim. The simple meaning is referring to a certain type of tree he planted which is permitted on Purim. A deeper meaning is that it refers to Torah which is called a **נטיעה** as it says **וחיי עולם נטע בתוכינו** Torah is Simcha! Happy Purim :-)

Gravity

Everything gravitates to the earth unless there is another force suspending it in the air. Once that force is disconnected, the object will return back to the earth following the law of gravity. For example, if one throws an object up into the air it is detached from the earth. According to how strong you threw it; is how far it will be from the earth. However, once the strength the object was thrown with dies out it descends back to the ground.

A Tzadik follows this quality as it says **וצדיק יסוד עולם**

This explains why people gravitate to a Tzadik. Those who don't, it may be because of their sins which create a barrier. However, once that barrier is removed, they will naturally gravitate to the Tzadik following the law of gravity.

This is the idea of the Mishkan as in **משכני אחריך נרוצה** - to gravitate. Who is the one who erects the Mishkan? A Tzadik, Moshe- **ויקם משה את המשכן**- as he is the one who possesses such a quality. This quality holds in one who makes himself humble, like Moshe, an **ענו מאד** .This is what is meant in **אשכון ואת דכא** (humility).

This week's Parsha which deals with the Mishkan ushers in the month of Adar. We need to each make ourselves into a Mishkan- a place where Hashem can dwell as in .... **מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם** This is done through humility.

The Chidushai Harim tells us **שקל** is an abbreviation for **שבתך קומך לכתך** as we donate a $\frac{1}{2}$ Shekel in the month of Adar. This means we

need to donate ourselves to Hashem with a burning passion. Indeed, **שקל** has the same Gematria as **נפש** - 430 , as giving the ½ **שקל** is symbolic of giving over our **נפש** . ½ represents humility. When we clear ourselves of the 'I' through humility we make way for Hashem to dwell within us. With this, the Pasuk **ונתתי משכני בתוכם** - I will place my sanctuary among you, can be fulfilled.

Rising Above

The title **יום הכפורים** implies that Yom Kippur is a day like Purim, meaning Purim is even greater than Yom Kippur. How are we to understand this?

In the story of Purim it seemed that all hope was lost as there was a decree for all Jews to be killed out. When describing the situation, it says there was great mourning among Jews, **וצום ובכי ומספד**; fasting weeping and lament. The term **הספד**; lament is used when hope is lost. Furthermore, it states ...**אין להשיב**; an edict written in the king's name and sealed with his signet may not be revoked.



On Yom Kippur, hope is surely not lost. However, with Purim all hope seemed lost as we steeped so low which caused the decree. Yet, we didn't give up and still did Teshuva. In this way, Purim is even greater than Yom Kippur.

אדר - the month Purim is in- means strength, might as in **אדיר במרום ה'** ; mighty on high. This hints to that we remain strong even if we have fallen so low. We hope to Hashem and as we say in **שושנת יעקב - שכל קויך לא יבשו** ; those who hope in You will not be ashamed. Even at the point of no return, we must have Emuna as it states **ויהי אמן את הדסה - אמונה**.

Not despairing is one of our fundamental principles and as the Gemara says **אפילו חרב חדה מונחת על צוארו** - even if a sharp sword is on one's neck, he shouldn't refrain from davening for mercy. We have this in our genes from Avraham, who didn't despair, as he had a child at the age of 100. When Avraham went to save Lot, he had 318 men with him. What is the significance of this number? It is one above **יאוש**; despair which has a Gematria of 317. This is because Avraham was above **יאוש** as while others despaired on Lot being saved, Avraham didn't.

A holocaust survivor was asked how he survived. He said that when he recited Kiddush Levana, he thought to himself, just as the moon renews itself, so too this time will pass and we will renew ourselves. This prevented him from despair.

When one feels on the verge of giving up, he should talk to Hashem, as this can prevent despair. **שיח** - to talk has a numerical value of 318, one above **יאוש** - despair. This is the **קול יעקב** - talk of a Jew, as **קול יעקב** has a Gematira of 318!

Moshiach comes from not despairing on the redemption- even though it already has been thousands of years. Vowelizing the word **משיח** differently we get **משיח** - from speech.

Parshah Thoughts By: Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

The Medrash (Shemos R. 33:1) relates a parable where a king asks his son-in-law to make sure that there is always a room for him to stay in when he visits his daughter and son in-law.

Hashem asked us to build a Mishkan for Him to "dwell" amongst us. **Rav Meilich Biderman** explains based on the Alshich, that we should ensure that Hashem has a presence in our lives, no matter where we are!

Our Instant World



Let us take a look at what we have today: The modern-day technology, the great advances in the sciences and medicine, the comforts and luxuries that weren't available in earlier times…. When was the last time we waited to receive a letter we were expecting in the mail?

People used to hang their laundry on a clothesline to dry and not use a dryer. Not too long ago, people would snap pictures with cameras that used rolls of film. Only when the roll finished would they develop it. Then they had to wait several days to see the pictures for the first time.



Today we have digital cameras where we can see the pictures a moment after we snap them. Corded phones were once owned only by VIPs and business tycoons which are now considered a primitive means of communication. These days every youngster carries around his advanced cell phone. We correspond almost exclusively through electronic mail. Nowadays we are able to shop and order anything we wish instantly with a touch of a finger. Who needs to go to the bank today as we have online banking? Who needs a map these days as we can just plug in the address of our destination into our device, which can guide us?

Although this seems to be a perfect world, it surely isn't. Instant gratification makes it that there is no need to wait. Because we have

grown so accustomed to getting everything immediately, we have no patience to wait for a process to unfold. In life we are forced to wait for a Shiduch, have a child or to find a way to buy a home.

These days things are so easily available and happen so quickly that we expect our desires to be fulfilled with speed. We need to appreciate when our desires are met. We also must have full trust in Hashem that everything will come at the right time as Hashem knows what He is doing.

The Miniature Sanctuary

One of the blessings commonly given to a newly-engaged couple is that the match should "oleh yafeh." While it may be customary to rapidly rattle off the words, an examination of the English translation - the match should "go up well" - reveals that the wording is awkward, and the deeper meaning is difficult to grasp. What is the underlying intention behind this curiously worded blessing?

The Satmar Rebbe Rav Yoel Teitelbaum brilliantly explains that the word "oleh" is often used to connote the numerical value of a phrase. If so, we may re-interpret the blessing as stating that the new match should have the numerical value of the word "yafeh," which comes to 95 (yud, fey, hey).

But what is the significance of this seemingly arbitrary number?

The Sefer HaChinuch discusses the laws and reasons for the 613 mitzvos, listing them in the order of their mention in the Torah. He counts the 95th mitzvah as the commandment **וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם** 25:8 ***And they shall make Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in them.***

This is a most appropriate blessing to give a new couple embarking on the establishment of their own personal miniature Sanctuary.

Time of Teshuva



Did we ever think of this time of year as a time for Teshuva? Well, the **Chidushai Harim** informs us that **אדר** is a time of Teshuva before Nissan just as **אלול** is before **תשרי**.

In fact, the well-known Pasuk **אִיש לְרעהו וּמתנות לְאביונים** contains the initials **אלול**. Indeed, **אדר** is related to strength as in **אדיר במרום ה'** since we need to strengthen ourselves with Teshuva.

So what is the difference between **אלול** and **אדר** ? **תשרי** is **תשובה מיראה** whereas **אדר** is **תשובה מאהבה** .

The Tikunai Zohar compares Purim to Yom Kippur. On Yom Kippur- which is in Tishrei- we received the second Luchos. That is **מיראה** as it was a continuation from Shavuos in which we were coerced. Purim on the other hand is **תשובה מאהבה** as we reaccepted the Torah- this time willingly.

The Gemara teaches that from **תשובה מאהבה** ; **תש** motivated by love, the **זדונות**; wilful sins become merits. This is what Adar is as it is **חודש אשר נהפך** ! It can reverse one's sins into merits.

With this we can appreciate the depth in **לולא התמהמהנו...שבנו זה פעמים** - if one didn't do Teshuva in Elul as **לולא** consist of the same letters as **אלול** , then **שבנו זה** - do Teshuva now in the 12th month (Adar as it says **אדר...ובשנים עשר חדש**) as **זה** has a Gematria of 12.

To Host The Shechina



How can one make his home into a Mikdash where the Shechina dwells?

The answer is by putting our heart and soul into it and as it says **הקב"ה ליבא בעי** - Hashem wants our heart. If we take the sum of the word **בית** **412** -- and put our **לב** - heart- 32- into it, we come to a total of 444. This is the sum of **מקדש** ! In this way we can grasp **ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם** - to make a Mikdash where Hashem will dwell in it.

Rising to The Test



Hashem tests those who are able to handle it. Indeed, the Midrash says Hashem doesn't test the wicked rather only the Tzadikim because the wicked can't withstand the test.

This can be compared to a strong animal and a weak one as surely you would put your load on the strong one. Another analogy is banging a nail into a piece of wood as you bang only according to what the piece of wood can tolerate as otherwise it will break.

We must realize that the difficulties of life are intended to make us better, not bitter.

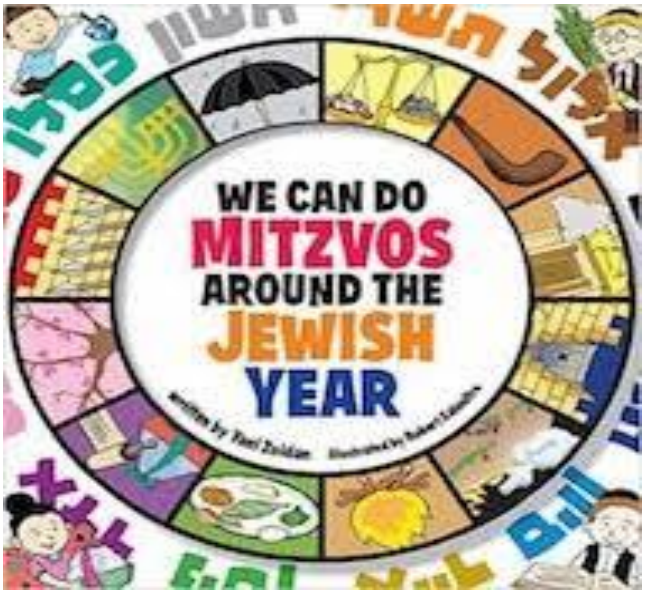


In a row of houses in Lakewood where all the homes had the same landscaping, each lawn had a large tree planted in the same location. During Hurricane Sandy, some of the trees fell while others didn't. This was because those watered with automatic sprinkler systems didn't remain intact since the systems collapsed. Those not automatically watered had to spread their roots deep into the ground to access the water and nutrients they needed. Thus they were firmly rooted in the ground and able to withstand the hurricane's winds. The other trees received their water easily and thus were not strong enough to survive the storm.

The struggles we endure build us into strong, great people. Whenever we find ourselves doubting how far we can go, we need to remember how far we have come. Remember all we have faced, all the battles we have won and all the fears we have overcome. We must do something today that our future self will be proud of.

Bitachon is the realization that all we have, all we are, and all that will be, is a gift from Hashem. – Rabbi Noach Weinberg.

Living with Hashem 24/7



Real authentic living with Hashem means each moment of one's life. In this way we can interpret **תמיד לפני ה'** – we should always have **ה'** in front of us and as it says **שויתי ה' לנגדי תמיד** - I have set Hashem before me always. Our **אבות** and **אמהות** embodied this. If we add up the number of letters in their names, we notice there are 13 in **אברהם, יצחק, יעקב** as well as in **שרה, רבקה, רחל, לאה** which is the same equivalent as **אחד**. 13 and 13 is 26, the Gematria of **י-ה-ו-ה**. Hence, this alludes to that the **אבות** and **אמהות** were always connected to **ה' אחד**.

We need to observe the Torah and Mitzvos 24 hours daily. Delving into the phrase **וחי בהם** - live by Hashem's decrees and judgements, we see this as **וחי** yields a Gematria of 24, as we should live with Hashem 24 hours a day through the Torah and Mitzvos.

Here are some other illustrations of this idea:

- Our **תנ"ך** consists of the 5 books of **חומש** and 19 in **נ"ך**. This gives us a total of 24!
- There are 24 **תכשיטי כלה**; adornments, as we- the **כלה** of **ה'** - should be loyal to Him 24 hours daily.
- Our famous words **נעשה ונשמע** are recorded in which Perek and Pasuk? None other than 24:7! This is in Parshas Mishpatim, as we should live by the **משפטים** of the Torah 24 hours daily, 7 days a week.
- There are 24 **מתנות כהונה** alluding to this idea as the **כהן** is the one who is especially close to **ה'**.
- In the **בית המקדש** there were 24 **משמרות**.

- When Shlomo built the Beis Hamikdash he sought to bring the **ארון** to the holy of holies. Upon the gates clinging to each other being unable to open it, he recited 24 songs of Tefila.
- Shabbos is a day of just us and **ה'**. Consequently, we cannot perform the 39 **מלאכות**. How many chapters are there in Mesachta Shabbos? **24**! Additionally, the first letters of **וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת** - the Jewish people should observe Shabbos, has a sum of 24.

Now we can understand the depth of why the curtains of the **משכן** were comprised of 24 strands per thread. True living (as **משכן** is rooted in **שוכן**; to dwell) with Hashem is 24 hours daily.

Beards and Payos

R' Leibla Eiger didn't stroke his beard although his beard was long. This was so that he shouldn't pull out any hairs.



הגה"צ רבי לייב'לע אייגער זצ"ל
לובלינער רבי

In the Sefer **עין חנוך** the author **R' Chanoch Henoch Meir** writes, "I heard from my father-in-law- the Kedushas Yom Tov- that combing the beard and Payos is included in **זה א-לי ואנוהו** this is my G-d and I will beautify Him.

The Ben Ish Chai writes that a longer beard is better according to Kabbala…Therefore those that Hashem created a long beard for and want to change this present by shortening their beard through folding it even though they are careful not to cut it, are acting improperly. It should be left as is and one should be happy with the way it is.

We know many Jews don't have a beard. **The Chassam Sofer** tells us that the **Rema Mipano** among many others shaved his beard. He continues further that there is no prohibition whatsoever in shaving a beard today.



When Elimelech Gavriel (Mike) Tress (1909-1967) went to visit the **Satmar Rebbe, R' Yoel Teitelbaum**, the Rebbe showed him lots of respect. After he left, the Chasidim asked their Rebbe why he showed so much respect to someone who doesn't even have a beard.

The Rebbe responded that when this man goes to heaven, Hashem may ask, ***"Jew, where is your beard?" However, when you Chassidim go to heaven you may be asked, "Beard, where is your Jew?"***

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמָתִי

R' Yankel Klapholtz z"l was a tremendous masmid who never wasted a minute of his day. But as his daughter was of marriageable age and he didn't have money to make a wedding, he wished to ask the **Chazon Ish zt"l** what he should do. He asked a friend, **R' Chaim Brim zt"l**, a renowned Talmid Chacham, who was close to the Chazon Ish, if he can get him an appointment in Bnei Brak, and R' Chaim acceded to his request, even agreeing to accompany him.

When they arrived at the Chazon Ish's home, the gabbai told them that the Rav wasn't feeling well and wasn't accepting people. However, he didn't want to disappoint them and told them that when the Chazon Ish goes from his room to daven Mincha he stops for a

moment to wash his hands, and if it's a short shaila, perhaps he would be able to answer it right then and there.

R' Chaim and R' Yankel anxiously stood waiting by the sink, and as the Chazon Ish approached, he immediately recognized R' Chaim and asked him what brings him to Bnei Brak.

R' Chaim told the Rav that his friend has an urgent shaila, and asked permission if he could ask it. The Chazon Ish nodded and R' Yankel asked "Rebbi, I have a daughter that's of marriageable age, but I have no funds to make a wedding. Should I go to America and collect money?"

"America? To make money? Whose idea is this?" replied the Chazon Ish. "It's my own idea" replied R' Yankel. "Your own?" said the Chazon Ish, and then, after a moment of thought, he said, "If so, go, and be matzliach!"

Once R' Yankel had the green light, he wasted no time to pack his bags and set out for the long ocean voyage to America. Even though he was warned that he probably wouldn't raise much money - barely enough to cover his ticket - R' Yankel was unfazed by these remarks, and, having complete faith in the Chazon Ish's beracha, he continued on his journey.



Upon arrival in New York, R' Yankel found himself in the Satmar B.M. in Williamsburg, where he spent the day studying Torah as if he was back at home. He seemingly forgot his mission to collect money for his daughter's wedding expenses.

During the early evening hours, R' Yankel noticed that the **Satmar Rebbe, R' Yoilish Teitelbaum zt"l**, would go for his daily walk with his shamash. Eager to have the

privilege of speaking to the Rebbe in Torah, he asked the shamash to ask the Rebbe if he minds to answer some of his Torah questions. The Rebbe readily agreed, and over the next two weeks, R' Yankel spent his days studying Torah in shul, and toward evening, he would accompany the Rebbe during his walk.

The Satmar Rebbe was very impressed with R' Yankel's Torah knowledge and was curious to know what had brought him to America. When R' Yankel explained that he came because he needed money to marry off his daughter, the Rebbe told him, "That's it? Don't worry. I'll call a meeting of a few of my wealthy chassidim and we'll see what they could do for you."

The next morning, the Satmar Rebbe called R' Yankel to his study and gave him an envelope full of bills. R' Yankel thanked the Rebbe profusely, and, as he was about to leave, the Rebbe told him the following: "I want you to know that I often make these meetings for poor families. But this meeting was exceptional – the attendees contributed unusually large amounts, more than I've ever seen before." R' Yankel thanked the Rebbe again and headed back to Yerushalayim.

When he counted the money, he saw that not only did he have enough for his daughter, but he also had left-over money for his second daughter! This story seems like the typical story that one hears about how a beracha of a tzaddik is fulfilled. However, there is more to the story which makes it even more incredible.

The obvious question is: If R' Yankel travelled to collect money, why was he spending his time sitting in the Satmar Rebbe's shul instead of getting addresses of donors? The answer lies in one missing link in the story.

Before R' Yankel left Yerushalayim, he told his rebbi, the **Tchebiner Rav, R' Dov Ber Weidenfeld zt"l**, about the beracha he'd received from the Chazon Ish. When his Rebbi heard this, he told him, "Listen carefully to the Chazon Ish's instructions. If he told you to go to

America, then you must go. But he never told you to go out and collect. Therefore, when you arrive, go into a shul and continue your regular learning schedule and you will see that Hashem will help you." And that's exactly what he did! Tzaddik gozer, v'Hakadosh Baruch Hu m'kayem!

Project Mesorah - Rabbi Paysach Krohn's inspiring Erev Shabbos Bracha



There is a wonderful **Malbim** in this week's parsha. The Pasuk says **וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם** 25:8 ***And they shall make Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in them.***

Why does it say *dwell in them*, it should say *dwell in it*? Some say that when Klal Yisrael make the *Botei Mikdosh* (whether the first or the second) **וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם** - ***I will dwell in them*** ie. the 1st and the 2nd Beis Hamikdosh. However the Malbim says it actually refers to Klal Yisrael. **וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ** let them make for Me a mikdash- **וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם** - ***and I will dwell in them- Klal Yisrael***, because they have done such a wonderful thing.

And then he says something amazing. ***Everybody*** *is supposed to build a Beis Hamikdosh in the chambers of his heart*. This is what is meant by *a dwelling place*. Hashem will dwell in each and every one of us. Further on in the **Rimzei Hamishkan** it says that the stomach is like the Mizbayach – why? Because just like the on the Mizbayach, the sacrifice is consumed, similarly the stomach consumes food. So when you eat, just remember that it has to be B'tachlis Hakashrus because your stomach is like the Mizbayach. And then he says that the

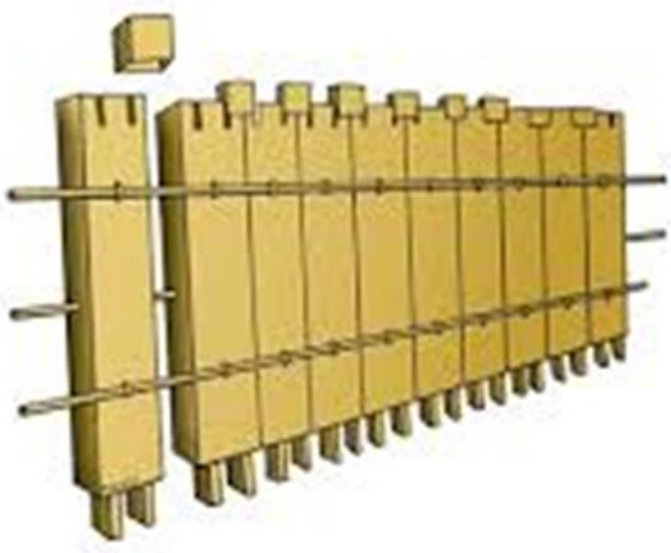
Lechem Haponim is like your heart. Just like a person needs bread to survive, he also needs the heart to beat to stay alive. And the brain which houses the Saichel is like the Aaron Hakodesh. The Aaron Hakodesh houses the Luchos and the Sefer Torah.

So, if you think about it, you are a walking, talking Beis hamikdash. If we think like this, then whether you are a man, woman, or boy, you are going to behave on a higher level.

You should have a frailichen Shabbos and a lichtige Shabbos.

And just remember that we have high standards because we are each a walking, talking Beis hamikdash.

Parsha Points to Ponder



From where did the Jewish people obtain the wood for the **בריח התיכון**- the middle bar (26:28) which miraculously turned (Shabbos 98b) to run inside of the **קרשים** (planks) along the lengths of all three of the walls of the Mishkan?

The **Targum Yonason** writes that the wood for this bar originated in the inn of Avrohom Avinu in which he fulfilled the mitzvah of hosting guests. When the Jewish people were crossing the Red Sea, angels cut it down and threw it into the water, from which the Jews took it and used it in building the Mishkan.

Peninim quotes **Rav E. Muller,** who symbolically explains that the entire Mishkan was built from donations given by those whose hearts generously motivated them to give. Therefore, it isn't surprising to learn that the central bar which supported the entire structure was

one which was steeped in charitable giving, as Avrohom personified the Jewish attribute of chesed.

Alternatively, the **Daas Z'keinim** writes that the middle bar was made from the wooden staff of Yaakov Avinu.

The Capacity to See the Eventuality by Rav Yissochor Frand



Rashi comments on one letter in the pasuk, "You shall make the boards of the Mishkan of shittim wood, standing erect." [Shemos 26:15] Rashi points out that the pasuk says, "And you shall make the boards (v'asisa es ha'kerashim)."

A more straightforward way to say this would be "v'asisa kerashim". What does the "hay hayediah" (implying "these special boards") come to teach? Rashi comments that the Torah only uses such language by the kerashim – the boards. The Torah does not use the construct "es haXXX" (the XXX) by any other keylim of the Beia Hamikdash.

Rashi in fact says in the name of the Medrash Tanchuma that these are special boards – prepared and reserved for this purpose. Yaakov Avinu foresaw prophetically that his descendants would leave Egypt and make a Mishkan out of wood. Chazal say that he therefore planted cedar trees when he came down to Egypt. Before he died, he told his children that they would one day leave the country and pointed out to them the cedar trees he planted that he wanted them to take with them.

Rabbeinu Eliyahu Mizrachi asks a question on this Rashi: Yaakov Avinu only commanded his children to take out the cedar trees (Arazim) that he planted in Egypt. That does not explain the construct "Es HaKerashim" (the Boards). Yaakov did not plant boards. He planted trees!

I heard an answer to this question from an acquaintance: When Yaakov Avinu planted the trees, he did not see them as trees. He saw the (future) boards of the Mishkan. Yaakov had the foresight, with Ruach HaKodesh, to say, "one day you will take these very trees and they will be the boards of the Mishkan." Yaakov had the capacity to see not only the present, but to see the dream, to see the eventuality, as well!

This acquaintance mentioned that the **Ponnevizher Rav, zt"l**, had this same capacity. When he bought the large tract of land that was to become the Ponnevizher Yeshiva, there were not twenty Yeshiva bochrim in all of Eretz Yisrael. He bought acres upon acres of land. Not only were there not twenty Yeshiva bochrim in all of Eretz Yisrael, but the German General, Erwin Rommel, was 11 days away from Tel Aviv! At that very moment, the Ponnevizher Rav was buying land for a Yeshiva to hold 1,000 bochrim! People told him "You are dreaming!" He responded, "I might be dreaming, but my eyes are open." He had the capacity to see the eventuality of a Yeshiva that needed space for 1,000 students. When he saw that barren piece of land on an empty hilltop, he already saw upon it the Ponnevizher Yeshiva.

Rav Schwab tells the story that he was once walking with **Rav Ruderman, zt"l**, in the Forest Park neighborhood (where the yeshiva was originally situated). They were walking by a big old house and the Rosh Yeshiva said to Rav Schwab "This building can hold two hundred bochrim." In those days, there were maybe 20 or 30 bochrim in the whole Yeshiva. Rav Schwab chuckled to himself – why is Rav Ruderman worried about a building for 200 students? In

those days a Yeshiva with 200 bochrim in America, and certainly in Baltimore, was a "crazy" idea.

Here again, a great man looked at a building and saw into the future – this could be a Yeshiva one day! These are called dreamers – visionaries. These are people with foresight to see what is not here now, but what can, and many times will, be here one day.

It is a rare commodity to be able to see beyond the here and now and see the future. That is what Yakov Avinu saw. When he planted those Arazim he did not just see cedar trees. He saw the walls of the Mishkan. Therefore the boards were called haKerashim with the Hay haYediah! We do not see it now, but a person with a long range of vision can see the future.

Unlock Your Potential!



Naftali Tzvi Yehudah was not doing well in school. One night he overheard his parents talking about him in another room. His father was crying and felt saddened that it didn't seem that his son would succeed in his Torah learning. His parents felt that they would have to take him out of school and teach him a trade. As soon as Naftali Tzvi Yehudah heard this, he burst into the room and assured his parents that he would begin to work very hard in school. His parents agreed to give him one last chance. True to his word, Naftali Tzvi Yehudah became a very diligent student and became very knowledgeable in his Torah learning.

The Netziv, Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin, became one of the greatest Torah leaders of his time! He headed the Volozhin yeshiva and authored many Torah books. Later in his life, the Netziv bemoaned what might have been had he not heard his father's pain and begged for one more chance. He would have grown up as a good Jew. He would have davened daily and would have been an honest worker in some trade. He probably would have learned some Torah, such as Mishnayos. However, after his passing, the Heavenly Court would have held him accountable for what he could have accomplished but did not. He imagined that the Heavenly Court would say to him. "You had the abilities to become very learned in Torah and you were supposed to author books of Torah learning. You were also supposed to teach Torah to many students. Why didn't you fulfill your potential? Why weren't you as good as you could have been?" (based on a story from Rabbi Paysach Krohn)

❖**The Chofetz Chaim** quotes a Pesikta: When Hashem asked Moshe Rabbeinu to make a sanctuary for His Holy Presence to dwell in, Moshe trembled greatly. Moshe questioned, "How it was humanly possible to make a house for Hashem? Hashem's holy Presence is infinite and can't be contained in all the heavens!" Hashem told Moshe, "I am not asking you [to build a sanctuary] based on my ability to do so. Rather, [try your best and do it] according to your capabilities." When Hashem asked Moshe to bring a sacrificial offering for Him, Moshe was bewildered. Even if he were to sacrifice all the animals in the world it wouldn't be significant to Hashem who owns all the animals in the world. Hashem again responded to do what you can do. All Hashem wanted was one lamb in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Hashem will never say to us, why don't you learn as much Torah as the other fellow? Why don't you give as much charity as he does? Why don't you do as many good deeds as he does? Rather, Hashem will ask us, why don't you learn as much Torah as you are capable of?

Why don't you give as much charity as you are capable of? Why don't you do as many good deeds as you are capable of?

We all have different G-d given qualities and abilities. Our obligation in life is to use our own, personal abilities to their maximum potential.

Jewish Education Program Queens [JEP]

It's Mine! No, It's Mine! It's Ours!



Hashem asked Moshe to build a Mishkan to house Hashem's Holy Presence. Moshe and Betzalel were told to construct the different vessels. Hashem said, "You shall make…". When it came to constructing the Aron (the Ark which contained the 10 Commandments), Hashem told Moshe," They should make". Regarding all the other vessels, Hashem said each vessel should be made by one person. Yet, Hashem said that the Aron should be made by multiple people.

The Ramban says that Hashem wanted every single Jew to participate in constructing the Aron. Why? It was so that every single Jew would merit to attain a knowledge of the Torah. How could every Jew possibly join in? The Midrash (34:2) explains that every Jew could participate in one of three ways. He could donate some gold toward its construction, he could help Betzalel a little, in its actual construction or he could merely have a desire to be involved.

Rabbi Meir Dan Plotsky in his sefer the Kli Chemdah (as quoted in the Commentary on the Ramban by Rabbi Charles Chavel) says that even the desire alone to help Betzalel in making the Aron was considered an act of helping to make it. That desire would be enough to merit acquiring the knowledge of the Torah.

The Eitz Yosef explains why the participation of a donation or physical help in the actual construction would make a difference. He says that the involvement and participation in constructing the Aron would awaken their hearts to the holiness of the Aron since it housed the holy Torah. That in turn, would make an impression in their hearts about the holiness of the Torah and would enable them to acquire a share in the Torah. It seems that in order to acquire a share in the Torah, our hearts must be able to feel its holiness.

The Chofetz Chaim zt"l explains that Hashem wanted all the Jews to have a share in the Torah. Hashem didn't want one Jew to say to another, "I learn more Torah since I donated more towards its construction." Hashem also didn't want one Jew to say to another, "You didn't donate towards the construction of the Aron, therefore you do not have a share in the Torah." To prevent these comments Hashem told Moshe that all the Jews were to be involved in the Aron's construction. The Torah belongs to all Jews!

The Ibn Ezra in Tehillim (19:9) says that the Torah was entrusted to us. We have an inner need for Torah. It quenches an inner thirst that brings us joy. In fact, we are taught that if a person is sad or depressed, he should go learn Torah. That will lift his spirits.

However, the **Klai Yakar** says that not all Jews are capable of learning Torah. Those who can't learn, can acquire a share in Torah by supporting those who do learn. By supporting others, it is considered as if they themselves learned Torah also. [Nowadays, even those who support Torah learning can also learn on their level, as there are many Torah classes and books available in English and on all levels.] The Chofetz Chaim says that there is a great reward

both for those who learn Torah and for those who support Torah learning. The poles that were used to carry the Aron when the Jews travelled were never removed, even when the Aron was in the Mishkan. The reason is that since they were used to carry the Aron, they acquired the holiness of the Aron.

The Chofetz Chaim says that the poles represent the financial supporters of Torah. The financial supporters of Torah will merit eternity, together with those who learned Torah. The Torah belongs to all Jews. Some acquire a share through learning the Torah while others acquire a share by supporting those who learn Torah. [Even those who support Torah learning should learn to the extent that they are capable of].

Don't Tarnish Your Mitzvah



❖**Rashi** is bothered by the apparent extra words "for Me", in the pasuk. Why else would the Jews have donated to the Mishkan (Tabernacle) if not for the sake of Hashem? Imagine if we were given the opportunity to sponsor part of the building of the Holy Temple- wouldn't we give wholeheartedly, for the sake of Hashem? Furthermore, building the Mishkan was an atonement for the Sin of the Golden Calf and the Jews were probably overjoyed that they had this opportunity for atonement. Of course, their intentions would be for Hashem- to wipe away their sin. Then why were the seemingly extra words of "for Me" needed?

In order to answer this, it is important to understand that the quality of a mitzvah is based upon three factors:

1. The action of the mitzvah.

2. The way it is performed (e.g. quickly or begrudgingly).

3. The intention while performing the mitzvah.

The Evil Inclination tries to prevent us from performing mitzvos. If he isn't successful, he tries to tarnish the quality of the mitzvah by affecting the way we do it or our intentions when doing it.

❖It is precisely this point that Rashi is emphasizing. The Jews needed that extra reminder to donate for the sake of Hashem, to strengthen their resolve against the Evil Inclination who would try to corrupt their pure intentions by creating ulterior motives for their actions. Perhaps the Evil Inclination could convince some Jews to donate for the sake of receiving honour or prestige or some other personal motivation that would detract from the purity and quality of the mitzvah.

We must be on guard at all times against our worst enemy, the Evil Inclination, who is always looking for ways to stop us from doing mitzvos altogether or from doing them in the best possible (and most qualitative) way. Don't let the Evil Inclination beat you! *(Based on a dvar Torah by* ***Rabbi A. Henach Leibowitz zt"l,)***

A Wise Man would say:

"A person with true Emunah will understand that when Hashem solves your problems, you have faith in His abilities; when Hashem does not solve your problems, He has faith in your abilities."

Torah Tavlin



הרואה את הים הגדול אומר ברוך שעשה את הים הגדול - Berachos 54 The **שו"ע** paskens that the beracha, **שעשה את הים הגדול** is only made on the Mediterranean Sea; on other oceans, **עושה מעשה בראשית** is recited. The **מ"ב** brings that most achronim argue and say the Atlantic Ocean is the **ים הגדול** and on all others, including the Mediterranean, we say the beracha **עושה מעשה בראשית**. Since it remains unclear, it is recommended that on the Mediterranean one recites **עושה מעשה בראשית**, and quickly afterwards, add **שעשה את הים הגדול**, to avoid this ambiguity, one should only make the general beracha of**עושה מעשה בראשית** .

In the year 2010, **R' Aharon L. Shteinman zt"l** visited a Kollel in Gibraltar. In Gibraltar, there is an area called "Europa Point" where you can see the Atlantic and Mediterranean at the same time. This is the only place you could make the beracha **הים הגדול** without a **ספק**.

The Gabbaim waited for the precise moment when they were flying overhead and pointed out the window, explaining this once in a lifetime opportunity to Rav Shteinman. The Rosh Yeshiva who was in middle of learning Gemara replied, **צו א בלאט גמרא קומט עס ניט** !" He refused to interrupt his learning to take advantage of this rare opportunity.

R' Dovid Chananya Pinto shlita (Derech Chayim) would say:



Perhaps the reason that older people come to take part in the celebration of a Bar Mitzvah of a young boy, instead of only young boys his age celebrating with him, is because the Torah has no finite measurement and is wider than the sea.

The celebration of the Bar Mitzvah of a young boy arouses adults to make a personal accounting; what have we achieved so far since the day we celebrated our Bar Mitzvah? Did we progress in Torah and fear of Heaven in all those decades since we celebrated our thirteenth birthday, or have we remained in the same place and thus are even on a lower level than the young boy presently celebrating his Bar Mitzvah? Participating in a Bar Mitzvah has the potential to awaken us to draw closer to Hashem and his Torah, which raises a person to greater heights."



R' Shlomo Ephraim Luntschitz zt"l (Kli Yakar) would say: ועשית לו זר זהב סביב - The Shulchan in the Mishkan was to have a **זר זהב**- a golden crown around it. This hints to our desire for eating as this is what the Shulchan - the table - represents. If we have control over our desire for food then it is a **זר** - a crown as we are free and like a king with a crown. If our desire controls us then it is **זר** - a stranger, outsider."

וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־נֵרֹתֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה וְהֶעֱלָה אֶת־נֵרֹתֶיהָ וְהֵאִיר עַל־עֵבֶר פָּנֶיהָ: 25;37



When **R' Mendel Kaplan zt"l** arrived in Chicago in the early 1940's, he became a Rebbi in a local Hebrew school. Although he didn't speak English yet, he won his students over by offering to "teach them to read the Chicago Tribune if they taught him to read English." His insights into world affairs and reading between the lines of the daily paper earned him his student's respect.

One of R' Mendel's students was a troubled youth who was totally absorbed in pursuing a good time. He held no interest in Torah learning. R' Mendel put in considerable effort to get him to learn, but to no avail. He finally made a standing offer that if the boy ever felt so inclined to learn with him, he would gladly make himself available, no matter what hour of the day or night.

It so happened that one Motzei Shabbos, the young man was returning home at 2:00 am after spending a night out on the town. It occurred to him that it would make a good practical joke to pay a visit to R' Mendel's home at this unholy hour and ask to learn with him. He knocked on the door of the home and, to his surprise, R' Mendel immediately opened it. The talmid entered the dining room to find R' Mendel had been sitting over an open Gemara learning. R' Mendel joyously greeted him as an honoured guest and the two studied together till the morning.

"From that moment onward, I became a changed person," relates the student decades later. "I found myself increasingly drawn to my Rebbi and to learning in general until finally, I merited to be what I am today - a maggid shiur in a yeshivah in Yerushalayim."

The Menorah represents the light of Torah, a light so unique that it can push away any form of darkness. Even the darkness of the night

and the wee hours of the morning, are no match for the light of Torah, and its transformative qualities can take a person far from the light and draw him in until he can absorb it and light himself up from within.

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם׃ 25:8

A man hired a carpenter to help him restore an old farmhouse. He had just finished a rough day on the job. A flat tire made him lose an hour of work, his electric saw quit, and now his ancient pickup truck refused to start. The boss drove him home and they sat in stony silence. On arriving, he invited the boss in to meet his family.

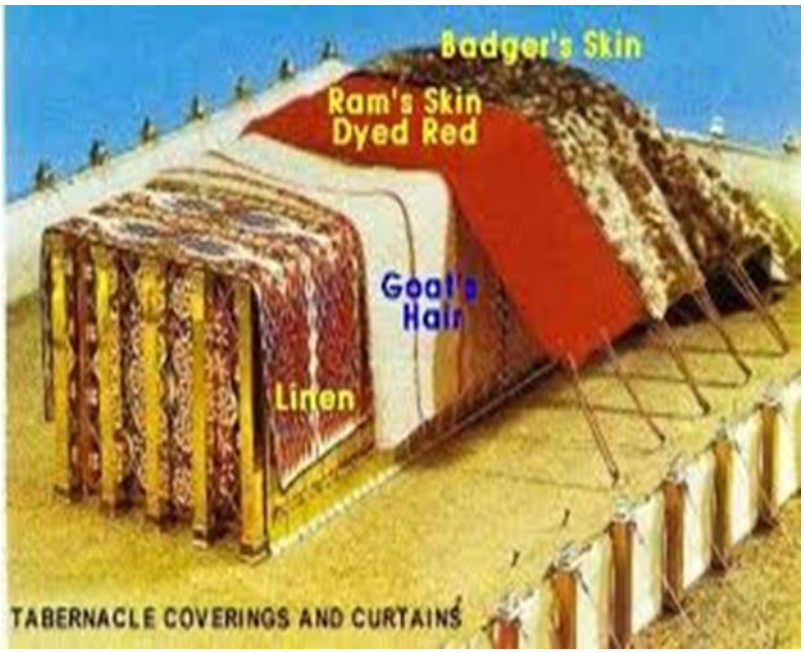


As they walked toward the front door, he paused briefly at a small tree, touching the tips of the branches with both hands. After opening the door, the man underwent an amazing transformation. His tanned face was wreathed in smiles and he hugged his two small children and his wife. Afterward, he walked the boss to his car.

They passed the tree, and the boss' curiosity got the better of him. He asked him why he touched the tree earlier. "Oh, that's my trouble tree," he replied. "I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but one thing is for sure; troubles don't belong in the house with my wife and children. So, I hang them up on the tree every night when I come home. In the morning, I pick them up again." The boss was impressed. But the carpenter smile d wistfully. "Funny thing is," the man concluded, "when I come out in the morning to pick them up, there

aren't nearly as many troubles as I remember hanging up the night before!"

Hashem chose the Jewish people to be His builders, the Chosen Nation who will construct a house that is worthy of His Shechina. But one thing is for sure: Hashem wants every Jew to put forth his best effort and leave all his troubles aside. For in a home as holy and worthy as Hashem's abode, there is no place for grief, distress or pain. Hashem wants our hearts – **רחמנא ליבא בעי** - and when we enter a shul, Beis Medrash or even our very own homes, He expects us to hang up our troubles outside so that He can take care of them and somehow make them disappear!

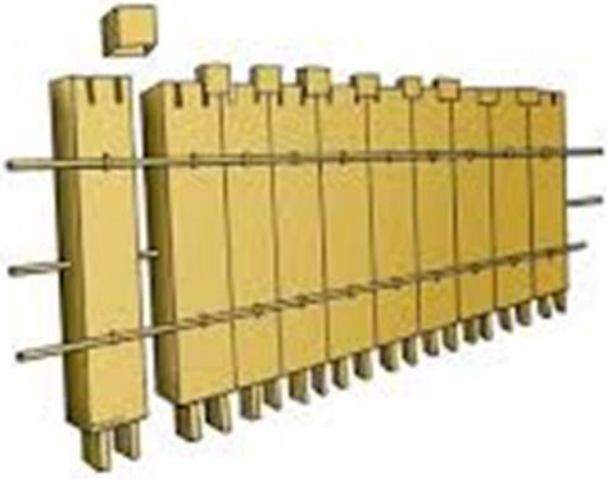


R' Menachem Mendel of Premishlan zt"l (Toras HaChassidim Harishonim: Darchei Yesharim) would say: ועשית יריעת עזים לאהל על המשכן - There are two kinds of tzaddikim. On the one hand, there is a tzaddik who is the same on the outside as on the inside. When you look at him, you know he is a tzaddik. On the other hand, there is a tzaddik whose righteousness is hidden. To the casual observer, this tzaddik is nothing special, a 'regular' person. Which way is preferable? The posuk states: 'You shall make curtains for a tent over the Mishkan.' This teaches us that a tzaddik should try to 'cover' himself, for we are instructed to make a curtain to cover our inner Mishkan - our inner holiness."

Torah Tavlin - Concepts in Avodas Halev From The Family of R' Chaim Yosef Kofman Zt"L

וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁים לַמִּשְׁכָּן... וְהַבְּרִיחַ הַתִּיכֹן בְּתוֹךְ הַקְּרָשִׁים מַבְרֵחַ מִן־הַקָּצֶה אֶל־הַקָּצֶה: 26:18/28 The posuk tells us that the middle bar of the Mishkan (**בְּרִיחַ הַתִּיכֹן**) should extend from one end to the other end connecting the krashim together so that all 4 walls are solidly secured.

Targum Yonason explains that the angels in heaven cut down the eishel trees and set it afloat on the sea and all the Malachim sang out, "These are the trees that Avraham Avinu planted in Beer Sheva." Therefore, Yaakov Avinu stopped in Beer Sheva to take his grandfather's trees and brought them with him to Egypt. From there they went through the midbar until the wood was designated to its holy place in the Mishkan. Why was it so important to use this wood from Avraham and Yaakov, instead of just using wood that they could have found in Mitzrayim?



My machshava is that Avraham Avinu personified the middah of chessed while Yaakov personified the Middas Haemes. Therefore, in order to guarantee that the Mishkan, where the Shechina will rest, will have special kedusha, it had to contain both chessed and emes; as the posuk in Mishlei says, **חסד ואמת אל יעזבך**. Hashem wants His Shechina to be able to rest in every single Jewish home, as it says, **וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם**.

In order to build our homes with the proper kedusha, we need that middle beam connecting all four walls of our own home infused with the middos of Torah and chessed personified. This can only happen

if we live a life filled with the middos of Avrahom and Yaakov Avinu, middos of chessed and emes. ***May we all have nachas from all our future generations and enjoy simcha and happiness throughout our future years.***

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ 25:2 The blacksmith of Radin was known as a congenial and friendly man, however, he did not part with his money too quickly. Even his own children knew not to ask their father for a few kopecks as it was usually a waste of time. One day, the blacksmith came frantically running to the home of the **Chofetz Chaim zt"l** and pleaded, "Rebbe, please bless my sick daughter with a speedy recovery!"



To his surprise, the Chofetz Chaim looked at him long and hard and then agreed to bless her - in return for ten rubles. Never had the Chofetz Chaim taken money from anyone! Yet the blacksmith did not think twice and instantly placed the sum in the Rav's hands - all that mattered was his daughter's recovery. And, indeed, his daughter returned to her former self. The blacksmith's joy was beyond measure. One day, the blacksmith received a letter from his son, whom the Chofetz Chaim had persuaded to leave home and attend yeshivah in a distant city. In shock, he read the letter. In it, his son thanked and praised his father for sending him ten rubles. The letter went on and on and the son could not thank his father enough for this unexpected bounty. The blacksmith held the letter and thought long and hard. And then it hit him. The mystery behind the Chofetz Chaim taking the money was solved. And the man learned his lesson.

Donating to the Mishkan was a mitzvah given to all of Klal Yisroel. Each and every Jew gave from his possessions and was very happy to do so. This is what Hashem wants from us - He wants us not only to give but to be happy to give! It is incumbent upon every member of the Jewish Nation to use his innate middah of kindness to help others, give charity and see to the needs of the community. Because in the end, your money will be given - the only question is how it left your pocket and reached its destination!

Drush V'Chiddush

וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁים לַמִּשְׁכָּן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים עֹמְדִים 26:15



The Medrash Tanchuma comments that when Hashem commanded Bnei Yisroel to make the planks of the Mishkan from acacia wood, standing erect, He was implying that they should take those acacia trees which were prepared and already standing for this purpose. Avraham Avinu had planted these trees many years earlier in Be'er Sheva. When Yaakov Avinu went down to Egypt with his seventy souls, he transplanted the trees there. Before he passed away, he told his sons that Hashem would one day command that they build a Mishkan, a sanctuary to house His Divine Presence, and they were to use these trees for the construction. Were there no suitable trees in Egypt? Why did the Patriarchs go to such lengths? Couldn't the Jews simply purchase wood from gentile traders who used to sell them food (Yuma 75b)?

R' Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l explains that the Patriarchs acted thus in order to raise the spirits of their descendants who would be enslaved in Egypt. It was not enough to promise the Jews that they would be redeemed; the groves of acacia trees that Yaakov planted in Egypt were a tangible reminder to the enslaved Jews that their eventual salvation was a reality. (Targum Yonason brings an interesting fact: The tree that Avraham planted in Be'er Sheva was brought by angels to the Red Sea. It floated on the water and the angel announced, "This is the tree that Avraham planted." The Jews took it and made it into the inner beam of the walls which was seventy amos long. When they set up the Mishkan this beam would miraculously twist like a snake inside the boards and pass through each wall from one end to the other and turn the corners between one wall and the next!)

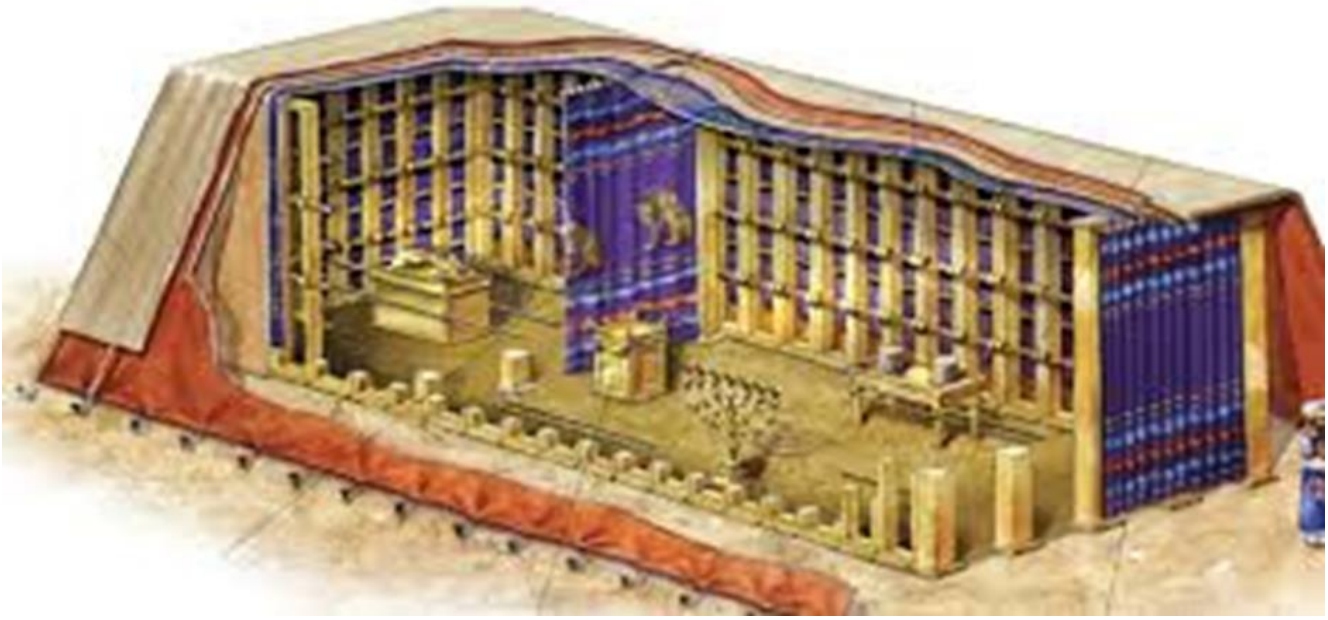
R' Yaakov says that this is one of the reasons why the authors of the siddur included the order of the korbanos in the daily prayers. The more we are familiar with what took place in the Bais HaMikdash, the more excited we will be and the eventual rebuilding of the Bais HaMikdash will seem to us.

From the Wellsprings Of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

As we enter the month of Adar, we always read Parshas Teruma where Hashem instructs the Jewish people to build a Sanctuary for Him. Why would Hashem need a physical structure here on earth? Hashem is completely spiritual and cannot be contained in a specific space - not even a spiritual sanctuary - so why did He command us to make for Him a Mishkan?

The answer is that since the time of Sarah Imeinu, Hashem has been longing for the special connection He had with her. That incredible bond was symbolized by the three special miracles that Sarah experienced in her tent. Her Shabbos candles never went out, there was a special blessing in her dough, and there was a Cloud of Glory

hovering above her tent. All of these represented the special connection that Sarah had with Hashem. When Sarah passed away, so did that special connection.



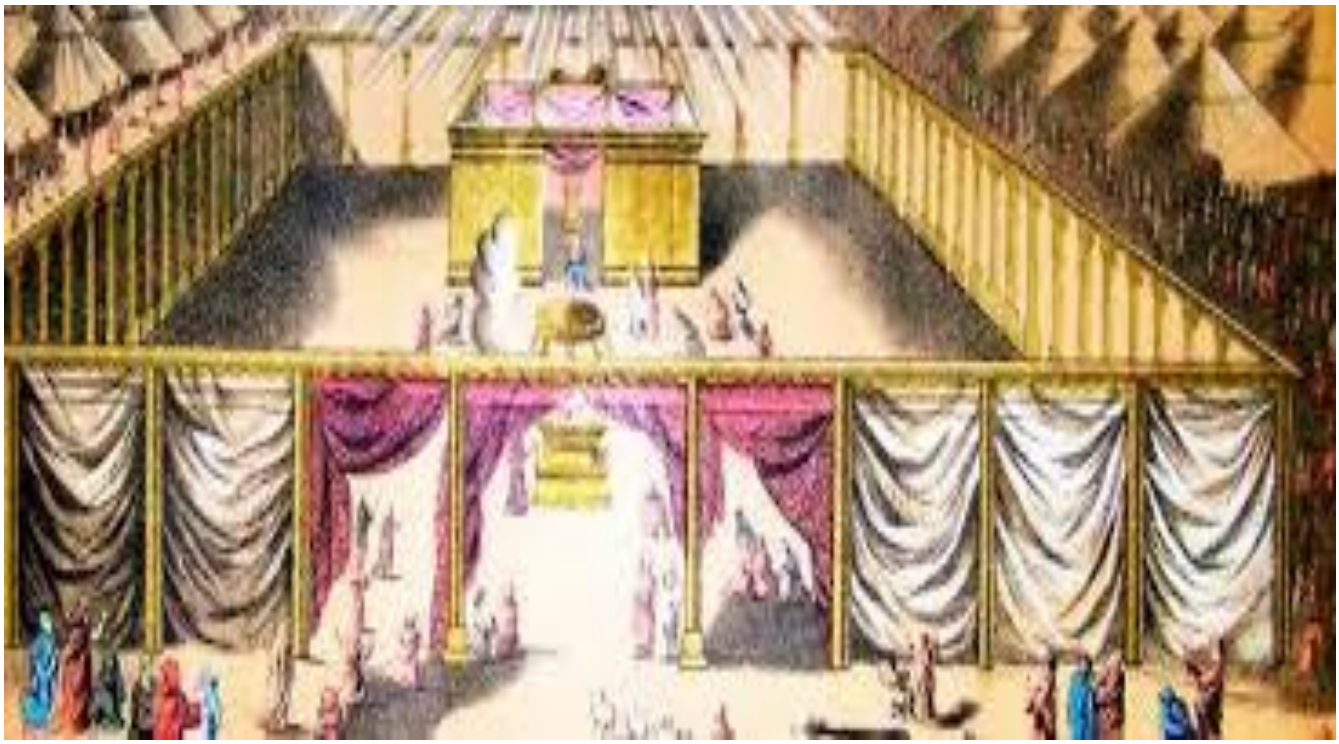
The Ramban tells us that the real redemption from Egypt took place only when Klal Yisroel built a Mishkan for Hashem. Hashem gave very specific stipulations to model this holy Temple after the tent of Sarah! Make a Ner Tamid, just like Sarah's Shabbos candles that never went out. Make me Lechem HaPanim, like Sarah's dough. And just like the cloud that hovered above her tent, I will rest my Shechina in this Sanctuary!

Hashem tells us to build this Home, so that we can feel close to Him, and when we do feel that Hashem is right here amongst us, then we can bring Him into our minds and our hearts and then He will truly dwell inside of us, down here on this earth!

The Mishkan is for us, Am Yisroel, to bring Hashem into our lives. Although nowadays we do not have a Mishkan, we can still fulfil the command of building it, by thinking about Hashem and feeling close to Him. In this way our minds and hearts become a true dwelling place for Hashem.

From the Wellsprings Of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

וְרִיעַת הָאֹהֶל יֵהְיֶה סָרוּחַ עַל־צִדֵּי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִזֶּה וּמִזֶּה לְכַסֹּתוֹ 26:13



The beautiful yerios (curtains) that covered the Mishkan were draped with another layer of goatskin. Rashi says the reason was to teach us derech eretz - that when you have something beautiful and extraordinary, you must be extra careful with it. Something with incredible beauty and value must be handled with extreme care!

R' Avraham Pam zt"l commented here: "What could be more beautiful and valuable then you! Every human being is unique and special and it would have been worth creating the entire world if you were the only person in it!" He would often tell his talmidim how special they are and what beautiful neshamos they have with unlimited potential for greatness! Each one is precious! In order to achieve that potential, a person must recognize his strengths and greatness, for if he doesn't, he is denying the great gift that Hashem gave to him. We often tell our children that we grew up in a different world. We were not so involved in materialism and instant gratification. We shake our heads and tell them what a crazy world we live in today - the "ME" generation - and how one can barely walk in the street without being affected by negative influences.

How do we think this makes our children feel? It makes them feel like they don't stand a chance! We feed them so much negativity, that they feel like there is no way they will succeed in life! This is the wrong message. We need to tell them how special they are! Tell them that they have very special heilege neshamos if Hashem gave them such difficult challenges! Tell them they are amazing kids with so much knowledge, so much chessed, and so many opportunities for growth! Yes! They are the "ME K'AMCHA YISROEL" generation! They are so special and unique that no one in any other generation can do what they do!

If we apply the advice of Rashi to our children and others, to show extra care when handling something especially precious and beautiful, we will hopefully help them truly shine!



For a very long time, R' Chaim Pinchos Scheinberg zt"l would travel overseas to collect money for his Yeshivah, Torah Ore in Jerusalem. He would visit various communities for six weeks at a time, from Rosh Chodesh Adar until Pesach. While he was there, he would lift the spirit of the communities and encourage them; people would gain inspiration just by looking at him. Even though the purpose of his trips was to sustain and support the yeshivah, he would sadly admit that it took him six weeks to build himself up again to reach the level he was on before he began his journey.

In the early years, when he was not as well-known, R' Scheinberg would go to Jewish communities all over the United States and

collect small donations. Years later, when people asked him why he had to endure such embarrassment while collecting for his yeshivah, he responded that just as the prophet Yechezkel ben Buzi humiliated himself for Torah, so, too, was he prepared to endure disgrace for the sake of Torah. He didn't seek honour in his travels; he was there on behalf of the yeshivah, and there was nothing that was beneath him if it could fill the yeshivah's coffers.

As he grew older, and it became more and more difficult for him to make the trip abroad, some of his talmidim tried to stop him. But he insisted on traveling to Europe and America to raise the needed funds. As the traveling took a toll on his health and the pressure to stop increased, R' Scheinberg insisted, almost prophetically, "I will travel until I am 100 years old." And that is exactly what happened!

Until he was about 85 years old, he made those trips without an escort. For the next fifteen years, as awestruck flight attendants looked on, he continued to travel but with another person escorting him. During his visits to America, R' Scheinberg held appeals in Boro Park, in Congregation Anshei Sfard. He would sit and learn in the shul, and as each minyan ended, he would deliver a short and impassioned appeal for the yeshivah and then circulate among those davening, holding out a cigar box to collect the donations.

Talmidim and others were troubled that such a towering personality like the Rosh Yeshivah had to lower himself to make continuous appeals every half-hour or so, from sunrise until late in the morning. They appealed to him to stop but he refused. One of his students asked him how much money he collected during that time. He responded that he collected approximately $1,000. His student was shocked. This was not a huge sum of money. He urgently pleaded with R' Scheinberg to stop collecting and he would personally give the $1,000. He felt that this kind of collecting was an insult to R' Scheinberg's honour. The Rosh Yeshivah looked at his talmid and answered with a smile, "Mein Tayere, ich mach mit der Gaon's golus.

(I am enduring an exile similar to the **Vilna Gaon's zt"l** who exiled himself to atone for his sins)." His honour did not matter; R' Scheinberg was willing to suffer humiliation like the Gaon for the perpetuation of Torah.

On another occasion, when his talmidim offered to take over his collection duties, he told them it wasn't worth it. They insisted on doing it for him until he finally responded, "Look, let's be fair. If you ask them, they will give you $1. But if I ask them, they will give me a five!" And when his talmidim offered to cover all the money, he would smile and tell them in his gentle way, "In order for a yeshivah to be successful, it must be supported by the entire Klal." He would then share the story of the rich man who came to visit **R' Yisroel Meir Hakohen Kagan zt"l**, the saintly Chofetz Chaim. He saw the deprivation and hunger of the students and wished to do something meaningful. The man walked into the yeshivah in Radin and offered to cover all the expenses of the yeshivah for the next five years. The Chofetz Chaim was very appreciative of the man's generous pledge, but he turned down the offer, saying, "You can give your share, but not the whole thing! You can't take away the zechuyos of the others who want to support Torah."

R' Scheinberg compared this to Klal Yisroel's participation in the building of the Mishkan. There could have been been one wealthy benefactor who sponsored the construction of the entire sanctuary, but this was not the Will of Hashem. He wanted each and every Jew to be involved and thus, every person gave their share towards the construction.

"Bitachon is not about removing our fears, but about feeling secure in Hashem's embrace, even amidst our fears." – Rabbi Avraham J Twerski.

Concepts in Avodas Halev - R' Chaim Yosef Kofman

וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב מִקְשָׁה תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם מִשְׁנֵי קְצוֹת הַכַּפֹּרֶת 25:18

Rashi quotes the **Medrash Tanchuma** that Moshe Rabbeinu had difficulty figuring out how to make the Menorah out of one single piece of gold. Hashem told him to throw a handful of gold into the fire and the Menorah would be created. Hence, it is written **תיעשה** - "it will be made by itself," and not **תעשה** which means "you shall make it" like it states by the Cheruvim.

The question is why is the Menorah different than the Cheruvim? Why couldn't the two golden Cherubs - which were also fashioned out of one piece of gold **מקשה** covering the Aron Kodesh - also be created "by itself"?



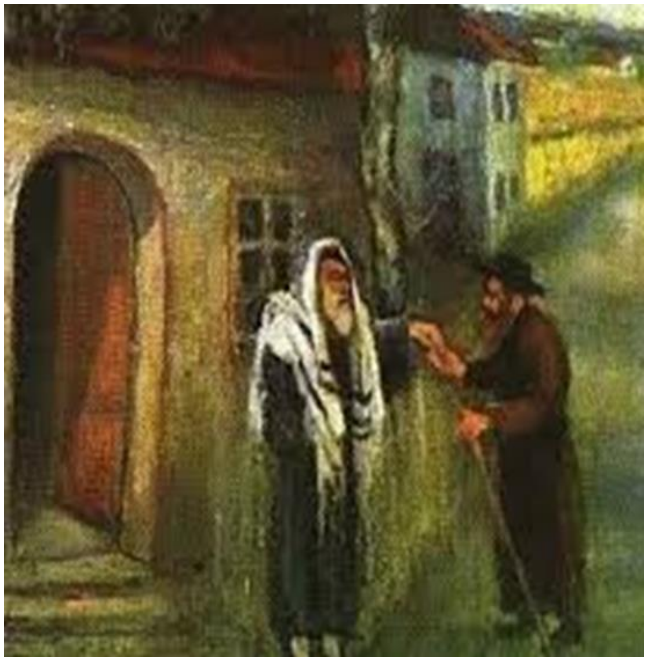
My machshava here is as follows: Chazal tell us that the Cheruvim were images of two children facing one another, which were positioned on top of the Aron, the Holy Ark.

The Baal HaTurim translates the word **כרוביא** to mean "like a child." We learn from the manner in which the Cheruvim were fashioned a great lesson in Chinuch Habonim: Children do not grow in Torah and Yiras Shamayim - by themselves. No matter how hard it is to raise them, it is only with strenuous efforts, tefillos, tears and a great deal of siyata d'shmaya, that our children follow the path of Torah, and we are zoche to see future gebentchte **דורות**. As we say in the Pesach Haggadah: **ואת עמלינו אלו הבנים** - based on the sweat and tears we put into our children, that is the nachas we will take out of them.

Interestingly, there is a halacha that should there not be enough gold to make all the vessels needed for the Bais Hamikdash, we can use silver instead. For all except one item. Do you know which item that is? The Cheruvim? Why? Because the two childlike angels represent the chinuch we put into our very own "angels" - our very own children - and when it comes to raising the young generation to a life of Torah, mitzvos and maasim tovim, we won't settle for anything less than the "gold" standard! Silver - in this case - second best, is just not an option for our children.



R' Pinchos Halevi Horowitz zt"l (Panim Yafos) would say: "The entire construction of the Aron alludes to the great forefathers of Klal Yisroel: The two Cheruvim allude to Avraham and Yitzchok. Two times the gematria of **כרוב** equals 456, the same gematria as **אברהם יצחק**. The Aron itself alludes to Yaakov, who said, **מה נורא המקום הזה**- 'How awesome is this place.' The letters of **נורא** are the same as **ארון**. The four walls of the Aron represent the twelve tribes, which travelled in a four-sided formation. The two poles for carrying the Aron allude to the two leaders who 'carried' the nation - Moshe and Aharon. Finally, the **לוחות הברית** inside the Aron allude to Yosef, who is known as **שומר הברית** since he was the standard bearer for morality in the face of seduction."



R' Schneur Zalman of Liadi (Baal HaTanya) would say: **ויקחו לי תרומה** - Concerning Tefillah, our Sages have taught us: 'Better a little with the proper intentions than a lot without the proper intentions.' However, with respect to tzedaka and giving charity to the poor, it is quite the opposite: 'A lot without the proper intentions' is also good! The main purpose in giving tzedaka is to help others; the motivation behind the deed is secondary. In simple terms, the more money that is given, the more good can result from it."

Torah Tavlin - Concepts in Avodas Halev From The Family of R' Chaim Yosef Kofman Zt"L



וְעָשִׂיתָ שֻׁלְחָן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים 25:23

Rabbeinu Bechaye quotes the Gemara in Berachos that teaches: **פתח במזבח וסיים בשלחן** - the posuk begins with the Mizbeach and ends with the Shulchan. This sends us a message that as long as we had the Bais HaMikdash, we had an atonement through the Mizbeach. Once we lost the Mizbeach, we receive our kappara today through our Shulchan - our table.

He further cites a Medrash Tanchuma that the **ראשי תיבות** of the word **שטים** stand for **שלום- טובה- ישועה- מחילה**. This tells us that

the main blessings in this world - peace, goodness, salvation, forgiveness - come to us through the good we do at our own dining room table, such as helping the poor, widows, orphans, hachnosas orchim and tzedaka.

The Mishne in Avos states: - A person takes nothing with him when he leaves this world except the charity and good deeds he did in this world. The only money that will accompany a person to Olam Haba is what he gives out in this world at his "table" as it says **אם כסף תלוה את העני עמך** - the word **תלוה** can be interpreted here as to accompany. In other words, it is his **כסף** that he gave out to the **עני** that will **תלוה** (accompany) him into the next world.

The Sifsei Kohen writes that the **ר׳ת** of the word **שלחן** stands for **שמור לקבורה חסד נדיבותיך** (your noble kindness protects in the grave) and Rabbeinu Bechaye mentions a fascinating minhag in France where people used the wood from their dining tables to build the **ארון** that they were buried in, in the hopes that this will open the gates to Gan Eden.

A well-known askan was celebrating the bar mitzvah of his oldest son and on Shabbos morning, the shul where he davened, and where his son lained and said his pshetl, was packed to overflow. Close to two hundred people squeezed into the sizable shul - many others stood outside - and there was barely an inch of space at the tables between the congregants. Roshei Yeshivah from some of the most prestigious yeshivos, both in Israel and America, came for the simcha; many family members from the other coast flew in and even a group of Chassidic singers, baalei tefillah with a choir, came from New York to enhance the festivities. All in all, it was a memorable event!

As one can imagine, davening was long and went on for close to four hours. Some of the congregants in the packed shul were becoming fidgety and wondered out loud how much longer davening was going

to take. When they were told that before Mussaf, the Rav was going to introduce the Bar Mitzvah boy to say his pshetl, to be followed by a derasha given by a Rosh Yeshivah from Israel, many of them groaned - some good-naturedly, others perhaps less so.

With the conclusion of the Haftorah, the baal simcha asked one of his family members to daven Mussaf, hoping that he could "move things along." Due to the confusion, the huge throng of people and the fact that the chassidic choir stood up and began yet another cantorial rendition, it took some time before Mussaf could even get started. Even the Baal Tefillah situation was unclear as one family member pointed to another and then another until finally an uncle to the Bar Mitzvah boy walked up to the amud and began the tefillah.

At this point, just about everyone in the shul was becoming anxious, although they all knew that another lull in the davening was on its way; the Rav's speech and Bar Mitzvah boy's pshetl. Apparently, one man was more anxious than the others.

Turning to the people at his table, he said out loud, "Do we really have to stop for speeches? If this guy doesn't stop and after putting away the Sefer Torah, he goes straight into, 'Yisgadal V'Yiskadash Shmei Raba,' I will give him ten thousand dollars!" Everyone at the table laughed. Although everyone in shul seemed to know that speeches were coming, the uncle/baal tefillah was perhaps the only one who "didn't get the memo!" Thus, as soon as the Sefer Torah was returned to the Aron Kodesh, he walked to the amud, and innocently sang out in a loud, melodious voice, 'Yisgadal V'Yiskadash Shmei Raba."

He was quickly hushed and told that there was a break in the davening now and speeches were to be conducted. He obediently sat down. But at the table where the anxiety level had caused one man to offer the $10,000 bounty, a huge wave of laughter rolled over the people. Not only that, but the man's friends were expecting him to pay up.



"You said that if he started 'Yisgadal V'Yiskadash Shmei Raba,' you would give him $10,000 - and that's exactly what he did!" The man who had made the offer tried to explain that his intent was that he should have kept going and not stopped at all for the speeches, but the good-natured ribbing continued, with people all around insisting that he has to pay up, until the shul turned silent for the speeches.

After Shabbos, the festivities continued at the home of the Bar Mitzvah boy and many guests came from all over town to wish him Mazel Tov. Just then, the door opened and in walked the man from shul. He walked directly over to the uncle who had davened Mussaf, and pulled out a wad of one hundred crisp $100 bills! "I said that I would give you $10,000 so here it is!"

The uncle - as well as everyone else in the room - was flabbergasted and he tried to turn the man down. "Listen to me," said the man, who had seen his share of misfortune in life, "I have nothing left in my life but my word! I gave you my word so you must take the money!" He pushed it into the other man's hand and walked out!

To everyone's amazement, the uncle shook his head in wonder. "You are not going to believe this," he said. "This week, a Russian Baal Teshuvah that I have been helping out for almost 16 years became engaged. I decided to take it upon myself to raise money for the wedding. Just this morning, I was saying that I need to raise $10,000 and just like that, Hashem answered my call!"



R' Mordechai of Neshchiz ZT"L (Rishpei Aish) would say: כַּפְתֹּרֵיהֶם וּקְנֹתָם מִמֶּנָּה יִהְיוּ כֻּלָּהּ מִקְשָׁה אַחַת זָהָב טָהוֹר: 25:36- ***'Their knobs and their branches shall be (made) out of one piece; all of it shall be one piece of beaten work (מִקְשָׁה) of pure gold.'***

The Hebrew word **מִקְשָׁה** is similar to the word **קשה** which means difficult or hard. It is a very difficult thing, the Torah tells us, to reach the level of 'pure gold,' making sure that we live our lives to the purest level, our every penny is 'kosher' untainted by the slightest hint of fraud or deception.

True, this is **קשה** - it is quite a difficult task to achieve, but one who does so is likened to the Menorah itself, whose purity illuminated the very heavens."



R' Shmelke of Nikolsberg ZT"L would say:

"See the plot of the Yetzer Hara. In early days, when a Jew became old and his beard turned white, he would recount his deeds and repent his sins. When he got even older, he required a cane and that would prepare him for his soon-to-come Day of Judgement. But now, young men shave, wear eyeglasses and walk vainly with exquisite canes. Thus, they never come to think of their deeds or do a proper teshuva!"



One of the followers of R' Yitzchok of Vorki ZT"L was very wealthy. On one occasion the Rebbe asked him about his lifestyle. The rich man assured him that he was not led astray by his riches, and he was following the dictates of the Sages, leading a very austere life, and getting along on a simple diet. He did not wear lavish clothes or have servants.

"No! No!" the Rebbe protested. "You are doing it all wrong. I want you to hire servants and buy yourself the finest suits, along with expensive dresses for your wife. Hire a gourmet chef and eat delicacies at every meal. Take lavish vacations and use your wealth for maximum enjoyment. Then you will merit the Divine blessing for continued wealth." When the surprised chasid left, the Rebbe turned to the astonished bystanders and explained. "If he will indulge in luxurious food and clothes, then when a needy person asks for help, he will understand that this poor fellow requires at least enough for bread and simple clothes. But if he himself lives an ascetic life; how will he view the needy? He will think that the poor can eat rocks and wear rags!

The wealthy must enjoy their wealth, so that the less fortunate will have enough for a meagre existence. If the rich train themselves to survive on the bare minimum, they will let the poor starve!"

A great deal of gold and other precious materials were used extensively in the construction of the vessels of the Mishkan. Similarly, the clothing worn by the Kohen Gadol were comprised of gold and he would perform his priestly duties wearing these precious

garments. For the Kohen Gadol was the representative of Klal Yisroel and by wearing clothing worthy of splendour and utilizing vessels that were likewise rich in appearance and content, he was better able to represent the needs of the people and facilitate Divine sustenance - and even wealth and riches - for his people.

The great conqueror and Emperor of France Napoleon Bonaparte was known as a fierce general as well as a man with a quick and dreadful temper. Anyone who crossed him, paid a steep price, usually with his life.



It happened that Napoleon's wife was expecting a child and when the time came for the baby to be born, she began experiencing terrible labour pains. Her shrieks and cries were terrifying, for Napoleon himself was becoming agitated and everyone knew what that meant.

A number of top doctors were summoned to the royal chambers, but each found a reason to excuse himself from assisting the patient for fear of the consequences should he fail in some way during the delivery. The only option was to call a local doctor from the village, an ignorant by big-city standards. On the other hand, he did not know who Napoleon was. The doctor showed up and realized that it wasn't such a difficult delivery after all. Blissfully unaware of whose baby he was delivering, and thus working without any undue pressure, he calmly delivered a healthy baby.

The Medrash says that Moshe was unable to create the Menorah even after Hashem showed him what it was to look like in a Menorah of fire. Moshe Rabbeinu, who knew the deepest and holiest secrets behind the Menorah, and yet he was paralyzed with fear and trepidation and could not create it. Betzalel, on the other hand, who was not nearly on Moshe's spiritual level had no problem constructing it. Why?

Answers the **Chiddushei HaRim ZT"L**, because Betzalel's level of fear did not interfere with his work!

From the Wellsprings Of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo



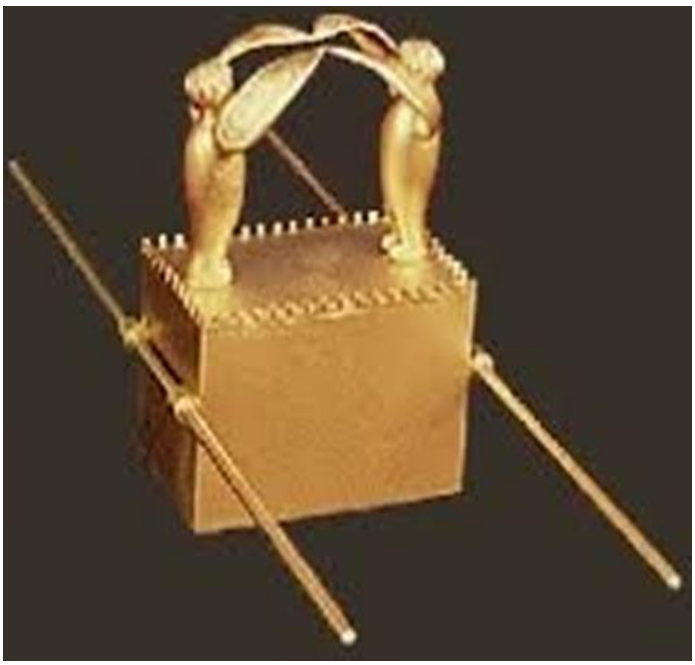
The precious stones used for the garments of the kohen gadol were donated by the **נשיאים**, but the truth is that these great men were rebuked for waiting until the very end to make their donations.

The Torah actually leaves the letter י out of their name (**לה-כז**) **הנשאם** because of their attitude of "let's wait until the end and fill in whatever is missing." In all honesty, though, what was so terrible about what they did? It sounds pretty logical and even commendable to fill in whatever is lacking. However, no matter how noble and logical the intentions of the nesiim, the fact that they were able to think so rationally shows a flaw in the intensity of their Avodas Hashem. Says **Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski**, "One who is overcome by an intensity of passion does not calculate - he acts immediately!"

Torah Gems

The Medrash says that the poor do more for the **בעל הבית** (homeowner who gives charity), than he does for the poor. How can that be? If someone provides a person with a meal, the physical gift is a rather temporary thing. However, when one looks at the whole picture from beginning to end, he sees that there is a lot more to it. By giving to a needy person, one is in fact gaining a share in Olam Haba. Therefore, his act causes a long-term effect as well. For this reason, writes **R' Shlomo Breuer ZT"L**, the Torah employs the word **ויקחו** - ***"You shall take"*** rather than **ויתנו** - ***"You shall give"*** by the command to donate to the Mishkan. This is to teach us that by "giving" something to another, whether with our bodies or with our money, we are in fact "taking" something for ourselves.

We see this regarding the first act of chessed mentioned in the Torah, that the same expression is used: **יקח נא מעט מים.. ואקחה פת לחם** - ***"Let water be taken .... I will take bread."*** Shouldn't Avraham have said that he will "give" water and bread? The answer is that Avraham was teaching us an eternal lesson: When you help someone else, you are in fact not giving, but taking.



Similarly, the Aron, the holy ark, was to be carried by the Leviim on two poles, each inserted through hoops, one pole on each side. However, the gemara tells us that in actuality the Aron didn't need carriers for it transported its bearers - a miracle occurred whereby the ark carried its own weight, easing the load of its bearers.

R' Nosson Adler ZT"L suggests that the same is true in a Yissachar-Zevulun partnership. The Zevulun appears to be "giving" - supporting

the Yissachar, but in fact he is the one who is "taking." This is a classic example of the "ark supporting its bearers." The Torah that the Yissachar learns is in fact supporting the Zevulun, who is its bearer.

The Gemara Says That Rich People Are Stingy.

R' Shimon Sofer ZT"L explains that if a rich person were not stingy, his tzedaka would be meaningless. Hashem makes him stingy by nature so that parting with his money will be a challenge, even though financially speaking it is not. This way, he too, can earn the great mitzvah of tzedaka with mesiras nefesh just like his less affluent brethren, who are parting with money that they can ill afford to part with.

The following story was told over at an awards ceremony for Howard Schultz, chairman and chief global strategist of the famed



coffee company, Starbucks Corp. Schultz received the Botwinick Prize in Business Ethics from Columbia Business school in 2000, and

during his acceptance speech, he related a fascinating insight into how he became a better person.

"When I was in Israel," Schultz related, "I went to Meah Shearim, the ultra-Orthodox enclave within Jerusalem. Along with a group of businessmen I was with, I had the opportunity to meet with the head of the (Mir) Yeshiva, **R' Nosson Tzvi Finkel (ZT"L)**. I had never heard of him before and didn't know anything about him. We were ushered into his study and waited for close to fifteen minutes before the rabbi came in.

What we did not know was that Rabbi Finkel was severely afflicted with Parkinson's disease. He sat down at the head of the table, and immediately we looked away. We didn't want to embarrass him.

Suddenly, the rabbi banged on the table and said, 'Gentlemen, look at me, and look at me right now!' "His speech affliction was worse than his shaking. It was really hard to listen and look at him at the same time. He said, 'I have only a few minutes for you because I know you're all busy American businessmen!' You know, just a little dig there. "Then he asked, 'Can anyone tell me what the lesson of the Holocaust is?' He called on one guy - it was like being called on in the fifth grade - and not knowing the answer. The guy said something benign like, 'We will never forget?' "The rabbi completely dismissed him.

Rabbi Finkel was looking around the table to call on someone else. We were all sort of under the table, looking away, hoping he would not call on any one of us. Personally, I was sweating. He called on another guy, who I thought had such a fantastic answer. 'We will never, ever again be a victim or bystander.' "But the rabbi said, 'You guys just don't get it. Okay, let me tell you the essence of the human spirit.

As you know, during the Holocaust, the people were transported in the worst most inhumane ways imaginable. The people thought they were going to a work camp, but we know they were sent to

concentration camps. After hours and days in this horrific corral with no light, no bathroom and extreme cold, they arrived at the camps. The doors were swung wide open, and they were blinded by the light. Men and women were separated, mothers from daughters, fathers from sons.

Eventually, they were sent to the barracks. "As they went into the sleeping area, only one person was given a blanket for every six. The person who received the blanket had to decide before going to sleep, 'Am I going to push the blanket to the five other people who did not get one, or am I going to pull it towards myself to stay warm?'

These are the types of questions they asked themselves. "Rabbi Finkel paused for a moment. Then he said, 'Gentlemen, it was during this defining moment that we learned the power of the human spirit, because we pushed the blanket to five others. That is the lesson of the Holocaust!' "With that, he stood up and said, ***'Take your blanket. Take it back to America - and push it to five other people!'"***

There is a follow-up to this story. Apparently Mr. Schultz later returned to Israel and visited R' Nosson Tzvi again. This time, he pulled out a blank check, signed it and told R' Finkel to fill it out for whatever he wants. R' Nosson Tzvi asked him, "I can fill out this check for whatever I want?" Mr. Schultz answered in the affirmative. R' Nosson Tzvi picked up his pen and wrote out the check for $1400. Then, he handed the check to Howard Schultz, and told him to take it across the street to the scribe (sofer), use it to buy a pair of tefillin, and promise to put it on every day.

His yeshiva was millions of dollars in debt, and R' Nosson Tzvi worked very hard to raise money for the yeshiva, but he thought about his fellow Jew first.

"Whatever your host tells you to do, - do. " ~~ Talmud, Pesachim



R' Yoshe Ber Soloveitchik ZT"L (Bais Halevi) would say:

"There are three conditions to the mitzvah of tzedakah: **בכל** (with all), **מכל** (from all), **כל** (all).

To collect funds for the poor, one must do it **בכל** - with any and all who are willing to lower their honour and self-respect on behalf of others. When accepting a donation, it should be **מכל** - from all those who find it in their heart to help out a fellow Jew in need. And the donation itself should be **כל** - any amount that is given should be accepted graciously and with thanks."

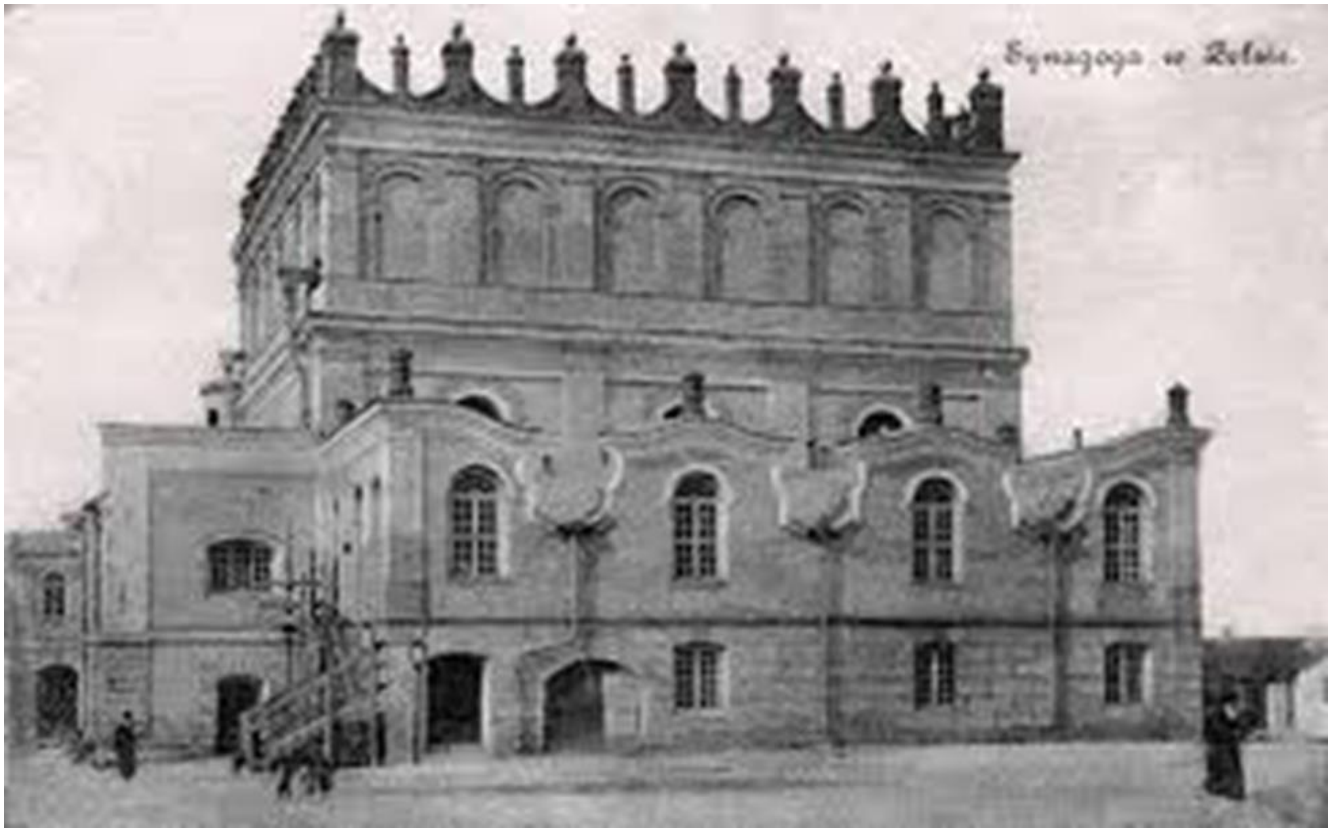
וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאִתָּם זָהָב וָכֶסֶף וּנְחֹשֶׁת – *"This is the portion that you shall take from them: gold, silver, and copper .."* (25:3)



R' Nosson Sternhartz z"l (1780-1845; foremost student of **R' Nachman of Breslov**) writes: Colours represent good qualities, as we read (Shir Ha'shirim 1:5), "Though I am black with sin, I am beautiful [i.e., not black, but multi-colored] with virtue."

Each Jew has a unique colour, i.e., virtue. Moshe's task was to find the virtue within each Jew and to combine those virtues into an abode for the Shechinah. *(Likkutei Halachot)*

In 1843, one of the largest and most imposing synagogues of that era was completed and dedicated by the holy **Belzer Rebbe, R' Sholom Rokeach ZT"L (Sar Sholom)**.



A great Torah scholar and tzaddik, R' Sholom personally helped build the city's large and imposing synagogue. The building resembled an ancient fortress, with three-foot thick walls, a castellated roof and battlements adorned with gilded copper balls. It could seat 5,000 chassidim and had superb acoustics.

It stood until the Nazis invaded Belz in late 1939 and although the Germans attempted to destroy it, first by fire and then by dynamite, they were unsuccessful. Finally, they conscripted Jewish men to take the building apart, brick by brick.

Today, like the original synagogue of Belz which took 15 years to complete, the new Beis Medrash HaGadol ("Great Synagogue") that dominates the northern Jerusalem skyline also took 15 years to construct and was dedicated in 2000.



Its main sanctuary seats 6,000 worshippers, and the huge Aron Kodesh contains more than 100 Sifrei Torah. Nine chandeliers in the main hall each contain over 200,000 pieces of Czech crystal. Its regal beauty is breath-taking.

An interesting anecdote is recorded involving the construction of the original synagogue of the Sar Sholom. A local gentile landowner (poritz) decided that it was not fitting for a Jewish house of worship to have such prominence. He decided to build a large, imposing church directly opposite their synagogue. He had the plans drawn up and when he was sure that his building would dwarf the Jewish structure, he began construction.

In his hatred of Jews, he even sent a message to the Belzer Rebbe: "Remember, I am the most powerful noble in Belz, comparable to Haman." To that message, R' Sholom replied, "And may your end be the same as his."

On another occasion, R' Sholom told the nobleman, "With G-d's help, your building will never be finished." As the Beis Medrash neared completion, the nobleman saw that it would indeed tower over every other structure in the vicinity, including his church. He gave orders

that a high steeple be constructed on the roof of the church, and so the building "competition" continued from day to day.

The conflict escalated to the point that the young son of the nobleman accosted the Rebbe on the street and stuck a piece of pork in the tzaddik's face demanding, "Eat this, Jew!"

No sooner had the words left his mouth than the boy began shaking uncontrollably. Instantly, he fell to the ground and in a matter of minutes was no longer alive. After that, the landlord was the implacable enemy of the Belzer Rebbe.

Not long before both buildings were to be completed, it was revealed that the land on which the nobleman was spitefully constructing his church did not actually belong to him. In fact, it belonged to a family who had been contending in superior court for the property rights for quite some time. Eventually, the court ordered that the land be put up for public sale.

The nobleman was furious, and he made it known that nothing would prevent him from killing any Jew who dared to bid on the property. R' Sholom, however, was not deterred. He lost no time contacting a certain wealthy non- Jewish doctor in Vienna who was an ardent supporter. He requested that the doctor come to Belz for this special auction and purchase the land for whatever sum was necessary. And this the doctor did.

The nobleman was infuriated, yet over the following months, he could do nothing but watch as not one, but two handsome buildings were completed at the behest of the Belzer Rebbe, who converted and included the original church structure into the Belzer complex.

As the legend goes, the nobleman did not suffer his indignity for too long. Early one fine spring day, the nobleman decided to take his favourite horse out for a brisk trot. Suddenly, the trail narrowed sharply and another rider appeared before him; it was the count of

another neighbouring town, someone he had never held in much regard.

"Move aside!" he ordered. But the other nobleman took great offence. "I will not move aside, Sir," the count bellowed. An argument quickly flared up and the count withdrew a pistol from his coat. Within minutes the arrogant and wicked landowner from Belz was shot dead.



As explained in the Mechilta at the end of last week's parsha, all of the Mishkan's vessels were allowed to be made from another metal if gold was not available. All except for the cherubim. The cherubim were unique in that no other substance besides gold was acceptable. The question is: what is different about the cherubim that Chazal were insistent that it shall be made only from pure gold?

Why, unlike all the other vessels - the spoons, pans, utensils and even the menorah and the table - were they permitted to be constructed from other metals, whereas the cherubim were prohibited to be made from any other metal other than gold?

R' Meir Shapiro ZT"L of Lublin, gives us an incredible and beautiful explanation which hits home, even in today's day and age. The cherubim, with their faces formed like those of children, are symbolic of the young and impressionable children of Bnei Yisroel. Together with caring for their physical needs, the most important consideration that the Jewish people must afford their children,

that every parent must ensure for his offspring, is the need to provide them with an uncompromising Jewish education.

Indeed, the position of the cherubim on top of the holy ark symbolizes this idea that our children's Torah education is to be placed in our highest regard. For when it comes to teaching children Torah and supporting Jewish education for our youth, only our best, golden efforts will do.



In the city of Lodz, the Rov, R Eliyohu Chaim Meisel ZT"L, would routinely be honoured on Shabbos with the third aliyah. The elders of the community and town dignitaries would generally receive the sixth aliyah to the Torah. Maftir was reserved for Chasanim - grooms, and those who were observing a yahrzeit, the anniversary of the passing of a relative. The rest of the aliyos were distributed among the other worshippers. Once, a certain ill-mannered man became among the wealthier members of the community. He was proud of his fortune and proceeded to flaunt his wealth.

One day, he turned to the gabbai and said, "This Shabbos I am celebrating a birthday. I want to receive an aliyah." "It would be an honour," responded the gabbai, "but just know that someone else has Yahrzeit and will receive maftir." "No problem," assured the arrogant aristocrat. "The sixth aliyah is good enough for me." "But this Shabbos is the turn of the old Dayan," noted the gabbai. "I will call you for the fifth aliyah, like usual."

"Don't you dare!" warned the wealthy man, his furious eyes flashing. "You will give me the sixth aliyah, and no other aliyah!" Well, threats could never frighten the old gabbai, and so, when the fifth aliyah came around, he called the name of the wealthy man. The latter stood up from his seat and approached the bimah. Only, instead of stopping by the Torah, he continued on to the gabbai and punched him right in the face!

One can only imagine the turmoil which ensued - shouts, insults and name-calling. Needless to say, such an incident could not be ignored. After Shabbos, the infuriated gabbaim went to the rabbi's home to decide upon a proper response.

The gabbai who was hit stood up and raised an amazing proposal: Do away with the entire procedure of honouring people with the various aliyos, thus removing the root of all the ill-will and strife. What would be simpler than simply eliminating this entire system and deciding once and for all that all the aliyos are to be considered of equal stature? The distribution would be conducted randomly, and peace will finally be restored to the community.

The idea sounded great. Everyone looked at the rabbi sitting at the head of the table, waiting for him to give his stamp of approval to the proposal at hand. The rabbi finally spoke up. "It certainly sounds like a terrific idea. Yet, I cannot accept it." They didn't understand.

The rabbi explained, "It is a tragedy when people come to shul looking just for honour. But it would be even worse if people would stop coming to shul looking for honour. Then, they'd stop coming altogether!"

To have Bitachon is to understand that everything that happens is a direct message from Hashem, even if we may not understand it at the time. – Rabbi Dov Ber Pinson.

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman- Torah Wellsprings

The gemara says, "just as when Av arrives, we lessen our joy, when Adar comes, we increase our joy" (Ta'anis 29.). We understand why we must lessen our joy in Av, since these are the days that the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed, but why should we increase our joy in Adar.

The Meor Einayim asks this question:"When Adar begins, we increase joy. But why? The miracle [of Purim] happened on the 14th and 15th of Adar, so why should we be happy starting from the beginning of the month?"



The Meor Einayim answers, "The names of the months have meaning... The translation of **אדר** is **א-דר** the Alef dwells. The Alef is the Alufo Shel Olam (Master of the World)... **א-דר** means that Hashem dwells with people and His Shechinah resides in this world..." So the joy of Adar is that Hashem's Presence resides, and is perceived, in the world.

The parashah that is read on Shabbos is related to the time of year it is read. Parashas Terumah is read in the month of Adar, because their themes are similar. Terumah teaches us how to build the Mishkan. The purpose of the Mishkan was so Hashem can dwell among us. As the passuk states, **וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם**: ***"Build me a sanctuary, and I will dwell among them"*** (25:8). Adar is also, **א-דר**, Hashem's dwelling among us.

Now we understand why the gemara contrasts (and compares) Adar to Av, as it says, "Just as when Av comes, we lessen our joy, when Adar comes, we increase joy." Why is Av mentioned? It could have

simply said, "When Adar comes, we increase joy." The answer is the gemara is showing us that the joy of Adar is the exact opposite of the mourning in Av. In Av we mourn the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, and in Adar we rejoice with building the Mishkan, the **א-דר**, Hashem's presence in the world.

The Malbim explains, **וכן תעשו**, this means that everyone should build a mikdash in his heart. He should turn himself into a Beis HaMikdash, an abode for the Shechinah…" In all generations, regardless of whether there is a Beis HaMikdash or not, everyone should open their heart to constantly recognize Hashem. By doing so, he is building a sanctuary in his heart.

Hashgachah Pratis Stories



A father called the mashgiach of one of the prominent yeshivos in Eretz Yisrael, and asked information about one of the bachurim. The mashgiach, said in Hebrew, **הכל לא בסדר** "Nothing is good about this bachur", but the shidduch was finalized anyway. At the vort, the mashgiach warmly shook the father's hand, and wished him a joyous mazal tov, and out of curiosity, he asked the father why he decided to go further with this shidduch, even after what he had told him. "My daughter said that it doesn't bother her if **הקול לא בסדר**, if he doesn't have a good voice." The father misunderstood the mashgiach because Hashem wanted the shidduch to transpire.

Rebbe Mordechai of Zvhil zy"a (before he became rebbe) needed twenty-six thousand dollars for an upcoming chasunah. He

went to the office of the Eitz Chaim Yeshiva, where he studied, and asked the director of the yeshiva to give him the addresses of wealthy donors in America, because he wanted to send them letters, asking for money for the chasunah. The director didn't want to give him the addresses (because he wanted their support for the yeshiva) so he gave Rebbe Mordechai Zvhiller some old addresses from people who used to support the yeshiva, but hadn't given a donation for a long time.

When Rebbe Mordechai returned home with the list, his wife rebuked him, "Do you really think that these are going to help you? The director certainly gave you the addresses of people who don't have money anymore." Rebbe Mordechai explained to her that he was doing hishtadlus. "If your goal is hishtadlus, why do you have to send letters to all of them? Just send one letter, and that will be your hishtadlus..." she chided. Rebbe Mordechai replied, "You're right. I'll send only one letter."

He sent off one letter and soon received an envelope in return with a check for twenty-six thousand dollars inside!

Rebbe Mordechai went to the director to thank him for the addresses. The manager was shocked. "You mean your letters were answered?" "Not the letters, I only sent one letter, and I received twenty-six thousand dollars." And he told him the name of this baal tzedakah.

The manager called up this baal tzedakah and asked, "I see that you have money, because you just gave one of our students twenty-six thousand dollars for hachnasas kallah, so why did you stop sending money to the yeshiva?"

The man replied, "I don't have money anymore. The money was from my daughter, who is a kallah. After her engagement we discovered that she has an illness. We went to **Reb Moshe Feinstein**, and asked him whether we must tell the chassan and the mechutanim about it. Reb Moshe inquired about the nature of the illness, and then ruled

that we don't need to say anything. 'However,' Reb Moshe advised, 'if your daughter has some money of her own, it is a good idea for her to give it for hachnasas kallah. In the merit that she helps another kallah go to the chuppah, she will also merit going to her chuppah.'

Just then, we received Rebbe Mordechai's letter, and his request for hachnasas kallah. My daughter works, so she had some money saved up. She emptied her account, and immediately sent it to Rebbe Mordechai, for his daughter's wedding." Rebbe Mordechai had bitachon, and received all the money he needed with one letter. This story is an example of hashgachah pratis. Immediately after Reb Moshe advised them to donate money for hachnasas kallah, Reb Mordechai's letter arrived in the mail.

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Reb Eliyahu Shamni and his wife were childless for twenty years, before they decided to adopt. Adoption is a long process. The first step is to fill out forms at the adoption agency, then, the agency tries to determine whether the couple applying is capable of raising a child. The first question on one of the documents was: "State, in order of preference, the five things you love the most." Reb Eliyahu Shamni wrote, "Hakadosh Baruch Hu" first and then he filled out the other four.

The agency reviewed his answers and asked him, "If you will have an adopted child, will you love the child more than the five items you listed here?" This is the agency's method to determine whether the couple will love the adopted child. Reb Eliyahu Shamni answered, "I will never love anyone or anything more than HaKadosh Baruch Hu!"

There was another religious couple in the agency at this time who was also applying for adoption. They said to Reb Eliyahu Shamni, "Just tell them what they want to hear. It's just a procedure. You don't have to tell them the truth. Otherwise, they will not accept you." But Reb Eliyahu Shamni was unyielding, "I love Hashem more
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than everything in the world," he said emphatically, "and I refuse to say differently."

The Shamni's were disqualified, and the adoption agency removed them from the waiting list. Nine months later exactly, the Shamnis had twins.

The other religious couple who was with them in the agency was still waiting for their adopted child. The adoption process can take a lot of time, but Reb Eliyahu and his wife were blessed with their own set of children. Reb Eliyahu wisely told me, "When one doesn't give up on the One, he ends off with two."

Simchah

In Adar, we are urged to increase our simchah. Joy can be attained in several ways. Ideally, we should be happy with our problems, because of our belief that everything is for the good. But when this level is beyond us, there certainly are several other skills people can use, to make themselves happy in Adar, and during any other month of the year. One counsel is to make the problems small. Everyone goes through some form of hardship; but it is up to each individual to decide how serious and severe he views his problems.



In Mishlei (12:25), it states, "When one has a worry, make it small. A good thing, make yourself happy" (Mishlei 12:25).4 The Metzudos Dovid explains, "When a worry comes to one's heart, make it smaller than it truly is. And it is even better when one can have the strength to be happy with the

problem, by thinking that it came for your good." The ideal situation is to be happy with the problems he has .Due to our awareness that everything is from Hashem and everything is for our good. However, when this level is beyond us, then the advice is to make the problem small. Consider the matter to be smaller than it really is. With such an attitude, you can have happiness all the time.

Rebbe Menachem Mendel of Kotzk zy"a would often repeat this Metzudos Dovid, and said that it was said with ruach hakodesh.

whY I Matter - Young Israel of Midwood

Studying the Mishkan From parashah Terumoh on, most of the remainder of Sefer Shmot is devoted to the construction of the mishkan / Tabernacle (the precursor to the Bet Hamikdash). Following this, in Sefer Vayikra, we read of the korbanot / sacrifices which were to be brought in the mishkan.

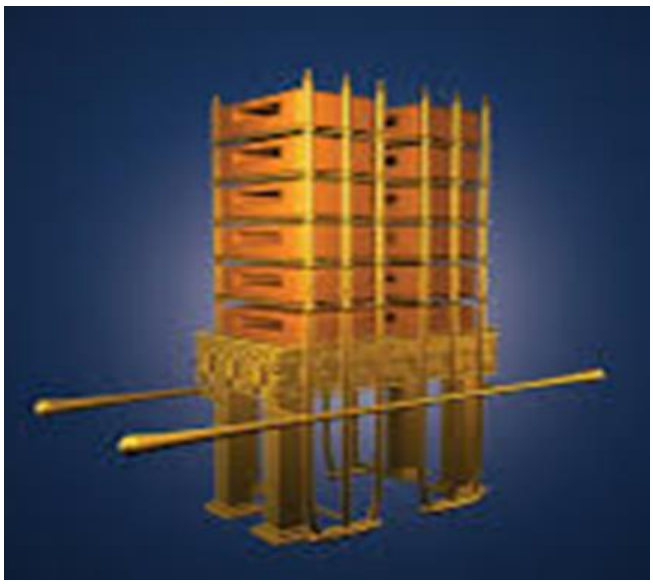


R' Moshe Isserles z"l ("Rema"; 1525-1572) authored a lengthy work containing philosophical and ethical lessons that are derived from the structure of the Bet Hamikdash and the laws of the korbanot. In the introduction to that work, he wrote as follows: The Midrash Tanchuma states: "The Torah is greater than all the sacrifices, as it is written (Vayikra 7:37), 'This is the Torah of the olah / burnt offering, the minchah / the meal offering, the chatat / guilt offering etc.' One who studies the Torah, i.e., the laws, of the olah is deemed to have brought an olah; one who studies the Torah of the minchah is deemed to have brought a minchah; and so on."

Similarly, Rema writes, the early commentaries state that if one studies the structure of the mishkan and its utensils, he fulfils a great mitzvah. How much more so is this true if we merit to understand the inner meaning of even one of the things to which the mishkan or its utensils alludes!

In reality, there are two benefits from studying the inner meaning of the mishkan, the Bet Hamikdash, the utensils and the sacrifices, Rema writes. One is that this study will cause us to mourn for the Temple, for we will understand what we are missing. The second benefit is that we will be able to "bring sacrifices" in our minds when we sin; this is relevant to us all, as it is written (Kohelet 7:20), "There is no man in the world who is a tzaddik who does only good and does not sin." *(Torat Ha'olah)*

The Show Bread



וְנָתַתָּ עַל־הַשֻּׁלְחָן לֶחֶם פָּנִים לְפָנַי תָּמִיד
You shall set the show bread upon the table before Me always *(25:30)*

Ever since the world was created out of nothingness, G-d's blessings can only come down when there is a physical object or vessel to contain them. As the function of the table in the Holy Temple was to influence abundance among the Jewish people, physical loaves of bread were necessary as a channel for G-d's blessings. *(Ramban)*

"There is no treasure like friends." ~~ Mivchar Hapeninim

כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מַרְאֶה אֹותְךָ אֶת תַּבְנִית הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת תַּבְנִית כָּל־כֵּלָיו וְכֵן תַּעֲשׂוּ
"Like everything that I show you, the form of the Mishkan and the form of all its vessels; and so shall you do." 25:9



Rashi comments: "And so shall you do"–for future generations. **R' Eliezer Zusia Portugal z"l** (1898-1982; the Skulener Rebbe) asks: How can building a Temple be a mitzvah for future generations when, at least according to some opinions, the Third Temple will descend from Heaven as a building of fire? He answers: The Temple that will descend is being constructed all the time from our mitzvot. Every good deed adds a course of "bricks" to that Temple. This verse is commanding us to do those good deeds. *(Noam Eliezer)*

Girded with Simchah

Reb Ahron HaGadol of Karlin zy'a wrote in a letter, "Atzvus (depression) isn't a sin, but the timtum haleiv (closed heart) that atzvus generates, the greatest sin cannot create."

His grandson, the Beis Ahron (of Karlin) once saw that his son was unhappy, and he rebuked him for this. His son asked, "Why is father rebuking me specifically for this matter, and not for any other wrong things that I do?" The Beis Ahron replied, "You know by yourself when you do something wrong, and I'm certain that you will improve, even without my rebuke. But you aren't aware how serious it is to be

unhappy. That is the reason I am specifically urging and encouraging you to be besimchah (joyous)."



A person who is unhappy cannot daven properly; he cannot learn well; and he is liable to become angry, have bad middos, fall into bad taavos, etc. In contrast, a happy man can feel connected to Hashem. Although being sad isn't a sin per se, it leads to many negative things. This is the reason why tzaddikim urge people to always be happy.

One counsel for simchah is to make other people happy. We say in Shacharis, פִּתַּחְתָּ שַׂקִּי וַתְּאַזְּרֵנִי שִׂמְחָה׃ (Tehilim 30).

The Beis Yisrael zy"a explained, "open up your wallet to help others, and you will be girded with happiness." "Mishenichnas Adar marbim besimchah". Marbim (we increase) is stated in plural. **The Sfas Emes** teaches that this indicates that the path to happiness is by making others happy. There are several paths that lead to happiness and when we implement them, we can carry out Chazal's requirement to be happy in Adar.

When one becomes bar-mitzvah, what is the first mitzvah he becomes obligated in? Some say that it is kriyas Shma. Others answer that the first mitzvah is emunah.



The Chasam Sofer zt"l said that one's first obligation is simchah. The obligation to be b'simchah is the first obligation of a bar-mitzvah, and it continues throughout his entire life.

The keruvim (two angelic figures, on top of the aron in the Mishkan) also demonstrated the need for unity, love and caring among Yidden. The faces on the two keruvim were facing one another, as it states, **וּפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו**— the [two keruvim] faced each other (25:20). This implies that yidden should face each other, and help one another.

You're only Half Way There!! - by Benjamin A Rose



וְעָשִׂיתָ כַּפֹּרֶת זָהָב טָהוֹר אַמָּתַיִם וָחֵצִי אָרְכָּהּ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי רָחְבָּהּ "And the dimensions of the Aaron should be – two and half Amos its length, one and a half Amos its width, and one and a half Amos its height." 25:17

Why are the dimensions of the Aaron in half Amos (by the Shulchan the dimensions are 2 Amos x 1 Amah)?

The Baal HaTurim says, Chazal teach that the Aaron represents Torah. The significance of halves is to teach us, one must break himself (in half) over the Torah. In order to reach a high level in Torah, one cannot sit back and relax. Rather, he must be "Maymis Atzmo Aleha" – kill himself over toiling in Torah, as we learn in Pirkei Avos.

Kli Yakar offers a different answer. Since the Aaron represents Torah, halves are representing the fact that even an accomplished Talmid Chachom is never finished learning. There is always more to learn and understand. A person is never more than a fraction of the way to completing the Torah.

R' Shmuel Winzelberg - Shabbos Treasures

When saying Kiddush, the Kos, the Kiddush cup, should be held a Tefach over the table (Orach Chaim 183:4). The Mishnah Brurah says (183:16) that this is so that everyone can see the cup over which the Brachah is being said.

Rav Yosef Eisen comments that just as one who wins a gold medal or an award holds it up high and with pride, all the more so should we show Chashivus, importance, to Hashem's Mitzvos. The Kiddush cup should be held with just as much pleasure and importance, if not more, as we should demonstrate our pride and love for a Mitzvah.

The Mechaber writes (Orach Chaim 28:3) that when taking out Tefilin from their bag or when putting them away, they should be kissed. The Kaf HaChaim (Orach Chaim 28:18) teaches that this is done so we learn to cherish and love the Mitzvah, adding that to love a Mitzvah is a Mitzvah in itself!



Other examples include the Minhag to kiss a Siddur or other Sefer (Aruch HaShulchan, Yoreh De'ah 282:11), and the Mezuzah when we pass through a doorway (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 11:24).

There is a Minhag Chassidus to kiss the Succah when going into it on Succos, and to kiss the Esrog and Matzah when using them for their Mitzvos. This is all done to show our love for Hashem's Mitzvos, and we can do this each week when saying Kiddush!

Parsha Pshetel – Rabbi Yankie Shechter

ברכת חיים Melachim 1'6:13 - **ושכנתי בתוך בני ישראל**

"Inside" the letters of the **ישראל** are יו״ד, שי״ן, רי״ש, אל״ף, למ״ד These are the letters of **ישראל** spelled out. If you take all of the middle letters, the **ו-י-י-ל-מ**, the total is 96. The number 96, which corresponds to the Names of Hashem of **א-ל** , and **י-נ-ד-א** .With this we can understand the word, **ושכנתי** and call it **ושכינתי** – "that Hakodosh Boruch Hu says, "My Shechina will be within Klal Yisroel."

The **נר** is also a Remez to the Neshama of a person, as it says in Mishlei 20:27 **כי נר ד׳ נשמת אדם**. ***The Shechina rests upon the Neshama of a person.*** The world is a dark place and it is only the light of the Shechina that illuminates the world.

The middle letters of the words, **בני ישראל** are a **נ** and a **ר** which spell the word **נר**, a Remez to the unity of the lamp. The three **ה״ הוי**, with the Names of Hashem, **אלקים, אדנ״י, אהי״ה** is equal to- **נר 250** - this is a great illumination. **ושכנתי בתוך בני ישראל**- the **נר** representative of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, is within **בני ישראל**. With Hakodosh Boruch Hu being "in middle of B'nei Yisroel, **לא אעזוב את עמי ישראל**- "Hakodosh Boruch Hu will never forsake His people, Yisroel.

Vechol Maaminim

The Covering of the Shulchan With the Brachah of Zaha"v

כה: כג- כד ועשית שלחן עצי שטים...; וצפית אתו זהב טהור

Rabbeinu Bechayei explained: The pasuk hints to us that the table that we eat on every day should be coated with 'zahav', meaning, with Birchas Hamazon, as the word **זהב** alludes to the three first brachos whose obligation is from the Torah **ברכת הארץ ברכת בונה ירושלים ברכת הזן**

Living Jewish



וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם: *They shall make Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell among them* *25:8.*

Three different types of metal were used to build the Sanctuary: gold, silver and copper. As gold is obviously the most precious, wouldn't it have been more appropriate to use only gold? Rather, the three metals allude to the three categories of Jews. Silver (kesef) alludes to tzadikim (the righteous), who continually yearn (nichsafim - from the same root as kesef) for G-d and His Torah. Gold (zahav) alludes to penitents, "in whose place even complete tzadikim cannot stand." Copper (nechoshet) alludes to those who have transgressed, who have yielded to the temptation of the nachash (serpent) that brought sin into the world. Because G-d wanted all Jews to participate in the Sanctuary's construction, all three metals were utilized. *(Ma'ayan Chai)*

Mind Your Business - Always remember Hashem runs the World. We are obligated to put our best efforts (mesirus nefesh) but the outcome is none of our business. That's Hashem's business.

The more we focus on our business, the more inclined Hashem is to show us just how great He runs His business. - Rabbi Yaron Reuven

וְעָשִׂיתָ מְנֹרַת זָהָב טָהוֹר מִקְשָׁה תֵּיעָשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה יֵרֵכָהּ וְקָנָהּ גְּבִיעֶיהָ כַּפְתֹּרֶיהָ וּפְרָחֶיהָ מִמֶּנָּה יֵהְיוּ 25:31



The Malbim cites that the Menorah alludes to wisdom and to the Torah. He then brings a wonderous item that the beginning of each sefer of Torah indicates the Menorah:

The first Pasuk in Sefer Bereshis has seven words signifying the seven branches of the Menorah.

The first Pasuk in Sefer Shmos has 11 words signifying the 11 kaftorim.

The first Pasuk in Sefer VaYikra has 9 words signifying the 9 perachim.

The first Pasuk in Sefer BeMidbar has 17 words signifying the height of the Menorah (without the one tefach of the base's leg).

The first Pasuk in Sefer Devarin has 22 words signifying the 22 gevi'im .

The Malbim says he has not found a source for this, but it is logical.

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman- Torah Wellsprings



This week's parashah discusses the materials the Jewish people were told to donate for the building of the Mishkan. One of those materials was **עורת תחשים**, hides from the tachash. Rashi (25:5) writes, "Tachash was an animal that only existed for a short period. It had many colours, rejoiced and was proud of its colours.

Since there was tachash in the Mishkan, we can be certain that there is an aspect of tachash in every Yid, as the Zohar teaches: the Mishkan was a microcosm of the human being (and of the entire world). For example, there was gold and silver in the Mishkan. These are also found in the soul of mankind. Gold represents fearing heaven and silver signifies loving Hashem. Likewise, if there was a tachash in the Mishkan, there is an aspect of tachash, figuratively, in the soul of every Yid. What is it? The great virtue of being satisfied with one's portion is well known. As it states in Avos (4:1) **איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו** ***"Who is wealthy? He who his happy with his lot."*** Rashi explains, "[He is happy with] the portion that Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave him. Whether it's good or bad, a lot or a little, he accepts it with a good eye." (The Divrei Yisrael writes in the name of an ancient sefer that **חלקו** is roshei teivos for **חַם-לַח-קַר-וְיָבֵש**, hot, wet, cold, and dry. This indicates that a person should be happy with his portion, regardless of the situation.) A person shouldn't be jealous of those who have more money than him. No matter what portion Hashem gave you, you should believe that it is for the best and accept it happily.

The Sfas Emes adds that even in spiritual matters, one needs a certain degree of being **שמח בחלקו**, to rejoice with the amount of mitzvos and Torah that he can do. After all these introductions, we can determine where the tachash is within every Yid. The tachash "rejoiced and was proud of its colours." It was happy with its lot. Every Yid also has the potential to be happy with his lot, because there is an aspect of tachash within every Yid.

A yungerman once complained to **Rebbe Shalom Kaminka zt'l** about his bitter lot. Rebbe Shalom said to him, "As you know, whiskey/vodka is bitter. Someone not accustomed to drinking it spits it out, and he can't imagine why anyone buys it. But those who do drink it know that this bitter brew makes them happy.

I understand you are living a bitter life, but if you know how to accept life properly, you can find happiness even amidst the bitterness.

Take tzedokah! Written by Benjamin A Rose

The possuk states "ViYikchu Li terumah – And you shall take for me a seperation" - Many Meforshim ask why the possuk says "Viyikchu – and you shall take" or why it doesn't use the loshon "ViNasnu – You shall give"??

The famous answer given is, one who gives Tzedoka is really on the receiving end. He ends up getting more reward than the amount of money he donated. Therefore, the pasuk says, "ViYikchu" – "You shall take", because in effect you are really taking.

The Vilna Gaon says that this is a similar lesson to that in Parshas Ki Sisa, where the possuk says, "ViNasnu Ish Kofer Nafsho – you shall give.." Here the word **ונתנו** can be read forwards and backwards. This is also telling us that one who gives charity (forward) is actually on the receiving end (backwards).



וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ ***A contribution from every man whose heart prompts him*** *(25:2)*

A very wealthy but extremely stingy man once came to **Rabbi Shlomo of Radomsk** for a blessing. As was customary, he enclosed a certain amount of money for tzedaka in his letter to the tzadik. When Rabbi Shlomo refused to accept the money, his attendant was surprised. "Why wouldn't you take his contribution?" he asked him. Replied the tzadik with a smile, "Had you seen the look of joy on his face when I returned his money, you wouldn't ask me why I was unwilling to take it..." *(The Magid of Kelm)*

Adar

The Gemara (Beitzah 15b) teaches, "If a person wants his property to remain with him, he should plant an adar [tree]. As it states, **אדיר במרום ה׳** ***'Hashem is great in Heaven.'"***

The Sfas Emes explains this Gemara in the following way: If you want to succeed, plant the lessons of chodesh Adar in your heart. In Adar we learn that **אדיר במרום ה׳** Hashem is all-mighty and powerful, and He does everything. Remember this when dealing with business and with everything else you do, and you will certainly succeed, because remembering Hashem brings success to all your endeavours.

The Chidushei HaRim teaches that **אדר** is roshei teivos for **אלוף דל רש**, "train yourself to be poor; to be a pauper."

In Adar, we learn that Hashem is in charge of our destiny, and we are poor and helpless without His help.

"If the Eibershter Doesn't Want…"

A pauper once came to see **Rebbe Yehoshua of Belz zt'l**. The Rebbe honoured him immensely and even walked him to the door when he left.



The Rebbe's son, (who later became the next Rebbe) **Rebbe Yissachar Dov zt'l**, asked his father why he honoured this pauper so much. The Rebbe replied, "This man seems to be your standard pauper, going from door to door, from town to town asking for handouts. However, he is one of the greatest talmidei chachamim of our generation. There isn't a section of Torah that he doesn't know by heart. That's the reason I honoured him so much.

Now, my son, if you ask me, since he is so great in Torah, why isn't he a rav in some large city? The answer is, if the Eibershter doesn't want it, it won't happen. And if you ask me, why can't he be a rav of a small town? The answer once again is, if the Eibershter doesn't want it, it won't be.

Perhaps you'll ask that he should at least be a rosh yeshivah, a shochet, or some other post befitting a scholar and the answer is the same: If the Eibershter doesn't want it, it won't be."

Years later, Rebbe Yissacher Dov repeated this story and added, "My father supported many yoshvim in Belz. [Yoshvim were Yidden who devoted their lives to Torah study, tefillah and chassidus.] I wonder why my father didn't offer this scholar to be one of the yoshvim, and my father would have supported him? The answer once again, is if the Eibershter doesn't want it, it won't be."



Reb Yissacher Shlomo Teichtahl zt'l heard Rebbe Yissacher Dov zt'l tell this story. When Reb Teichtahl repeated it, he added the following: "Once, I was in Eastern Europe, and I met an old Yid who I knew from years back. He was sitting on a street corner, collecting money. I said to him, 'I remember you from years ago. You had a nice parnassah back then. What happened that you became so poor? Didn't you consider saving money in your younger years for your older years?'

The old man replied, 'I put away money for my retirement, but I invested all my money in a deal that my son-in-law was involved in. That venture failed, and I lost all my money. Now I am poor. I have no choice other than to sit on the street corner, collecting coin by coin. It's terribly embarrassing, and it requires a lot of effort for an old man like me. But I accept Hashem's decree with love, because I know that this is how Hashem wants it to be. And if this is what the Eibershter wants, then that is how it is.'"

Reb Teichtahl said, "When I heard him say those words, I wondered, How did this simple Yid reach this level of emunah? The Belzer Rebbes taught this level of emunah to their chassidim, but how could this simple man know so clearly that, 'If the Eibershter doesn't want it, it won't be'?

But then I understood. It wasn't so hard for him to learn this emunah, since life taught it to him. Life showed him that Hashem's plan will be, and nothing can change Hashem's plans. The Belzer Rebbes taught this truth to their chassidim. They should know this truth, even before life proves it to them.

R' Shmuel Winzelberg- Torah U'Tefilah

וְאֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן תַּעֲשֶׂה עֶשֶׂר יְרִיעֹת שֵׁשׁ מָשְׁזָר וּתְכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי

You shall make the Mishkan-spread of ten panels – twisted linen (26:1)



Much gold was used in the Mishkan – the Aron was coated with pure gold inside and out, the cover and the Cherubim were made of gold, the Shulchan (table) was covered in gold, its dishes, spoons, tubes, and supports were all made of pure gold.

Even the Menorah and its decorative knobs and flowers were made of pure gold. However, there were spreads on top of the gold, coverings of linen and hides. This was done so that one standing outside the Mishkan would not see the gold, the luxury would not be seen at all.

This teaches us a great fundamental lesson – that even if you have a lot of gold and much wealth, do not put it on public display. Enjoy it, appreciate it, but quietly. Definitely, do not show it to the world. *(Umatok HaOhr)*

The Torah isn't an oven where you bake a cake, and it comes out perfect. One also needs Mussar, Tikkun HaMiddos, and Milchemes HaYetzer. - Rav Leib Malin zt"l, related by his student Rav Michel Shurkin shlit"a of Yerushalyim

ושמרו בני-ישראל את-השבת לעשות את-השבת



Reb Simcha Bunim of Peshischa would remark on the uniqueness of the mitzvah of sukkah. Other mitzvos are performed with only one part or other of a person's body, but sukkah is performed with the entire body. A person immerses himself from head to foot in the holy atmosphere under the s'chach.

Reb Shlomo Leib of Lentshna adds that Shabbos is an even greater mitzvah. Although one tries to spend as much time as possible inside the sukkah, there are occasions when it is necessary to step outside and the mitzvah is gone. However, Shabbos envelopes the entire person without the need for any action. When Shabbos arrives, we are automatically surrounded by the mitzvah from the beginning until its conclusion.

True man Written by Rabbi Daniel Leeman

Moshe Rabeinu was told to speak to the Children of Israel. But instead of continuing in the usual manner and say to them, G-d commanded Moshe to take for Me teruma (donations for the Tabernacle) from each person whose heart drives him to give you will take My teruma". But if so, what did Moshe actually say to the Children of Israel? And why is it not recorded? - Furthermore, what is the meaning of the word teruma and why is its taking repeated (take for Me teruma… you will take my teruma)?

Several years ago, after the government expressed their unwillingness to sponsor the project, an evening was organised by

Rabbi Toledano for the purpose of raising funds to build a mikveh (ritual immersion bath house) in a far-out settlement near Bersheva where many new immigrants from Menkes, Morocco had settled.



Rabbi Toledano apologised profusely that the turnout was not exactly as expected, and only a single couple came to the event! But nevertheless, he insisted that **Rabbi Yaakov Galinsky** nevertheless deliver his speech – and deliver it he did, with the same enthusiasm as if he were speaking to an audience of hundreds.

After the speech, the attendees thanked the Rabbi for his words of encouragement and made a donation for two-thirds of the mikveh!

Moshe spoke to the entire nation of Israel, but his words were focused only to those individuals who were to listen to his words and be driven to make donations to the Tabernacle.

The word teruma means to separate, or to elevate. Just like each donor would give his teruma donations, he himself would also become a type of teruma separated and elevated from others. Moshe was therefore commanded not just to take the teruma donations, but also to elevate those individuals who took his words to heart.

This also explains why Moshes words to the Children of Israel were not recorded, because in truth they were directed only to those elevated individuals who opened their hearts. The language of the heart cannot be written it is heard only by those who open their hearts.

How many words for 'a gift' in Hebrew? - by D Fine



There is a concept that a language reflects the character of the people who speak it. Thus, Rome is called an 'unsatisfactory kingdom,' for they have no language of their own; it was borrowed from other nations(Gittin 80a). Therefore in arctic social circles, there are many words for different types of snow (The Sami people, who live in the far north of Scandinavia and Russia, have about 180 words related to snow and ice.) – since snow is an important part of their society. And in the (capitalist) west we have few words for shades of red but many different words for varieties of blue (navy, light, dark, royal, etc). And in the (communist) east they have many words for red but few for blue.

In Hebrew, we have many words of things which are given; 'Terumah' & 'nedava' mean a donation, and 'doron' & 'mattanah' mean a gift/present. The idea is that giving is a thing aimed to be treasured by our Jewish society, and thus we have many words for giving.

R' Naftali Berditchever would say: "When you were born, you cried and the world rejoiced. Live your life in such a manner that when you eventually die the world will cry and you will rejoice!"

"Who occupies himself with the needs of the community is as though he occupies himself with Torah." ~~ Talmud Yerushalmi, Berachos

It's All About Give & Take - Written By Rafi Jager



In the beginning of this week's Parsha, Hashem tells Moshe to "take for Me a portion" (Exodus 25:2) referring to the items which were to be brought for the construction of the Mishkan.

The Sforno poses a very interesting question. If Hashem wanted the Jews to give a portion to the Mishkan, then why didn't Hashem say "give" instead of "take"?

The Sforno answers by saying that Hashem wasn't telling Moshe to go to all the Children of Israel. He wanted Moshe to go to the Levites, the collectors of the materials to be used in the Mishkan, to tell them to go and take a portion from the Children of Israel. The directive was issued at the Levites and not the rest of the Jewish nation.

We can draw out an extremely important lesson from this understanding of the verse. One might think that only the person who gives charity gets a reward. But we must also realize that the person who works hard collecting the charity also deserves credit.

Torah Temimah

Really, Hashem doesn't need us to build anything, for the entire universe belongs to Him. Yet, the Torah tells us that He only rested His Shechina amongst us after the mishkan was built.

This then testifies to importance of working in avodas Hashem, for it isn't the result, as that could have been accomplished without our efforts. Clearly, Hashem wants us to expend energy and efforts in order to achieve closeness to Him.

Rabbi Zecharia Wallerstein - Unmask Your Inner Beauty

I was approached by a girl who asked me an honest and straightforward question. "Rabbi Wallerstein, I went to high school and seminary, and we had many talks and classes about tznius (modesty), and I understand that it is important. But let's get real…" As soon as she said those words, all I could think was, "Okay, here we go…"

"The bottom line, Rabbi, is that the girl who puts on make-up and nail polish and has coloured streaks in her hair receives attention. It is that type of girl who I see getting married often. I've been dating for a while, and I dress modestly, and no one ever looks at me in the same way. I don't get dressed like some of these other girls, nor do I do my hair that way. I feel like I am doing everything right as I am supposed to do, but no one is taking interest in me. At the end of the day, I feel that the girl who is not so modest in dress and character is getting married and I am not."

Before I addressed the girl's particular question, I wished to clarify a general concept that I felt she was touching upon. "If Hashem tells us to do something," I said, "such as dressing modestly, don't think that you will lose out because you are doing the right thing. If you believe that you will not find a shidduch because you are dressing modestly, you cannot be talking about G-d. Hashem never punishes you for doing what is right. That is not why you are not married.

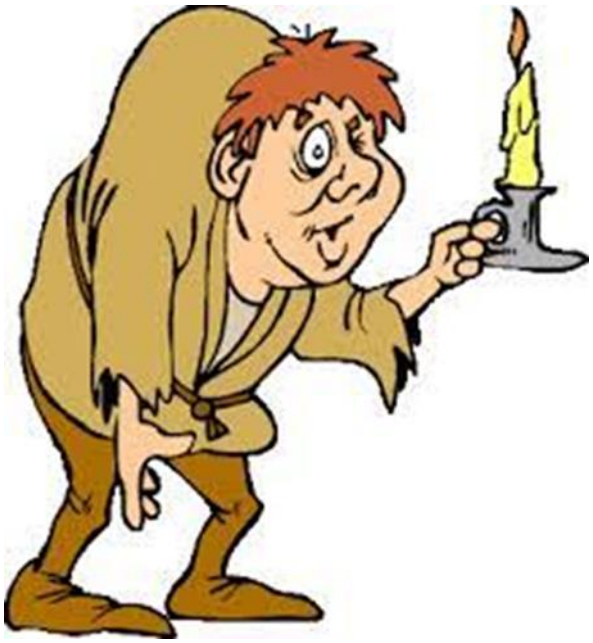
It can neither be true that someone is honest and is poor because he is honest. There must be a different reason. But one thing is for sure: it is not because you are honest. Do not make the mistake in believing that because someone dresses provocatively and attracts attention, that she is therefore married, and you who do not act that way, are not. Your modesty is not the reason you would not get married. That is the first thing to take to heart."

And then I continued. "Let me share with you a comment from Rashi. The Torah says that as Avraham Avinu came close to Egypt when

travelling from the Land of Israel because of the famine there, he remarked of Sarah, his wife, 'Now I know that you are a beautiful woman' (Bereishis 12:11). Rashi, bothered why Avraham Avinu would only realize now that his wife is beautiful comments, "Until now he had not noticed her beauty because of their modesty; but now he recognized her beauty as he caught a glimpse of her reflection in the water."

The difficulty with the simple reading of the Pasuk – i.e. that only now Avraham recognized Sarah's beauty – is that the Gemara (Kiddushin 41a) states that it is forbidden to marry someone until you have looked at them, for otherwise, you may later come to despise them because of their unappealing physical appearance to you. That being so, how could Avraham have not known what Sarah looked like, if he needed to see her before he married her?

Allow me to share a story with you.



There once was a hunchback whose body and facial features were twisted, yet he sorely wished to get married. The problem, however, was that no one wanted to get near him. Except one girl, who found it within her heart to marry him. While her decision shocked her family and friends, she went through with it. Yet soon thereafter, she realized that she could not carry on. "I really wanted to make this marriage work, but I'm unable. He is just too horrendous to look at. I'm sorry to break his heart." Yet before any final decision was made, they agreed to visit **Rav Chaim Halberstam of Sanz**, also known as the Divrei Chaim, and discuss the matter.

While the woman understandably explained her predicament to the Divrei Chaim, she found no way she would be able to continue living

with him. "Do you think you're beautiful?" asked the Divrei Chaim. "Why don't you take a look into the mirror," he said. Stepping over in front of the mirror, the wife let out a shriek. She looked like a hunchback herself. She couldn't believe it. In her mind, the Divrei Chaim had done something to make her look as horrible as she did.

"I didn't do anything to you," remarked the Divrei Chaim. "But let me tell you who this person is that you want to leave. Before the two of you were born the same day, you both were waiting to come into this world. The angel turned to you and said that because of what you had done in your previous life, you will need to re-enter this world as a hunchback as an atonement. Yet the neshama of this man was behind you, and said to the angel, "Don't do this to her! I'll take the punishment instead." That man was supposed to be born handsome, yet he took on your twisted figure and now he looks like he does because of you.

As soon as the woman heard this, all she could think of was, "How could I walk away from such a man? I'll have to make it work… I'll never leave him." Her one request was that the Rebbe return her to the way she looked before. "You never changed," replied the Rebbe. "Take a look in the mirror." And sure enough, she looked as she always had. It was merely a mirage in the mirror.

This is a peculiar and startling story. Yet this same story happened in Ohr Naava eight years ago.

There was a girl who used to sit in front of my class every week who had Down Syndrome. Each week, she used to bring me water, but besides that she used to sit very quietly and not say a word.

One night, I was speaking about the logo of Ohr Naava being that a butterfly, which symbolizes how a person figuratively undergoes the process of entering a cocoon, going through a metamorphosis, and emerging as a beautiful butterfly. The Zohar in fact says that the caterpillar's old body dies and a new body forms inside a protective shown, called a chrysalis, from which a butterfly develops. Hashem

intentionally created the process of a butterfly's formation in this way to underscore the process of Techiyas HaMeisim, the Resurrection of the Dead, whose process mirrors that of a butterfly's old body decomposing and a renewed life force emerging.

In life, our process of growth involves us discovering our "wings," our unique talents and strengths and growing into the person we are capable of becoming. The butterfly, to this effect, is the paradigm example of such a life-changing growth process. It is scary to go from a crawling caterpillar to a flying butterfly, but such growth is the greatest change that could ever occur. Yet, all the while the butterfly doesn't realize that it has wings, another butterfly comes to its side and tells it, "You know, you have wings just like I have… and you can fly." The mission statement and vision of Ohr Naava was to teach girls and women that they have wings and can achieve extraordinary accomplishments in their lives.

After I finished this class, this girl who always sat in front of me and had never said a word, walked up to me. "Rabbi Wallerstein, could I tell you a story?" "Sure," I said. As I took a seat, she stared right into my eyes with a very serious look and said, "Rabbi Wallerstein, do you know the story of the moth?" "The moth?" I said with surprise. "Yeah, the story about the moth." "Okay…" I wondered. "What's the story of the moth?"

"There was once a girl," she began, "and she was sitting with her grandmother on the porch, when a big, ugly moth landed on the porch. Without hesitating, the little girl took off her shoe, ready to kill the moth. But before she had a chance, the grandmother cautioned the girl, "Don't kill the moth." "Why not Grandma? Don't

they eat clothing?" "Do you know the story of the moth?" asked the Grandma.



"When Hashem created the world, He created butterflies, and He gave them all of His colours. But then all of humanity sinned, and Hashem decreed that He would destroy the world. Though, at the same time, Hashem swore that He would never destroy the world again, and to prove that, He created the rainbow. Yet, the only problem was that Hashem had no colours left, because He had given them all to the butterflies. He therefore couldn't make the rainbow. Hashem then called back all the butterflies, and said, "I am looking to make a rainbow; would you be able to give Me some of your colours back?" Some of the butterflies replied to Hashem, "We will give You of our colours so you can make the rainbow." And those are the moths… They are butterflies who have no colour because they gave it to Hashem to create the colours of the rainbow.

"And that's why," finished the Grandma and concluded this girl to me, "you should never kill a moth. It is really a butterfly which gave its colours to Hashem to make the rainbow."

All I could wonder after this girl finished was, "Who told you that story?" She looked at me and said, "I'm not telling you." I looked back at her with a pleasant smile and asked again if she would be willing to tell me where she heard the story from. "I'm not telling you," she insisted. I could not ever find out where this story originated from.

Knowing that everything happens at a specific time for a specific reason, I could only wonder what this girl really meant to tell me.

This story is not a Midrash, and neither is it true. But I was sure that there was something more for me to learn from this interaction with this girl.

When I was later in Israel vising my Rebbe, **R' Gamliel Rabinowitz shlita**, I asked what he believed Hashem wished to show me in this encounter with this girl. R' Gamliel said, "Maybe she was telling you her story. Maybe she was trying to tell you that she may have Down Syndrome, but she is no different than the moth who is really a butterfly, but just gave her colours to somebody else. She was trying to convey that although people may look at her differently, she is really no different. If anything, she did something so incredible. She gave her colours to someone else. She's been sitting in front of you every week when you speak for years for a reason. Don't ever look at her differently than anybody else."

The hunchback. The moth. They both gave something so dear to them away – their beauty. Never look at them as any different. If anything, they are far greater than you could ever conceive.

Now we can answer our original question. How could Avraham Avinu say that only now, as he neared Egypt, that he noticed Sarah's beauty?

My brother explained to me as follows. Avraham Avinu was telling Sarah that he never married her because of her physical beauty. He married her because of her internal beauty and what type of person she was. While Avraham definitely saw Sarah before he married her, her physical beauty wasn't his focal point. Yet now was the first time in his life that Avraham saw Sarah's reflection in the water, and a reflection has no inner beauty. It merely portrays one's physical image. It is bereft of the person and simply recreates a reflected picture. It was the first time that Avraham ever saw Sarah's outer beauty and outer beauty only. And that is what Rashi means.

Of course, Avraham had seen Sarah before. But he never thought to himself, "Look at her physical beauty," but rather, "This is a

beautiful person." It was only now that he saw her reflection, which has no inner beauty, and only displays outer beauty, and to that alone, Avraham said, "Wow! Even just your outer beauty is truly beautiful."

I then concluded telling this girl who asked me her question about tznius, "A girl who is not modest is just a reflection. There is no inner beauty. You may have gorgeous make-up and beautiful hair, but that is only a reflection in the water. Tznius shows your inner beauty, and someone who appreciates you for that is attracted to you as a person and values you much more than your outer beauty. And the longer you are married, the more your inner beauty develops. Outer physical beauty fades and wanes with time. But inner beauty glows and grows with time.

"You remain as modest as you are," I told this girl. "That inner beauty is everything you need. And believe me, Hashem will take care of you. You will find your Avraham Avinu…"

Rabbi Paysach Krohn - Ascending the Mountain

It was just last year on my birthday, Tu B'shvat, that someone told me something which left me so inspired and invigorated. "You should know that the day you were born years ago was the day that G-d decided the world could no longer exist without you." I have personally found this message so touching and empowering. The same is true of each and every one of us. When you were born, it was because G-d decided that the world needs you. I don't have to be like you and you don't have to be like me, and both of us don't need to be like him or her. But each of us was put into this world because we specifically are needed.

What then is important in our lives? If we would like to develop into that person, we were created to become who has their priorities

straight and understands what life is about, what would that look like?

Mitch and Steve Barnett, two friends of mine, who are today known as Michoel and Simcha, came a long way. Having grown up irreligious, their dedication towards growing in Judaism and becoming more and more identified as Torah Jews is a sure sense of inspiration. Besides being identical twins, their interests and hobbies are almost identical too. On one occasion, Simcha shared an incident with me that left him with a profound message.



For one, he and his brother love bike riding. They have joined various bike clubs over the years and travelled to numerous places. On one occasion, they decided to take a trip to New Zealand. After traversing through the North Island and taking a ferry, they arrived at the South Island and began biking up the mountainous terrains there. As it turned out, the first mountain they encountered was extremely steep and difficult to ride up. All the bikers struggled to pedal and manoeuvre their way around, and they didn't seem to be getting anywhere.

Finally, though, one of the bikers stopped and dismounted his bike. Removing his backpack, he took out a heavy book and threw it down. He then took out a crowbar along with some other tools, and also dropped them to the ground. With his load now lightened, he got back on his bike and started peddling back up the mountain, which he did with much greater ease. The rest of the riders quickly noticed what this one biker did. Without thinking twice, everyone else

followed suit and also began emptying heavy or unnecessary items from their backpack and lessening their load.

"Rabbi," Simcha said, "after I became religious, I realized something phenomenal. This bike ride represented my journey in becoming a Torah observant Jew." Unsure what he meant by this statement, I asked him to please explain. "I realized that if I wanted to climb to the top of the spiritual mountain, there was a lot of baggage I needed to get rid of. There were many things which I needed to change, readjust and give up for the sake of achieving my journey in becoming the person I wished to become."

I was taken aback to hear such profound words. But I was even more shocked when my son, Avraham, returned home an hour later. "Did you hear what Simcha said?" I asked him. "It's a Pasuk!" he said. "What do you mean?" I asked in confusion. "The idea which Simcha shared with you comes from a Pasuk in *Tehillim*! Dovid Hamelech says, "Who is the one who will the ascend the mountain of G-d, and who will stand in the holy place? The one who has clean hands" (*Tehillim* 24:3). It is the one who is not carrying a heavy, burdensome load who will be able to make it to the top of the mountain. That is exactly what Simcha was referring to.

Shortly thereafter, I located on my bookshelf a book of mine called *Mikdash Me'et*, a commentary on *Tehillim*. I wanted to see if the author had anything to say in relation to this verse. Sure enough, he cites the *Olelos Ephraim*, a commentary authored by the Kli Yakar, who interprets this phrase beautifully.

Dovid Hamelech wishes to teach us that if we wish to ascend to the top of the mountain in spirituality and Torah, we cannot carry a heavy burden. What does this heavy burden consist of? In Hebrew, the word for load or burden is *maasah* (comprised of the letters mem, sin, aleph).

The word *maasah* is an acronym for mammon (money), s'malos (clothing), ochel (food).

If all a person pursues in life is making money, dressing in the fanciest clothing and eating only the best and most delectable foods, it will be very difficult to make it up the mountain.

We all certainly need money, clothes and food, but that is not meant to be the priority of our lives. If it becomes our focus, it weighs us down and makes it that much harder to continually grow spiritually and wholeheartedly dedicate ourselves to the pursuit of Torah and *mitzvos*. We are all here in this world for a purpose and are meant to direct our efforts and energy in attaining that end. What will propel us forward is focusing our vision on what will bring us closer and ease the process and ensuring that we remove any extra luggage which holds us down and pulls us back. But there is more to the picture.



One of the greatest things we can do in life is learn to live not only for ourselves, but for others. **Rav Chaim Volozhiner**, in fact, told his son that the few most important words to always live by are, "A person was not created to merely help himself, but to help others." Hashem puts us into this world to develop certain talents with which to serve Him and inspire others. With our capabilities, we are to ask ourselves, "What can I do to contribute to the world?" We can choose to lead self-centered lives wherein we overly focus and indulge in the luxuries of money, clothes and food, or we can turn our attention towards loftier and more important matters. We most certainly require these needs in life, but we can never let them overtake and consume our days, weeks and years.

Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis *a"h*, who survived as a child during the war years, rebuilt herself, her family and so many others to become dedicated and committed Jews despite all odds. Founding the *Hineni* organization, she successfully brought countless Jews back to their roots. I had the unique opportunity of speaking to her several times throughout the last years of her life, during which she told me something I will never forget.

"For years after my husband passed away, it was difficult for me to open his books and look at them. Every time, I would inevitably see his handwritten notes on the side and cry. His handwriting was something which touched me and was so special.

One night, my daughter opened one of his books and found a note inside. When I read it, it touched me profoundly. As I wrote in my own book *Life is a Test*, I felt that this note was meant for me to read. He wrote, 'A long life is not good enough, but a good life is long enough.'

Those words will always remain with me." Such powerful and penetrating words need no elaborate commentary. Use your days to grow spiritually yourself, help others grow, and together, everyone will ascend the mountain.

On one of my touring trips to Poland, I led a group to the cemetery of the second Gerrer Rebbe, the **Sfas Emes**. Passing away in 1905, the Sfas Emes only lived to be fifty-eight years old. When he passed away, one of his sons turned to the other and said, "Well, at least our father had *arichus yamim* (length of days)." "What do you mean?" the other brother replied. "He only lived to be fifty-eight!" "I didn't say he had *arichus shanim* (length of years); I said he had *arichus yamim* ."

No one can guarantee longevity for no one knows what tomorrow will bring. But every one of us can guarantee *arichus yamim*. We all can make each day meaningful and use it to accomplish so much.

That is the motto by which Rabbi and Rebbetzin Jungreis lived and so must we. A good life, full of accomplished days is a real life. What can we realistically do on a daily basis to live with this attitude?

The Chofetz Chaim (*Ahavas Chesed*, ch. 12) writes that not a day should go by without a person performing an act of kindness. Practically speaking, keep a notebook where you can write down what act of kindness you did each day. In a short time, that notebook will become of your most treasured possessions. It need not be something of major consequence; just something small, where you think of another and extend yourself for them.

That is what it means to think outside of yourself and lead a life where your priorities are in order. It is a mindset which places others at the height of importance and constantly thinks of what can be done to bring oneself and others to a higher point on the mountaintop. And then, sooner than later, we will all find ourselves together at the peak of the mountain, with our hands free of heavy and burdensome loads, and instead full of eternal spiritual reward.



Start Being Joyful at The Beginning of Adar - Rabbi Avigdor Miller, Zt"l

When [the Hebrew month of] *Adar* comes in we are told to increase our joy. Why is that?

Because it's a season that requires a certain frame of mind. *Purim* requires joy, *Pesach* requires joy. In order, however, to be prepared, you must start at the beginning of *Adar*.

You can't be glum and sad, and suddenly when *Purim* comes, you jump up and down and you celebrate. No! You're doing it with a heavy heart.

When *Adar* comes in you begin looking for ways and means of generating happiness, and you look at the world. The world is full of happiness. The sunshine causes happiness. The fact that you're able to see. One of the greatest pleasures in the world is the ability to see. It's **fun** to see.



You have two movie cameras taking pictures constantly wherever you look, colour pictures. Isn't it fun to see? Oh, close your eyes, [and you prerceive] a dark sad world. Open your eyes. Oh!! Moving pictures! And they function in synchronization, together.

And the pictures are recorded in your mind. You know the pictures that you are taking right now will never be forgotten? I could prove to you that the pictures are recorded forever in your mind. Forty years later somebody will say, "You remember sitting in Rabbi Miller's shul years ago? He was talking about the wonders of creation."

"Oh yes I remember now," and the pictures suddenly flashes out from the filing cabinets of your mind and you see everything once more. Where was the picture for forty years? It was there because the pictures you are taking are never erased from your mind. You might forget, because it goes back in the depths of the cabinets, but the pictures are there. Someday you might take them out and see them again, and reminisce about your youth. You remember even the voices; that's because you have a sound recording in your head.

So you start in the beginning of *Adar*, piling up *Simcha*. It's **fun** to see, (Rabbi Miller took a big breath) it's **fun** to breathe. *Rabosai*, let's all practice the *Simcha* of filling our lungs with this wonderful

air in this little place here. (And everyone in the audience took a deep breath) AHH, that's joy. It's **fun** to be alive! *Baruch Hashem*, it's **fun** to live. It's **fun** as the heart causes the blood to course through your vessels; it's **fun**. Everything in life is **fun**. How silly people are! You know when they realize life is **fun**? When they are on the verge of dying. Oh, oh, oh, it's all over. Now is the time, enjoy life right now.

It's **fun** everywhere. When you sit down tomorrow morning at breakfast, it's **fun** to use those teeth to chew food, teeth are **fun**. False teeth are also **fun**. Life is **fun**, life is happiness, and we thank *Hakdosh Baruch Hu* for it.

Rabbi Ephraim Shapiro - Like Father, Like Daughter

מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו From every man whose heart motivates him… (Shemot 25:2)



It was just a few hours after Shabbos ended that sixteen-year-old Nechama said aloud, "Baruch Hashem, tonight I can resume sleeping with a pillow." Just barely making out what Nechama muttered, her parents paused their own conversation. "Nechama, did you say something?" "Oh, don't worry," replied Nechama, "it's nothing." Having caught fragments of what was said, her parents asked her to repeat herself. "Okay," Nechama said, "I'll tell you."

"A year ago, my class was told that our Rebbe had unfortunately turned ill. I really admired and respected him, and when I heard that he needed to undergo treatment, I wondered if I could do something

special to identify with his discomfort and perhaps serve as a merit for his recovery. I decided to remove my pillow from under my head whenever I would go to sleep until his health was restored.

"It was just today, a year after he started his treatment, that I heard great news. He has fully recovered and is ready to return to a normal schedule. This is what I meant when I said, 'Baruch Hashem, tonight I can resume sleeping with a pillow.'"

Such was the care and concern of a sixteen-year-old girl. Someone else's discomfort was her own discomfort. She looked at another Jew's situation and felt as if it were her own.



That is one story. Now let me share with you another.

Allen is one of my beloved congregants in North Miami Beach. A sweet and considerate man, I was happy to run into him and a number of other gentlemen at a wedding. They were all partaking of the ice cream dessert being served, except for Allen. I knew Allen to be an ice cream lover, and his abstinence led me to wonder if maybe something had occurred. Turning to him later, I said, "Allen, don't you love ice cream? You didn't want to have any at the wedding?" Looking back at me, Allen replied, "Rabbi Shapiro, allow me to explain.

"You probably remember how last year, when the situation in Israel wasn't the best, you mentioned that every one of us should consider what we can take on to feel the pain of our fellow brothers and sisters. 'Don't be apathetic,' you said; 'be empathetic.' After hearing you speak, I thought about what I could do. I then decided that I would refrain from eating ice cream until the conditions in Israel improved.

"That is why I didn't have any ice cream at the wedding. I have stopped eating ice cream now for a while, and I wasn't going to start then."

Now what relevance do these two stories have with each other? Allen never knew about Nechama's practice nor did she know about his.

Because the girl who chose not to sleep with a pillow for a year is the daughter of the man who refrained from eating ice cream. Nechama is the daughter of Allen. Nechama never knew about her father's abstinence, yet her education within her home was such that when she heard about another's pain, it became her own. And where did she learn to feel that way? Her father.

The messages we send our children, even those which are nonverbal and seem so ever subtle and subliminal, have the greatest of impacts. Sometimes, we need not even say anything to them, yet they pick up on our cues and follow in our ways.

That is what it means to educate a child.



The Israeli Air Force Pilot and the $100 Bill – D Keren

I'd like to end this column with a story I heard on a recent Torahanytime.com lecture by Rabbi Yosef Mizrachi. He told of an elite secular IDF (Israel Defense Force) air force pilot who was part of a group of fellow pilots who went on an organized educational visit to various cultural sights in Israel, including a stop at the Ponevezh Yeshiva in Bnei Brak where they met and heard words of Torah from the famed Rosh Hayeshiva – **Rav Elazar Shach**.

After the Rosh Hayeshiva had concluded his remarks, the group was walking out of the Ponevezh Yeshiva. Before they left, the IDF pilot noticed that tacked on a bulletin board was a $100 bill. Surprised, he asked one of the yeshiva students why the large money bill was posted. He was shown an accompanying note that explained that someone found the money and was announcing that if anyone lost it, they should take the $100 bill.



The pilot asked how long the bill had been tacked onto the bulletin board and was absolutely stunned when told that it was about three years. Probably the person who lost it was an outsider visitor who never came back. The pilot exclaimed "If someone made such a posting on the bulletin board on my air force base it would have a life expectance of just three seconds before someone would quickly grab the money and pocket it."

So impressed was the Israeli pilot about the Torah values of those sincere yeshiva students at Ponevezh Yeshiva that he made a commitment to study that same Torah and he eventually became a baal teshuvah.

"Never lose hope, for even in the darkest moments, there is a flicker of light. Hold onto faith and trust that Hashem is guiding you towards a brighter tomorrow." ~ Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik.

The Donkey in the Pit By Yaakov Lieder



When life throws challenges at us, we have a choice. We can feel sorry for ourselves and cry and complain, "Why me?" Or we could stop and say to ourselves: "What can I do, given the new circumstances that have arisen?"

I once asked an elderly wise person whom I used to approach for advice, "Where do you get such good judgement from?" He answered, "Good judgment comes from bad experience." He related to me the following story, which had a profound effect on me.

One day, a donkey fell into a pit. The animal cried and whined for hours while his owner tried to figure out what to do. Finally, the farmer decided that since the animal was old, and the pit needed to be covered up anyway, he'd just bury the old donkey right there. He got a shovel and started filling in the pit. The donkey kept up its wailing but then fell silent. After an hour of furious shoveling, the farmer paused to rest. To his amazement, he saw his old donkey jump out of the pit and trot away!

At first, when the donkey realized what was happening, he cried even more piteously. But then the wise animal hit on a plan. As each spadesful of dirt hit his back, the donkey would shake it off and take a step up on the growing mound of earth. Eventually, the mound grew high enough for him to jump out of the pit.

Life is going to shovel dirt on you, all kinds of dirt. The trick to getting out of the pit well is to shake it off and take a step up. We can get out of the deepest pits by not stopping and never giving up.

The Holocaust Survivor Who Couldn't Get a Job As the Shul Shamesh



In the Brachah of Borei Nefashos, we say that 'Hashem creates numerous living things with their deficiencies'. The Rashba (Teshuvos, 149) explains that with these words we have gratitude to Hashem specifically for what appears to us to be deficiencies in our lives, because in this way, we acknowledge that Hashem has created us in this manner.

For example, Hashem could have created us without having the need to eat. Therefore, we thank Hashem for this 'deficiency' which

requires us to be human, and to subsist on what Hashem provides us with.

This idea that we must appreciate everything that occurs in life, even if it seems to be 'deficient' to us, is displayed by the Rosh Yeshivah of Tshebin in Eretz Yisroel, **Rav Avraham Genichuvski, zt"l**, when he gave a Shiur to his Talmidim.

He related the story of a Holocaust survivor who arrived in America shortly after being liberated. He was looking for a way to make a living, but he was unable to learn the English language very well, and because of this, his options were limited.

He heard that one of the Shuls in the neighborhood was looking for a Shamesh, someone who could care for the Shul and help it run, as well as someone to greet the members and visitors, and make them feel comfortable in Shul. The Shul administration was impressed with this man, his confidence, his sense of humour, and how well he got along with people.

He was about to get the job and sign a contract, when one of the board members asked, "Of course, you speak English?" as until then they had only spoken in Yiddish.

The man replied that he did not and explained that in Poland he had had no need to speak English, nor did it matter while he was in the Nazi concentration camps, and he hasn't picked it up that well.

The board member said, "We are very sorry that we can't offer you the job. In our Shul, we often have celebrations which are attended by family and friends, and to many of them, a Shul is very foreign. They need someone to guide them through the Davening and explain what is happening, and all of this requires fluency in the English language. We would love for you to have gotten the job, but you simply do not have the qualifications for it."

The man realized that he was out of choices, so he decided to purchase a used pushcart and sell small items on the corner of one

of the busy streets. Business started picking up almost right away for him, and he expanded quickly, hiring other people to manage additional pushcarts. Eventually, he had several pushcarts throughout the city, and at this point, he decided it was time open a large retail department store.

This too saw success, and soon he was purchasing other businesses. The simple pushcart had now become a large corporation! At the closing of a major transaction involving the purchase of a number of stores, he was asked to read and sign the contract. The man gave the contract to his secretary and asked for it to be read it to him.

The businessmen and lawyers who had gathered around the conference table were incredulous to see that this man, the CEO of such a large business, could not read English. They asked him, "How is it possible that you were able to build and maintain such a large business empire, yet you can't read English?"

He said, "Let me explain something to you. If I had even spoken English a few years ago, today, I wouldn't be here making this deal. I would be washing floors in the Shul!"

The Rosh Yeshivah concluded his Shiur by telling his students, "We don't realize how it is specifically the 'deficiency' that may bring us the opportunities to succeed in life, and can often turn our lives completely around. It is for this that we thank Hashem in Borei Nefashos!"

(Torah U'Tefilah: A Collection of Inspiring Insights compiled by Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg.)

Bitachon is trusting that Hashem is always there for us, even when the world seems to be against us.– R' Yeruchem Levovitz

The Wheel that Rotates in the World



It is well known that Baron Rothschild was a man who believed in Hashem Yisbarach and he particularly focused on the mitzvah of *tzedakah* – charity. However, as something inadvertently emitted from the mouth of the ruler, he once misspoke and said that because of his great wealth it is not possible that he would die of hunger. The baron did not mean to say, *chas v'shalom*, that he was not in the domain of his Creator, rather he was just describing his vast wealth, that even if his business would fail, still, he did not see how this would cause him to die of hunger.

He wanted the Celestial Supervision to show him that everything was in the Hand of Hashem, and even if his business did not fail, he could still die of hunger. One day the baron opened his safe and went in to take care of something and while inside the door of the safe locked with him inside.

The door of the safe was built in a way that it could not be opened from the inside, since it was not meant that anyone should stay inside for any length of time, it was designed from the outset that it could only be opened from the outside, thus the baron was not able to open it. Additionally, it was constructed from thick iron and even if he knocked on the inside it would not be heard from the outside, so the baron remained alone inside without any food to eat.

He was hidden there for a few days and despite intensive searches for him there was not a trace of where he was hidden. They did not

think of checking the safe and only after several days they tried to open the safe and then the baron was found, but it was too late…

They found a note with him that he had written before he died and in it, he confessed that it had entered his mind that there are things that are not in the Hand of Hashem, *chas v'shalom*, and he realized his punishment was measure for measure.

This story comes to teach us that a person cannot determine his future and it is not appropriate to brag about what he has.

Similarly, we see in our parsha in which it states (18:1): "Yisro, the father-in-law of Moshe heard…"

And Rashi explains, 'Here Yisro felt himself honored through Moshe, "I am the father-in-law of the king," while in the past Moshe attributed the greatness to his father-in-law as it says, "And he returned to Yeser, his father-in-law."

At first, Yisro was in the realm of greatness and Moshe was subordinate to him and he was pleased to be his son-in-law, however, after this the wheel turned around and Yisro was pleased to be the father-in-law of Moshe.

From here a person can understand that even if he finds himself on a level of greatness, he should be careful not to be haughty, for in a moment the whole thing can turn around. So too, the opposite, when a person is found in a very low state, he should strengthen himself with awareness, and he should know that in a moment his situation can turn around, and it is possible that he will be elevated to greatness and authority. No one in the world can know what waits for him in the future.

"One should respect one's father-in-law like one's own father." ~~ Midrash Tehillim

Napoleon's Red Velvet Cloak - Yerachmiel Tilles



Napoleon Bonaparte and his French armies began their invasion of Russia. Napoleon had dreams of conquering the vast Russian army.

On the way, he passed through the town of Lelov, where lived the renowned **Rabbi Dovid of Lelov**. When the monarch heard about the saintly man and his powers of prophetic vision, he decided to visit him.

Let's see what he will tell me about whether or not I shall succeed in my campaign," he thought.

He covered up his royal garments with a soldier's winter overcoat, and thus disguised as a plain soldier, he entered the humble abode of the Lelover rebbe.

What can I do for you?" asked the rebbe.

Napoleon unbuttoned his soldier's coat and revealed his kingly robe. "I am Napoleon Bonaparte," he declared. "They say that you can see into the future. What is my future? Will I succeed in conquering Russia?"

"What if my answer displeased Your Majesty. Will I be punished?" Reb Dovid first had to be reassured.

"You have my word that I shall not punish you, no matter what you say," the emperor promised. "Then I don't have good news. You will suffer total defeat," replied the Lelover rebbe.

The emperor's face burned red with rage. Clenching his first tightly, he hissed, "Rabbi, if you turn out to be wrong, you'll be in deep trouble."

Napoleon and his armies continued on toward the heart of Russia to the capital city of Moscow. They won one victory after another. They captured Moscow. But when they turned back toward France, they found that the Russian winter had set in.

The soldiers suffered from lack of food and from the bitter cold. Their morale was low. Now when the Russian soldiers attacked them, Napoleon's troops were too weak and dispirited to fight back. They were forced to retreat. Subsequently they were attacked by the armies of Austria and Prussia. Napoleon was forced to run for his life. The once glorious monarch fled from one city to the next. Soon he neared the town of Lelov. He remembered the rebbe and what he had foreseen.

"That rabbi he turned out to be a holy man after all," Napoleon mused. "I must stop by and concede to him that he had seen accurately."

He found Rabbi Dovid Lelover's house.

"Rabbi," he admitted, "you were right after all. I would like to leave you my royal velvet mantle to remember me by."

Reb Dovid thanked Napoleon for his gracious gift and the monarch continued his flight.

Eventually his enemies caught him, captured him, and sent him into exile. The Lelover kept the cloak. It was a rich, soft, bright red velvet cloak altogether magnificent. Reb Dovid was not interested in beautiful garments and material possessions. He treasured the mantle because it represented something else to him: the fact that the Gentile nations of the world and their monarchs recognize that the Jews are a G-dly nation.

To him it meant that the following verse had come true: "And all the nations of the world will see that G-d's name is upon you and they shall fear you" [Deut. 28:10].



When Rabbi Dovid passed away, the mantle was inherited by his son and successor, Moshe.

Rabbi Moshe Lelover took the royal mantle with him when he and his chasidim moved to Israel. There he built a synagogue and yeshiva. For the curtain on the holy ark, Reb Moshe had Napoleon's majestic cloak cut and sewn to fit on the Aron Kodesh.

Turning Point in the Lobby By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach



It happened in the lobby of a Swiss hotel. An Israeli visitor active in charitable causes noticed a family parked on lobby sofas at a late hour of the night. Upon inquiring he learned that the father, mother and daughter had an early morning return flight to Israel. In order to save the expense of another night in their hotel room they had checked out and were

spending the remaining hours till their ride to the airport parked outside the lobby.

When they refused his invitation to come to his room for some refreshments he brought some cookies and chocolates to them in the lobby. Upon his return to Israel he forgot the entire incident until some months later when he received an invitation to the daughter's wedding referring to him as the main *mechutan* (title usually reserved for the parents of the bride and groom).

Unaware of his connection he called for clarification. He was told that the bride had strayed from the religious lifestyle of her parents and had become engaged to marry a non-Jew. The trip to Switzerland was a desperate attempt to dissuade her but she refused to budge.

It was only on the flight back to Israel that she kept talking about how wonderful that religious Jew was to them in the hotel lobby. She was so moved by his thoughtfulness that she decided that she wanted to return to a lifestyle which had such values.

The result was that she called off the intermarriage and soon became engaged to marry a fine, religious Jew.

Streets of Life By Rabbi Morderchai Kamenetzky

Unexpected Gifts Can Come From The Strangest Places

Every time I go through the parshiyos that narrate our golus in mitzrayim, I marvel at the amazing events that led to the Exodus. The Riboino Shel Olam's ways are remarkable; you just never know where your salvation will come from.

I recently heard about a rosh Kollel in Eretz Yisrael who had been struggling for years to support his yungeleit. The members of the Kollel knew that they couldn't rely on timely payments. Then things

suddenly began to change. Not only did their cheques arrive on time, but the rosh Kollel stopped flying to America to solicit donations.

The Kollel families also began to receive generous bonuses when they made a simcha or before YomTov.

A couple of youngeleit approached the rosh Kollel. "What changed? How are you doing this?"they asked him.

In response, he shared an amazing story that happened about a dozen years earlier.

"I had taken my family on a trip up north," the rosh Kollel said. "We were driving on a highway in the Haifa area when I suddenly realized that the fuel tank was almost empty. A few minutes later the car spluttered to a halt.



So, there we were, stuck on the highway with cars zooming by. No-one stopped. Around twenty minutes later, a sports car approached. The driver was wearing a wild T-shirt, dark sunglasses and no yarmulke. He turned his head towards us and slowed down. I thanked Hashem for sending help – but I was wrong. The driver just did a double-take and drove off as fast as he could.

Unbelievably, around five minutes later, he came back. He stopped his car and asked us what was wrong. When I told him that I had run out of petrol, he said, "I'll tell you the truth. I used to be religious and gave it up. But something in my heart told me that I should help you guys. When I saw you, your wife and kids stranded, I had rachmanut on you." He told me that he would drive me to a petrol station about ten minutes away so that we could put some petrol into a jerrycan.

On the way there, I struck up a conversation with the young man. He had difficulties during school, wound up on the streets and unfortunately abandoned Yidishkeit. I thanked him profusely for going out of his way, trying to warm up his heart, but I couldn't tell if I was successful or if my snippets of Torah meant anything to him.

We got to the petrol station, and the fellow was about to fill up a jerrycan, when I noticed a sign on the window. Printed in big, bold, brazen letters were the words "WE ARE OPEN ON SHABBAT"

I shouted, "Stop! Please drive me back to my car!" - He looked at me as if I was crazy, but I said to him, "I can't buy petrol from somebody who openly declares how defiant he is with regards to Shemiras Shabbos. I love Hashem, and Hashem wants us to keep Shabbos. A sign proclaiming that this owner is proud to refuse to do so is a stab in the heart of someone who loves Hashem."

Surprisingly, instead of being upset, the guy simply said, "okay, get back in the car and we'll try to find another petrol station.

The second petrol station was actually closer to my car, and we got petrol there. After driving me back to my car, I thanked the fellow again. We exchanged contact details and promised to keep in touch. For the next few years, we usually managed to speak to each other before the Yomim Nora'im.

Twelve years passed. Then one day I got a phone call from a lawyer in Tel Aviv. It turned out that this man's father had recently passed away, leaving four apartment buildings as a yerusha. He had left one building to each of his three children, and he instructed that the fourth be given to ***someone who loves Hashem***!

The lawyer explained that the man who had helped me buy petrol was the executor of the will, and he had decided that the apartment building should go to me. - It is that building, the rosh Kollel concluded, that is now funding the Kollel!

Rabbi Avigdor Miller, Z"tl - Preparing for a Date

Are there any specific things a girl should do to be *zoche* to marry a true *ben Torah*?

Yes! One is that when there is an appointment to meet one of the *bnei Torah*, she should make it her business to go first to the beauty parlor. That's a specific thing to do to marry a true *ben Torah*. It's a pity so many girls don't know that.



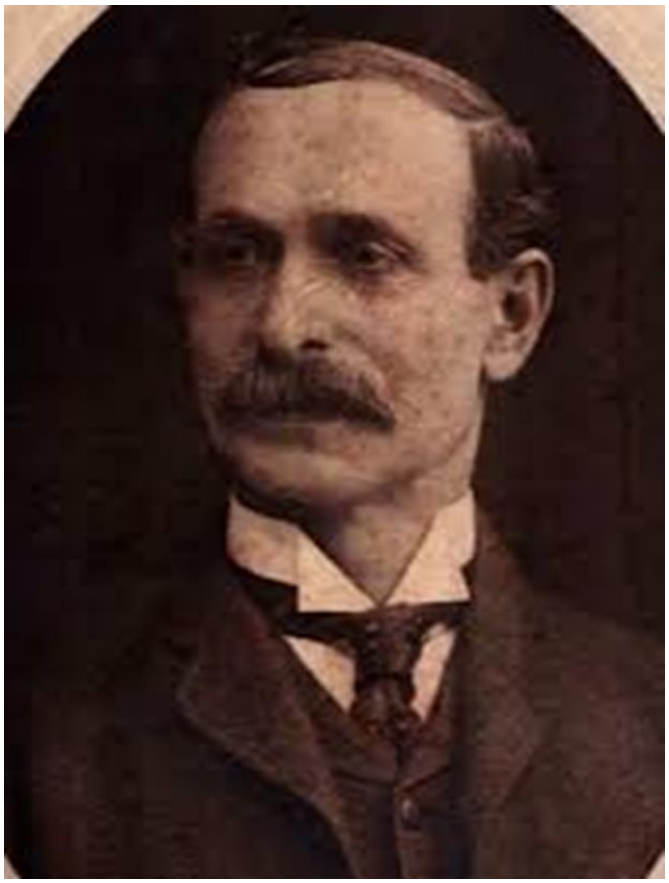
Another specific thing is, to brush your teeth from the age of six and on. So when you're going to meet that candidate and you'll flash a smile, it shouldn't be a row of crooked and decayed teeth. A lot of specific things a girl should do to marry a true *ben Torah*.

Of course, she expected me to say what prayers should she add at the end of *shemonei esrei*. Certainly she should pray to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, but don't forget that she has to do certain things that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* wants her to do, things that are simple and direct in addition to all the other things.

"Even in His wrath the L-rd keeps in mind compassion." ~~ Talmud, Pesachim

"The most effective defence against temptation is this: Shut your eyes."

Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld-*Rosh Hayeshiva Yeshivas Beis Dovid*



Aaron Rothchild handed his children two letters right before he died. He told them that one of the letters should be opened as soon as he dies, and the second letter should only be opened a month later. When he passed away, they opened the first letter and found a message that was written as follow:- ***"My last request in this world is that I should be buried wearing my socks."*** His children read it and couldn't understand it, but they said, "*Mitzvah l'kayeim divrei hamess* – we have to honour what he wanted." But the rabbonim that were there, absolutely forbade them from doing so, and he was buried without his socks.

A month later, his children were so excited to open the second letter. They opened it up and found a second message. ***" I know that you did not bury me with my socks on, as I had previously requested in my first letter, because it is against the halacha. But you are probably wondering why I requested it initially. The reason was, my dear children, to teach you a lesson. A lesson that you should remember for the rest of your lives. A person cannot even take his socks with him into the next world. The only things that he can take, are the Torah and Mitzvas that he performs in this world."***

The Meforshim at the beginning of this weeks parsha ask, that when the Riboino Shel Olam told Klal Yisrael to contribute to the building

of the Mishkan, He said to them - **וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה** – ***take*** for Me the contribution; not to give, but to take.



Says the **Beis Halevi**, amongst many, that when Klal Yisrael contributed to the Mishkan, they were taking for themselves. This reminds us that all our acquisitions, all our wealth, and even our talents, are not actually ours. The Riboino Shel Olam has lent them to us, in order that we can learn Torah and do Mitzvas with them in the right way. Then we get them for eternity. This is why the Torah says that we are ***taking*** from the Mishkan, and not ***giving***. This is how Hashem teaches us how to take for ourselves.

When we utilise our tools for Tzedaka, for Ruchniyas, for Avodas Hashem, we transfer them into our spiritual bank for the next world, where they will be ours for eternity.

Every one knows that when King Munbaz was overly generous when it came to giving Tzedaka, during the tears of famine, his family approached him and said, " we don't understand, all your ancestors spent their lives saving all their money, and you are giving it away?" He replied, "no it is not true, the Torah teaches us that when you give Tzedaka it will be yours. So, I am the one that is saving, not them."

Bava Basra 11a– **מַעֲשֶׂה בְּמוֹנְבַּז הַמֶּלֶךְ שֶׁבִּזְבְּזוּ אוֹצְרוֹתָיו וְאוֹצְרוֹת אֲבוֹתָיו בְּשָׁנֵי בַּצּוֹרֶת וַחֲבֵרוֹ עָלָיו אֶחָיו וּבֵית אָבִיו וְאָמְרוּ לוֹ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ גָּנְזוּ וְהוֹסִיפוּ עַל שֶׁל אֲבוֹתָם וְאַתָּה מְבַזְבְּזָם אָמַר לָהֶם אֲבוֹתַי גָּנְזוּ לְמַטָּה וַאֲנִי גָּנַזְתִּי לְמַעְלָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר אֱמֶת מֵאֶרֶץ תִּצְמָח וְצֶדֶק מִשָּׁמַיִם נִשְׁקָף אֲבוֹתַי גָּנְזוּ בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁהַיָּד שׁוֹלֶטֶת בּוֹ וַאֲנִי גָּנַזְתִּי בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁאֵין הַיָּד שׁוֹלֶטֶת בּוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט מְכוֹן כִּסְאֶךָ**

How can you say that he was saving when he was giving it all away? The answer is the same as what the Beis Halevi says. That when a person gives away his money, he is actually contributing to himself, transferring it into his spiritual bank account for the next world.

We have to remember this, because the Mishkan was the residence of the Shechina. And, Chazal tell us that a *shul, botei knesses, or beis haknesses* are all places where the Riboino Shel Olam resides.

I want to take this opportunity, particularly in this week's parsha - Terumah, to thank all those people that generously contributed to the ***Yeshivas Beis Dovid*** in our latest campaign. What a z'chus this is for you, to keep us going, to keep the Torah and the beis Hamedrash running- ***tremendous!*** Those of you that are hearing this for the first time, I personally request that you go to The Chessed Fund and look up Beis Dovid or go to beisdovid.com/donate, to make a small contribution. ***This will really be a contribution to you!***

Please feel free to contact us how to get involved in all of the Yeshiva's initiatives. The yeshiva puts out many publications, whether it being booklets on the Yomim Tovim, or posters for various occasions. The Rosh Hayeshiva gives a daily Halcha shiur, as well as a Daf Yomi Shiur. Please feel free to check them out on torahanytime.com or on his app; Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld. It is available on the AppStore and GooglePlay.

Have a great Shabbos!

"Even if you have all the other virtues, without the virtue of humility you are lacking." ~~ Kallah R.

"The entire purpose of our existence is to overcome our negative habits." - Vilna Gaon

Mystery of the Stolen Car by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach



When a shiny new car driven by an Arab pulled up at the Erez checkpoint on its way to Gaza, the soldiers on duty made their routine inspection to determine that it was not a stolen vehicle. The driver produced the proper documents and the soldiers were about to let him drive into Gaza when they suddenly heard the checkpoint commander order them to wait.

Coming from behind the car the commander approached the Arab and demanded to know whether the vehicle was his. When the suspect insisted on the validity of his documents, he was warned by the commander that if he did not immediately admit to theft his punishment would be more severe. His self-confidence thus shattered, the Arab confessed that he had stolen the car and its documents in Ma'aleh Adumim.

"What are you, sir", asked the surprised soldiers of their commander, "some kind of prophet?" "I'm no prophet," he replied, "but come here behind the car and look at the bumper sticker." What they saw were three Hebrew words that explained everything:

"Ein od milvado"(There is no one else but Him.)

Charity – A199



Yonatan Gold was an artist with a special soul. Do not ask how or why, but Hashem planted within him an artistic talent. In an incredible way, he incorporated verses of Tehillim into his paintings of nature. He would draw little but what he drew was incredible. The verses in his paintings were not only written with an artistic hand, but it was as if the verses were speaking through the pictures and conveying the deep meaning that David HaMelech had intended to convey while writing the verses.

Yonatan knew how to play the tunes of the holy words through his brush and if you listened carefully, you could hear the songs of the Leviim emanating from the pictures.

Yonatan Gold was also an amazing lecturer in Jewish Ethics and he was on the level of "Words that come from the heart, enter the heart". At the end of the lecture, he would raise up the curtain behind him and all those present would see his fabulous paintings spread out before them; on them painted pictures of nature and the songs of David HaMelech intertwined in a beautiful tapestry. Yonatan was a sensitive artist and a man with a heart of gold who knew how to give of himself to others. After his lecture, he usually would speak about his paintings arousing trust in Hashem and love of Hashem to all those who listened.

Yonatan Gold would keep his original paintings in a safe in one of the banks in New York. His soul was stored in these paintings and he could not risk having his soul torn away from him. He, therefore, printed 200 copies of each painting on a screen of silk which was spectacular. He numbered each of these paintings from 1-200.

During one of his lectures in the South of Israel in the month of Elul about 20 years ago, he noticed an elderly woman with a hair covering was looking at his paintings one by one She was very emotional, and he noticed she was murmuring either some prayers or verses of Tehillim.

"I want to buy this painting", the old lady said to Gold, and she pointed at a painting that had the words of Tehillim of פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת־יָדֶךָ וּמַשְׂבִּיעַ לְכָל־ חַי רָצוֹן ***"You open Your hand and satisfy every living thing its desire"***. (Psalm 145)



The painting and the verse enlightened the one looking at the painting about the Mitzvah of Tzedakah – giving charity. The act of giving, the good eye, and the generous heart pulsed through the words and the colours. Charity received an elevated meaningful expression through the painting. Yonatan Gold told her "You are meriting buying the last painting in the charity series and it should be a blessing for you". The old lady took the painting and looked at it a second time. She took out her cheque book and paid for it and then went to sit down on a couch nearby and looked again at the painting.

Suddenly, her head bobbed right and then left, she snorted, paled and then lost consciousness. Mrs. Moran, a nurse, noticed what happened, gave her a light slap in the face, held her tongue so it would not roll back into her throat, and gave her long breaths while everyone around said Tehillim.

When the ambulance arrived, there was nothing for them to do. Mrs. Bluma Meir regained consciousness. The nurse checked her blood pressure, her heart rate, and everything was fine. After a quarter

of an hour, Mrs. Bluma Meir returned to herself. Yonatan Gold was very emotional, and he asked her, "What happened to you?

It seems like the painting…" "Yes", she answered, "Your painting affected me very strongly…look here at the number on your painting on the left side, A199". Gold asked her, "So, what is the big deal? This is the number that I use on my paintings to identify them". Mrs. Meir then showed him her arm and said, "Look here at my arm, I have this same number written on it, A199. I am a Holocaust survivor as you see… I simply was shaken up by the fact that the number on my arm is the same number as the picture I bought and according to you, it is the last one of the series on charity".

"Why did you specifically buy this painting"? Mr. Gold asked her. She replied, "Because the topic of charity is very dear to me. Before the Holocaust, I ran a Gemach that helped orphans set up their home. Even during the Holocaust with all the suffering, I tried very hard to help others in any way I could. Baruch Hashem I was saved, arrived in Israel, and together with my husband we continued to help others in need. Mr. Gold looked at the number on her arm, at the number on the painting and said…" It is unbelievable. The numerical value of the word Tzedakah – charity is 199".

The hand of Divine providence caressed the curls of Mr. Gold as if to say, "You understand my young artist, charity saves from death. It is not just a painting, or a verse, or a number of a prisoner in the concentration camps, but it is the way Hashem works. And behold you and Mrs. Bluma Meir received a message – 199".

Shlomo HaMelech says (Mishlei 21, 21), "One who chases charity and loving kindness will find life, charity and honour". On this verse the Gemara (Bava Batra 9) says, because one who chases charity will find charity. This is to tell you that whoever runs after charity Hashem will help him find money to do charity with.

Jewish Man, What Are Your Deeds?



One of the students of the **Brisker Rebbi Zt'l** came to visit the Rebbe after many years. The Brisker Rebbi asked his student, "What are your deeds?" The student answered, "Baruch Hashem, I am healthy, I am happy with what I have and I am doing business and am very successful". The Rebbi continued to talk with the student and asked again after a few minutes, "So what are your deeds". he student answered again, "Baruch Hashem, I see blessings in my business.

An hour passed and the Rebbi again asked him, "What are your deeds"? The student was surprised and said, "Rebbi, this is the third time you are asking me the same question. I already answered you before".

The Rebbi was distressed, and he told the student, "You did not answer my question. I asked you what your deeds are, and you are telling me about your health, your wealth, and your success, but these are not your deeds. These are things given to you by Hashem.

I am asking you about your deeds: Do you give charity? Do you support the widows and orphans? Is your house open to poor people and those who are having difficulties…?

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.

משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה - מזל אדר דגים



There was a Chossid who would travel to the Heilige Tzadik **Rav Yechezkel of Kozmir ZY"A**. The Minhag of the Tzadik was that when one would give him a Kvittel, he would also give a Pidyon with the Kvittel. [This Inyon is mentioned in Sefer Ohev Yisroel in this weeks Parsha].

This Chossid was not of means to bring a coin as a Pidyon. Therefore, he concluded to bring a fish as a Pidyon. As there were no ways to preserve the fish for the journey in those days, the Chossid concluded to catch a fish and tie it to his boat with his Gartel and such transport it to Kozmir.

Upon arrival to Kozmir, the Chossid was astonished, as his Gartel tore and he no longer had the fish. With no option he made his way to the Rebbes Beis Medrash and sat there reciting Tehillim.

Suddenly, the Gabbai comes from the Rebbes room and tells the Chossid that the Rebbe awaits him. When he enters the Rebbes room, the Rebbe immediately shows him a large fish on his table and tells the Chossid "This is your fish"! That morning the fishermen went fishing and caught a large fish with a Gartel tied to it. The fishermen concluded, "A fish with a Gartel belongs to the Rebbe"!

As the month of Adar is the Mazel of Dogim – Fish, surely in this month it is Mesugal for every person to be bestowed his needs in Ruchniyus and Gashmiyus. - Everyone should be Zoche – Merit to "Catch the fish of their needs." May we all be Zoche to a Yeshuoh Klolis and Protis (general and specific).

Living Jewish - The Upstairs Neighbour



Once, some of the dishes in the Rebbe's home (**The fifth Chabad Rebbe, the Rebbe Rashab**) needed to be koshered. Together with Rebbetzin Shterna Sara, the Rebbe took part in the process, pouring a lot of boiling hot water, which overflowed and spilled all over the floor. "There is no need to pour so much water over the floor!" the Rebbetzin said hastily. "The downstairs neighbour is scary." The Rebbe responded, "of the downstairs you are frightened. But why aren't you scared of the one Above?"

מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמָתִי **"From every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My offering"** (25:2)



It is told in the Gemara that Binyamin HaTzadik was appointed head of a charity. One time a woman came to him in a year of famine and said to him, "Rebbi, sustain me". He said to her, "I swear that there is nothing in the charity funds". She said, "Rebbi, if you do not sustain me, then before you a woman and her seven sons will heaven

forbid die". Binyamin HaTzadik gave her of his own money to sustain them.

After some time, Rebbi Binyamin became sick and was about to die. The ministering angels came before Hashem and said, "Master of the World, You said, whoever saves one Jewish soul, it is as if he saved the whole world. Binyamin HaTzadik saved a woman and her seven children. Should he die in the prime of his life"?! Immediately, they tore up his decree and added another 22 years to his life (Bava Batra 11a).

A Short Message - Rabbi Yitzchok Fingerer



It is well-known that the word "**בשמחה**" - with happiness, shares the same letters as "**מחשבה**" - thoughts. More than anything, our state of mind is what determines our state of happiness.

However, there is another rearrangement of the word **בשמחה** which yields a further level of insight. These same letters also spell **בחמשה** - with five. It is through appreciating our five senses that we infuse our lives with gratitude and happiness. Our ability to smell, taste, touch, hear and see are our most basic gifts, yet our greatest gifts. There can be nothing more precious than that.

B'Rina Yiktzoru - A summary of the points in the Parashah

1. Hashem commands to take from Bnai Yisrael 13 types of offerings for building the Mishkan (25, 1-9).
2. The commandments of making the Ark of the Testimony, and on it the ark cover and the cherubim (10, 22).
3. The commandment of making the table and its vessels – bowls for baking the showbread, spoons for the frankincense, pillars, and the poles between the breads (25, 23-30).
4. The commandment of making the Menorah and its vessels (candles, tongs, and scoops) (31, 40).
5. The commandment of making the tent on the Mishkan, 10 wool curtains whose combined length is 40 amot and 11 curtains made of goat hair whose combined length is 44 amot and from above a covering of ram skins and tachash skins (26, 1-14).
6. The Mitzvah of making the 48 planks of the Mishkan (that serve as the walls of the Mishkan) which were stood up on silver sockets and strengthened by rings on top, and in the middle strengthened by additional bars (26, 15-30).
7. The Mitzvah of making the dividing curtain to differentiate between the holy and the holy of holies, the order of the vessels of the Mishkan, and the screen for the opening of the tent (26, 31-37).
8. The commandment of making the altar from copper for the sacrifices in the courtyard of the tabernacle (27).
9. Instructions on making the courtyard around the Mishkan; surrounded by hangings of linen, on silver pillars, and copper sockets. The length of the courtyard is 100 amot and its width 50 amot and a screen to the courtyard's opening. (27, 9-19).

Location of the Bimah in the Shul

וְשַׂמְתָּ אֶת־הַשֻּׁלְחָן מִחוּץ לַפָּרֹכֶת וְאֶת־הַמְּנֹרָה נֹכַח הַשֻּׁלְחָן

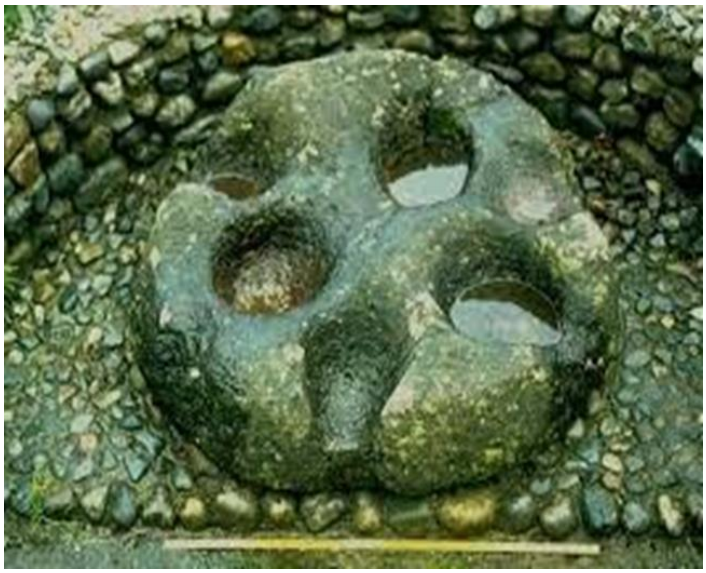
"The Shulchan is in the north removed two and a half amos (cubits) from the northern wall. The menorah is on the south, removed two and a half amos from the southern wall. The Mizbeach Hazahav was placed opposite the space between the Shulchan and the Menorah" (Rashi based on Yoma 33b)



One of the well-known controversies between the Neologs and the traditionalists at the inception of the Haskalah era was about the location of the bimah in the shul.

The Chasam Sofer came out very strongly against those who dared to move the bimah to the front of the shul, which was like the custom of the gentiles. He even cited a winning proof against them from the words of Chazal that the Mizbeach Hazahav stood in the middle of the Heichal opposite the space between the Shulchan and the Menorah. The bimah is opposite the Mizbeach, and it is upon it that we read the parshiyos of the Korbanos and the Ketores, and they circle it on Sukkos like the hakafos done around the Mizbeach. Therefore, just like the Mizbeach was not placed near the aron kodesh, the bimah should also not be placed at the front of the shul, near the aron kodesh.

Essential Rabbi Nachman - Water wears away stone



Water wears away stone Even if many days and years pass and it seems as if you have accomplished nothing with your prayers and conversations with God, don't give up! Every single word makes an impression. אֲבָנִים שָׁחֲקוּ מַיִם **"*Water wears away stone*"** (Job 14: 19).

It may seem that water dripping on hard stone could not make any impression, yet when water drips on stone continuously for many years, it can literally wear a hole in the stone.

We actually see this. Even if your heart is like stone and it seems that your words of prayer are making no impression at all, still, as the days and years pass, your heart of stone will also be softened. For: *"Water wears away stone"*. (*Sichot Haran #234)*

Jewish Education Program Queens - Heaven Help You!

A man had heard that the **Chozeh of Lublin** was a very holy man and could tell what a person was thinking by looking at him. Sceptical, he asked the Chozeh if he knew what he had davened for. The Chozeh told him that had petitioned Hashem to allow him to have more free time to learn Torah. Apparently, he had very little free time to learn Torah. Even the free time that he did have was wrought with the challenge of being very tired from a long day at work.

This man had learned Torah for many years. Now he had to support a family and found that his time to learn Torah was very limited. The young man was astounded that the Chozeh knew what he had davened

for. He asked the Chozeh what Heaven's response was, to his prayers.

The Chozeh said that the angels laughed. Hashem could easily send money to this young man enabling him to spend more time learning. However, that was not what Hashem wanted. What Hashem wanted was to see this man's determination to learn despite the less than optimum conditions. What was precious in Hashem's eyes was that this man learned as much as he was able to despite his challenges.

The Parsha discusses the utensils in the Mishkan. The Aron, the Menorah and the Mizbayach Haketores represented the three crowns that were given to the Jewish People. As such, each was constructed with a golden crown around it. The crowns were the Crown of Torah, the Crown of Kingship, and the Crown of Priesthood. The Crown of Priesthood was exclusively for the kohanim and the Crown of Kingship was for the tribe of Yehudah, for King David and his offspring. The Crown of Torah is available for every single Jew. Whoever wants to, can acquire the Crown of Torah. A person who learns Torah can feel a sense of spirituality and holiness, a connection to Hashem. However, learning Torah may not come easily to some people.

The Sfas Emes gives an answer for those people. One of the vessels in the Mishkan was the Menorah. The Menorah had a very intricate design. Hashem showed Moshe how to make it. Moshe had such difficulty understanding what to do that Hashem told him to throw a large gold ingot into the fire and the Menorah would be made by itself, miraculously.

The Sfas Emes questions, If the Menorah was going to be made miraculously, why was it necessary for Hashem to first show Moshe how to make it? The Sfas Emes says that this teaches us a very important lesson. When a person tries as hard as he can to do a mitzvah but cannot do any more, then he will get siyata dishmaya and Hashem will help him complete it.

The Talmud (Shabbos 104A) states that if a person tries to purify himself, Hashem will assist him to succeed. Not every person is able to perform every mitzvah to perfection. However, if he tries his utmost, Hashem will assist him.

The Parsha also lists all the items that Moshe collected from the Jewish People for the construction of the Mishkan. The last items that were mentioned were the precious stones that were placed in the Choshen (the breastplate of the Kohain Gadol).



The Ohr HaChaim said that these precious stones were the most valuable of all the materials that were collected. If so, why were they mentioned last? The Ohr HaChaim gives three answers. The last answer is based on the Talmud (Yuma 75A) that says that these precious stones fell from the sky, together with the Manna. Targum Yonassan ben Uziel (Shmos 35:28) says that the Pillar of Cloud (that guided the Jews during the daytime) brought these stones from the Pishon River, one of the rivers that flowed from Gan Eden. The Ohr HaChaim says, all the other items that were donated to the Mishkan were acquired with effort and donated at a cost to the owner. However, these precious stones were acquired with no effort and at no cost. Therefore, they were not as precious to Hashem as the other gifts. Therefore, they were written last.

We see from this, that what Hashem truly values is our effort. If we try our utmost in the performance of a mitzvah, Hashem will help us succeed!

The Secret of Reb Amram Blau's Miraculous Recovery By Dovid Hoffman (*Torah Tavlin.*)



R' Gamliel Rabinowitz shlit'a recounts an amazing story that occurred during the time that Arik Sharon was in a coma. He relates that his own mechutan, Reb Amram Blau, an active member of one of the premium Vaad Hakashrus agencies in Jerusalem, fell ill and he too, suffered a brain haemorrhage which put him into a vegetative coma. Doctors used life-saving measures to stabilize him, but he hovered between life and death for many months. His family was constantly at his bedside, saying Tehillim and learning as a zechus for hum, but doctors were not optimistic and had no idea if he would ever regain consciousness, or brain function.

But the A-mighty tends to His righteous adherents and one fine day, Reb Amram suddenly opened his eyes and woke from his vegetative stupor. His family laughed and cried, and doctors came running to witness the miracle patient who suddenly woke from a coma, seemingly without rhyme or reason.

Extensive tests were performed on the patient and after a few short weeks, Reb Amram was released from the hospital with a clean bill of health. He had suffered no long term effects and his cognitive skills were as sharp as before he took ill. It truly was a miracle.

One day, Reb Amram received a phone call from Omri and Gilad Sharon, the two sons of Ariel Sharon. A Sharon family member got on the phone and explained that their father, the Prime Minister, is lying in a coma in Sheba Medical Centre, for quite a few years already, and the doctors have tried just about every medical procedure to save him. Nothing has worked. The family hired some

of the best doctors in the world to see if there's anything to do. As of now, there's no cure in sight.

The family member finally got to the point. Someone had told them about Rabbi Blau and how he was in a vegetative coma for months, with the same diagnosis as their father. And suddenly, he woke up from the coma and his health has been totally restored. They were requesting a meeting to possibly learn what forms of treatment were done to bring him back from the dead; would he teach them the "secret" formula that had allowed him to beat the odds and regain his health? They were prepared to pay whatever he asks to help them in their quest for the cure.

Name your price, they said, we beg you to help us. Reb Amram smiled inwardly and replied, "I am sorry to hear about your father and the suffering your family is going through. From a medical standpoint, I cannot imagine that more was done for me than for your father. In fact, no doubt, you have done much more to cure your father than was done for me."

There was a pause at the other end. "So you're saying you don't know? It was a miracle?" Reb Amram replied, "It was better than a miracle. Bezras Hashem Yisborach, I have been blessed with many children and over one hundred grand and great-grandchildren. All of them are shomer Torah and mitzvos. Each and every one of them spent every day of my illness davening to Hashem & performing acts of goodness as a zechus for my recovery. Their actions and their prayers not only stormed the heavens, but it broke through the heavenly gates! That's the whole 'secret' - that's the 'miracle.' If you can somehow do that, maybe you can invoke Divine mercy and merit a miracle too!"

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.

In Aaron's Rings

One day about two-hundred years ago, for reasons unknown, the son of a wealthy, Egyptian magnate disappeared from his lavish abode, leaving behind his father, mother, and two brothers. There was some speculation that he had been kidnapped, but no ransom note was ever delivered. Others were sure he had been murdered, yet his body was never found. Still others thought he felt cramped by his family's lifestyle, and had gone to seek his own fortune, but he was never sighted by anyone anywhere.

The story was popular conversation for many years, but as is often the case, eventually grew old, and was more-or-less forgotten. At least until the father died, leaving behind a substantial inheritance for his remaining sons.

It was not long after his death that a youngish man appeared, claiming to be the man's long-lost son. Of course, he felt he was entitled to his portion of the inheritance. Astonishingly, he was able to answer exceptionally detailed questions about the appearance of his childhood home, his 'parents' and 'siblings', and his upbringing. Try as they might, they were simply unable to stump him. He claimed to have been wandering for the past thirty years, which he said explained why he no longer looked even remotely like what everyone remembered, including his 'brothers.' Hearing that his parents had passed away, it was natural that he would come to claim his part of the family riches.

Despite his inexplicably intimate knowledge about the minutest details of their family life and history, the other two brothers were adamant in their protestations—this man was not their brother! They offered him a tidy sum of money just to be rid of him, but he stubbornly refused. He was their brother, he said, and he wanted no less than his portion of the inheritance. Eventually, word of their feud reached the Sultan of Egypt. Seeing as they could not reach an agreement, the Sultan himself consented to listen to both side's

claims in his private court and render judgment. The two brothers and the claimant agreed that the Sultan's word would be binding and final.

"Tell me something," the Sultan asked, "where were you for thirty years that you never even sent a letter to your parents telling them of your whereabouts?"

He was not ill-prepared. He claimed to have been taken captive in India. His captors did not allow him to have any communication with the outside world, and thus it was not possible for him to make contact.

For many days, the Sultan tried to get to the bottom of things—to find a hole either in the claim of the brothers, or in the testimony and memories of the 'long-lost brother.' In the end, he threw up his arms in frustration, unable to render a ruling.

"Most exalted master," the vice-Sultan chimed in, "far be it from me to intercede, but in the annals of our history, in such circumstances, it has been the way of your predecessors to engage the services of a Jew. The Jews are a wise nation and have often been instrumental in helping to bring some of the most difficult cases to a satisfactory conclusion."

The Sultan was intrigued. "Which Jew do you suggest I use?" "That's the strange thing. Protocol says you just send out a clerk to bring the first Jew he finds on the street, no matter who it is. If precedent is to be trusted, he will somehow help the Sultan to render judgment."

"If that's so," ordered the Sultan, "go find me a Jew!" Aaron Perdo was a quiet, Jewish, Egyptian goldsmith. For half-a-day he would practice his trade; the rest of his day was spent studying Torah in the local Beis HaMidrash.

This morning, he had awoken remembering the strangest dream. In his dream, he found himself in the most spectacular shul, the likes

of which he had never seen. It was furnished as richly and as lavishly as a king would a palace. The shul was packed with people, and the Torah was being read. Aaron was called to the Torah and ascended the bimah. He found the sefer Torah open to parshas Terumah. The chazzan began reading: "Be-tab'os aharon yi'hiyu habadim, the sticks must be in the rings of the Ark," but instead of reading ha-aron/the Ark, the chazzan read aaron, which sounds like the name Aaron.

R' Aaron (Perdo) corrected the chazzan. He read the verse again, but again he read it, Aaron. This was the end of R' Aaron's enigmatic dream; he had no idea what it meant. His dream gave him no rest: he thought about his dream during prayer and was still thinking about it as he arrived at his jeweller's shop, where an old woman sat impatiently waiting for him to open. Her tattered clothing bespoke poverty—not the type of woman that usually frequented his place.



When it became clear she was eyeing the most expensive rings, R' Aaron felt he had to ask: "The rings you are looking at are very expensive," he said. "Are you sure you have the money to pay for them?" "I don't today," she confessed, "but tomorrow I will. Tomorrow I will become a wealthy woman. Right now, my dear son is amid a very important court case.

Tomorrow, he promised me, the case will be decided in his favour. And he said that to celebrate, I can buy myself any ring I want!" R' Aaron was less than enchanted with her tall tale. He was glad when she finished browsing and left. Soon after, a wealthy man came in the store and asked if R' Aaron could bring some rings to his home for his wife to choose from. It was on the way to the rich man's home that R' Aaron was stopped by the court clerk and ordered in the name of the Sultan to appear in the Sultan's palace.

As R' Aaron ascended the polished marble stairs and got his first glimpse of the palace, it hit him: this had been the spectacular building that was the shul in his dream. It was just that in the place where the bimah had been, the Sultan sat on his magnificent throne. In measured words, the Sultan conveyed the main arguments of both sides, and why he was having an impossible time bringing the case to resolution. "So, R' Aaron—can you solve the mystery?"

Though he trembled inside, R' Aaron knew he could. He turned to the claimed 'missing son.' "Tell me—you claim to be the missing son, but isn't your last name really such-and-such? Isn't your mother still alive? In fact, I'll even describe how she looks…" R' Aaron began describing the pauper woman who had come to his store than morning. His shock at R' Aaron's words, and the confidence with which they were spoken, caused the man to collapse on the spot.

It was obvious to the Sultan, and to everyone present, that he had just been caught as his ruse. He was dealt with accordingly, after which everyone's attention turned to R' Aaron and his brilliant and instantaneous resolution which caught them all so off-guard. How did he know that woman was his mother, they asked?

R' Aaron told them about the dream he had that night. "As soon as you told me about the man's claims," he said, "I understood the meaning of the misread verse. Be-tab'os Aaron—in Aaron's rings, that's me, yi'hiyu ha- badim—the badim, or liars (badim in Hebrew can mean poles but it can also mean liars) will be found. I thought

about the woman who came into my store looking for a ring—a gift from her soon to-be-rich son and realized right away who the liar was!"

"With a Torah like that," the Sultan was heard to remark as R' Aaron too his leave, "it's no wonder the Jews are so smart!"

My Grandfather: Patriot & Traitor by Rabbi Ezra Adler



My maternal grandfather, JA Samuels, was a successful trader in precious metals, who helped to found the commodities exchange in New York City. Because of his wealth and influence, he was also very involved with trying to save Jewish lives during the Holocaust, including travelling with esteemed rabbis on Shabbos in an effort to raise money for this purpose. My grandfather's business, like most, was disrupted by the depression years, and later, the outbreak of World War II. On 9 December 1941, my grandfather unexpectedly received a call from the Japanese Consulate in New York. They wanted to place a huge order for various precious metals that they urgently required, an order which would have brought a very large profit to my grandfather in those difficult financial times.

What made the call rather unusual was its timing. Just two days earlier, on 7 December 1941, "a date that will live in infamy", in a

stunning surprise attack, the Japanese Navy had bombed Pearl Harbor, the United States naval base located in Hawaii, causing massive destruction of both life and property and thrusting the United States into World War II. Over 2, 400 Americans were killed and close to 1, 200 were wounded because of the attack.



The very next day, 8 December 1941, the United States declared war on Japan. In spite of the much-needed income, my grandfather told the Japanese Consulate that he was unwilling to do business with them. Despite the much-needed income, without any hesitation my grandfather told the Japanese Consulate that he was unwilling to do business with them, querying how, after President Franklin D Roosevelt had declared war on Japan, he, a citizen of the United States, could do business with the enemy.

The Consulate responded that the US government had given them 30 days to leave, thus making such a deal entirely legal. My grandfather, in turn, responded that, even if this was technically the case, it was almost certainly not what the government had intended by providing such a generous grace period, which was likely only done for them to conclude their outstanding business and move things out – not for them to start up new business.

Accordingly, he reiterated his position, firmly stating he would not do any business with them and proceeded to hang up the phone. I can only imagine the thoughts that went through my grandfather's mind after he put down the receiver. After all, with the country now at war and only beginning to emerge from the many difficult years

of economic depression, money was already very tight and he no doubt thought hard about the many Jewish lives that such a sum could have helped save. And that was the end of it. Or so my grandfather thought.

Unbeknownst to him, the US government had started listening to all the calls going in and out of the Japanese Consulate and had overheard his entire conversation. Imagine his surprise when, only a few hours later, he received a call informing him of this and instructing him to come to the White House for an urgent, private meeting with President Roosevelt, who wanted to thank him personally, as well as formally recognize his exemplary actions.

Although he was an observant Jew, like many religious Jews of that era, my grandfather never wore a yarmulke at work. For his meeting with the president, however, he felt he needed to make an exception, as he wasn't just representing himself, but every Jew – so he purposely donned his yarmulke for the meeting.

In appreciation for my grandfather's unwavering patriotism, President Roosevelt promised that, henceforth, any platinum which the government might need during the war would be purchased exclusively from him.

My grandfather may have lost out on some material reward from the deal he had refused to make with the Japanese, but he more than made up for it with the spiritual reward he reaped from the tremendous Kiddush Hashem that he created. When it came to saving Jewish lives, he didn't let any laws stand in his way and was even willing to give up his life if necessary.

As much as my grandfather's patriotism couldn't be bought, it was eventually trumped by his loyalty to his people. When it came to saving Jewish lives, he didn't let any laws stand in his way and was even willing to give up his life if necessary. When the danger to the Jews in Europe became clear, he channelled all of his efforts into getting them to America.



My grandfather worked hand-in-hand, from a private office in his house, with **Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl, z"l,** who desperately tried to save Hungarian Jewry, including, at one point, begging the Allies to bomb the train tracks leading to Auschwitz. Anyone who wanted to immigrate to America not only needed money and means to get there, but in order to secure a visa, required a sponsor, who was required to complete an affidavit stating that he accepted financial responsibility for the applicant.

My grandfather spent an enormous amount of time and money obtaining the proper documentation for each person he sponsored, and he sponsored hundreds of individuals, including my father's family. Unfortunately, not every person wanted to, or could, come. Eventually though, the immigration office decided that, after having completed the forms to sponsor several hundred applicants, my grandfather could not be allowed to sponsor anyone further. Left without any other option, my grandfather made the extremely difficult decision to hire someone to make a forged stamp and letterhead for him.

With these tools in hand, he started sending out thousands of forged affidavits to those who needed them, knowing full well that this was an act of treason that could earn him the death penalty. It wasn't until people actually started trying to enter into the country using these forged documents that the government took note of what was happening and began to investigate.

My grandfather was subsequently arrested and put on trial. The day of the trial came, and my grandfather braced himself for the worst. As the prosecutor began presenting his case, family legend has it that the judge interjected and said to the prosecutor, "If you had seen today's papers you would know that that they just reported all of the horrific things that the Nazis have been doing to the Jews in the concentration camps. How can you call what this man did treason? This was an incredibly brave and humanitarian act!" With that, the judge dismissed the trial, and my grandfather was released.

Close to a decade later, my grandfather travelled by ship to bury his father in England next to his mother, who had died and been buried there many years earlier. News of his trip made the local papers and, when the ship he was travelling on arrived at the dock, he was quite surprised to be greeted by a crowd numbering in the hundreds. They had all come out to meet him and to thank him for saving their lives. Although they hadn't made it quite as far as America, the affidavits he had sent to them had made it possible for them to escape from the death sentence they surely faced in Europe.

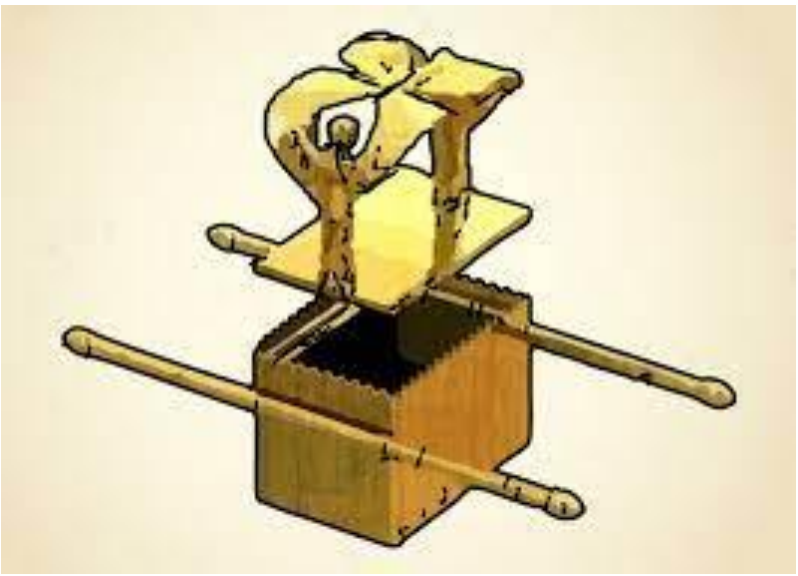
Although we knew some of the details of the work that my grandfather had done, the real scope and impact of his actions didn't really sink in until after he had passed away. From what seemed to be out of nowhere, hundreds upon hundreds of people turned up at the funeral and then at the shiva house to pay their respects to this man who had saved their lives and the lives of their families.

Shortly after, my brother discovered among our grandfather's papers some of the lists of the many names to which he had sent affidavits, both real and forged. My grandfather taught us by his living example that sometimes circumstances require us to behave in a way that upholds the spirit of the law, even if our actions wouldn't really be in violation of the letter of the law. But he also taught us that sometimes, circumstances require us to recognize there's a

higher law than the one written by man, and we have to do everything in our power to uphold it. My grandfather knew the difference and was willing to pay the ultimate price if it came to it.

Revach L'Neshama - Chizkuni - Long Poles Are Big Obstacles

בְּטַבְּעֹת הָאָרֹן יִהְיוּ הַבַּדִּים לֹא יָסֻרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ 25:15



It is a Lav (negative commandment) to remove the poles from the Aaron. Chizkuni asks, why do we only find this prohibition by the Aaron and not by the other vessels that also had poles - Shulchan, Mizbayach HaZahav and Mizbayach HaNichoshes?

Chizkuni answers, the poles were a hindrance and a stumbling block to have around when the Mishkan was stationary. They simply took up too much room. Therefore it would be best to have them removed at the time of encampment. However, since the Aaron was in the Kodesh HaKadoshim - a place that was only accessed once a year by the Kohen Gadal; it really wasn't in anybody's way. Therefore the Torah says specifically by the poles of the Aaron - "Do not remove them".

Whenever feeling downcast, each person should vitally remember, "For my sake, the entire world was created." - Baal Shem Tov

Revach L'Neshama – Reb Yeruchom Levovitz Does A Goral HaGra & Stays In The Mir

The Daas Chochma UMussar quotes a letter from Reb Yeruchom. Reb Yeruchom writes that he wanted to leave the Mir Yeshiva (where he was the legendary Mashgiach) to go to live Kelm. He faced all sorts of obstacles that were clearly orchestrated from Shamayim.



He decided to perform a Goral HaGra to determine his path. He came to a pasuk that shook him deeply. **בְּטַבְּעֹת הָאָרֹן יִהְיוּ הַבַּדִּים לֹא יָסֻרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ** ***the poles of the Aron should remain in their rings and not be removed*** (Truma 25:15).

Unlike the other Keilim in the Mishkan, the Torah says the poles of the Aron must remain fixed in their place even if the Bnei Yisroel was not travelling.

Reb Yeruchom wrote that this pasuk was revealed to him, not because of his own just actions but rather B'zchus HaRabim. The lesson he learned is that the poles are the people who help carry the torch of Torah. Those people should never leave their position just like the poles cannot leave the Aron.

From then on, said Rav Yeruchom, even when I had to leave Yeshiva for a short time, I had many hesitations.

"If all men were fools, there would be no one left to realize it." ~~ Midrash, Temurah.

Revach L'Neshama – Rav Chaim Kanievsky - Faces Shining In The Dark

One of the items donated to the Mishkan was "Shemen LaMaor", oil for light. Interestingly in Parshas Truma (25:6) it says the word LaMaor missing the letter "Vav", but in Vayakhel (35:8) it says it with the letter Vav. Why?

Rav Chaim Kanievsky answers that when the Bnei Yisroel said Na'aseh V'Nishma 600,000 malachim came down and placed two crowns on their heads. After they did the Chait HaEigel, 1.2 million malachim came and removed them. The medrash says that Moshe took all of them. These crowns were the source of the light emanating from Moshe's face. Before Chait HaEigel every Jew had that light emanating from him because of his crown. In Parshas Truma, since it was after Matan Torah, the Bnei Yisroel did not really need a light in the Mishkan because a person's shine would light up the way. Therefore, the word Maor to light, up was missing a Vav, since light was not necessary. However, in Parshas Vayakhel after they lost their crowns, they need the light of the Mishkan and the word Maor is spelled with the missing Vav.

Vedibarta Bam - A Compilation of Torah Insights in Question & Answer Format By Moshe Bogomilsky

"ויקחו לי תרומה" - *"Let them take for Me an offering."* (25:2)

QUESTION: According to Rashi, the word "li" teaches "lishmi" — "for My name." What is the connection between terumah and Hashem's name?

ANSWER: The four-lettered name of Hashem is spelled י-ה-ו-ה and it teaches the correct manner of offering *tzedakah*. The י represents the coin being given. The ה is the hand (five fingers) giving the coin. The ו is the poor man stretching out his hand to

receive the coin, and the final ה is the receiving hand. However, if a poor man first stretches his hand out and asks for *tzedakah*, the name of Hashem is not in order (ה,ו,ה,י).

Rashi is teaching us that the proper way to give tzedakah is "lishmi" — in the order of the spelling of My Name. (**של"ה**)

Vedibarta Bam

"מן הכפרת תעשו את הכרבים על שני קצותיו" ***"From the Ark-cover you shall make the keruvim on its two ends."*** **(25:19)**

QUESTION: The *keruvim* were to be hammered out simultaneously with the making of the Ark-cover (Rashi). Why weren't they made separately and attached afterwards to the cover?

ANSWER: The *keruvim* had the faces of small children (Rashi). They were placed on the cover, gazing down at the Ark indicating that that Jewish children should be exposed to and directed to the teachings of the Torah.

A father and mother of a two-year-old child once argued about when they should begin the Torah education of their child. The father contended that when the child reached school age, they would send him to *yeshivah*. The mother argued that they should wait until he was more mature. Unable to resolve their argument, they agreed to consult a Rabbi. After listening to them, the Rabbi inquired, "How old is your child?" They responded, "Two years old." The Rabbi looked at them and said, "I regret to tell you that you are already two years late."

The Torah is teaching us that as soon as the child is born, there should be no delay, and he should immediately be given a Torah education and raised in a Torah-true environment. Do not wait to "attach" him at some later date. **(לקוטי בתר לקוטי מהדו"ת)**

Vedibarta Bam

"וזאת התרומה אשר תקחו מאתם זהב וכסף ונחשת"
***"And this is the offering you shall take from them: gold and silver and copper."* (25:3)**



QUESTION: Why is the most valuable metal, gold, called *"zahav"* (**זהב**), the cheaper metal, silver, named *"kesef"* (**כסף**), and the least valuable metal, copper, called *"nechoshet"* (**נחשת**)?

ANSWER: The word "**זהב**" is an acronym for **זֶה הַנּוֹתֵן בְּרִיא** — one who gives his contribution while in good health. "**כסף**" is an acronym for **כְּשִׁישׁ סַכָּנַת פַּחַד** — contributing due to fear caused by danger. "**נחשת**" is an acronym for **נְתִינַת חוֹלֶה שֶׁאָמַר תְּנוּ** — a severely ill person who directs his family to give. He is unfortunately very sick and unable to give himself, but he instructs his family to give for him after he passes on.

In regard to giving *tzedakah* it is important not *what* one gives, but *how* one gives. Giving *tzedakah* just for the sake of the *mitzvah* and without any ulterior motive is similar to gold. When one is motivated by deep fear and gives money to diminish his fears, it is of lesser significance and considered like silver. To bequeath charity is the lowest level of giving charity and therefore equivalent to copper.(**ר' מאיר מפרימישלאן**)

Vedibarta Bam

"ועשו ארון" - *"And they shall make an Ark."* (25:10)

QUESTION: Why for all the vessels made for the *Mishkan* such as the table, *menorah,* etc. does the Torah command in a singular form — "*ve'asita*" — "And you shall make," while only for the Ark and *eifod* (apron) does it say, "*ve'asu*" — "And *they* shall make?" (28:6)

ANSWER: In the Torah there are 613 *mitzvot*. Some *mitzvot* can only be performed by *Kohanim,* others only by *Levi'im* and others only by *Yisra'eilim.* Since it is impossible for a single Jew to fulfil all 613 *mitzvot,* the making of the Ark, which represents Torah, is commanded in the plural. (**אור החיים**)

Vedibarta Bam

"ויקחו לי תרומה" *"Let them take for Me an offering."* (25:2)

QUESTION: The people *gave* donations to the building of the *Mishkan*. Why does it not say "*veyitnu*" — "and they should *give*"?

ANSWER: When a Jew gives *tzedakah* he is not only giving but also receiving, because when the poor man accepts the *tzedakah,* the giver receives a *zechut* for the *mitzvah,* through which he will get back from Hashem ten times as much as he gave. Regarding the words "*Aseir te'aseir*" — "You shall surely tithe," (*Devarim* 14:22) the *Gemara* (*Ta'anit* 9a) says, "*Aseir bishevil shetitasheir*" — "By giving ten percent to *tzedakah,* you will become rich."

Thus, by giving for the *Mishkan,* the Jews were "taking" from Hashem much more than they actually gave. (**אפריון**)

Vedibarta Bam

ועשו ארון עצי שטים אמתים וחצי ארכו ואמה וחצי רחבו ואמה וחצי קמתו
***"They shall make an Ark 2 1/2 cubits in length, 1 1/2 cubits in width, and 1 1/2 cubits in height."* (25:10)**



QUESTION: Why did all the measurements of the Ark include fractions?

ANSWER: The Ark, which contained in it the Tablets, represents Torah study. The measurements teach that people who learn Torah must always bear in mind that regardless of how much they learn, they do not master it all. The extent of their knowledge is only a fraction of the vast teachings and depth of the Torah. (**כלי יקר**)

It is also for this reason that the first page of every *Gemara* is *daf beit* and not *daf alef*. This reminds the Torah student not to arrogantly think that he has mastered it, for he still lacks knowledge of the first page.

"ועשית שלחן עצי שטים אמתים ארכו ואמה רחבו ואמה וחצי קמתו"
***"You shall make a table of acacia wood two cubits long, one cubit wide, and one cubit and a half in height."* (25:23)**

QUESTION: Why was the width of the table less than the height?

ANSWER: Inviting guests and feeding the needy is highly commendable. Unfortunately, often people go overboard on lavish table expenses in order to make an impression. Their extravagance creates huge debts and may be at the expense of giving *tzedakah* or paying tuition. The Torah teaches us that the width (*"breitkeit"* — expansiveness) of one's table should not exceed one's "material height." (**פון אונזער אלטען אוצר**)

Vedibarta Bam



ושה קנים יצאים מצדיה שלשה קני מנרה מצדה האחד ושלשה קני מנרה מצדה השני ***"And six branches going out of its sides; three branches of the menorah out of its one side, and three branches of the menorah out of its other side."*** **(25:32)**

QUESTION: In what position were the branches and cups?

ANSWER: The Rambam wrote a commentary on *mishnayot* in Arabic which was recently newly translated to Hebrew in the Kapach Edition. This newer, more precise translation includes the Rambam's own drawing of the *menorah (Menachot* 3:7). Evidently, the branches *(kanim)* of the *menorah* were not curved like semi-circles, but instead were straight and extended diagonally upwards. (Rashi too is of this opinion.) The cups *(gevi'im)* were on the branches for beauty and were inverted with the wide end downward.

* * *

The popular image of the *menorah* with curved branches stems from the *menorah* which is engraved on the Arch of Titus in Rome. Titus was the Roman general who conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the second *Beit Hamikdash*. It was customary in those days to build a special gate through which the victorious soldiers would enter upon returning to their homeland.

On the Arch are engraved various scenes to commemorate the victory and included is the *menorah* which he defiled. The craftsmen made the *menorah* according to a general idea of how it looked. However, according to the Rambam the *menorah* on the Arch is an

inaccurate replica of the one in the *Beit Hamikdash*. (**לקוטי שיחות חכ"א**)

Some sources state that the cups were put with the wide end upwards in order to catch any dripping oil. (**חזקוני**)

Vedibarta Bam

***"ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם" "They shall make for Me a Mishkan and I will dwell among them."* (25:8)**

QUESTION: Since, they were building the *Mishkan* (tabernacle) and not the *Beit Hamikdash,* should it not have said "*ve'asu li Mishkan*"? Furthermore, it should have said "*betocho*" — "in it" — instead of "*betocham*" — "in them"?

ANSWER: The first *Beit Hamikdash* lasted 410 years, and the second *Beit Hamikdash* 420 years. This *pasuk* is hinting at this by saying "*ve'asu li Mikdash*" — "They shall make for Me a *Beit Hamikdash.*" The word "*veshachanti*" (**ושכנתי**) — "and I will rest" — can be read as two words: "**ושכן**" — "and I will rest [in it]" — — **ת"י** **410** years (**10** = **י**, **400** = **ת**). The word "**ושכנתי**" can also be rearranged to read "**ושני ת"כ**" — "and the second, 420."

Since the *pasuk* is alluding to Hashem's dwelling in the first and second *Beit Hamikdash,* it says "*betocham*" — "in them."(**בעל הטורים**)

Vedibarta Bam

***"ועשית את הקרשים למשכן" - "And you shall make the boards for the Mishkan."* (26:15)**

QUESTION: The boards for the *Mishkan* were made of acacia wood from trees which Yaakov planted in Egypt and instructed his children to take with them upon leaving (Rashi).

These boards were over 200 years old. Why didn't the Jews send messengers to a nearby country to buy fresh wood?

ANSWER: In every generation it is the goal of young people to construct their own homes. Often, the younger generation becomes accustomed to modern ideas. To demonstrate their so-called progress, they bring their modern ideas into their homes and in so doing may detach themselves from the ways of Torah.

By mentioning the antique boards prepared by Yaakov, the Torah teaches us that a true Jewish home should reflect the "styles" i.e. the tradition and heritage, of our forefathers. Such a home is a miniature Sanctuary in which Hashem desires to dwell.

L'Maaseh… A Tale to Remember



Rav Yaakov Yitzchak Horowitz, the *Chozeh* of Lublin, always kept an open house for guests. He insisted on personally serving his guests, all of whom were quite diverse from each other. One day, a poor man came to the house and the *Chozeh* happily served him a meal.

When the guest had finished eating, the Rav cleared the table and brought the empty plate into the kitchen. The poor man was astounded and said, "Rebbe, I understand that you occupy yourself with the mitzvah of *Hachnasas Orchim*, but why do you also clear the table? Don't you have servants in the house to do that?" The Rav smiled and answered, "In the *Mishkan* and *Bais HaMikdash*, there were jobs to remove the ashes from the top of the *Mizbei'ach*. This was a cleaning job, yet the *Kohanim* were eager to carry them out! Even removing the shovel and fire-pan from the

Kodesh HaKodashim on Yom Kippur was an honourable *avodah* for the *Kohein Gadol*!

We can learn from this that when a mitzvah includes less glamorous aspects— like cleaning, or clearing a table, it too is an honourable *avodah*, and is equally a part of the mitzvah as well."

Parshah Thoughts - Ideas and reflections by *Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn*

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם *'They should make for Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell within them.'* (25:8)

Why does the Torah use the word '*b'socham*'— 'within them', as opposed to '*bah*' or '*b'sochah*"— 'in it'?

The *Ohr HaChaim* explains a deeper meaning with this choice of words because '*b'socham*' adds an extra point. A person has the ability of establishing a place where Hashem will dwell and wherever in one's life, one will let Hashem into— is considered '*v'shachanti b'socham*'— '*and I will dwell within them*'.

This is an essential point to keep in mind, to try our best that our actions should be for the sake of Hashem and to keep Him constantly in our lives.

Parshah Thoughts - Ideas and reflections by *Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn*

Why does the building of the *Mishkan* follow immediately after receiving the Torah? The *Medrash* explains this with a parable. A king had an only daughter who was married off to a prince. The king's new son-in-law now wished to take his wife home, but the king was hesitant, and he explained his predicament. "On the one hand she is my only daughter, and I can't part from her, but, on the other hand,

you are her husband and I can't stop you from taking her with you. Therefore, I will ask of you a favour. Anywhere that you will go, please set aside a room for me to be able to live in, because I can't leave my daughter."

This is what Hashem told *Bnei Yisrael*, "I gave you the Torah and it is yours to keep. However, I can't leave it and I also can't tell you not to take it. Therefore, wherever you go, make for Me one house to be able to live in." This is the concept of Hashem commanding us to build a *Mishkan* right after we received the Torah on *Har Sinai*.

Shabbos Treasures - The precious gift of Shabbos

The *Mishnah Brurah* (250:2) writes that we should buy special things specifically for Shabbos, and we should keep Shabbos in mind when we buy it. The *Gemara* (*Beitzah* 16a) teaches that Hashem pays us back for all our Shabbos expenses.

Tosafos explain that when we go shopping for Shabbos, it is as if Hashem is telling us to borrow *from Him*, and spend money on Hashem's account. Hashem will surely pay it back!

L'Maaseh… A Tale to Remember

Rav Chaim Halberstam of Sanz, was approaching a busy train station in Vienna surrounded by his *Chasidim*. Suddenly he stopped because he heard the sound of a young girl crying and sent over one of his students to see what was troubling her. The *Chasid* saw that she was well dressed, and her eyes were red from crying for a long time. After a few questions, he learned that she was the daughter of a non-Jewish minister and that she was supposed to travel home by train, but her money had been stolen, and now she was stranded. She had been sitting there crying without anyone paying any

attention to her. She began to cry again, "What will I do now? How will I get home?"

The *Chasid* went back to Rav Chaim Halberstam and explained why she was crying. Immediately, Rav Chaim gave some money to his *Chasid* and said, "Give this to the girl and tell her that Rabbiner Halberstam sent her the money." The *Chasid* did as instructed, and the girl happily accepted the money as she wiped away her tears.



Years later, R' Shmuel, a *Sanzer Chasid*, came to visit Rav Chaim Halberstam seeking his advice. R' Shmuel owned a thriving boot factory and one of his clients was the Hungarian army. The army had recently ordered a large supply of boots for the approaching winter, and a jealous non-Jewish competitor who was looking to steal the client, told the army general that R' Shmuel's boots were made of inferior materials and R' Shmuel was a liar and a thief, just like the rest of the Jews!

The general was willing to accept these anti-Semitic charges and informed the Hungarian government. R' Shmuel was now facing serious charges and imprisonment. Rav Chaim listened and told R' Shmuel, "Don't worry at all. Go to the Justice Minister in Lemberg and tell him that Rabbiner Halberstam said that you are not guilty, and the accusations are false."

R' Shmuel did as he was told and travelled to Lemberg, but the Justice Minister was not in his office. Remembering Rav Chaim's reassurance, he decided to go to the Minister's home, and to his surprise, the Justice Minister allowed him in and permitted him to tell his story. He ended with the words, "Rabbiner Halberstam told me to come and tell you in his name that I'm not guilty and these are all false accusations."

The minister was silent, but his wife, who had also listened to the story, turned to R' Shmuel and asked with great interest, "Who told you to come here?" "Rabbiner Halberstam," said R' Shmuel, surprised by her interest. "Rabbiner Halberstam of Sanz?!" she asked excitedly. "Yes," R' Shmuel replied, even more curious why this non-Jewish woman was so interested in his Rebbe. "Do who know who that is?" she said to her husband.

Once, when I was a girl, I was stuck in the Vienna train station when all my money was stolen. I sat and cried there for a full hour, and not one person in the crowded train station paid any attention to me, except that Rabbi, Rabbiner Halberstam. He heard me crying and gave me money to buy a ticket to travel home. He's an angel of G-d, this Rabbiner Halberstam, and I'll remember him as long as I live! If Rabbiner Halberstam is supporting this man, he is surely not guilty."

When R' Shmuel left Lemberg, cleared of all charges, he immediately travelled back to Sanz and told Rav Chaim what had happened. Rav Chaim smiled and said, "This is what it means when it says, שַׁלַּח לַחְמְךָ עַל־פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם כִּי־בְרֹב הַיָּמִים תִּמְצָאֶנּוּ ***"Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it.*** Kohelet 11:1

When you act appropriately to every person that was created in the image of Hashem, you will only gain from it!"

L'Maaseh… A Tale to Remember



The *tzaddik* **R' Moshe Leib, *zt"l*, of Sassov**, was once visiting the town of Brod. A wealthy woman came to him to *daven* for the recovery of her daughter who was seriously ill. When the woman introduced herself to the Rebbe and mentioned her father's name, R' Moshe Leib realized that he knew her father and the family, and that they were known for their generosity.

As it was the custom to give the *tzaddik* a monetary donation for distribution after receiving a *brachah*, the woman removed an envelope from her purse and placed it on the table, but the *Sassover Rebbe* refused to accept it.

"I don't want money from you!" he said. "But I know that you have a very beautiful and precious *menorah*. That is what I want!" "Rebbe," she responded, surprised at his request, "I do have the *menorah* you describe. It has been a family heirloom for generations. However, I don't use it, and if the Rebbe wants it, I will gladly give it to you!"

That evening, when she came and presented the *menorah* to R' Moshe Leib, his attendants were buzzing with amazement. The Rebbe had never asked for a specific item before. Why did he want it, especially since he only used the *menorah* given to him by *his* Rebbe, **R' Shmelke of Nicholsburg, *zt"l*?**

R' Moshe Leib, however, did not keep the *menorah*. Instead, he called Yechiel Tzoref, the local silversmith, into his study. When the man came in, the Rebbe told him a story. "I want to tell you a story about

your grandfather. You may not know this, but when the time came to arrange a match for his daughter, your mother, he was so poor he couldn't find a proper young man for her. No one would lend him money, since it was obvious he could never return the loan.

After approaching all of his friends and acquaintances he had only one choice left; he decided to approach a certain wealthy man and beg him for a loan. When he asked him to lend him the money, the wealthy man replied, 'I know you will never be able to repay me, but I will make a deal with you. You own a very beautiful *menorah*, the likes of which I have never seen. If you give it to me, I will give you 10,000 gulden, enough for the marriage and even more!'

When your grandfather, whose name was also Yechiel, your namesake, heard the demand he was shocked and dismayed. Every year, his *Rebbe*, R' Zishe of Anipoli, *zt"l*, would give out silver coins to his *Chassidim*. R' Yechiel collected the coins year after year and he melted them to form a magnificent *menorah*.

It was this *menorah* that the wealthy man wanted. Your grandfather faced quite a dilemma. "In the end, R' Yechiel had no choice but to accept the man's terms and he parted with his beloved *menorah* for 10,000 gulden."

R' Moshe Leib closed his eyes for a moment. He opened them and looked at Yechiel Tzoref. "When this wealthy man passed away and stood before the Heavenly Court, there was great confusion as to how to rule in his case. On the one hand, the wealthy man had certainly performed the mitzvah of giving *tzedakah* to help a poor bride. He had, after all, paid 10,000 gulden, an enormous amount, to your grandfather. But on the other hand, he had desired the prized possession of a poor man and caused him great pain.

Finally, the Court reached a decision. The wealthy man's reward would be withheld, since the mitzvah was intertwined with the sin of coveting the possession of another."

The *Sassover Rebbe* stood up and produced a gleaming silver menorah and handed it to the speechless Yechiel Tzoref. "That is why I have arranged to return the menorah to you, his grandson. The sin has now been atoned, and the wealthy benefactor of your grandfather will rest in peace, enjoying his eternal reward!"

V'halachtah B'drachav - The Ways of Hashem

The *Chofetz Chaim* once visited a potential supporter of his *Yeshiva*, and while talking, he sensed that the conversation was heading towards *Lashon Hara*. The *Chofetz Chaim* noticed a telegram on the man's desk, and said, "It seems as if you've rewritten this telegram a few times." "Yes," said the man, "Every word costs money. I've taken great care to write only what's necessary."

The *Chofetz Chaim responded*, "If only people were so careful with the words they speak as you are with your telegram." After that comment, the man reflected on the conversation they were having, and resolved to always think about what he was going to say before he said it.

V'halachtah B'drachav - The Ways of Hashem

The Alter of Kelm taught that we must value each and every minute that we have and use our time to grow in *Ruchniyus*. He said that it would have been worth it for the entire world to be created for 6,000 years only in order that a single Jew would say *Baruch Hu U'Varuch Sh'mo* when he heard Hashem's Name in a *brachah*. A thousand responses of *Baruch HuU'Varuch Sh'mo* is equal to a single response of *Amein*, while a thousand replies of *Amein* are equal to a thousand responses of *Amein Yehei Shmei Rabba*. A thousand answers of *Amein Yehei Shmei Rabba* are equal to a single word of Torah learning!

If this is what a single word of learning Torah is worth, imagine how much an *entire minute* of Torah learning is worth, or five minutes, an hour, or longer!

The Siddur Speaks - A Closer Look at Davening

Rav Shimshon Pincus, *zt"l*, once asked why Hashem doesn't provide us with a large sum in response to our *Tefilos* for *Parnasah*. He asked, why it is that we must keep coming back to Hashem for more, again and again? Why can't Hashem allow us to simply win the lottery and we will be thankful to Him just the same? The answer, explains Rav Shimshon, is that Hashem wants us to always be connected to Him. Hashem therefore sets it up in this way to encourage us to keep coming back to Him, like a child to a father, for all that we are lacking.

This is a blessing because it shows that Hashem wants to have a relationship with us! If Hashem gave us so much 'up front', it would diminish our responsibility and opportunity to cultivate that relationship that He desires so much, and that is why the chance to *daven* to Hashem is a great *brachah* and opportunity.

Shabbos Treasures - The precious gift of Shabbos

'Whoever delights in Shabbos will have his wishes granted' (*Shabbos* 118b). The *Ben Yehoyada* explains that this means a person should *only think Shabbosdik* thoughts, even though it is permitted to think weekday thoughts on Shabbos.

You should make yourself think and feel that everything for the week was taken care of and concentrate only on honouring Shabbos. If your thoughts honour Shabbos, then in turn, you will be *zocheh* to have your heart's wishes fulfilled!

Besamei HaTorah …Beneath the Surface R' Shmuel Winzelberg

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם: ככל אשר אני מראה אותך They shall make Me a Sanctuary so that I may dwell among them. In conformance with all that I show you. (25:8-9)

By way of a hint, it seems that the location for the *Bais HaMikdash* is hinted at in this *posuk*. The final words of the *posuk*: **ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם ככל אשר** , when rearranged

spell out **ירושלים** ! We find that this is what the *posuk* is saying: "In conformance with all that I show you", and hinting to you as to where to build the *Bais HaMikdash* – in Yerushalayim, for there "they shall make Me a Sanctuary that I may dwell among them".

Middos



Rav Elimelech Biderman relates that once, someone who was suffering great hardships complained to his *Rebbe* that he could not endure the tests from Hashem any longer.

The *Rebbe* told him, "Take three pots, and fill them with water. In one pot put a raw potato, in the second pot put a raw egg, and in the third pot add some coffee, sugar and milk. Place them all on the stove to cook for an hour and then come back to me and show me the results."

An hour later the man returned to his *Rebbe* and showed him that the raw egg became hard, the hard potato got soft, and the boiling water turned into a sweet cup of coffee.

The *Rebbe* explained the message he was trying to convey. "The boiling water represents life's tests. Tests change people. It toughens the soft people, softens the tough individuals, and it can make someone become sweet, like a cup of coffee. It all depends on the type of person we are. All of our challenges can change us. They are opportunities for us to grow and to become a better person. The test will end when the cooking is done, and we have made the necessary changes in ourselves that have brought about the challenges in the first place!"

The Siddur Speaks

A man once came to **Rav Moshe Feinstein, *zt"l***, and asked for the *Gadol's* advice. He said that he was suffering from a health issue and his doctors did not give him hope that he had much time left. He told Rav Moshe that he was given the option to have a complex surgery, and if it was successful, he may be able to live another six months, but he would be in considerable pain. He asked Rav Moshe if he should go through with the procedure or not.

When Rav Moshe heard this, he started to cry, as he was acutely aware and sensitive to feeling another person's pain. Rav Moshe told him that he had to think about it before he gave his answer, and he asked the man to return to him the next day.

When the man returned the day after, Rav Moshe told him to go ahead with the procedure, and with *Hashem's* help everything will work out. He explained his reason to the man.

Rav Moshe said, "If you have the surgery, you will be given more time and more opportunities to answer *Amein*, and in the *Zechus* of answering *Amein*, you will be able to merit to live much longer.

Every time you answer *Amein* you create a *Malach* for yourself, because the *Gematria* (numerical value) of the word *Malach* is 91, which is the same *Gematria* as the word *Amein*. This *Malach* will

protect you from danger and allow you to live longer." Rav Moshe gave the man his *Brachah*, and the man had a successful surgery, and *Baruch Hashem* was granted life well beyond the six months the doctors predicted for him!

Orchos Chaim L'HaRosh

זְכֹר יוֹם הַמָּוֶת תָּמִיד. וְצֵידָה לַדֶּרֶךְ הָכֵן. וְשִׂים בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ שְׁנֵי אֵלֶּה תָּמִיד וְיִהְיוּ מְזֻמָּנִים לְךָ לְיוֹם הַפִּירוּד 32. *Constantly remember the day of death and prepare provisions for the journey. Always place these two ideas between your eyes, and they will be ready for you on the day of departure.*



The Tosfos Yom Tov writes that with this order we are instructed to remember throughout the day that we will certainly not live forever and that we must prepare ourselves for our journey to Olam Haba. The provisions that we must take are the Torah that we learn, the Mitzvos and Chesed which we have done, and the regret and Teshuvah over our mistakes and Aveiros.

Rav Yecheskel Levenstein, zt"l, comments that we should show concern for our needs after our lives have been completed here, so that we will not go hungry for 'bread' in the World to Come.

Rav Moshe Sternbuch notes that it is not enough to just remember the day of death, but one should remember that it is a day of reckoning and that he will be judged for his actions on that day. Also, this is not only a charge to do Teshuvah, but if one focuses on his day of death during his lifetime, he will be prepared for it, and he

will merit to not pass away suddenly, as he will always be prepared for this.

Rebbe Aharon Leib Shteinman, zt"l, was once travelling to the United States, and his family prepared his suitcase for him. When the Rosh HaYeshivah saw all the many preparations, he considered how much thought went into the packing of the suitcase. He said, "I am going to the United States, a land of plenty, and if I am missing something, I can buy it. I am travelling for just ten days, and still they are all going about filling the suitcase with everything that I might need. If so, then how much must we prepare our 'suitcase' of Mitzvos that we take to the World to Come?! Every Jew must be concerned that his suitcase is filled with Mitzvos for Olam Haba!"

Once, a rich businessman travelled to visit the **Chofetz Chaim** in his home, in Radin. The man was utterly shocked at the plain and simple way the Chofetz Chaim lived. There was hardly any furniture— only a table and some long benches. In his surprise, he asked the Chofetz Chaim where all his furniture was?

In reply, the Chofetz Chaim asked the man where his furniture was. The rich man said, "I am only visiting and I'm staying in a hotel. My furniture is at home since I am only passing through."

The Chofetz Chaim said, "I too am just passing through. I am only visiting this world for a few short years, and then I will return home. Just as you are travelling without your furniture, so am I!"

Pearls of Wisdom …A Word for the Ages

At the time when one stands in prayer, there should be happiness in his heart; as it says in *Tehilim* (100:2), **עִבְדוּ אֶת־ה׳ בְּשִׂמְחָה בֹּאוּ לְפָנָיו בְּרִנָּה** *Serve Hashem with gladness*. (*Medrash Shocher Tov, Tehilim* 100)

Orchos Chaim L'HaRosh

אַל תְּאַחֵר לָרוּץ אֶל בֵּית הַתְּפִלָּה. וְשָׁמַרְתָּ רַגְלֶיךָ פֶּן יִהְיוּ מְטֻנָּפוֹת. אַל תָּשִׂים לִבְּךָ אֲחוֹרַנִּית בִּשְׁעַת הַתְּפִלָּה, וְהִתְכַּוֵּין לְבָרֵךְ לְיוֹצְרֶךָ 49. *Do not be late and delay to run to Shul. Protect your feet from becoming dirty. Do not turn your heart to look behind you during Davening and concentrate on bentching your Creator.*

The *Tosafos Yom Tov* states that this is an admonishment for one to not be late for *Davening*, rather, one should run quickly to get to *Shul* to make sure he is there on time.

Rav Moshe Sternbuch writes that the main *Mitzvah* of running to *Shul* is not when one is late and he is hurrying to get there. The real way of doing this *Mitzvah* is for one to run to *Shul* even when he is *not* late. Even for one who has plenty of time when he gets to *Shul* for the *Minyan* to start, he should quicken his steps when he gets close to *Shul*, so he can get there while 'running'. Additionally, Rav Sternbuch notes, that even though one should run to *Shul*, he should still take care not to get his feet or shoes filthy, so that he can still enter *Shul* in a neat and respectable manner.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, *zt"l*, would always leave his home to go to *Shul* fifteen minutes before *Davening* started in order to get there early, even though it was just a two-minute walk.

When asked by a family member why he allowed so much time for the walk, Rav Shlomo Zalman replied, "If you had a meeting with one of the most important people in the world, you wouldn't take any chances on being late. You would make absolutely certain that you would be there on time. All the more so when I am not meeting just anybody. I'm meeting *Hashem*, the Creator of the world! I don't want to take any chances on being late to my meeting with the *Ribono Shel Olam*!"

V'halachtah B'drachav - The Ways of Hashem

Rav Paysach Krohn once shared a story about the ***Sfas Emes***, who passed away at the age of 58. His son, **Rav Avraham Mordechai**, spoke about his father at the *Levaya*, and said that his father had *Arichas Yamim*, a long life. He explained that although the *Sfas Emes* did not have long years, he had long days.

Rav *Krohn* said, "Nobody can guarantee us long years, but everyone can work on having long days. This means that we should make every day special, and do something special each day. As the husband of Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis said, ***'A long life is not good enough, but a good life is long enough'***. We must learn to make every single day count, and that is how we can each guarantee a long life for ourselves!"

Besamei HaTorah …Beneath the Surface by By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

ונתת על השלחן לחם פנים לפני תמיד You shall place the Show Bread on the Shulchan before Me, always. *(25:30)*

We have a custom that we leave a piece of bread [*Challah*, *Matzah*] from the *Shabbos* meals [*Seudos Shabbos*] on the table for *Bircas HaMazon*. **The *Zohar Ha'kadosh*** writes that the piece of bread should not be taken off the table after *Bentching*, rather, it should remain there overnight. In the morning, at the *Seudas Shabbos*, it is possible to eat this piece as there is new bread on the table, but at the end of the meal, a piece of bread should remain on the table until *Seudah Shlishis*. We should do the same until the fourth meal [*Melaveh Malkah*].

It works out that over twenty-four hours there is always bread on the table. It does not have to be a whole loaf, even just a piece or half a piece will suffice.

The *Zohar* states that this is so that blessing should rest in your house, and in this merit, all week long you will not lack your sustenance. This occurs specifically on *Shabbos*, but during the week you do not have to leave bread on the table since the entire week is blessed from the holy *Shabbos*. As we say in *Kabbalas Shabbos*, "*Ki He Mekor HaBrachah*", for *Shabbos* is the source of blessing. (*Doresh Tzion*)

Torah Tavlin

The **Panim Yafos** writes as follows: "The entire construction of the Aron alludes to the great forefathers of Klal Yisroel: The two Cheruvim allude to Avraham and Yitzchok. Two times the gematria of '**כרוב**' equals 456, the same gematria as **אברהם יצחק**.

The Aron itself alludes to Yaakov, who said, **מה נורא המקום הזה** - 'How awesome is this place.' The letters of **נורא** are the same as **ארון**.

The four walls of the Aron represent the twelve tribes, who travelled in a four-sided formation. The two poles for carrying the Aron allude to the two leaders who 'carried' the nation - Moshe and Aharon.

Finally, the **לוחות הברית** inside the Aron allude to Yosef, who is known as **שומר הברית** since he was the standard bearer for morality in the face of seduction!"

Amazing!

Pearls of Wisdom …A Word for the Ages

A person should arise early to go daven, for there is nothing greater than davening to Hashem. (Tanchuma, Mikeitz 9)

From the Wellsprings Of R' Guttman - Ramat Shlomo

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם 25:8

Chazal tell us that Sarah Imeinu had a unique relationship with Hashem. Sarah had a special blessing in her gashmiyus, as well as her ruchniyus. Sarah uplifted everything mundane and made it holy.

She raised up all the gashmiyus in her life by bringing Hashem into the picture. Whatever she did, she did for Hashem. When she ate, it was to have energy to serve Hashem. When she slept, it was so that she could properly serve Hashem. She lived for Hashem in everything that she did. Whether it was physical or spiritual, it was always with a good measure of spiritual because it was all for Hashem.

The Ramban tells us that when Hashem asked Klal Yisroel to build Him a Mishkan, it was because He missed the tent of Sarah. He longed for that special relationship that He had with Sarah Imeinu, and He wished to recreate that special bond with His children through the Mishkan.

He actually modeled the Mishkan after the tent of Sarah. Hashem said that the Mishkan should have a Ner Tamid, just as Sarah's candles never went out. He commanded that the Mishkan have Lechem HaPanim just as Sarah had a special blessing in her dough. And He rested His Shechina in the Mishkan just as Sarah had a cloud of glory hovering above her tent. Hashem hoped to recreate that special relationship with Klal Yisroel that He had with Sarah Imeinu.

So, now that we are left without an Ohel Sarah, or Mishkan, and no Bais HaMikdash in our midst, what should we do? We must build a Mishkan in our own homes!

Women are given three special mitzvos that correspond to Sarah Imeinu's three special miracles and their job as wives and mothers is to bring the Shechina into their homes. With joy for mitzvos,

tefillos and chinuch, they fulfill this mitzvah of **וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם** - ***"Build for Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell among you."***

The nashim tzidkaniyos have the ability to bring the Shechina into their homes, and can recreate that special relationship that Sarah had with Hashem. By doing so, they can raise up themselves and their families in private miniature sanctuaries.

Short And Sweet Story Of The Week With Rabbi Mordechai Levin

Reb Yechezkel Levenstein, ZT"L, was the great Mashgiach of the Mir Yeshiva in Europe and subsequently of Yeshivas Ponovezh in Bnei Brak. Known as Reb Chatzkel, he was widely recognized as a pure and lofty Tzaddik whose sole interest in life was the betterment of himself and others. Seforim containing his mussar speeches are immensely popular in the Torah world today. However, the great Reb Chatzkel was not always a learned man.



In his teens, he decided that he was not cut out for a life of learning and piety, so he left yeshiva and began selling flowers. One Friday, after a successful week of selling flowers and with an entire week's worth of income in his pocket, he went to the Mikvah in preparation for Shabbos. He hung his pants on a hook and went to dip into the Mikvah. In the meantime, a thief snuck in and stole all the money from his pants pocket.

When young Reb Chatzkel discovered that all his money was gone, he was stunned. He thought about how hard he had worked all week to earn that money, and that now he had absolutely nothing to show for all his efforts.

Upon further introspection, he decided to concentrate his life's efforts on something that nobody would be able to steal from him and that would also lead to great reward. He resolved to return to yeshiva and to redouble his efforts to achieve and maintain spiritual greatness. Hashem granted his wish, and that eventually lead to his becoming Reb Chatzkel, the great Mashgiach.

Comment: Parshas Terumah discusses the building of the Mishkan. ***The Ohr HaChaim*** *(Shemos 25:8) says that Hashem rewarded Klal Yisroel. At Har Sinai, Hashem appeared to the Jews surrounded on all sides by Malachim. The people had achieved spiritual greatness at Har Sinai, and now wished to maintain their lofty status by also having Hashem live amongst them, and to be able to surround Him. Hashem granted their wish and said, "I will live amongst you".*



מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

There are certain people who give Tzedaka because they feel it is a calling in life. Others give because they are pressured to donate, or to show the world just how generous they are. Some people like to see their money being put to immediate use and are happy to donate to poor people or organizations that assist the indigent. Others prefer to give to big institutions where they know that their money is used for a higher purpose and they can go and visit the yeshivah, or school, or campus, that they donated to and feel a sense of satisfaction about their good deed. There are some benefactors who are exclusive and will absolutely not give to poor people, or absolutely not give to a yeshivah. In those cases, it is almost impossible to change the giver's mind about where to give the money to and that's usually the end of the story.

But not always. With the right sales pitch, a man's mind can be changed. In fact, the famed Gabbai Tzedaka, **R' Yehoshua Rosenblatt z"l** had a knack for knowing just how to get wealthy people to give charity, even to places that they weren't planning on giving to. Reb Yehoshua, it was said, could literally squeeze water out of a stone.



On one occasion, he was travelling in the United States on behalf of a poor family that could not make ends meet. He was told of a wealthy and generous man, who loved to give Tzedaka - but only to yeshivos and never to private collectors. "Don't waste your time," he was told, by a friend who was collecting for a large and well-known yeshivah. "He never gives to private individuals." But Reb Yehoshua was adamant and pleaded with his friend to allow him to come along.

The man relented and the two entered the rich man's home. The friend was welcomed in warmly and a large check was soon forthcoming. When it was Reb Yehoshua's turn, the man was totally uninterested in his cause and no matter what he said, it didn't make any impression whatsoever.

When the man finally stood up to escort his guests to the door, Reb Yehoshua decided on one last-ditch attempt. He turned to the man

and said, "Look, here's the bottom line: I need to raise $10,000 for this desperate family in Bnei Brak. Normally, I take one third of the donation for my fee. So, the money that goes to the family comes out to $7,777, which you can pay in a cheque or money order, made out to the family. However, my share - $3,333 - I really need the money in cash. So, if you don't mind, please give me the cash and send them the cheque."

The rich man stopped walking and his smile faded instantly. He turned red and started screaming in anger. "How dare you? What a chutzpah! You call yourself a Gabbai Tzedaka? Get out of my house right now! And don't ever come back!"

Reb Yehoshua quickly left the house and his friend was shocked as well. How could someone be so brazen as to say such a thing? The man was obviously not giving him a penny and then to say to give the poor family a cheque while he needed his hefty share in cash? The man demanded an answer but Reb Yehoshua just smiled the whole way home.

The very next day, Reb Yehoshua received a phone call from the head of the Tzedakah organization to which he was associated back in Bnei Brak, and to which he directed all charity cheques to be made out to. The man on the line was in shock. "How did you get money out of this gvir?" he asked incredulously. "We have tried many times to get money from him for needy causes and he always says no. He only gives to yeshivos and large institutions! But early this morning, which must have been late at night in America, we received a phone call from this man, authorizing a wire transfer of $7,777 to our mosad on behalf of this poor family.

The man sounded angry when he called, and he made it very clear that he was only sending this amount of money and not one penny more for the horrible man who came to him yesterday!"

Reb Yehoshua laughed out loud. "Don't you see? This man has a good heart and really wants to give Tzedaka. But he is afraid that money

collectors are trying to take advantage of him. That's why he only gives to well-known institutions. But I gave him a way out! He right away saw that the money collector who came to him yesterday was clearly trying to rip him off. But he is too smart for that. He won't get ripped off. He'll give to the poor family and not one penny for me!"

The Jewish Weekly

This week's Torah portion, Terumah, says: **דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמָתִי** - ***"Speak to the children of Israel, and they shall take for Me a contribution; from every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My contribution."***



There is an obvious anomaly here. "Have them take for me a contribution," is a peculiar choice of words. A more appropriate expression would have been, "they shall give Me a contribution."

The Midrash explains: Since G-d really owns everything, it is impossible to speak of giving Him anything. Giving usually implies I have ownership, and I transfer the ownership to someone else. When we talk about the Master of the World, we don't use the expression "giving." Instead, we use the expression "taking." We are taking from G-d in order to give to G-d. "Take for Me a contribution" means to take the contribution from Me in order to give it to Me.

Rabbi Moshe Alshich says there is an important message here. Giving is a form of taking. You are not giving Me a contribution, says G-d. By giving for My causes, you are taking. Or, as the Midrash famously puts it, more than what the benefactor does for a poor person, the poor person does for the benefactor.

When we give, we get much more. When we give, our lives are elevated to a higher, more dignified, more Divine plane. If one gives a person a donation, the money is temporary. Perhaps it pays for the next meal, or rent, or tuition. It comes and goes.

On the other hand, the person who is giving is receiving something eternal. He gives something to his soul that is priceless, he acquires a relationship with G-d that is timeless, and he receives a reward both in this world and the world to come that lasts for eternity.

This point is underscored the first time the Torah relates a story of giving. It is when Abraham invited three guests to his tent to relax under the shade, to eat and to drink. This is the first overt mention of an act of kindness in the Torah. Three times in that story, the Torah repeats the phrase "taking." "Let water be taken," "I will take bread," etc. Why this expression? Abraham should have said: "I will give water!" "I will give bread!"

The answer, of course, is that Abraham is guiding his children of all future generations. My children, you must know that when you help someone else, you are not giving; you are taking. The greatest gift we can give ourselves is a life filled with love and caring for others. More than the host does for the guest, the guest does for the host.

This is true in our marriages as well; when a husband and wife are committed to giving to each other, they themselves are often surprised by how much they receive by the sheer act of giving to somebody outside of themselves. The love we give away is the only love we keep.

Rabbi Eliezer Abish - Tied to the Peg



In Parshas Terumah, we learn about the building of the Mishkan, and at the end of the Parsha, the Torah tells us how to build the walls around it. The Torah tells us that all the pegs should be made out of copper. Rashi explains that these pegs, which essentially were large nails, were for the purposes of tying the cord around the peg. This was so the wind would not lift it when it blew.

Rashi then says, "I don't know if these pegs are stuck into the ground, or there is just a rope tied around the head of the peg and because it is so heavy, it weights it down and the wind cannot blow it. But I say that because of their name, pegs, they are driven into the ground." The commentaries wonder why Rashi mentions his thought process towards reaching this conclusion and sound like a Gemara. Rashi never does that.

Rav Moshe Feinstein makes a very interesting observation here. We are building a Mishkan, which is how we feel Hashem's presence on earth. Rashi was wondering how we can stay tied to Hashem, and if it is sufficient to just take the peg and tie the cords around it, or perhaps that is not enough. You also need to drive the peg into the ground. Rashi's conclusion: you also need to drive the peg into the ground.

With this, Rav Moshe says that to be an eved Hashem, to serve Hashem, a person cannot just work on his relationship with Hashem. We also must be tied to a community, to a rebbe, yeshiva, shul,

chesed organization, parents, fellow Jews. It is not enough to just make sure your relationship to Hashem is strong. You need to make sure your relationship to Klal Yisroel is also pushed into the ground.

It is not enough to just be tied to the peg; the peg has to be knocked into the ground as well. We cannot just be connected to Hashem; we must be connected to the Jewish people too. That is the only way we can stay secure.

Parsha Thoughts By: Mordechai Sapoznick



In this week's parsha, why does it discuss the שֻׁלְחָן right after it discusses the אָרוֹן? The חומת אנך answers that the לֻחֹת which represent the תּוֹרָה were kept in the אָרוֹן. Therefore, the parsha discusses the שֻׁלְחָן right after the אָרוֹן to teach us that when someone eats a meal and makes sure to say a Dvar Torah at the meal it is as if he is eating from the table of Hashem.

The word שֻׁלְחָן has the same gematria as מְשַׂמֵּחַ - to make happy, because one who eats properly by making sure to say Brachos and a Dvar Torah makes Hashem happy. It is also the same gematria as

למשיח – In the Messianic era, all of the Temple's vessels and implements that have been plundered or hidden away will be restored for use in the Divine service. (Chomat Anach)

However, the word שֻׁלְחָן has the same letters as the word לְנָחָשׁ – to the snake, because if someone doesn't eat properly it is as if he is eating from the table of "the snake," which represents the Satan.



Emunoh In Our Chachomim

ז' אדר א, marks the Yohrzeit of not only **משה רבינו** but also **רב צבי קינסטליכער זצ"ל**, **R' Tzvi Kinstlicher** the Sebiner **רב**.

He was born in Handsorf, Slovakia in the year 1869, and at the age of 14 he became a **תלמיד** of Rav Moshe Grunwald **זצ"ל**, the **ערוגת הבושם**. 12 years later, he went to Pressburg to learn by Rav Simcha Bunim Sofer **זצ"ל**, the **שבט סופר**. Such was his stature, he was asked to give a **שיעור** in the main Shul in Pressburg the very first **שבת** that he was there. He received **סמיכה** from both **רבנים** and from Rav Mordechai Winkler, the **לבוש מרדכי** zt''l.

He married Rebbetzen Hena, and after serving as **רב** in Honiad, Romania, he became **רב** in the town of Sebin in Transylvania in 1919. Besides for being known as a tremendous **תלמיד חכם** and **פוסק**, his davening left an impression on all who saw them. He would cry copious tears every day when reciting **ברכת התורה** and would tell himself before every **תפלה**, 'Hershel, this could be your last **תפילה**, make sure you daven properly'!

One year, before **פסח**, he was suffering from terrible stomach pains and went to nearby Klausenberg to seek advice from doctors. They

found a terrible disease and wanted to operate on him immediately, but he refused to spend **פסח** in hospital. The doctors sent him home but warned him to only eat eggs and milk and not to touch any wheat based products.

On **ליל הסדר** he ate **מצה** soaked in milk and after the second **סדר** he felt no more stomach pains. He returned to the doctors after **פסח** who discovered that the disease had amazingly disappeared!

After the Second World War he moved to **ארץ ישראל** where he opened a **כולל** but overall shied away from public life. In 1965 he was **נפטר** and was buried on **הר המנוחות**. His son-in-law was Rav Betzalel Stern זצ״ל, the **בצל החכמה**. **זכותו יגן עלינו.**

Pearls of Wisdom… *A Word for the Ages*

***Rabbeinu* Yechiel**, one of the *Ba'alei Tosafos*, who lived in France more than 800 years ago, was once invited to the royal palace, where the king offered him a cup of wine. *Rabbeinu* Yechiel found himself in a terrible dilemma, because it was forbidden for him to drink the wine, as wine touched by a non-Jew is *Yayin Nesech*, but the king was likely to be furious if *Rabbeinu* Yechiel told him so. While he was pondering the situation, a servant brought a washbowl into the room for the king to wash his hands.

As soon as the king had washed his hands, *Rabbeinu* Yechiel drank the water in the basin. Turning to the king he said, "It is forbidden for me to drink this wine, but I am honored to have drunk the water with which the king washed his hands." The king smiled, and disaster was averted!

"A man first builds a house and afterwards brings in the furniture. [First things first.]" ~~ Talmud, Berachos

Stories of Gedolim

Rov Yosef was a very poor man monetarily, but he possessed two treasures, his two sons, Yehuda & Aryeh Leib. They both loved learning and were progressing beautifully in their ameilus, ahavas hatorah & yiras shomayim. The boys were their rebbe's pride and joy and attended his shiurim daily.

One day Rov Yosef was startled to hear that his boys were not in yeshiva. Frantically, he went home to inquire about the welfare of his sons. Upon arriving home, Rov Yosef found his two boys standing, waiting patiently as their mother was attending to household chores.

"Why aren't the boys learning?!" he asked, well aware of the value of every precious moment of learning. "Why haven't they gone to their rebbe?" Their mother replied that their clothing was very soiled ,as they each only has one shirt and would not go to learn unclothed, the boys had to wait for her to finish laundering them before they could resume their studies.



Rov Yosef couldn't bear the thought. Every minute waiting was Torah lost. He quickly took off his own shirt and put in both boys one in each shirt sleeve and sent them to their rebbe. The boys got the message loud and clear.

Rov Yosef was zocheh to have his boys grow up to be the famous Ketzos Hachosehen, Rov Aryeh Leib Heller, and his brother Rov Yehuda who authored the Kuntres Hasfeikos.

Rav Yosef Boruch HaLevi Epstein, 10th of Adar I The Gutteh Yid of Neustadt

The Sanzer Rav once made a siyum upon completing the entire Shas. One of the guests who joined him for the siyum was the son of the holy **Ma'or VaShemesh**, known as the "Gutteh Yid of Neustadt".

This hidden Tzaddik tried to conceal his greatness. He was not known as a great scholar, but was often seen reciting Tehillim, much like the simple townspeople.

During the siyum, he told the Sanzer Rav that he too was celebrating a siyum, because he had completed the entire Tehillim. The Sanzer Rav replied, "Would you like to make an exchange? I will give you all the merit I earned from studying the entire Shas, and you will give me the merit of your Tehillim." The Gutteh Yid refused the offer, and it stayed at that.

Simcha

Do we say **משנכנס אדר מרבים בשמחה** in **אדר ראשון**, and why is the **עבודה** specifically **שמחה**? A: There is indeed a **שאלה** regarding **אדר ראשון**, but most **פוסקים** say that it does apply to **אדר ראשון** too. In fact, when there is a leap year, one of the reasons why we **דוקא** choose **אדר** as the month to double, is because of the amazing potential that this month has for our **עבודת ה'**.

Some say even more than **אלול**! Although in **ניסן** we saw open miracles like **יציאת מצרים** and **קריעת ים סוף**, in **אדר** we experienced the miracle of **פורים**, where we see **ה'ס השגחה** and how he controls everything that happens even when it isn't obvious.

The knowledge that **ה'** runs the world and is always looking after us should fill us with tremendous **שמחה**!

Short Vort: Rabbi Moshe Kormornick

וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ וְעָשִׂיתָ עָלָיו זֵר זָהָב סָבִיב

And you shall overlay it with pure gold; from inside and from outside you shall overlay it (25:11)

The Gemara learns from here that a Torah scholar whose inside does not reflect the actions he shows to others is not truly considered a Torah scholar. The question on this is that this lesson is learned from the Aron, which actually had three layers — gold, **wood**, and gold !How can we learn from the Aron that a Torah scholar's inner-world must reflect his external actions from the Aron, when the Aron itself had wood covered in gold?

Perhaps the answer can be found in the Daas Zekeinim, who reveals the reason why the middle layer of the Aron was made of wood: so that the Aron would not be too heavy for those who were carrying it! Meaning, the Aron *should* have been made of gold in and out, but due to the concern that others would suffer from the Aron's "inside", the hidden gold was sacrificed and wood was used instead.

Accordingly, we can now understand the Gemara's words to teach a deeper level: we must aspire to be gold on the inside just as we are on the outside, but our "gold" cannot come at the expense of others. Our personal stringencies, for instance, should not create a burden on those around us.

The month of Adar - Rabbi Raphael Avitan

Imagine you are walking home from work and suddenly you bump into the **Babi Saleh zt'l** who tells you he came to inform you that today is not just a regular weekday and that it is in fact a holiday and anything you ask for during this holiday, particularly for anything that will bring you joy and peace of mind, you will get. You would without a doubt isolate yourself to pray with concentration from all

your heart for all your needs. The entire month of Adar, all 30 days, is one big holiday. We see this in the Megilat Esther where it mentions "the month that went from being a month of mourning to a holiday".

The Mekoubal **Hateret Yehoshua** says that during the month of Adar one can acquire three of the biggest physical gifts in the world. They are Banei, Chayei and Mezonei, Children (which includes finding a marriage partner), Life (therefore health) and Parnassa. These three blessings can be acquired in abundance and with great blessings during the month of Adar.

The numerical value of Adar - 205, is the same numerical value as the words Banei, Chayei and Mezonei combined. This symbolized that in the month of Adar these blessings are ready to come down into the world.

The Ateret Yehoshua says that the words Inveh Hagefen (vine leaves), which is symbolic for the most ideal shidduch, the best match, has the same numerical value as the sentence "Mishenichnas Adar Marbim Bessimcha". This, in turn, signifies that the joy of the month of Adar has the power to bring one closer to finding his/her shidduch. If one is already married, the joy of Adar has the power to bring true Shalom Bayit to a couple.

The month of Adar brings down a light from Shamayim which carries an abundance of blessings ready to be distributed to each and everyone of us.

Rabbi Israel of Apta zt'l writes that the word Bessimcha from the phrase "Mishenichnas Adar Marbim Bessimcha" has the numerical value of the word Shana, year. The joy of Adar can be carried out into the entire year, and we therefore must make tremendous efforts throughout the entire month to be happy and particularly on Rosh Chodesh Adar since it influences the entire month.

Set aside some time daily to pray and to beseech Hashem for all your needs. One should pray with emuna shelema, complete faith, that Hashem will send you an abundance of blessings that you will see with your own eyes. Believing that Hashem will answer all our prayers for the best should also give us great joy.

May we all be blessed with an abundance of blessing and tremendous joy this month and for the entire year too.

Chodesh tov!

HaRav S F Zimmerman Federation Rav & Av Beis Din

On a snowy Friday morning parshas Trumah, 29 years ago, I was learning in a Kollel in Monsey and the great rosh hayeshiva and magid Rav Yaakov Galinsky was coming in to speak.

At the same time, we heard the news that Olympia & York the construction company owned by the great Jewish philanthropic family [Paul Reichmann and his brothers] had just been dissolved due to bankruptcy. [20 billion dollars]




When Rav Galinsky walked in, we asked him," how is it possible that people who gave so much tzedakah, could lose everything?"

He looked at us , and said," they lost everything? They only lost what they kept for themselves. What they gave away, they still have."

He said, that this weeks parsha begins וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה – ***"you shall <u>take</u> to me a donation"***

One doesn't take donations, you give donations. The answer is that what we give away is the only thing that we ever have for all eternity.

Rabbi Yisrael Bronstein – *A Shabbos Vort*

זָהָב וָכֶסֶף וּנְחֹשֶׁת 25:3 ***"Gold, silver, and copper"***

The Chasam Sofer found in these words an amazing allusion to all the days of the year on which we read from the Torah:

Zahav –

Zayin (Shabbos, the seventh day of the week).

Hei - (Thursday, the fifth day).

Beis - (Monday, the second day)

Keseph- Kippurim, Sukkos, Pesach, and Purim.

Nechoshes-

Neiros (candles, an allusion to Chanukah), Chotsit (Rosh Chodesh as well as Rosh Hashanah, which falls on Rosh Chodesh), Shavuos, Shemini Atzeres, and Ta'anis tzibbur (a public fast day)

Rabbi Joey Haber - Show Them

Rabbi Yehudah Jacobs *zt"l* was a beloved *rebbe*. Serving as the *Mashgiach Ruchani*, guide and mentor, to thousands of students at the Lakewood Yeshiva, his name was synonymous with *Tatty*, father, to so many. At the age of eighty-seven, he returned his soul to Heaven, amidst the global pandemic. But with his life, he left a legacy of what it means to show sensitivity for the ages.

Rav Jacobs would sit in a room during the day and learn with a *chavruta* (study partner). Often, as it would occur,

the *chavruta* would get up to locate a certain *sefer*, during which time, other students would quickly grab the open seat opposite Rav Jacobs and present a certain question or dilemma they had. Everyone loved getting his advice; he was a wise man with a brilliant blend of Torah knowledge and sophisticated, worldly insight.

And so, one day, Rav Jacobs' *chavruta* got up to look for a *sefer,* and in came a student just moments later, pulling in the seat and preparing himself to talk. "Now's not a good time," Rav Jacobs said immediately, even before the boy got out a word. "Please come to me later, after this *seder* (learning session)." The student didn't say a word, but simply nodded in acknowledgement, stood up and walked back to his seat. It was odd, as he had never before seen Rav Jacobs do this, but he assumed that he'd eventually have the opportunity to speak with him.

An hour later, the *chavruta* stood up again, this time to leave the Beis Midrash completely, perhaps to go to the restroom. The student figured that now there would be ample time for him and Rav Jacobs to talk, so he approached him and motioned if now was a good time. But again, Rav Jacobs stuck out his hand, as if to indicate that they'd speak later, privately, at his home.

Finally, half-hour before the end of *seder,* the *chavruta* closed his Gemara and stood up, clearly ready to leave for the day. "Now will be a good time," knew the student; "his *chavruta* won't be coming back." "Rebbe, can we talk now?" he asked, as he shot over to Rav Jacobs' side. "Not right now. Please come to my house and we'll talk then."

Thirty minutes later, in walked the student to Rav Jacobs' home. Before the student even began saying anything, Rav Jacobs began, "I know you're curious about what was going on for the past hours that I didn't talk to you. Let me explain. There was someone who came over to me earlier today who was involved in a big public scandal and needed some advice.

A short while after that, another man came to me who is also involved in this scandal and he's also going through a messy divorce. When you came to me after these two men had spoken to me, I knew that if we'd begin talking, people would think that you too were part of the scandal. That would taint your reputation. I didn't want people to think that you had anything to do with it. That's why I insisted that you come here, to my house, to speak where no one else can see."

That is a *Kiddush Hashem*. That is a man who is thinking about others in ways that they can't even imagine and shows them that he is.

Rabbi Ephraim Shapiro - Bend Your Ego



One of the great miracles taking place in the Beis Hamikdash is described as follows: when the Jewish people stood still, it was extremely crowded, and yet when they bent and bowed down, there was ample room (*Avos* 5:7). This is an astounding miracle, because we would certainly assume that if it's packed when standing erect, it will certainly be that way, if not even more, when bending.

My father *zt"l* liked to homiletically expound from this Mishnah the fundamental requisites of a strong relationship between husband and wife.

If you are always going to "stand" your ground, and be rigid in spirit, never capitulating and always bringing your ego into the relationship,

it will feel crowded. The relationship will be uncomfortable, if not miserable.

But if you are willing to "bend" down and listen to what the other person is saying, putting your ego out of the equation, there will be room. Abundant room. And that's because there will be harmony and peace, and both husband and wife will feel its blessed effect.

Rabbi Uri Lati - Don't Get Blinded

Nachum Ish Gamzu, the teacher of R' Akiva, was known by this title because he would always remark, "Gam zu l'tovah – This too is for the good." But Nachum Ish Gamzu did not have just any ordinary life.

He was, aside from other ailments, blind in both eyes. How could it be that he embraced such an optimistic attitude? What was it that enabled him to be so grounded in his faith and believe that everything, no matter how dismal it was, emanated from G-d?

The sefer Chaim V'Shalom remarks that Nachum Ish Gamzu was someone who, mirroring his blindness in both eyes, had firmly embedded in his heart that even if he cannot understand something at all – he would be 'blinded in both eyes' – it was still for his best.

Even when we don't see anything going our way, not at all, we still know that there is a conductor in Heaven Who is orchestrating everything.

The gematria (numerical value) of Anochi, I, a reference to the first of the Ten Commandments, contains the same value as the word for trust in G-d, bitachon.

When you have full trust in G-d, you are able to choose a life of firm belief in Anochi, in G-d's Oneness and master plan, and experience the blessing accompanying it.

AT THE ArtScroll SHABBOS TABLE
A PROJECT OF THE Mesorah Heritage Foundation

Pray For Me, Too! From Sinai to Yerushalayim – Our Jewish Journey Continues The Story of Roy (Yisroel) and Leah Neuberger by Rabbi Nachman Seltzer



After Yisroel and Leah Neuberger became frum, Yisroel made a point of regularly meeting his parents for dinner in the city. Yisroel would pick up his father after work at the City Athletic Club, and from there they would go out to dinner.

One midwinter afternoon, he was on West Fifty-Third Street, in front of the Museum of Modern Art around the corner from the club. It was rush hour, and thousands of people were streaming out of the city on their way home.

Those were the days when Edward Koch was mayor, and the street signs reflected his Jewish sense of humour, with slogans like "Don't even think of parking here!" Suddenly, Yisroel realized that he had neglected to daven Minchah. It was almost sunset. With no choice, he pulled out of the traffic, parked his car, and got out. Standing beside the car in a "No Standing" zone, with traffic streaming past and crowds rushing down the street, he turned to face east and began reciting Ashrei.

No sooner had the first syllable left his lips when he heard a loud and authoritative voice barking, "What are you doing stopping on this street? Move that car!"

Yisroel looked up to see a man in blue. "I'm sorry, Officer," Yisroel said, "but sundown is in a few minutes, and I wanted to say my prayers before I miss my chance."

"You want to pray?" the cop responded. "You want to pray!"

Yisroel got nervous hearing the officer repeating his words. He figured that he was really in for it now. But no.

"You want to pray?" he said to Yisroel again. "That's a different story! You just stay here as long as you want. And don't forget — pray for me, too!"

When we do what we're supposed to do, people admire and appreciate us, and know that we are their connection to the Creator of the world.

Let Him Know That You Care!- Forever a Talmid – The Chinuch Legacy of Rabbi Chanina Herzberg – by Rabbi Yitzchok Herzberg



When **R' Chanina Herzberg** was a bachur at Yeshiva Sh'or Yoshuv, the rosh yeshivah, **Rav Shlomo Freifeld**, once walked up to the bimah in the middle of first seder and gave a klap, something extremely unusual.

Silence reigned immediately, and in a booming voice, Rav Shlomo announced, "I just saw a stranger come into the beis midrash, and not one person went over to him to say shalom aleichem. If my talmidim don't understand the importance of a shalom aleichem, then I may as well close the yeshiva!" • • • • • "You have to show others your pearly whites!"

R' Chanina would say. "Like my Rebbi used to say, you must greet everybody the way you would want to be greeted. When you say hello to someone and make him feel comfortable, you are showing him that he matters. When you give someone a shalom aleichem, you're validating him, you're telling him he's important.

A person coming into a strange place has sfeikos, doubts, about his metziyus, his essence. A shalom aleichem says to him, 'You are part of our tzibbur; you now have a metziyus.' When you give him a shalom aleichem, he feels like he's at home.

So make him feel welcome. Whether it's with a l'chaim, a shtickel herring, a good vort — say something to him. Let him know that you care - that you are there for him!"

The Right Intentions by Rabbi Shraga Simmons



Parshat Trumah begins with God's instruction to "**take** a donation" for the Tabernacle. This sounds strange. Shouldn't the Torah have instructed us to "**give** a donation"?

The explanation is that giving — for the right reason and to a proper recipient — is also a form of taking. You see, the money we own is temporary, but our good deeds are eternal. So a gift is to our credit. As a wise person once said: "All that I really own is what I've given away."

And in the truth, one of life's greatest pleasures is to give. God's most essential quality is that of a giver, so our emulating God — by giving — is one of the highest forms of spiritual expression.

This parsha also tells us the key to proper giving: it should be with a full heart. The Midrash says that Betzalel, the architect of the

Tabernacle, was able to discern the intentions of those who donated. In this way, he determined how each donation would be used in the Tabernacle. For instance, when someone gave with pure intentions, their donation was used for the Holy Ark. Whereas someone who gave begrudgingly would have his donation used for pegs to hold up the Tabernacle walls.



שמואל זנויל כהנא Shmuel Zanvil Kahana Zt'l (Chief Rabbi of Persian Jewry)

Bring Hashem Into Your Life

וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר: דבר אל בני ישראל ויקחו לי תרומה מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את תרומתי ***Speak to the children of Israel, and have them take for Me an offering; from every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My offering***. (25:1-2)

An interesting connection. In Parshat Yisro it is told how Hashem gave the Torah to the Israelites. Based on the scriptures, it can be said that G-d said to Israel: "It is my Torah, it is one of my most precious treasures, but I am giving it to you, take it".

Whereas here Hashem tells us: "My justice is mine, but I give it to you; take it."

Whereas in Parashat Terumah we read: "And they took me a donation." It is clear that G-d does not need donations; therefore, instead of "and they took me" it could be said - "and they took Me". That is: G-d says to the children of Israel, "

It can therefore be said that G-d is saying to the Israelites: "You have Torah and justice; Now take Me into your life."

If a person grasps the knowledge and wisdom of the Torah, if he bases all his actions and actions on justice, and if G-d and religion are essential to his existence, then his life is a complete life.

The Rebbe of Kotzk was once asked: "Where is G-d?" and he replied: **א וו מען לאזט איהם אריין, בכל מקום שמניחים לו להיכנס**, wherever they allow him to enter.

Fascinating INSIGHTS

Bending and Bowing

Why did Binyomin merit to have the Beis Hamikdash in his portion?

We are taught that Mordechai was a reincarnation of Yaakov while Haman was a reincarnation of Esav. This is hinted to in the words of Yaakov about Esav, **הַצילני נָא מַיד אחי מיד עשו**, save me please from the hand of my brother the hand of Esav, where the first letters spell **המן**.

The Chida explains this is what Yaakov requested from Hashem when he said **הצילני נא מיד אחי מיד עשו** — now it is Esav, but in the future when I am Mordechai it will be Haman — save me!

Since Yaakov bowed to Esav, Mordechai doesn't bow to Haman as a rectification. Where was Mordechai endowed with this strength from? He is a descendant of Binyomin.

Binyomin was the only one not born when Yaakov bowed to Esav. Consequently, he wasn't affected by Yaakov's bowing. Therefore, Mordechai had the power to withstand and refrain from bowing to Haman.

In light of what we mentioned we can grasp why the Beis Hamikdash was in the portion of Binyomin as it is the place of completely nullifying oneself to Hashem. Since Binyomin did not bow to Esav, he merited to have the portion of land where bowing takes place, the Beis Hamikdash.

The pasuk teaches that it is called Purim because of the lottery, **גרל**. Rearranging these letters, we notice it spells **רגל**, foot. This represents bowing, symbolizing nullifying oneself.



The following is some of what we do on Purim which originates from what took place when Yaakov received the Brachos:

1) How did Yaakov receive the Brachos? Through dressing like Esav. This is one of the reasons given as to why we wear a mask, or costume, on Purim.
2) Just as receiving the Brachos was done through a meal, we too have Seudas Purim.
3) Just as it is written concerning the Brachos **ויבא לו יין וישת** - he drank wine, likewise, on Purim we drink wine.

Medicinal Acquisition



We can compare physical medicine to spiritual medicine. Just as a doctor knows what medicine is needed for an ill patient, similarly, Hashem knows the medicine needed for a spiritual ailment. That is, to combat the Yetzer Hara.

The medicine is the Torah, as we are taught **בראתי יצר הרע ובראתי לו תורה תבלין** – ***I have created the evil inclination and I have created Torah as its antidote***.

How do we acquire the Torah? The Mishna enumerates the 48 ways for its acquisition. A hint to this is found in the dimensions of the

Aron. The Aron, which contained the Luchos, symbolizes the Torah. What were its dimensions?

Its length was two and a half amos and its width was one and a half amos. Since one amah is six tefachim, let's multiply two and a half (for the length) by six (tefachim). The product of this is 15. When we do this twice, for each of the two sides of the length, we get 30.

For the width, we get nine for each side when we multiply one and a half by six. This gives us a total of 18 for the width (for both sides). When we add 30 and 18, we get to a total of 48 tefachim. This alludes to the 48 ways that Torah is acquired!

Timeless Truths – Rabbi Moshe Bamberger

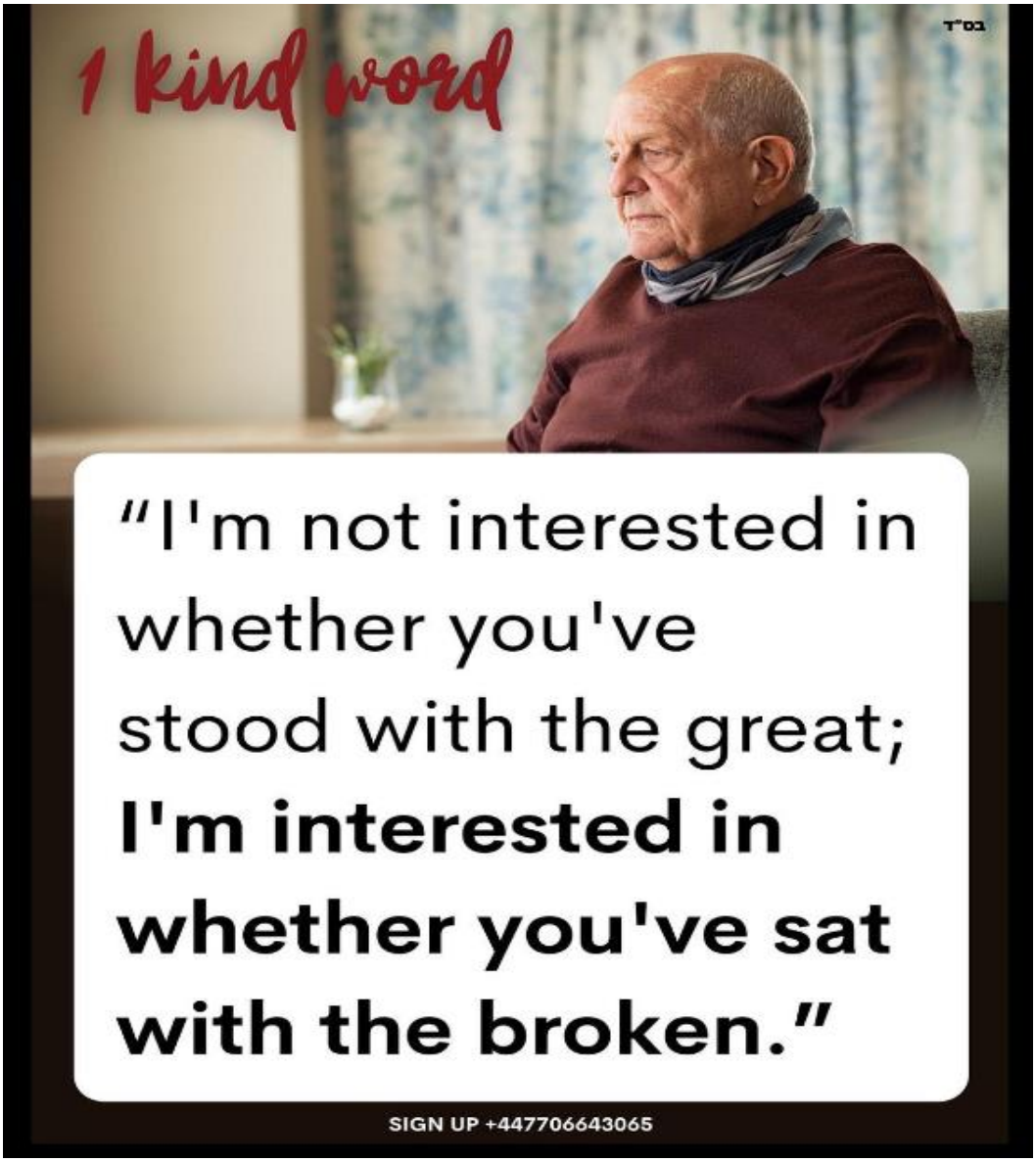


To have one's needs provided for by Hashem, it is a known segulah to complete the entire Sefer Tehillim without interruption. [See Pele Yoetz – letter taf.]

People mistakenly think that this means one must not interrupt by talking until all the psalms are recited.

In truth, what it means is that one must recite the words without any interruption between one's mouth and one's heart…! – Harav Moshe Tzvi of Soveran.

"Imagine in the morning what the day will bring if we would only get the blessings we thanked Hashem for yesterday!"



Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

For many years, people who knew **Rav Avraham Yaakov *HaKohein* Pam, *zt"l***, said he was 'the ***Chofetz Chaim*** of America'. Everyone agreed that this description was appropriate— except for one person who disagreed.

At a dinner, the chairman was introducing Rav Pam in this way, and it was one of the very few times when Rav Pam appeared visibly annoyed. Agitated, Rav Pam approached the microphone and said, "I protest being given this title, as is it an affront to the honour of the *Chofetz Chaim*!"

Rabbi Shmuel Donn Remez

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה Hashem tells Moshe Rabeinu, "***Speak to the B'nei Yisrael and they shall take Terumah for Me***…" (25:2) Rashi explains the word לִי - ***For Me***, in our Pasuk to mean לִשְׁמִי – for my sake. Hashem wanted all donations made to the Mishkan to be completely **לשמה** - for the sake of **כבוד שמים**.

The **נועם מגדים** explains that the word תְּרוּמָה comes from the word **הרמה**, which means to ***raise***. The idea behind giving Terumah is to ***exalt*** Hashem and recognize that our lives and everything we have – is from Hashem. It is a lesson in Emunah. Giving Terumah strengthened the Yidden in their belief in Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

The **אלפי מנשה** finds a beautiful remez to this in the Roshei Teivos of the next 6 words in our Pasuk: מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ - which is the gematria of **אמונה**! (102)

The Arizal brings down the **Zohar**, that the Terumah here in our Pasuk, was **תרי** (2) **ממאה** (100) – Two from One Hundred. = 102! - **אמונה**!

Why Worry? By Reuven Eckstein



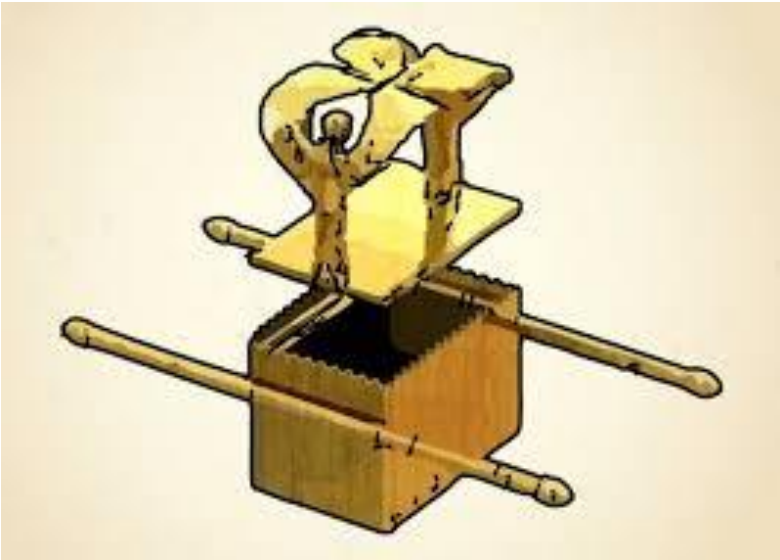
Rav Shloimo Zalman Aurbach Zt'l says, "When a person worries, this displays a lack of Bitachon.

Worry – דאגה

The word **דאגה** has 4 of the first 5 letters of the Aleph Beis – it is missing the Beis. The ב symbolises בִּטָּחוֹן. When a person is lacking in בִּטָּחוֹן he worries!

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series

לעילוי נשמת ר׳גרשון בן ר׳אריה ליב זצ"ל- נפטר כ׳ט שבט תשע׳ד



Chazal say that when it came to the building of the Aron, everybody had to have a part in its construction, as the Pasuk says- **וְעָשׂוּ אֲרֹן** (They shall make.) 25:10. Because every single Yid **must** have a *chelek* in Limud HaTorah.

If you look at the dimensions of the Aron: **אַמָּתַיִם וָחֵצִי אָרְכּוֹ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי רָחְבּוֹ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי קֹמָתוֹ** - ***two and a half cubits its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height.***

All these dimensions were incomplete numbers, to teach us that in order to be a **לומד תורה** – a person has to be an **ענו** (humble). Moshe Rabeinu said to Klal Yisrael -**וְנַחְנוּ מָה** [16:7] 'What are we?' – we are nothing.

The Chasam Sofer asks, "How many halves are there in the Aron ?"

אַמָּתַיִם וָחֵצִי – 5 halves

אַמָּה וָחֵצִי – 3 halves

אַמָּה וָחֵצִי – 3 halves

If you multiply these together, = 45 halves. Which is the gematria of **מה**.

The Ben Ish Chai says that this idea is hinted to in the Pasuk where Dovid HaMelech says: **ה׳ אֲדֹנֵינוּ מָה־אַדִּיר שִׁמְךָ בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ** – '***O L-rd, our Master, how mighty is Your name in all the earth***!' (Tehillim 8:10) We are nothing. We can look up to the skies and see the greatness

and gadluss of The Riboino Shel Olam, but then realise just how small we are in comparison.

The truth is, that we always need an equilibrium and synthesis of these two ideals. The greatness of Hashem – who loves us and brings us closer to Him, regardless of how far away we might be and the smallness of who and what we are in comparison.

In fact, says the Ben Ish Chai, that the tallest letter in the Aleph Beis, is a Lamed (**ל**) and the smallest letter in the Aleph Beis, is a Yud (**י**). Together the letters spell the word **לי**.

There is a Pasuk (**ישעיהו פרק מג פסוק כא**) that says: **עַם־זוּ יָצַרְתִּי לִי תְּהִלָּתִי יְסַפֵּרוּ** - '***This people I formed for Myself; they shall recite My praise***.' – We were created with a **ל** and a **י**. We have both attributes of appreciating the gadlus of Hashem, and at the same time acknowledge our smallness!

The Ben Ish Chai explains our Pasuk **דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה** (25:1) – The **לִי** is reference to both these attributes!

The main point brought out, is that if a person really wants to get close to The Riboino Shel Olam, **מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ** - '***from every person whose heart inspires him***.' A person must throw himself into doing the avodas Hashem with gusto. And then The Riboino Shel Olam, will, B'ezras Hashem will give us the Siyata D'shmaya to become closer to Him.

"The important part of Torah learning is the effort put into the learning. It's not the getting there, it's the going." - Reb Shlomo Freifeld

"The door of success is marked "push" and "pull." Achieving success is knowing when to do what." ~~ Yiddish Proverb

Rabbi Yechiel Emanuel- Leil Shishi Series

לעילוי נשמת ר׳גרשון בן ר׳אריה ליב זצ"ל- נפטר כ׳ט שבט תשע׳ד



The Aron had the Eidus HaTorah inside it. It is fascinating that when we look at the Aron, it stands out as being completely unique in the measurements it should be made. All the measurements are fractions and not integers. If you look at the dimensions of the Aron: **אַמָּתַיִם וָחֵצִי אָרְכּוֹ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי רָחְבּוֹ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי קֹמָתוֹ** - ***two and a half cubits its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height*** – $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$.

The Baal Haturim tells us that this teaches us that anybody who learns Torah, must humble himself - **שכל מי שלומד תורה צריך לשבר ולהשפיל עצמו**. Without Torah, we are incomplete. Humility is symbolised by none of the measurements being integers.

And also with regard to the performance of the Mitzvos, If one only does a partial mitzva, and someone finishes it off, they are considered as doing the whole mitzvah - **אין המצוה נקראת אלא על שם גומרה**. However, with Torah learning, this is not the case.

With Torah learning, there is no end to the amount to be learnt, however this does not absolve one from studying Torah at any stage. We always have a responsibility to learn Torah.

Therefore, all the measurements of the Aron are fractions, to teach us that in reality, however much we study Torah, we will never finish it in its entirety! (But begin, we must.)

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וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ וְעָשִׂיתָ עָלָיו זֵר זָהָב סָבִיב – '***And you shall overlay it with pure gold; from inside and from outside you shall overlay it, and you shall make upon it a golden crown all around.*** ' (25:11)



The Aron was made of three boxes. The outer and inner box were made of gold, and the middle box was made from wood.

Rabbi Yehoshua Leib Diskin Zt'l says that the Pasuk and the Yerushalmi say that he would take the smaller gold box insert it into a wooden box and then insert both of these into the third golden box.

However Rashi seems to say a more logical way: **נָתַן שֶׁל עֵץ בְּתוֹךְ שֶׁל זָהָב וְשֶׁל זָהָב בְּתוֹךְ שֶׁל עֵץ** - *He placed the wooden one inside the golden one and the [other] golden one inside the wooden one.*

Rabbi Chaim Kaufman Zt'l would say that perhaps this can be compared to the two ways that a Yid is symbolic of the Aron:-

Firstly, a Yid must be **תּוֹכוֹ כְּבָרוֹ** the same - inside and outside. [A person should behave honestly and sincerely. What he says and thinks must be the same as what he does.] - **מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ**.

The question is, "Where do you begin your Avoda?"

You could say that you begin your avoda **מִבַּיִת** – First make sure that you are completely pure on the inside, and that will hopefully filter through and permeate all the way through to the outside as well – **וּמִחוּץ**.

Alternatively, you may not have the strength of character to do this alone, so you may start with the outside first, and then when that is

effective, move on to the inner self:- **חיצוניות מעוררת את הפנימיות (מסילת ישרים ז)** When you do actions, they will either become habitual, or will make you become that internally as well.

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Do The Maths

וְעָשִׂיתָ כַּפֹּרֶת זָהָב טָהוֹר אַמָּתַיִם וָחֵצִי אָרְכָּהּ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי רָחְבָּהּ '***And you shall make an ark cover of pure gold, two and a half cubits its length and a cubit and a half its width***.' (25:17)

The Aron had a lid (**כַּפֹּרֶת**). It was $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$ by a Tefach thick.

So how heavy was the lid ?

An **אמה** (cubit) x an **אמה** of water in Chazal's terms is equal to 8 **כיכר** (talents). Gold is 19.3 times denser than water.

So, 19.3 x 8 = 154.4 **כיכרות**.

A Tefach is a $\frac{1}{6}th$ of an **אמה**. So, $2\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$ by $\frac{1}{6}th$ = $\frac{5}{8}\ ths$ of an **אמה**. So, $\frac{5}{8}\ ths$ x 154.4 **כיכרות** = 96.5 **כיכרות**.

This is all based on usual measurements (**חול**). But when it comes to **דברים שבקדושה**, two measurements = one **קדוש**. Therefore in this case, it would equal $48\frac{1}{4}$ **כיכרות** of **קדוש**.

A **כיכר** of **קדוש** = $42\frac{1}{2}$ kilogrammes. So, $42\frac{1}{2}$ x $48\frac{1}{4}$ = 2050 kilogrammes. This means that the (**כַּפֹּרֶת**) lid itself weighed over 2 tons! (not even including the cheruvim!)

If you add this weight to the inner and outer gold box, (plus the wooden box which has a negligible weight) you will have a clearer understanding and appreciation of the words - **ארון נושא את נושאיו**. It would have been physically impossible for 4 people to carry this weight! The Aron had to carry them!

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The Cheruvim

וְהָיוּ הַכְּרֻבִים פֹּרְשֵׂי כְנָפַיִם לְמַעְלָה סֹכְכִים בְּכַנְפֵיהֶם עַל־הַכַּפֹּרֶת וּפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו אֶל־הַכַּפֹּרֶת יִהְיוּ פְּנֵי הַכְּרֻבִים
Their wings were spread upwards towards heaven, and their faces were facing one another. 25:20

Rav Yitzchak Elchanan Spektor and the Beis Yisrael learn from this set up, that it was a message for Klal Yisrael.

At all times, we must focus on two things that govern, and give us direction in our lives.

Firstly, we must strive to improve and go further in our avodas Hashem. We have to fly and go places to go **מדרגה למדרגה**.

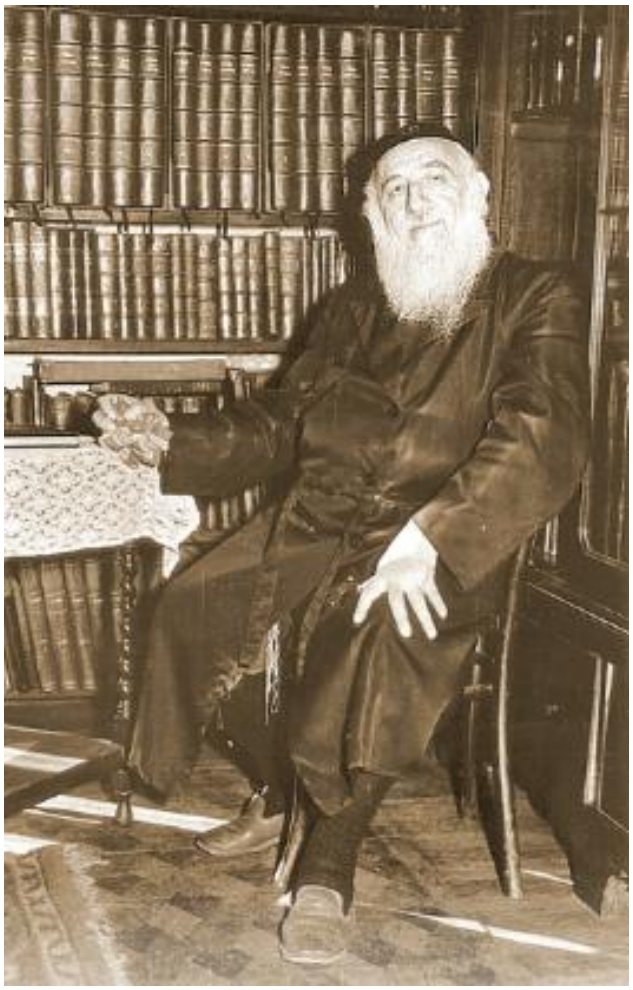
Secondly, this shouldn't be at the expense of our fellow man. We must always be looking out for each other. We must remain focused on one another.

The Gemarah Bava Basra 99a asks why with our cheruvim were they **אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו** but in Divrei Hayomim 2 (3:13) it describes the cheruvim that Shlomo Hamelech made for the 1st Beis Hamikdash, as **כַּנְפֵי הַכְּרוּבִים הָאֵלֶּה פֹּרְשִׂים... וּפְנֵיהֶם לַבָּיִת** ***'with their faces towards the House.'?***

So, the gemarah says, that when Klal Yisrael are doing the will of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, then the cheruvim are facing one another. But when we are not doing the **רצון ה'** then we are facing **פְּנֵיהֶם לַבָּיִת**.

כאן בזמן שישראל עושין רצונו של מקום - When two Yidden are facing each other – when we are looking out for one another, when we look to help one another, that's called **עושין רצונו של מקום**. When all I am

concerned about is my own needs (my four walls) that is **אין עושין רצונו של מקום**.



During the war, **the Shotzer Rebbe Shulem Moskovitz Zt'l** (1877 –1958) used to have many guests around his table for Shabbos meals. Rosh Hashana fell that year on Mon/Tue.

The Baker of the town started baking challos in preparation for Yom Tov on Moitze Shabbos. He stopped baking early, as he had Selichos on Sunday morning. So there was a shortage of challos.

The gabboim came to him and told him that there are enough challos for first night YomTov, but not for the remainder of Yomtov. He said, "I can't help you."

The Shotzer Rebbe met him about 4am on his way to the mikvah on Rosh Hashana morning, and said to the baker, "Listen, the townspeople require more challos for Yomtov. I want you to go back to your bakery and bake some more. You should daven your Shacharis in between bakes, and at 12 o'clock we will blow Shofar. If you are delayed, we will wait for you."

The Baker said, "Rebbe, the reason why I got up early was to say Tehillim before davening."

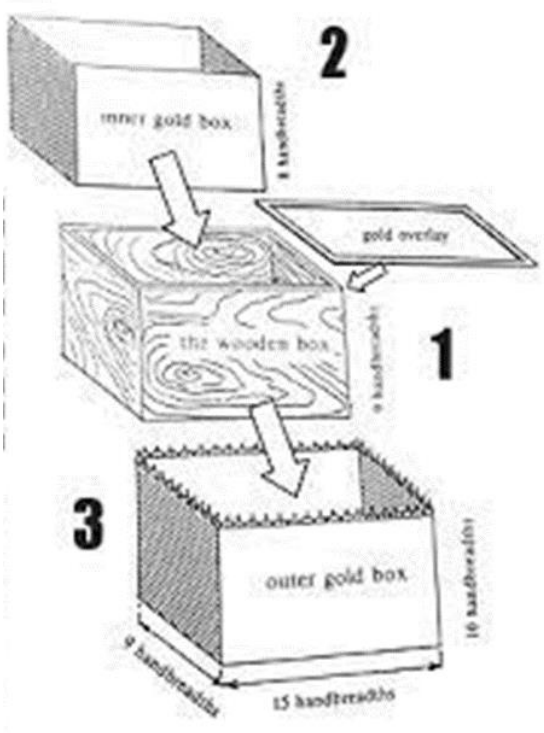
The Rebbe said, "Don't worry, I will say Tehillim for you."

"Rebbe, are you sure that's what the Riboino Shel Olam wants from me?" The Rebbe said, "If I knew how to do what you do- I would swop places with you! There's nothing more that The Riboino Shel

Olam wants on Rosh Hashana than Yidden should be looking out for one another. This is the needs of the tzibbur, and something that you can do for them."

וּפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו – This is what Hashem wants from us!

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Rav Shimshon Rephael Hirsch Zt'l asks why does the Torah say about the Aron - **וְעָשׂוּ אֲרוֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים** – '***They shall make an ark of acacia wood***.' (25:10)? It is significantly and predominantly – GOLD? The amount of wood in it is negligible both in size/weight and value?

The Aron is comprised of two materials: Gold and wood. Wood is something that is alive and grows. Whereas gold is a raw metallic material that is used for strength, e.g. armour, shields and ammunition. It has a power and strength that wood does not have, but it doesn't grow.

The Aron represents a Torah observant Jew, both internally and externally. But one is growing and must remain growing at all times. This is represented by the wood, which is the most important thing.

However, as a person is growing, he must be shielded from two types of influences – Influences from the outside, that may deflect a person away from his avodas Hashem. For that we have a shield of gold as a protection, on the exterior.

We also require a metal protective shield on the inside, to protect us from internal turmoil e.g., Kinah, Gaavah, Kavod, Taaveh etc. which could also hamper a persons growth in avodas Hashem.

Therefore we need **מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ**. The gold is not the main part of who he is, it is there just to protect him – from within and without! The main part is to grow – the **עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים**.

The Aron had rings, into which were put the *badim* -poles. **וְיָצַקְתָּ לּוֹ אַרְבַּע טַבְּעֹת זָהָב וְנָתַתָּה עַל אַרְבַּע פַּעֲמֹתָיו... וְעָשִׂיתָ בַדֵּי עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים... וְהֵבֵאתָ אֶת־הַבַּדִּים בַּטַּבָּעֹת עַל צַלְעֹת הָאָרֹן** ***And you shall bring the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark*** (25:12-14)

What were the **צַלְעֹת הָאָרֹן** ? Rashi understands it to mean: **צִדּוֹ** -the side of the Aron – like the ribs of a person are on his side.

What are the **אַרְבַּע פַּעֲמֹתָיו** mentioned in Pasuk **יב**? Rashi understands it to mean - its corners. They were attached to the upper corners, close to the ark cover.

Says the **Even Ezra**, you will never find anywhere else that a corner is called **פַּעֲמֹתָיו** ? We do find this wording with regards to legs e.g. - **מַה־יָּפוּ פְעָמַיִךְ בַּנְּעָלִים** (Shir Hashirim 7:2)

This shows us that the Aron actually had legs, like the Shulchan and the menorah. The poles were inserted into rings which were attached to these legs.

Rabbi Pinchos Roberts zt'l asks why are these legs called **פַּעֲמֹתָיו** ? Why not just say **ארבע רגליו**?

He answers, that **רגליים** are static legs, whereas **פַּעֲמֹתָיו** are FOOTSTEPS! A Yid has to be moving and always growing and taking steps!!

"Hashem is constantly arranging everything for the best; If things seem otherwise, it is only because we do not yet see how they fit into the larger pattern." – Rabbi Avraham J Twerski [Stories to Inspire]

The Shotzer Rebbe Shulem Moskovitz Zt'l (R' P Dunner)



He was born in 1877 in Vybranivk Galicia (now Ukraine). He was named after the Sar Shulem of Belz. He died in London on 22 Teves 5718 (1958) and is buried in the Adath Yisroel cemetery in Enfield. An ohel was built over his grave. His gravesite is known as a source of yeshuos and people from all over the world travel to his kever to seek salvations; it is a place of pilgrimage every Friday

Rabbi Shulem left a very interesting ethical will specifying that it should be published and publicised after he died. Part of it is affixed to the wall of the ohel.

It is an amazing text, containing an incredible posthumous promise for anyone could come to his grave and ask for his help, as long as they undertake to better themselves in at least one way in exchange.

These are the Shotzer Rebbes actual words:

"***It is well known that I have always tried to help people repent from their evil ways, and thank G-d, I have succeeded many times. Therefore, anybody that needs any kind of help, or to be healed from a sickness, whether for themselves or for someone else, should go to my grave, preferably on a Friday before noon, and they should light a candle for my neshamah, and make their request. They should state their name, and their mother's name.***

And if they do that, I will certainly intercede on their behalf with my saintly ancestors, asking that they awaken G-d's mercy for a Yeshuah or a Refuah."

What an incredible promise to make. Only a holy man like the Shotzer Rebbe could make such a promise and be confident that his heavenly prayers would make a difference.

There are many people who have had their prayers answered. Miracles have happened. Lives have been changed forever. A light has appeared when all hope was lost.

But you know the score, there is no such thing as a free lunch!

Of course, the Rebbe never intended his promise to be a one-way street. He didn't just offer to pray for someone and grant them a blessing without asking from them something back in return. There is a commitment attached to those who pray at his grave.

His message at his gravesite, express this in very serious unequivocal terms…

"***Any person coming to visit the Shotzer Rebbe's kever, looking for a Refuah or Yeshuah, must first commit to improving their standard of Yiddishkeit in a meaningful way.***

For example: Someone who has kept their business open on Shabbos until now, if they want him to pray for them, then they must promise that from now on, they will keep their business closed on Shabbos. Or if a person usually shaves with a razor, from now on, they must promise to shave in a halachically permitted way. Or if the supplicant is a woman who doesn't cover her hair, from now on she must cover her hair. Or a person who does not keep Taharas Hamishpacha, must commit to keeping it from now on."

None of these are small changes to be made in your life. They are big and meaningful changes. But only if you commit to these changes, will the Shotzer Rebbe intercede on your behalf.

The will at the gravesite finishes with these words:-

"***Everything that I am saying here needs to be clearly known to those who come to my grave. They must keep their promise, and not try to deceive me – G-d forbid, otherwise, I will be very angry. Unfortunately, there is already far too much deceit in this world!***"

May the merit of the tzadik Rabbi Shulem Moshkovitz protect us all. Amen

Rabeinu B'Chayai – [Introduction to Parshas Yisro]



The Healing Power Demonstrated By A Kind Word

מַרְפֵּא לָשׁוֹן עֵץ חַיִּים וְסֶלֶף בָּהּ שֶׁבֶר בְּרוּחַ (משלי טו, ד)

"A healing tongue is a tree of life, but a crooked one causes a broken spirit." (Proverbs 15:4).

In this verse Shloime Hamelech informed us of the tremendous usefulness of the power of speech. The tongue, i.e. the words spoken by the tongue, are the remedy capable of healing the mentally sick and depressed.

Curing a sick mind by means of the right words is a greater medical achievement than curing by means of organic or inorganic medicines.

Whenever one employs external agents, it is doubtful if they will accomplish their purpose. Even when these medicines remove the disease or sickness, they do not add to one's life span.

Using one's power of speech to effect a cure does not result in a doubtful cure but its effect is usually prompt and beyond question. Such a cure has the potential of increasing the patient's life span. It is like a tree of life to which life is attached.

Mental anguish and sickness is far more serious than a bodily dysfunction as it is likely to result in a broken spirit. Proverbs 18:14 states: רוּחַ־אִישׁ יְכַלְכֵּל מַחֲלֵהוּ וְרוּחַ נְכֵאָה מִי יִשָּׂאֶנָּה "***a man's spirit can sustain him during sickness, but who can lift up a dejected spirit?***"

The meaning of this verse is that the spirit, i.e. the soul, is able to relieve the sickness of the body to an extent as it sustains the sick body by itself going without food or drink for many days and offering solace to the body. When the mind is sick however, who can sustain it? Who will offer it solace or comfort?

Furthermore, just as there are physical afflictions so there are mental diseases. The latter are more serious and harder to combat than diseases of the body. Most people suffering mental disease are victims of sins committed or are the result of such a person (mind) having believed in the wrong values.

By having provided man with the ability to speak and to communicate his thoughts to others, G-d has given man a decisive advantage over all other creatures. He enabled us to heal people whose minds are sick and to bring them close to the protective wings of G-d's presence, the Shechinah (compare Ruth 2:12). Being under these protective wings of the Shechinah means to enjoy true and everlasting life.

Avraham Avinu possessed this attribute of being able to heal spirits and this enabled him to attract so many people to the one and only

G-d. All of this he achieved by healing people through judicious use of his tongue. When the sages describe that he had a pearl around his neck which conferred a cure upon people they meant the power of speech.

We are told that the single pearl which hung around Avraham's neck had the effect that any sick person who looked at it would be cured instantly. When Avraham died G-d took this pearl and made it part of the planet sun.

The Midrash obviously needs elucidation as it is a euphemism expressing a certain idea. The author compared Avraham's attribute which enabled him to gain converts to monotheism to the sun and its ability to illuminate matters that were previously concealed.

The mention of Avraham's neck in this connection is to be understood as the source of the "pearl" being in his throat (voice box?), the source of verbalising one's thoughts. What the author of the Midrash meant was that anyone suffering from spiritual dejection who listened to Avraham's words would be cured. When Avraham died, he did not leave behind him any person or creature capable of teaching the Divinity of G-d and His uniqueness other than the planet sun; this is why G-d removed this "pearl" and hung it around the "sun in its orbit."

This is confirmed by Psalms 19:2: "the heavens proclaim G-d's glory," and this is also the meaning of the words **מרפא לשון עץ חיים** which we quoted from Proverbs as the introduction to this essay.

The healing power demonstrated by the judicious use Avraham made of his tongue was the reason that so many of the people with whom he came into contact adopted his belief in monotheism.

"One who has Bitachon sees miracles every day." – Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneersohn.



וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ You shall cover it with pure gold, from within and from without shall you cover it. (25:11)

Chazal (*Yoma* 72b) derive from here that a *talmid chacham*, Torah scholar, should be consistent; in other words, his inner character must correspond with his public demeanour: *Tocho k'baro;* his internal rectitude should coincide with his outward conduct. The Torah does not brook hypocrisy.

The *Aron HaKodesh,* which is the repository of the Torah scroll, symbolises the crown of Torah. As it is covered with gold both within and without, it alludes to the requisite character of a Torah scholar.

Horav Yitzchak Zilberstein, Shlita, relates a *shailah,* that was posed to him by an individual who thought that he had crossed the line of personal integrity, feeling that how he had presented himself did not exactly give a clear picture of him.

A *meshulach*, fundraiser, visited London for the purpose of soliciting the Jewish community for the organisation that he represented. When he reached the home of a distinguished philanthropist, the man, who had been in the middle of studying *Gemorah*, said to him, "I am having difficulty understanding a *Tosfos*. If you can explain this *Tosfos* to me, I will give you a very large donation."

The *meshulach* was a learned man, but was unprepared to explain the *Tosfos* to the man's satisfaction. He walked out with the usual cheque – nothing extra. He walked outside and met another *meshulach* who was about to try his luck. He related to him what had occurred and suggested that, prior to soliciting this man, he should carefully review the *Tosfos* (he showed him which one) and be prepared to present a satisfying explanation.

The second *meshulach* stopped by the nearest *bais medrash* and reviewed the *Tosfos* with all of its super commentaries. He was now certain that he could answer any question concerning the *Tosfos*.

The second *meshulach* knocked on the door of the man's home and was invited in. The host was poring over a tome of *Talmud*, and when he looked up at the *meshulach*, he said, "Let me ask you a question. For some time, I have been stumped by a question that continues to bother me concerning a *Tosfos* I am studying. If you can explain it to me, I will contribute a large donation to your organisation.

The *meshulach*, of course, now being proficient in that particular *Tosfos*, immediately explained it to the shocked – but very happy – man. He immediately wrote out a cheque for a considerable amount of money. The *meshulach* could not believe his good fortune.

A week later, however, when the *meshulach* had returned home, he was troubled by his actions. Did he transgress the prohibition of *geneivas daas*, stealing one's mind, misrepresentation, deception? After all, the wealthy contributor had no idea that the man who stood before him had spent time preparing the *Tosfos*. Had he gone in "cold" as his predecessor had, he too, would have walked out with a less-than considerable donation.

The *meshulach* was a man of integrity. He did not want to do anything that might have a taint of unacceptable behaviour. He turned to *Rav* Zilberstein to clarify the *halachah*.

The *Rav* brought the question to ***Horav Chaim Kanievsky, zl***, who ruled that it was not a question of *geneivas daas*. On the contrary, it was a clear example of *siyata d'Shmaya*, Divine assistance. Hashem provided the second *meshulach* with an opportunity through which he could receive a large donation.

Rav Chaim cited an instance which occurred concerning ***Horav Yitzchak Elchanan Spektor, zl***, which was closely related to the incident that occurred with the *meshulach*.

As a young man, *Rav* Yitzchak Elchanan became *Rav* in a small town. As he travelled to accept his position, he stopped in an inn (owned by a Jew) to spend the night. He asked the innkeeper if he had any *sefarim* from which he could learn.

The innkeeper said that all he had was a *Derech Chaim Siddur* with a *halachic* commentary authored by *Horav Yaakov Lorberbaum, zl* (author of *Nesivos HaMishpat* and *Chavas Daas*, both classics).

Rav Yitzchak Elchanan spent part of the night studying the laws pertaining to *Krias HaTorah* and the *kashrus* of a Torah scroll. The day he arrived in the town, a question was raised concerning the community *Sefer Torah's* suitability. It "just so happened" that he had learned the *halachah* that addressed this question the night before.

This was a clear instance of *siyata d'Shmaya*. If we would only open our eyes, we would see how often Hashem provides us with opportunities for success.

The Torah Is Our Guide; It Is Life Itself

וְנָתַתָּ אֶת־הַכַּפֹּרֶת עַל־הָאָרֹן מִלְמָעְלָה וְאֶל־הָאָרֹן תִּתֵּן אֶת־הָעֵדֻת ***You shall place the lid on the Aron from above, and into the Aron you shall put the Testimony***. *(25:21)*

Hashem gave us His Torah, from which He cannot separate. He asked that we build a Sanctuary, so that the Torah will be there. Wherever the Jewish people move, the *Mishkan* will follow – and so will Hashem. Thus, the *Mishkan* serves the Torah, unlike the other vessels which serve the *Mishkan*. Since the *Mishkan* is present for the *Aron*, the *Aron* "enters" it *bi'shleimus*, in complete perfection – with the Torah within it.

We should never err in thinking that the focal point is the *Mishkan*. It is the Torah – as is everything in our *avodas hakodesh*, holy service. The Torah is our guide; it is our life; indeed, it is life itself.

This is the approach one should take upon learning Torah. It is not merely an attempt at mental gymnastics. It is life itself. When we study Torah, we come alive. Whoever does not understand this has not yet learned.

The following story took place about forty-years ago.

Two brothers, twins, Yair and Ariel, changed schools. They had originally been in a *mamlachti*, secular, school, in Kiryat Ono, and now transferred to She'eris Yisrael in Petach Tikvah. A tragedy that had taken the life of their father precipitated this change.

During a visit to the Unites States, they were all – two brothers, a young sister, and the parents – taking a road trip when it began to snow. It does not snow often in *Eretz Yisrael*. As a result, the father was unprepared for the icy roads which caused him to skid off the highway and fall hundreds of feet off a cliff. Miraculously, the mother and three children survived the accident, but the father did not.

Having witnessed such a revealed miracle, the mother decided to change her spiritual leanings. The first step was to enrol her sons in a *frum*, observant, school.

The story does not end here. This is only the beginning.

Yair and Ariel travelled daily from Kiryat Ono to Petach Tikvah. It was not an easy trip, but the boys did not complain, as they slowly acclimatised to their new, observant lifestyle. They learned quickly and were receiving excellent grades until they started learning *Gemorah*.

Ariel experienced great difficulty. He listened; he studied; but he could not pass the test. Finally, he informed his mother that he was not returning to school due to the difficulty he had with *Gemorah*.

This was not acceptable to his mother. She decided to let him sleep on it.

The next day, Ariel presented himself with his backpack on his shoulders, prepared to leave for school. "Ariel, what changed your mind?" his mother asked. "I cannot explain it, but last night *Abba* appeared to me in a dream. He was sporting a beard and *payos*, and he told me, 'I will learn the *Gemorah* with you.'



I asked him how he knew *Gemorah*. We were not yet observant when he was so tragically taken from us. He explained, 'Because of my two sons learning, my *neshamah* has been allowed entrance into *Gan Eden*. I am able to listen to your learning (the *rebbe's* teaching), and I understand the lesson. Therefore, I am able to teach it to you.'

This is what happened. *Abba* studied with me all night. I now feel that I understand the *Gemorah*."

Ariel told his mother, "*Abba* asked me to convey a message to you that your decision to have the family become observant is excellent, and you should continue to have us grow in Torah."

The mother broke down, weeping profusely. She feared that her son was suffering from an overactive subconscious, convincing himself that his dream was real. What would happen when he arrived in school and failed the test because he did not know the material?

Her fears were unfounded. Ariel negotiated the test and came out at the top of his class. The *rebbe* was so impressed that he called the mother and told her so. She wept into the phone. "You will not believe who taught him the *Gemorah*," she said.

When she shared with him what had occurred, he did not know if he should laugh or cry. He thought that both Ariel and his mother had become unhinged. Fathers do not appear in dreams to teach their children. On the other hand, the day before, Ariel had been totally clueless concerning the *Gemorah*.

The *rebbe* asked Ariel to repeat the dream, which he did. The words expressed by his father, "I am learning here exactly what you are learning," made the *rebbe* think twice. It was a concept which he may have heard, but he had never known anyone who had experienced it.

This story allows us a glimpse into the relationship between this world and *Olam Habba*, and how children can, with the power of Torah, catalyse extraordinary *nachas* and *illuy neshamah* for their parents. *Ki heim chayeinu*, "For they are our life": Torah is our life in this world and in the World-of-Truth.



וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁים לַמִּשְׁכָּן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים עֹמְדִים ***You shall make the planks of the Mishkan of shittim (acacia) wood****. (26:15)*

Rashi comments that Yaakov *Avinu* anticipated the need for lumber for the building of the *Mishkan*. Aware that wood was not a commodity one found in the barren wilderness, he planted these trees in Egypt upon his arrival.

He instructed his children that when they would eventually leave Egypt – at the end of their exile – they should take the wood with them.

Horav Doniel Alter, Shlita (son of the ***Pinchas Menachem***), adds that immediately upon his arrival in what was to be *galus Mitzrayim*, the Egyptian exile, Yaakov sought to imbue his children and all his future descendants with belief in the *Geulah*, Redemption.

Throughout our tumultuous history of persecution libels, pogroms and Holocaust, what kept us going was the belief and hope that one day it would all end.

Imagine a young child walks by the home of his aged grandfather, Yaakov, and he notices the tall trees growing in the backyard. He asks for an explanation, since he has not seen such trees anywhere else. His grandfather tells him that one day Hashem will liberate us from the land of Egypt, and we will be commanded to make a Sanctuary for Him. These trees will be used as part of the structure.



Furthermore, these tall trees could be noticed from distant places such as Ramses, where the Jews were struggling under the watchful eyes of their Egyptian taskmasters. When they saw the trees, they were infused with a sense of hope for better days, when they would leave this accursed land. Yaakov showed us the way to inculcate our children and future descendants with *emunah*, faith in Hashem, and hope for an end to our *galus*. Providing our children with tangible, concrete symbols of *Yiddishkeit*, in addition to including them in every aspect of the tradition, helps them to maintain a strong identity and bond with *Yiddishkeit*.

Our problems emerge when we eschew tradition: turn our backs on the past; lose our sense of pride and identity; encounter breaches in our legacy and rifts with our children.

Parenting entails responsibility: the responsibility to imbue each of our children with a clear, untarnished Jewish religious identity. He should know who he is, from whom he has descended, and which direction we would like (expect) to see him follow. We must invest

him with a strong, vibrant *emunah*, faith, so that he has the strength and ability to withstand and overcome the challenges he will confront in life. The greatest tool which we possess to teach our children is our example. When he sees our positive actions, how we live authentically, maintaining spiritual integrity and adhering to our core values, he respects us and views our lifestyle as one he, too, would want to live.

When *Klal Yisrael* saw the trees growing in Yaakov's garden, they were infused with hope – hope for a better day – a day on which the exile and its suffering would end.

Years ago, this story saw light in *Peninim*. It impacts an inspiring lesson. A young boy was sent with his family to the dread Auschwitz death camp. For a short while, father and son shared a barrack. Despite the unspeakable, debasing horrors to which the Jewish captives were subjected, many of them held on tightly to whatever vestiges of Jewish religious observance they were able.

One winter, every one of the internees reminded his fellow prisoners that the festival of *Chanukah* was approaching. In two days, the first *Chanukah* light would be kindled in Jewish homes throughout the world.

The Nazi murderers wanted to destroy the Jewish people and their laws and rituals with them. This was all the more reason to defy them – even at the risk of their lives.

They quickly devised a plan for enabling the lighting of the first candle. One of the men was able to fashion a makeshift menorah from metal scraps that he found. For a wick, he took some threads from his prison uniform. For oil, they used some butter he was able to "purchase" from a guard. Understandably, such observances were strictly prohibited. To be caught meant almost certain death. Yet, these men felt that it was important. The Nazis could take their bodies, but they could not severe their bond with Hashem.

When the young boy took all this in, he wondered to his father, "I can understand the scrap metal – it has no value. What are a few threads from a uniform? The butter, however, was food and could be used for nourishment. Why 'waste' something from which they could benefit?"

His father replied, "My dear son, both you and I know that a person can live a long time without food. I want you to know a person cannot live a single day without hope. This is the fire of hope. Never let it be extinguished – not here – not anywhere.

With this in mind, we have a new perspective on the *Karshei ha'Miskhan*. These planks were no ordinary construction grade wood. These planks were derived from Yaakov *Avinu's* "trees of hope." They held up the *Mishkan* either in our midst or in our hearts. We have hope, because we have a connection with the Torah, with Hashem. If we lose hope, we are lost.



In the winter of 2004, a tsunami crashed down on eleven countries in Southern Asia, killing over 170,000 people. One minute, they were sitting comfortably on the beach, staring at the calm waters and enjoying the warm sun; the next minute, they saw to their horror, forty-foot waves come crashing down on them.

Some people survived the calamity. Those who tried to outrun the raging waters that crashed down on the beach were not successful. One man (there were also others) did not run from the water. Instead, he climbed a tree and held on for dear life. The water swept by beneath while he was wrapped tightly on top of the tree.

Rabbi Paysach Krohn cites ***Horav Chaim Volozhiner, zl*** (*Ruach Chaim Pirkei Avos* 6:7), who comments on the *pasuk, Eitz Chaim hee*

la'machazikim bah, "It is a tree of life to those who grasp it" (*Mishlei* 3:18): "The world is like a raging sea, with its waves storming to sink/drown someone in the depths of his desires and ambitions. One who wishes to be spared from the effects of the outside world should grasp and cling to the Tree of Life – the Torah."

A powerful lesson. We have survived because we have held onto the Torah. It has given us hope and has comforted us during the vicissitudes of life. It has kept us strong and encouraged us when the *yetzer hora*, evil inclination, has attempted to sink us in a sea of desire and immorality. We have held on for thousands of years, and we will continue to do so until that glorious day when *Moshiach Tzidkeinu* will issue the clarion call for our redemption.



Hashem is the Baal HaBayis

The only time the Torah uses the word *Baal Habayis* is in Parashas Mishpatim (22:7), **ונקרב בעל הבית אל האלקים**, and it refers to a *shomer*, someone who is watching an object for somebody else.

We would expect the *Baal Habayis* to be the item's owner, not the one guarding it!

This is a reminder for all people who feel proud that they are the *Baal Habayis* and have wealth, to know that they are nothing more than a guardian. It states (Chagi 2:8) **לי הכסף ולי הזהב נאום ה'** - "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, says Hashem."

Hashem gave you the money to support your family and to help others, but everything belongs to Him.

Generally, when someone asks for money for a donation, he begins the conversation by explaining why he is asking for money. For example, he will say, "I have a child to marry off, and I need money to make the chasunah." Or, "I have a yeshiva of one hundred *bachurim,* and the yeshiva needs money." - First, the need is explained and then comes the request for money.



But in this week's Parashah, Hashem asks Bnei Yisrael to donate, and at first, Hashem doesn't give the reason. Then, eight pesukim later, Hashem reveals the reason He is asking for money **וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם** (25:8) "They shall make me a Mikdash, and I will dwell in their midst."

Reb Moshe Feinstein explains that it is written in this unusual manner to remind Klal Yisrael Who is the true owner of their wealth.

If you would give someone money to guard and then approach that person and say, "Please give me back the money I gave you," that should be sufficient. It is your money. You don't need to provide a reason for your request.

Hashem wanted the Yidden to know that their money was His. Therefore, he told them to give "Gold, silver, copper…" They have no choice in the matter because the money isn't theirs. And therefore, only at the end Hashem told them that their donations were for the building of the Mishkan.

The nation shouldn't think they are doing Hashem a favour when they give money to build the Mishkan.

Avodas Hashem

We can accomplish great things with our *avodas Hashem*, far greater than we can imagine.

The Midrash (Shemos Rabba 34:1) writes on the Pasuk **וְעָשׂוּ אֲרֹון עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים** 25:10. Hakadosh Baruch Hu never…requests from His creations more than they can do. When Hashem gave them the Torah on Har Sinai, He came to them in accordance with their strength. This is as it states (Tehillim 29:4) **קול ה' בכח**, in accordance with the strength of each individual. Also, when Hakadosh Baruch Hu told Moshe to build a Mishkan, Moshe wondered, 'Hashem's honour fills the upper and the lower worlds, and He is asking for a Mishkan?! [How can we possibly build a Mishkan sufficient for Hashem to dwell there?].'

Hakadosh Baruch Hu replies, 'I do not intend as you think. I am asking for twenty kerashim (planks) on the north side, twenty on the southern side, and eight to the west. And…I will bring the Shechinah to dwell within a square amah (of the Kodesh HaKadoshim)."

This is a wonderful lesson: Hashem doesn't ask from us more than we can do, and our minimal abilities are sufficient in Hashem's eyes.

The Ropshitzer Rav zt'l (Zera Kodesh **ד"ה ועשו**) quotes this Midrash and explains that the aron was made with **עצי שיטים**, which represents aveiros because Chazal (Sotah 3.) says, "A person doesn't sin unless he received a **רוח שטות**, a foolish spirit." So, the **עצי שיטים** represents this foolishness that enters a person when he sins.

Furthermore, **שטים** is gematriya **שט"ן**, which causes us to commit aveiros. A person thinks he can't correct his aveiros because there are so many. Hashem replies that His expectations of us are in accordance with our strengths and abilities.

"I will Dwell amongst Them."

This week's parashah discusses the halachos of how to build the Mishkan. The Torah applies to all generations, so there is a concept of Mishkan even today.

It says, (25:8) **ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם**, "They shall make for me a sanctuary and I will dwell in *them*."

It should have said **ושכנתי בתוכו**, "I will dwell in *it*."

The Alshich explains **ושכנתי בתוכם**, Hashem dwells in them literally in every Yid. Therefore, it is written in plural form, because Hashem wants to reside within every Yid.

This is an amazing revelation and something we should strive to attain. In this generation, there is no Mishkan or Beis HaMikdash, but Hashem wants to reside with us, in the hearts and the *neshamos* of Bnei Yisrael.

Let us recognize the holiness of a Yid, especially a Yid who lives according to the Torah and turns himself into Hashem's home in this world.

And it isn't only his self that becomes a Mishkan. **Reb Moshe Feinstein zt'l** says that one can also turn his home into being a Mishkan. A Jewish home is a place where mitzvos are performed, and future generations are raised. The home can become a miniature Mishkan, and this is the Mishkan that is constructed in every generation.

"Bitachon is the antidote to fear. When we trust in Hashem, we are able to let go of our fears and embrace the journey of life with joy and peace." – Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky

Creating a Mishkan in Your Individual Way

Reb Moshe Feinstein zt'l (Darash Moshe) clarifies that there is a fundamental difference between Hashem's dwelling place in the desert, in the Mishkan, to Hashem's dwelling place in our times, which is in the neshamah of a Yid or in a Yiddishe home.

He explains that the Mishkan has set laws, exactly how it should appear. However, when one turns his neshamah into a sanctuary for Hashem, and likewise, when one turns his home into a Mishkan for Hashem to dwell there, there aren't set, rigid laws. Each person serves Hashem somewhat differently, and each person, in his individual way, creates a place for Hashem.

This brings us to the important discussion of serving Hashem according to your own way. One shouldn't copy others. Instead, he should recognize the strengths, talents, and abilities that Hashem gave him and use them for avodas Hashem.

There's a Midrash (*Yalkut Shimoni, Mishlei*, **תתקל"ב**) that expresses the importance of serving Hashem according to the talent Hashem gave you:

"Reb Elazar Hakapar's nephew, Chiya, had a beautiful voice. Reb Elazar Hakapar would tell him, 'Chiya, honour Hashem with the talent Hashem gave you. Navos had a beautiful voice, and when he went to Yerushalayim for the *yomim tovim*, everyone would gather around him to listen to him sing.

One year, he didn't go to Yerushalayim, and dishonest people testified falsely against him, and he was killed (see *Melachim* 1, ch.21). Why did this happen to him?

It's because he didn't go to Yerushalayim to honour Hashem with the talent Hashem granted him.'"

Reb Meir Shapiro was a chassid of **Rebbe Yisrael of Chortkov *zt'l***. One Shabbos, when Reb Meir Shapiro was in Chortkov, the Rebbe

asked him to daven at the *amud* (*Rosh Chodesh benching* and *Mussaf*).





After the *tefillah*, the Rebbe invited Reb Meir Shapiro to eat the Shabbos *seudah* with him. When the meal was over and Reb Meir Shapiro left the Rebbe's home, people saw Reb Meir beaming with joy. They asked him what had happened at the meal that made him so happy.

He told them that the Rebbe praised him for the tefillos he *davened* at the *amud*. The Rebbe was saying, "Ah! Reb Meir! Your tefillah! Your *Rosh Chodesh benching*! The *mussaf*! It was so beautiful."

Reb Meir Shapiro said to the Rebbe, "If the Rebbe enjoys my tefillah so much, perhaps I should leave Sanik, where I'm the Rav, and I should become the *chazan* here?"

The Chortkover Rebbe explained to Reb Meir Shapiro that everyone has his primary life mission. "You are a *talmid chacham*, a talented teacher, and you have all the talents to be a *Rosh Yeshiva*. Therefore, that is your life's mission."

Soon afterward, Reb Meir Shapiro opened the Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin, where he channelled all his abilities to teach Torah to Yidden.

He understood that this was his life's calling and invested all his energies into succeeding in his individual mission.

Once, Reb Meir Shapiro was asked to represent the Jewish community in the Polish parliament. Reb Meir Shapiro asked Rebbe Yisrael of Tchortkov *zt'l* whether he should accept this position.

The Rebbe replied in a letter, "I received your letter, and I will tell you my opinion: - "A person can determine his life's assignment and the service that Hashem wants from him based on the talents Hashem endowed him with.

Hashem granted you a sharp mind, the acuity to delve into Torah and draw out beautiful diamonds and teach students. You have already established many outstanding students. If you accept this government position, it will take away from your *avodas hakodesh*.

On the other hand, in this political role as a representative, you will be able to do a lot of good for the Jewish community. Therefore, my advice is: Don't do any *hishtadlus* towards attaining this governmental position. But if the Agudah committee asks you to take on the position, accept it!"

Where your Heart Pulls You

Every person has a mission in the world, but how does one know what it is?

The answer is that there are signs. One sign is to follow where your heart pulls you. If this is your calling, your heart will draw you to it.

The Gemara (*Shabbos* 118:) states, **תיתי לי דקיימת ג' סעודת שבת** "I deserve reward because I keep the three meals of Shabbos."

Reb Yehudah said, "I deserve reward because I daven with *kavanah*."

Rav Hunah son of Rav Yehoshua said, "I deserve reward because I never walk four *amos* without covering my head."

Rav Sheshes said, "I deserve reward because I don't walk four *amos* without tefillin."

Reb Nachman said, "I deserve reward because I don't walk four *amos* without tzitzis."

Rav Yosef asked Rav Yosef the son of Rabba, "What was your father most cautious with?"

"Tzitzis. Once, he was climbing a ladder, and a string of his tzitzis ripped. He didn't come down until it was fixed!"

Abaya said, "I deserve reward because whenever I see a scholar finish a *masechta*, I make a *yom tov* for the *chachamim*." (Abaya was the *rosh yeshiva,* and he made a celebration meal for the students when there was a *siyum* – *Rashi*).

Rava said, "I deserve reward because when a Torah scholar comes before me to be judged in a *din Torah*, I don't go to sleep before I find a way to exonerate him."

The Netziv (*Haamek Davar*) explains that these scholars were sharing the particular mitzvah that they excelled in. Similarly, everyone should look in his heart, see where it calls him, and what his yearnings are, which is often a sign of what Hashem wants from him.

The Netziv writes, "If someone will ask you: Which approach to Torah study should I follow, and which mitzvos should I focus on? Reply (*Koheles* 11:9), **והלך בדרך לבך** - 'Follow your heart.'

Where your heart pulls you is a sign that your mazal understands that that is a good way for your soul."

"Falling is not failure, not getting up is failure." - R' Zecharia Wallerstein.

Parshah Thoughts - Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

All of the utensils of the Mishkan were ideally made of gold, but if there was no gold they could be made of other metals, besides for the Keruvim figures that were atop the Aron, which always had to be of gold (Mechilta, end of Mishpatim).

Rav Meir Shapiro (Imrei Da'as) explains that since the Keruvim represent the children, we are reminded that there can be no compromise on the quality of education and Chinuch that we are investing in them. It always has to be of the highest quality.

Working on our Middos

Rav Avigdor Miller, zt"l, once posed the following question: Why is the creation of the world described in the Torah in only 31 Pesukim, while the Mishkan, which only lasted for 39 years in the Midbar and then for a few hundred years in Eretz Yisroel, is described in five Parshiyos in the Torah? It seems like the creation of the world should have more attention!

He answers that the Mishkan is the blueprint for a Yiddishe home, and the centrepiece in a Jewish home has to be Torah.

Rav Miller taught, "Torah is the Jewish home, and Seforim should be front and centre in the Yiddishe home. Also, there should be pictures of Gedolim. In the Kodesh HaKodashim there are the images of two children, because the goal of a Jewish home is to teach the children and influence them to love Torah.

The Keruvim on top of the Aron HaKodesh are in an embrace, because the main thing in a Jewish home is that there should be Shalom, peace.

The mission statement of the Mishkan is love, unity, and friendship, and that is why there is so much focus on it in the Torah!"

L'Maaseh

The Poritz of a particular town once found it necessary to flee his home on very short notice. He approached Reb Yosef, a local Jew, and offered to sell him the entire village at a particularly low price.

Reb Yosef did not have anywhere near the sum the Poritz was asking for, but his wife urged him to sell everything they owned and take loans from various people in order to come up with the money. That way, they would be able to purchase the property and soon grow very wealthy.

Reb Yosef made the necessary arrangements and started heading over to the Poritz with the money. Suddenly, he heard a woman sobbing bitterly. When he inquired what was wrong, he learned that the woman had just lost her husband. She had small children at home and had no means to provide for them.

Overcome with mercy Reb Yosef gave the woman all the money in his pocket so that she could take care of her family.

Reb Yosef's deed caused a great tumult in Shamayim. Here was a man who had sacrificed a future of great wealth in order to help a fellow Yid!

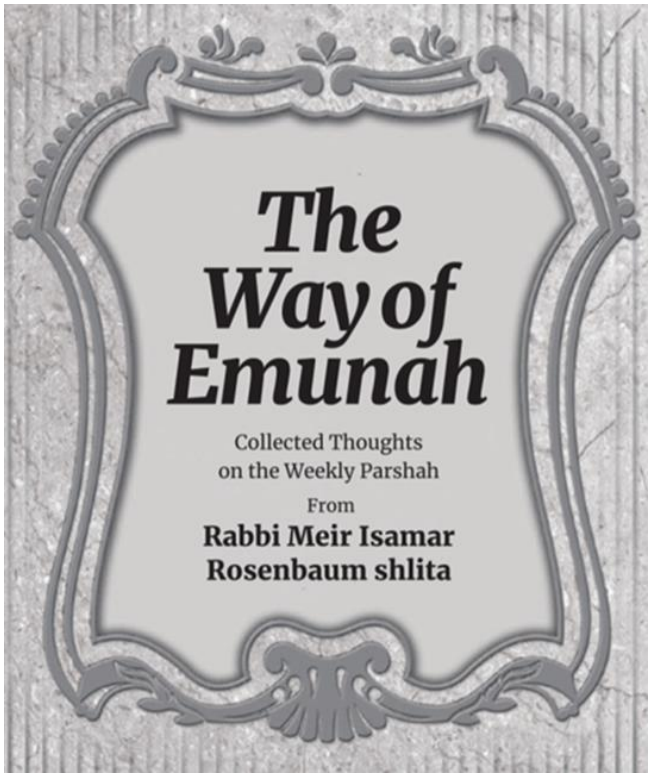
The Heavenly Court decided that in the merit of his noble deed, he would have a son who would illuminate the world with his greatness. However, the Satan strongly argued that Reb Yosef's kind deed was just by chance, and he surely already regretted his "foolish mistake."

It was decided that Reb Yosef would be tested to determine whether his actions had been sincere. An old man appeared to Reb Yosef and said that he heard about what he did to help a widow and her children, and he offered to purchase his Mitzvah for the full amount that he had given her.

Reb Yosef refused. He said, "All the gold and silver in the world could not compare in value to that Mitzvah!"

The old man then revealed to him that he was a messenger from Shamayim, and he was sent to inform Reb Yosef that in one year, his wife would give birth to baby boy. Until this point, Reb Yosef and his wife did not have any children.

When the child was born a year later, his parents named him Menachem Mendel. Little Menachem grew up to be **Rav Menachem Mendel of Rimanov, zt"l**, the great Tzadik and Chasidic Rebbe, who indeed lit up the world with his greatness!



Preparing The Donation in Advance

וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמָתִי ***And take for Me an offering. From every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My offering***. (25:2)

The Chida zt"l (Sefer Chomas Anach) explains the pasuk of **וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה** as follows: Some donors prepare money in advance so that when a poor person approaches them, they have it ready to give them. This is an easy and good method of giving charity.

It is known that every good idea and good middah is hinted to somewhere in the Torah. This good behaviour is hinted to from this verse. It says to "take a donation". This can be understood to mean that one should take out the money at a time when he is calm and collected so that he will be able to easily hand it over when he comes across a poor person.

When One Wants to Give Tzedakah, Hashem Gives Him Money to Do It



Alternatively, the Chida explains this pasuk by citing the Gemara (Bava Basra 9B) that says: "'One who pursues tzedakah and chesed will find life, tzedakah and honour (Mishlei 21:21).'

What does it mean when it says that one who pursues tzedakah will find tzedakah? This teaches us that if a person looks for ways to give tzedakah, Hashem will provide him with money in order to be able to give tzedakah."

This is hinted to in the pasuk that says: "Take for Me a donation, from every man who has a generous heart…" This can be understood to mean that if a person has a generous heart and wants to give tzedakah, his reward will be that he is given money so that he has the ability to give tzedakah.

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman- Torah Wellsprings

The Midrash talks about a ship that came to an inhabited island. They sent the only Yid aboard the ship to go to the island to bring back provisions. The Yid asked, "Why do you send specifically me? I'm a stranger on this island, just like you. No one knows me here. I will be all alone there…" The captain told him, "A Yid is never alone. As, **כה' אלקינו בכל קראנו אליו** - when you call to Hashem, Hashem is near you, and will help you."

Paid Back With Extra

The Riyatz of Lubavitch zy"a said as follows: Hashem never fails to repay a debt. He pays a person back for everything good that he does, but he also adds an extra bonus.

When we support orphaned children in Eretz Yisroel, Hashem provides all those who donate and all those who raise the funds with much nachas from their own children and grandchildren, and also from themselves."

The added words "and also from themselves" contain an extra bracha. As reward for helping children, Hashem will not only help the donors' children; He will also grant them whatever their hearts desire in ruchnius and gashmius.

One Is Not Silent When a Life May be in Danger

Rav Yisroel Grossman zt"l, Rosh Yeshivas Pinsk-Karlin, relates (in his Sefer Lev Yisroel, Parshas Chayei Sarah) that one of the communal activists in Yerushalaim once asked him to go to the home of the **Brisker Rov zt"l** and request a substantial donation for one of the great Torah scholars of Yerushalaim who needed money for an urgent surgery.

Rav Grossman relates, "I was puzzled by the request. The Brisker Rov was not a wealthy man by any stretch of the imagination. How could he possibly have that much money?

"Still and all, I couldn't say no to this important activist. I knew that he was a very persistent person who would not let me off the hook. So I went to the Rov's home and relayed the message. "The Rov looked at me and said, 'Look around. Look at my old table and chairs. Do you think I am wealthy?' I apologized and said that I had said the very same thing to the activist but he still forced me to come and ask because it was a matter of life and death."

The next morning, Rav Grossman heard loud knocking on his door. He opened it and saw **Rav Rafael Soloveitchik zt"l**, the son of the Brisker Rov, standing there, with a large sum of money in his hand.

He said to him, "My father could not sleep all night until he found someone to lend him the full amount needed for the surgery. Since you said it was a matter of life and death, he could not rest until he got hold of the money."

Cast Your Burden Upon Hashem

וְעָשִׂיתָ מְנֹרַת זָהָב טָהוֹר מִקְשָׁה תֵּיעָשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה... ***And you shall make a menorah of pure gold. The menorah shall be made of hammered work***...(25:31)

Rashi states: "*The menorah shall be made: By itself. Since Moshe found difficulty with how to make it. Hashem said to him, 'Cast the kikar into the fire, and it will be made by itself.*"

The Modzhitzer Rebe zy"a (Divrei Yisroel) says that this is a lesson that applies to every aspect of life that may be difficult. For example, obtaining parnassah is often very difficult.

The way to deal with this problem is to cast one's burden upon Hashem and let Him sustain you - **הַשְׁלֵךְ עַל־יְהוָה יְהָבְךָ וְהוּא יְכַלְכְּלֶךָ** (Tehillim 55:23). If we throw our "kikar" into the fire of Hashem, everything we need will be made by itself.

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם By Reuven Eckstein

Rabbi Moshe Sternbuch writes in Ta'am VeDa'as : That the **Zohar** says that If a person is **מקדש** his house **כמקדש מעט** and lives in holiness – then he will be zoche **לעתיד לבא** to build for himself a place to live in the **קדש הקדשים**!

Torah Compilations With Yossi

Parshat Terumah presents us with the fascinating details of the furnishing of the **משכן** in the wilderness. As a mobile sanctuary, it was important that every item within it could be transported from place to place. So, for example, for the **ארון**, the **שולחן** and the **מזבח**.

Hashem instructed us to place rings on the sides, and poles were inserted through the rings so that people could carry the poles on their shoulders and transport these **כלים** from one place to another.

However there was a major difference between the **ארון** on the one hand and the other vessels on the other.

With respect to the other vessels, once they reached their temporary resting place the poles were removed, and when the time came for them to be transported again, the poles were inserted. Not so, however, with respect to the Ark. When the Ark was put down, the poles were not removed. The Torah says, **לא יסרו ממנו** – "*Don't take them from the ark.*"

The poles were an inseparable part of the Ark. **The Meshech Chochmah** teaches us a beautiful lesson from this. He tells us that the Ark represents the centrality of the study of Torah and the practice of the mitzvot of Torah in our lives, and that's because the Ark housed the Ten Commandments and the Torah.

The poles represent the supporters of Torah. What we therefore find is that the supporters are as important as the implementers. There are all types of supporters. There are those who give financial support for the building and running of institutions, and then there are those who give encouragement to people to learn and to teach. Foremost amongst these are family members, and the finest example I can think of is Rachel, the wife of Rabbi Akiva. She encouraged her husband to go and study Torah and to become a great educator to the extent that we study from his teachings to this very day. But in order to achieve this, Rachel and Rabbi Akiva

were separated for long periods of time. On one occasion when Rabbi Akiva was with her, in the presence of his students he addressed them and he said, **שלי ושלכם שלה** – "*My achievements and your achievements are all her achievements.*"

If not for her, he would never have studied and they would never have been taught. It is therefore incumbent upon us to facilitate the high quality education of men and women within our communities and to encourage them **ללמוד וללמד** - 'to study and to educate others.

No wonder therefore that when we return the Torah to the Ark we chant the verse, - **עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה ותמכיה מאשר** – "***The Torah is a tree of life for all those who grasp it and all those who support it are rendered happy***."

If not for the supporters, we would have no Torah and without the Torah, we would have no people.

Sparks Of Shabbos



Every yom tov has its avodah and through it, one acquires levels in the spiritual realm. For example, by blowing shofar on Rosh Hashana, one can be meritorious in judgement. By fasting on Yom Kippur, he achieves atonement, and when he eats matzah on Pesach, he becomes free on a new level, etc.

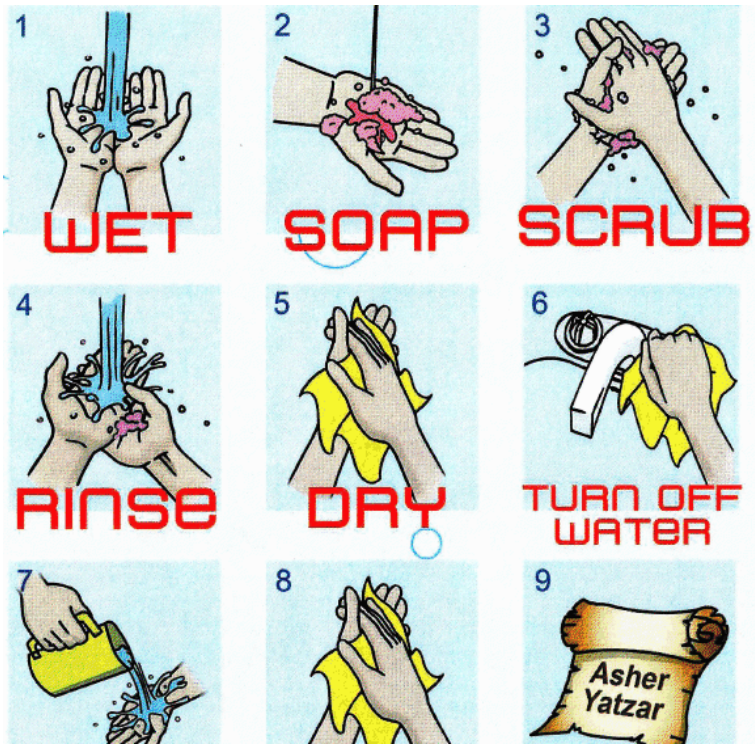
Although it might seem that there is no avodah for Shabbos, per se, it is actually a posuk; the Torah says **וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַשִּׁשִּׁי וְהֵכִינוּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר יָבִיאוּ** (they prepared that which they brought), **שמות טז ה** and so one

achieves spiritual madreigos on Shabbos by properly preparing for it before.

Primarily, this refers to the preparation of food, but also includes other preparations as well.

Rav Shimshon Pinkus zt"l explains that the reason for this is because, unlike the yomim tovim which a person must work to gain from them, Shabbos is a gift from Hashem. It is not something attainable through normal efforts. Rather, our job is only to prepare ourselves to receive it, and so, the efforts we put in on erev Shabbos, it what enables us to gain the most from the day of Shabbos itself.

L'Maaseh



Just before his wife's levaya, **R' Chaim Stein zt"l** was walking with one of his grandsons. The Rosh Yeshiva excused himself and stepped into the bathroom and when he came out, his grandson noticed that R' Chaim was mumbling something to himself and it appeared that he was saying 'asher yatzar'. However, since it was before the woman's burial, close relatives such as the rebetzin's husband and children had the halachic status of an 'onein' who is prohibited from saying berachos and davening.

Confused and thinking perhaps that his grandfather had forgotten, R' Chaim's grandson asked him about his conduct. The Rosh Yeshiva

assured him that he knew the halacha but explained that at his age (R' Chaim was in his 90's at the time), it is a tremendous gift from Hashem that his body still functions properly.

"How then," he asked, "could I not thank the Ribono shel Olam? Of course, I couldn't make the beracha, so I said it without saying Hashem's name!"

When the Rosh Yeshiva made a beracha, he understood that he was talking to his Creator.

Maasei Emunim - A Story About Amen and Tefillah

The Path That was Paved With Tefillah



Many of the gedolim, roshei yeshivos and rabbanim of Europe yearned to make Aliyah and settle in Eretz Yisrael. But the future of the yeshivos and communities that they led, combined with their worries about the spiritual and material situation in the Holy Land, compelled them to quell those deep desires.

In the years between the two World Wars, and especially as the outbreak of World War II neared, the challenges – both material and spiritual – mounted in Europe. During this time, many of the roshei yeshivah and rabbanim began to work to realize their long-time dreams to make Aliyah.

It was ordained from Hashem. In this way, the Torah world was built anew in Eretz Yisrael, and the infrastructure was laid to resurrect

the Jewish people after the horrific destruction that would transpire in the coming years.

One of the prominent gedolim who moved to Eretz Yisrael in these years was **Harav Isser Zalman Meltzer, zt"l**. He arrived in 5685, and was appointed to lead Yeshivas Eitz Chaim in Yerushalayim. The strong bond that Rav Isser Zalman had with his nephew, **Harav Elazar Menachem Mann Schach, zt"l**, led Rav Schach to want to follow in his path. But upon the advice of the gedolei hador, he had to repeatedly postpone his plans.

In 1940, the skies over European Jewry went dark. From day to day, the decrees mounted, and the possibilities of leaving Europe for safer shores grew narrower. Rav Schach realized that this was his final chance to flee with his family from the inferno, and to realize his dream of moving to Eretz Yisrael. On the other hand, it was hard for him to leave his yeshivah alone. The question was a difficult one, and he shared it with the gadol hador, **Harav Chaim Ozer Grodzhenski, zt"l**.

At first, Rav Chaim Ozer instructed him to remain with his students in Kletzk, but a short time after that, when it became a question of pikuach nefesh, Rav Schach again presented his question.

This time, Rav Chaim Ozer agreed that he had to make every effort to depart for Eretz Yisrael. However, at the time, obtaining entry visas to the Holy Land was virtually impossible. Anyone who wanted to reach the land had to find an exceptional way to obtain a permit of some type that would bring him closer to the destination.

Rav Schach decided to turn to the Turkish Consulate in Moscow, and to plead with the consul to give him an entry visa to Turkey. From there, he hoped to find a way to go to Eretz Yisrael. When it came his turn, Rav Schach stood before the Turkish official, but he didn't know Turkish and the official did not know Yiddish. Thus, they sounded like gibberish to one another. Rav Schach tried in every way he could to plead and explain his request, and the official did not

understand word. After many long moments, Rav Schach had to turn back, dejected, without obtaining what he wanted.

Because there was no one in the area who could mediate between him and the clerk, Rav Schach resorted to the age-old strategy of his ancestors. Like every G-d fearing Jew in a time of trouble, he retreated to the corner of the corridor, outside the clerk's office, and began to daven with tears and deep emotion. He pleaded with the Creator to help him be saved from the burning continent of Europe, and to bring him to Eretz Yisrael.

On that same day, **Harav Shabsai Yagel, zt"l**, Rosh Yeshivah of Slonim, had also come to the consulate. He also wanted a Turkish visa for his family. While his friend stood and davened, it was Rav Yagel's turn, and he entered the official's room to ask for the permits. He realized quickly that he would need to switch from spoken language to body language. So he stood up next to the clerk, and motioned with one hand upwards, and then bent down and motioned with the second hand downwards. This way, with some other motions, he tried to explain to the clerk that if he would not give them an exit visa, he would be sentencing them to a certain death. There is no way to know if the clerk understood or not, but the fact is that as soon as the little charade was over, the clerk signed on exit visas for both families.

With the visas in hand, Rav Schach and Rav Yagel made their way to the Odessa port, where they hoped to find a ship that would take them to Istanbul, Turkey. When the ship arrived, they crowded onto the deck with hundreds of other people. But their travails were not yet over. The Turkish government did not allow the two families to debark at the port, lest they settle in Turkey.

All their efforts to persuade the officials that they had no intention of doing so fell on deaf ears, and they ordered the captain of the ship to take the Jewish families back to Europe.

Here, too, Rav Schach used the same strategy as he had at the Turkish Consulate. He stood in the corner of the ship and offered a fervent tefillah from the depths of his heart that Hashem should grant him success and help him and his family flee to Eretz Yisrael. This time, the tefillah was also accepted. As the boat was about to depart the port, a distinguished Jew suddenly arrived; he appeared to be one of the prominent members of Turkey's Jewish community. In an authoritative tone, he informed the officials that he was the guarantor that the two families would not settle in Turkey, and bechasdei Shamayim, his words were accepted. The families were permitted to debark at the Turkish port, and a short time later, they departed for Eretz Yisrael via Syria.

The Turkish Jew who had helped them disappeared right afterwards and to this day, no one knows who he was. But in time, they realized that he was a Divine emissary to help save the gedolei Torah and their families – and no less than that, to save the Torah world in Eretz Ysirael, which these two gedolim were so instrumental in establishing. [Maran Harav Schach, Vol. I, Ch. 23]

Tzaddik B'Emunaso - Harav Yitzchak Eizik of Kaliv 7 Adar 5681

Harav Yitzchak Eizik Taub of Kaliv was born in 5511 in the city of Serencz, Hungary to his father, Rav Moshe Yechezkel, who passed away a short time after he was born. Already as a youth he stood out among his friends as an illuy and diligent learner. His lofty soul led him to be *misboded* for days and weeks, and he would use this time to help his poor mother support by family by taking geese to pasture in isolated places.

The tzaddik and mekubal, **Harav Leib Sarah's**, met him and saw who he was, and convinced him to come to the yeshivah of **Harav Shmelke of Nikolsburg**.

When **Harav Elimelech of Lizhensk** visited Nikolsberg, Harav Yitzchak Eizik met him and became a follower. In 5541, he was appointed Rav of Kaliv and served in this position for forty years.

His Torah and holiness became renowned all over Hungary. He was frail and sickly most of his life, and towards his old age, he took ill once again. As he lay in bed, he asked that no praise be written on his matzeivah aside for the following words: "***He could learn al hadaf, and was an ehrlicher Yid***."

On Shabbos, 7 Adar 5581, he passed away, and was buried in the cemetery in Kaliv.

Now You Know!



The Menorah was to be made out of a single piece of pure gold, and not bits and pieces cobbled together. Though it was much harder to do, the gold was to be hammered in such a way that the material of the block was formed into the various branches, cups, and flowers.

The Menorah symbolizes Torah, and this concept fits perfectly with the requirements of how to construct it.

The Chasam Sofer comments on the words, "***its cups and flowers shall be from it***," that we are not to interpret or expound Torah based on external sources. Rather, the drashos we make shall be based on the original Torah itself. We do not glorify Torah by bringing outside ideas and attaching them to it.

This also can explain, he says, the Gemara's comment (Megilla 32a) that one who holds a Torah barehanded will be buried naked. It explains that this refers to being "naked" of good deeds.

The Chasam Sofer explains: One who feels Torah is "naked," and requires the assistance of outside sources to "dress" it, is already leaning towards heresy and will die bereft of Torah and mitzvos. At the very least, he gains no reward for those explanations of Torah which he based on foreign sources.

Short And Sweet Story Of The Week With Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky



Reb Dovid of Lelov, a student of the **Choze of Lublin**, once came to Zelin to visit his friend, **R' Dovid of Zelin**. Hearing that the rabbi of Lelov was visiting him, the Zeliner Rebbe beseeched his wife to bake something special.

Alas, the poverty of the couple was dire, and the poor Rebbetzin only had some flour and oil, which she made into biscuits. Upon his first bite, the Rebbe exclaimed in earnest, "These cakes are truly exceptional!" Knowing the source, the Rebbetzin dismissed the compliments of the bland and meagre cakes as an appreciation of the effort.

Weeks later, the Rebbetzin of Lelov met the Rebbetzin of Zelin. "You must tell me how you made those biscuits that you served my husband. I have never heard him get excited about food before, yet he did not stop praising the biscuits he ate in your home!"

The Zelin Rebbetzin answered meekly. "There was no recipe. When I heard that the Tzadik of Lelov was coming I realized that I had nothing to serve. Hashem knows that had I the means I would have

made him a feast. But, I could not. So, I asked him to bestow His great goodness and the flavour of Gan Eden in the biscuits!"

The Rebbetzin of Lelov replied, "Your prayers were answered. He said that they had the taste of Gan Eden!"

Comment: - **וְעָשִׂיתָ לּוֹ מִסְגֶּרֶת** *- Why does the Shulchan (table in the Mishkan) need a crown to serve as a border/guard more than the other vessels (Shemos 25:25)? The crown of majesty turns a table into a Holy Shulchan! It guards it, surrounds it, and ensconces it with an aura of spirituality that converts a simple, mundane meal into a holy feast. That crown is more than an adornment. The Torah calls it a misgeres, a guard, which turns our food from the ordinary into morsels flavoured and seasoned by the Almighty.*

Saying Of The Week - Rabbi Menachem Lomner

"Understand the importance of a Mitzvah, for then you will be able to revolve your actions around it."

The Ramban says that when Hashem commanded Moshe to build the Mishkan, He started with the *Aron Hakodesh.* This is the most important part of the entire building. Then, Hashem told Moshe to make the Shulchan and Menorah as they were of the next-highest level of importance.

We are supposed to understand these differences because we must make decisions based on our understanding of them. Something more important must be regarded and treated as such.

This is true for all Mitzvos. When we understand that Mitzvos are more important than all mundane activities, we can expect to prioritize the Mitzvos and succeed in our quest for greatness.



R' Yitzchok Dov Koppelman zt"l (Nitzotzei Ohr) would say: **וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ- Daas Zekainim** notes that a Talmid Chacham is like the Aron and must be pure inside and out.

Where does one begin – on the inside or on the outside (the clothes of a Talmid Chacham)? The Torah tells us first inside then outside. First, one begins with the internal strivings of being a Talmid Chacham. Thereafter, one can grow to the outside of the Talmid Chacham's appearance. If one begins the other way around, he appears to be a faker."



וְעָשִׂיתָ מְנֹרַת זָהָב טָהוֹר מִקְשָׁה תֵּיעָשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה 'And you shall make a menorah of pure gold. The menorah shall be made of hammered work.'

A delegation of meshulachim arrived in the city of Volozhin to collect money for a Yeshivah in a distant city. They knocked on door after door, but to their dismay, most people contributed only very paltry sums of money.

Someone explained to them that people were likely annoyed that they had come to Volozhin to collect funds for a distant Yeshivah when Volozhin had its own Yeshivah to support.

When **R' Chaim Brisker zt"l**, Rosh Yeshivah in Volozhin at the time, heard that the meshulachim were deeply disappointed that they'd have to return home without the funds they'd hoped to collect, he asked them to wait a little and then quickly called a meeting of the city's important dignitaries. There he related the following story:

There was once a wealthy man who had business affairs in many countries. Since he couldn't be everywhere at once, he appointed a different manager to each branch of his business. Each manager strove to make sure that his branch of the business performed well. In truth however, none really cared about the company, they just wanted to please the boss.

Eventually, the wealthy man brought his son into the business. The son travelled throughout his father's business affairs to oversee the entire business; and business boomed! - Because the son cared about his father's business as a whole.

R' Chaim explained, "We are Hashem's children. We have to worry about His whole business, not just our own branch!"

The Menorah in the Mishkan was not made of a combination of parts screwed or welded together; rather, it was a single slab hammered into shape. When we read about the Menorah, we should remember, this serves as a symbol of unity in Klal Yisroel, even today!

Maaseh Avos Siman L'Banim

וְדִבַּרְתִּי אִתְּךָ מֵעַל הַכַּפֹּרֶת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִים אֲשֶׁר עַל־אֲרֹן הָעֵדֻת אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר אֲצַוֶּה אוֹתְךָ אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

R' Yitzchok Zilberstein shlita told over the following remarkable story.

One night, the phone rang in his home. One of the foremost pillars of Torah in our generation was on the line, a man who donates vast sums to mosdos HaTorah. He said he urgently needed to speak to the Rav. Although he wasn't feeling well, he agreed. This is how the conversation went.

The night before, he'd been to the Rav's father-in-law, **R' Shalom Yosef Elyashiv zt"l**, and introduced himself as one who donates generously to yeshivos. Then he asked for a beracha that his descendants should all become bnei Torah.

"R' Elyashiv gave me this beracha with great joy," the man reported, "but then I asked that he add a beracha for them to have a strong desire to learn Torah. He wagged his finger, indicating that he was not going to give that beracha."

"That is not up to me," said the great Posek Hador. "If you want children who have a strong desire to learn Torah, then it is clearly up to you, not me."

The philanthropist was deeply disappointed and upset with this remark, and wanted R' Zilberstein to explain the incident. Why did R' Elyashiv refuse to give him this beracha?

R' Zilberstein tried to comfort him. He told him that it was clear that R' Elyashiv had nothing against him. He was just expressing the Torah's view that only a father can instil love of Talmud Torah into his children. He further told him that if his children saw him snatch every possible moment for Limud haTorah, and he did it with a ratzon, a free will, and not like one who was being forced into it by some invisible demon, they will learn that Torah is the most important thing. "They will see that you learn Torah with more drive than you do anything else, and they will want to do as you do."

So that he could understand what it means to have a strong desire to learn Torah, the Rav told him about something that happened years before, just before an important, official state event - a spectacle that everyone went to watch, even many yeshivah bachurim couldn't resist. One of the best bachurim in the Slabodka Yeshivah told him, "Davka now, when so many people are not in the beis medrash learning, let's get a taste of true Torah. Let's go to Ponevezh and listen to a shiur given by **R' Shmuel Rozovsky zt"l**." R' Shmuel Rozovsky was one of those who personified a drive for Talmud Torah. Bachurim left his shiurim oozing joy and spiritual satisfaction.

Where did R' Shmuel get that incredible drive and love of Torah?



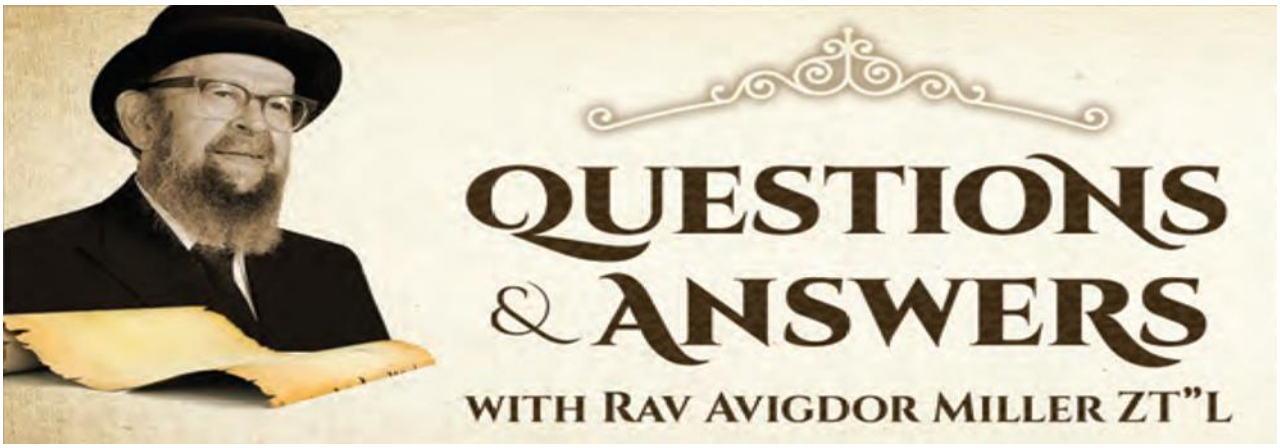
It was common knowledge years ago, that R' Shmuel's father, R' Michel Dovid Rozovsky zt"l, did everything possible so that his son would become a talmid chacham. He paid one of the best bachurim in the yeshivah to learn with his son. This bachur was brilliant. At eighteen, he served on **R' Chaim Ozer's** beis din in Vilna. The bachur's name was Yisroel Gustman, who went on to become one of the greatest educators and Roshei Yeshivah of the previous generation.

One could see on his face just how pleasurable he considered learning Torah. After a few days of learning with young Shmuel Rozovsky, **R' Yisroel Gustman zt"l** told his father that he did not wish to accept money for learning with his son anymore.

R' Michel Dovid's pleas made no impression on him. "I did not say that I was not going to continue learning with him," R' Gustman said. "It's just that I was taking money on false pretences. When I accepted money, it was because I thought it was going to be an effort, a job for me to learn with a young boy. But this is no job! I could never take money for learning with such a delightful chavrusa!"

One evening, R' Michel Dovid saw them learning together with such pleasure that he joined with them. He didn't stand on his own honour - he sat down to learn with his son and the yeshivah bachur. What did R' Shmuel learn from that? That an intense desire to learn Torah removes all thought of self, so that his father could sit down to learn with his child and a young man.

"That's what R' Elyashiv was telling you," explained R' Zilberstein to the philanthropist. "If you show your children that you have an intense desire to learn Torah, and you set a personal example of doing so, believe me, they will imitate you. They will also have a strong desire to learn Torah. A beracha isn't what's needed here." (Adapted from "A Treasury of Stories for Rabbis & Teachers")





Is there anything wrong with me davening to Hashem that He should give me a million dollars?

It depends what you'll do with a million dollars. Ordinarily it's a nuisance to have a million dollars. Once you get a million dollars then your life is no longer a life. You're a slave to your money. You have to take care of your property. You have no menuchah. A poor man goes to sleep at night and nobody bothers him. A rich man is always on the go.

However, if you want a million dollars in order to build a big yeshivah, then pray for a million dollars, yes. If that's what you want it for, absolutely.

If you pray for other things, it's surely good. **הרחב פיך** means you should open your mouth wide and ask for everything. Who says only a million dollars is good? Open your mouth and say, "Ribono Shel

Olam, help me to know a whole *mesechta*. I would love to know Bava Kama from the beginning to the end." Wouldn't that be a glorious thing to know Bava Kama? And maybe Bava Metzia too? Maybe Bava Basra too? Do you know what a happiness it would be if you knew three *mesichtas* from the beginning to the end? You're a real millionaire. Nobody could compare to you.

So first pray for one *perek*. Ask Hashem that He should help you to know one *perek* perfectly. Then you'll know another *perek* and another one and little by little maybe you'll become a millionaire in Torah.

You should pray to have good children too. Make sure to pray for everything. And if you pray for a million dollars too, it's no *cheit*. Only you have to know that in case it happens it's not such a simple matter. You have to expect a great deal of complications.

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה ***Speak to the Children of Israel, that they may bring me an offering*** (25:2)



"The fool gives, and the clever man takes," states the popular expression. What does this refer to? - The giving of tzedaka.

The fool thinks he is parting with something belonging to him; the clever man realizes that whatever he gives, he actually receives [its reward]. (Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin)

More Thoughts that Count for the Parsha

כִּכַּר זָהָב טָהוֹר יַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָהּ ***Of a talent of pure gold shall it be made*** (25:39)

A person's purpose in life is to illuminate his surroundings with the light of Torah and mitzvot. This responsibility holds true no matter what the individual's circumstances or mood may be.

The numerical equivalent of the Hebrew word for talent, "**כִּכַּר**," is 240 – the same as the numerical equivalent of "**מר**" (bitter), and "**רם**" (lofty). No matter what our situation, our task remains the same. (The Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe – **Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn**)

אַמָּתַיִם וָחֵצִי אָרְכּוֹ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי רָחְבּוֹ וְאַמָּה וָחֵצִי קֹמָתוֹ ***Two and one-half cubits its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth, and a cubit and a half its height.*** (25:10)

The ark was measured in fractions, not whole numbers, teaching us that to achieve spiritual growth, one must first "break down" and shatter one's negative characteristics and bad habits. (**Sefer Hamamarim U'Kuntreisim**)

Stay Young By Rabbi Yaakov Bender

וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים ***And you shall make two Keruvim*** *(25:18).*

Rashi says: Each one had the face of a child. While other Rishonim disagree. Rashi teaches us that the Keruvim were made with the faces of children. The Gemara bases this opinion on the word - **כְּרָבְיָא** [***keravya***] - ***Like a baby***

(Chagigah 13b). What is the significance of this?

The week after I became a chassan, I went to spend Shabbos at the home of my parents-in-law. I davened with them at the shul led by Rav Avigdor Miller.



He asked this question, wondering why the inspiration would come from the images of children. "Wouldn't we think that we can gain more chizuk from a picture of **Rav Moshe [Feinstein]** or **Rav Yaakov [Kamenetsky]**," he asked, using the example of the gedolim of the time, "than from that of a child?"

Rav Miller explained that the catalyst for avodah, the motivation to serve Hashem properly, comes from a child. Chassidim relate in the name of the **Maggid of Mezritch** that we can learn three things from a child: When he wants something, he wails until he gets it. He keeps moving, never idle. And finally, if his basic needs are met, he is in a good mood.

Yehoshua bin Nun is referred to as a נַּעַר (Shemos 33:11), a lad, because of his youthful energy, his devotion and determination to hear and internalize every bit of Torah from Moshe Rabbeinu.







Rav Shlomo Freifeld was once trying to get a point across to a group of talmidim and he felt like they were too cynical, too reluctant to hear his plea for change. He grabbed his own beard and said, "You know, I have a gray beard, but I feel like I am the youngest person in this room!"

Rav Shalom Schwadron would recall walking by the Tchebiner Yeshivah one day and hearing a young man learning with the **Tchebiner Rav, Rav Dov Berish Weidenfeld**. The younger chavrusa was speaking out the Gemara, step by step, with the enthusiasm of a rebbi teaching new talmidim, and Rav Shalom was intrigued.

He went to see who was learning with the rav and was astounded to see the Tchebiner Rav learning by himself, reading the Gemara with the excitement of a young bachur. This was the point of the Keruvim, said Rav Miller. To remind us, to inspire us, to motivate us to be young again.

On the pasuk here, the **Baal HaTurim** writes that the Keruvim appeared as children, and then connects this with the pasuk in which the Ribbono Shel Olam speaks of His love for Klal Yisrael, saying, "Ki naar Yisroel va'ohaveihu – When Yisrael was young, I loved him" (Hoshea 11:1). Hakadosh Baruch Hu appreciates us for this middah of "youth" — and youth has nothing to do with physical age. In the holiest place in the world, the center of avodah, stands a reminder to us to stay young.

[Reprinted from the Parshas Terumah 5783 edition of At the ArtScroll Shabbos Table. Excerpted from the ArtScroll book – Rav Yaakov Bender on the Chumash.]

"Bitachon means having faith in Hashem's plan for our lives, even if it doesn't align with our own plans." – Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe

Emunah means living with the knowledge that Hashem is not just a concept or an idea, but a living, breathing reality that we can experience every day. – Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz

MEOROS HATZADDIKIM
Lights Of Our Righteous

Rav Shmuel Avrohom Abba Shapira (Adar I 5, 5627 / 1867 - 156th Yahrzeit) - A Kiddush Hashem



אוהל צדיקי בית סלאוויטא

Rav Pinchos Koretzer used to say that studying the sefer **Ohr haChaim haKadosh** is a segulah for the neshamah, similar to studying the **Zohar haKadosh**. This is because Rashbi had the neshama of Moshiach of his generation, and also **Rav Chaim ben Attar** author of the Ohr haChaim haKadosh also had the neshama of Moshiach of his generation.

He ordered his descendants, the Shapiro grandchildren of the Slovita Press to publish the Sefer Ohr haChaim HaKadosh and that that would save them from evil and harm.

They fulfilled his command until there were so many published editions of the Ohr haChaim, that the seforim greatly outnumbered the demand and there were no buyers left to purchase copies. Therefore, they stopped publishing copies of the sefer. That very year that they ceased publishing the Ohr haChaim the infamous libel occurred and they were falsely accused.

When the Shapiro brothers (**Rav Shmuel Avrohom Abba and Rav Pinchos)** of the Slovita Press were about to run the gauntlet through rows of soldiers to carry out their sentence and flog them for the false libel, the authorities feared that the first troop had been bribed to only deliver soft perfunctory blows and so at the last minute they switched the troops, and they stripped the two brothers down bare so that the deadly blows were dealt harshly and cruely indeed!

The brothers accepted their fate with bitachon and equanimity. The night before their beating, they were visited by two chassidim, Rav David of Vaslikov and Rav Nota of Chaslivitch. After speaking enthusiastically in Torah, as if nothing unusual was about to happen, Rav Shmuel Abba quietly told them, "Tomorrow, we will be beaten and it should be arranged that there is a minyan, a doctor, ice, and lemon juice [as an antiseptic]. Also, any blood or fragments should be collected."

The two visitors recorded the impact upon them: "We stood there astounded. Holy fear overwhelmed us, and we could not say a word. The impression was so powerful that it will never be erased from our memory all our lives. Before our eyes, we saw, as it were, Avraham Avinu before the Akeidah, totally devoted to do the will of his Creator, and Rabbi Akiva before they combed his flesh, without

saying anything and without ruffling their tranquillity a hairsbreadth."

In those days, military beatings were administered by spiessruten (knouts), a punishment introduced to Russia by Prussian army officers. A more sophisticated method of administrating this punishment was "driving one through the stroy (line-up)." This meant running (or rather, being slowly led through) a gauntlet of two rows of 250 soldiers armed - 20 of 31 - with knouts. Resultant death from heart failure or blood poisoning was not uncommon.



To receive 1,500 blows, the brothers would pass between the rows three times. As the two brothers approached the place of their sentence, they sang a special niggun, which is preserved until this day.

During the beating, Rav Pinchas Shapiro immortalized his memory by refusing to move on after his yarmulke fell off. Unable to go back and pick it up because he was being led along by two long ropes tied to his hands, he simply stood stock still as blows rained on his back.

He retrieved it despite the blows that continued to rain on him, as obviously anyone who ran quickly fared better, yet despite all this he suffered it, rather than take even one step with his head uncovered! Miraculously they survived the ordeal with the grace of Heaven. The Holy tzadik Rav Pinchos Koretzer was able to achieve that when his grandsons, the Shapiro brothers of Slavita were being

flogged, angels stood at their backs to receive the blows. (Sippurei Maran HaRamach cited by Likkutei Imrei Pinchos Sippurim 126)

The two brothers regained consciousness on Shabbos and their first words were, "We must recite Kiddush!" After saying Kiddush, Rav Shmuel Abba washed and said Hamotzi, but was too weak to eat a morsel of bread. Whenever he recalled this incident in later years, he said that he was still sorry about this beracha levatalah!

It took them months to recuperate enough to begin walking in chains to Siberia and, by the time they arrived in Moscow, at the end of 5600/1840, they were too ill to proceed. After months of recuperation, officials petitioned that the brothers be permitted to return to Slovita, but Czar Nicholas I insisted that "if they are ill, they should be left in Moscow in a bogadelnia (old age home), but they must not be returned home."

Even after fifteen years, the brothers were still not allowed to return to a normal Jewish community. As Bibikov, now Minister of Internal Affairs, explained, "They can exert a harmful influence upon those Jews among whom they will settle and, in addition to this, it can also inspire in other criminals a hope for such types of ameliorations."

The brothers' only consolation was that, in 5607/1847, their sons won the tender to open the Russian Empire's second authorized Jewish printing house, in Zhitomir. The first was the Romm Printing House in Vilna. All other Jewish printing establishments had been closed down.

The brothers were only released in June 5616/1856 by Czar Nicholas I's more liberal son, Czar Alexander II, who is famous for his emancipation of the Russian serfs.

Surprisingly, Rav Shmuel Abba did not greet the news joyfully. "I fear that I am now losing my freedom," he moaned. "There, at home, when they greet us as martyrs, will my strength be sufficient to

weather the test? When will they demand of us that we become gutten Yidden (rebbes)? I implore Hashem to protect me from that path …" His fears materialized after Rav Aharon the Second of Karlin handed him a kvittel. Admirers insisted that he become a rebbe in Shepetovka and both brothers were revered as rebbes for the rest of their lives.

Nowadays, their memory is immortalized not only by their martyrdom, but also by their holy sefarim. As Rav Aharon Roth, the Shomrei Emunim Rebbe writes in his sefer, Taharas HaKodesh: "Therefore every G-d-fearing person should strive to acquire sefarim of old prints … especially from the print of Slovita and Zhitomir, [of the Shapiro brothers,] the grandsons of the holy Rav of Koretz, who were exaltedly holy men."

Hurray We Are Jews Rejoice!

During the time that the two Shapiro brothers of Slovita were imprisoned they did their best to daven and recite Tehillim. There was among the prisoners, an apostate and heretic who knew enough Jewish law and halachah to try to harm the brothers.

His hatred of all Jewish matters led him to act, and so he filled the chamber pot and befouled the cell to prevent them from reciting any holy words.

Rav Pinchos Koretzer's grandsons were momentarily dismayed and downcast, what would they do now? How could they daven? Suddenly, one of the two was struck with inspiration: It's true we cannot say Tehillim but is that a reason for our spirits to fail or falter?!

We must rejoice and be happy that as Jews that alone is an avodah! The very fact that we refrain also fulfils the Divine Will of our Creator! And if so we need to be beSimchah and thus they began to dance in jail over their very Jewishness! (Shmuos VeSippurim Volume I pg 244)

Rav Yitzchok Isaac Taub Kaliver Rebbe *(Adar II 7, 5581 / 1821 - 202nd Yahrzeit)* The Vanishing Rebbe



On the day preceding each Biblical festival, Rabbi Yitzchak-Isaac Taub of Kaliv would disappear for many hours; no one knew where he went. One year on erev Sukkot, the lay leader of the Kaliv Jewish community, Mr. Yaakov Fisch, was determined to discover the tzadik's secret.

While the Rebbe was occupied, Fisch hid himself in the wagon, where he remained undiscovered until the Rebbe was well on his journey. When Reb Yankel revealed himself, the Rebbe became visibly distressed. He exclaimed, "What can I do with you now?" He made the stowaway promise not to ask any questions, not of himself nor of anyone else.

Soon they arrived at a city which Yankel did not recognize. The Rebbe abruptly stopped the wagon, and began to walk down a narrow path that led to a mikveh. He instructed his passenger to wait while he immersed himself there.

Yankel waited in the wagon until he was overcome with curiosity and impatience. Forgetting the tzadik's warning, he hopped off the wagon and sought to question the people nearby. "Excuse me," he asked in Yiddish the first man he stopped, "but where am I?"

"Don't you know where you are?" the astonished fellow replied, thinking that he was dealing with a madman. "Where do you think you

are?" "Well, I was just in Kaliv, Hungary, a few hours ago," Yankel began.

"Now I know you're mad," said the man, "How could you possibly get from Kaliv to Tzfat in a few hours?"

"Tzfat?!" cried Yankel. "You're the one who is mad! How could I be in Tzfat, in Eretz Yisrael, if I was just in Kaliv?"

The argument intensified, and in the heat of the debate Yankel forgot to get back to the wagon before the Rebbe reappeared. To his dismay, he arrived back at the mikveh just in time to see the wagon pulling away.

Yankel was beside himself. Here he was, stranded in a town of "meshuga'im" (insane people) who thought they were living in Tzfat! However, he had no choice but to ask one of them to take him into his home for the Sukkot holiday.

Already during the first hours of the festival, seeing the different customs and hearing people speaking in the Holy Tongue and in Arabic as well as Yiddish, Yankel realized that indeed he was in Tzfat, Astonished, it dawned on him as an epiphany that the Kaliver used a Divine Holy Name for kefitzat haderech (a miraculous contraction of a journey) to come to Tsfat every erev Yom Tov in order to immerse himself in the mikveh of the holy Arizal, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria.

His amazement was quickly joined by shock as he realized that he was compelled to remain in Tzfat until the Rebbe would return the following Yom Tov. How else could he possibly get all the way back to Europe?

Meanwhile, back in Kaliv, the Fisch family was frantic about Yankel's sudden disappearance. They ran to the Rebbe for advice. The Kaliver smiled as he assured them that there was no need for concern, promising that Mr. Fisch would return just in time for the Passover Seder!

And so it was. Six months later, Yankel Fisch was delighted to see the tzadik's wagon arriving at the Arizal's mikveh on Erev Pesach. This time he made sure not to miss the ride back home.

The Rebbe extracted a promise from Yankel not to reveal this incident in his lifetime; it became known only after the Rebbe passed away in 1821.

Hallel On Parshas Beshalach

Rav Yitzchok Isaac of Kaliv was once in Lizhensk during Parshas Beshalach. **The Rebbe Elimelech** asked the Kaliver to be absent when he recited Torah at the tisch for some secret reason that the Rebbe would not divulge, but the Kaliver did not wish to miss the opportunity to hear the Rebbe's Chassidic discourse and so he remained.

As soon as the Noam Elimelech began to say Torah, the Kaliver jumped up away from the table and began to run to and fro in the entire house, singing Hallel at the top of his voice! Everyone present was very surprised by such aberrant behaviour.

Afterward, the Kaliver explained himself: "When the Rebbe said Torah about the weekly Parsha, I was infused by such excitement and it set me aflame with such hislahavus that I imagined myself to be in the midst of offering the Korban Pesach – and so I sang Hallel!" (Ohel Elimelech #274)

A Wise Man would say:

"If you have faith, you will have a successful life. Always remember that Hakadosh Baruch hu gives, gives, gives and forgives, while a human being gets, gets, gets and forgets. So be thankful in life."

Rav Chaim Efraim Zeitchik (Adar II 9) A Siberian Gemora

Rav Zeitchik was Rosh Yeshiva in Buczacz when he was drafted into conscription in the Russian army. Eventually he was taken to Siberia, where half a kilo of bread and water from the distant, icy ravines were his only means of sustenance and nourishment, since all local water was poisoned and unfit to drink.



The people, including himself, were unkempt and dressed in rags and tatters, sick, exhausted and in despair. One day, Rav Chaim volunteered to draw the water from the far-off well, a distance of over three kilometers of frozen Siberian wasteland. His reason was that he had discovered somehow that a Jew lived in that area. Secretly, he hid the buckets and made his way, sneaking from tree to tree, from grove to grove, until he reached this Jewish family. He edged closer to the house and indeed discerned a mezuza on the doorpost.

When the lady of the house answered his feeble knocking and saw a man dressed in rags, she was fearful of him as an escapee from the Siberian camps, but she was compassionate and offered him a treasure: a slice of bread!

She was amazed when he shook his head. No, he didn't want the bread. "I am a Jew. I don't want your bread. Please, do you have a sefer?"

She called her husband. "I am so sorry," the husband told Rav Zeitchik. "I am not a Rav – I only own one single sefer and I am not willing to part with it – it is a Gemora."

"Please," begged Rav Zeitchik and began to cry. "Please have mercy on me!" he sobbed. "At least give me just one daf! Don't leave me like this!"

The ba'al habayis tore the Gemora in half. It was an edition of Nedorim and Nozir, and Rav Zeitchik got Maseches Nedorim. There was no one happier in the world at that moment!

The disinterested guards paid no heed to the safety of the working conditions; they did not value the lives of their charges much at all. And so one day as he was working, chopping and sawing wood, a heavy branch fell on Rav Chaim's head and injured him. He fell to the ground, bleeding from the wound.

His fellows gathered him up and were about to transport him to the local hospital for medical attention, when he stopped them. Before they took him any further, he directed them to make a stop on the way to the grove where he had hidden his secret treasure that he refused to leave behind – his torn portion of Maseches Nedorim, so that he could take it with him to the hospital! (Hirhurei Teshuva, Maamar 27)

Rav Yosef Boruch Epstein The Gutter Yid Of Neustadt (Adar 10) - L'chaim Hashem, Good Night

The Tiferes Shlomo related how strong was Rav Fishel's emuna (faith) in hashgacha pratis (Divine Providence). "He always believed that anything and everything that happened was directly related to him and specifically for his sake.

For example, when the weather turned cold, the frost would make immersion in the mikvah a formidable ordeal. He would say: "I believe with full faith – b'emuna sheleima that this a test from Hashem whether I will immerse despite the cold and discomfort; but know, you Evil one, yetzer hara that you will not dissuade me nor block me from serving Hashem!"

Another story the Tiferes Shlomo shared was that before retiring to bed each night, Rav Fishel would take a glezzeleh bronfen (a glass of brandy or liquor) in hand and wish Hashem, "L'Chaim! L'Chaim

Ribono Shel Olam sheAta MeKor HaChaim veChai HaChaim - a gitte Nacht! L'Chaim, L'Chaim Master of the World; You are the source of all life; I wish you a good night!" He wished Hashem L'Chaim and a good night in Yiddish

Rav Fishel even once explained the reason behind this unusual minhag (custom) of his: "You must know that there are sick Jews everywhere in the world, and oftentimes it is at night that suffering intensifies.

I attempt to bring some relief to them with my L'Chaim to Hashem based on the principle that He suffers in our suffering. I wish Hashem a good night, if He wants a peaceful night free of pain and distress, He must heal all the Jews' suffering first! And so, I drink to Hashem and wish Him a good night – Gitte Nacht!" (Siach Sarfei Kodesh)

It's a Test! By Rabbi David Ashear



If we know that Hashem is behind everything, it is much easier to deal with challenges. **Rav Ephraim Wachsman** related that many years ago, an eighteen-year-old friend of his — we'll call him Eli — visited a museum in Eretz Yisrael.

When he went to purchase an entry ticket, the ticket seller told him, "You could pay half price; you're under eighteen."

Eli replied, "No, I'm eighteen. I want to pay full price."

The man said, "No, you look younger than eighteen. The guard at the door will never realize. Just pay half. It's okay."

Eli repeated that he was eighteen and wanted to pay full price — and that is what he did. When he handed his ticket to the guard, the man said, "Thank you. I just won 100 shekels."

The man explained: "When you were approaching the ticket agent, he said, 'Look, a yeshivah boy is coming. He'll probably try to lie about his age and pay less.' I said, 'No way. Yeshivah boys tell the truth.' And you proved me right."

That was a difficult test for Eli, but baruch Hashem, he passed. Rav Wachsman observed, "Imagine if Eli had been told beforehand, 'There are people betting on you to see if yeshivah boys tell the truth.' Would it even have been a question in his mind? He would have come confidently and stated with conviction, 'I'm a yeshivah boy. I always tell the truth. I'm always honest.'"

In truth, this is how it always is. Hashem sends people to test our patience, to see how we respond. If each time we could remind ourselves, "It's a test. Hashem sent him," we would be able to pass it much easier.

Pearls of Wisdom… A Word for the Ages

A Chasan once came to **Rav Meir Chadash, zt"l**, and asked for a Brachah before his wedding.

The Rav said to him, "I am sure that you are following the Minhag of visiting with different Rabbonim and Kevorim, asking and Davening for their Brachos. Surely, you must want the blessing of Hashem, Who is the Source of all Brachah.

I advise you that on the day of your Chupah, you should set aside a specific block of time and make sure to learn some Torah. Hashem will then come to you and Bentch you. In this way, you will be able to go to your Chupah accompanied by Hashem's Brachah!

Making a Visit to the Sick Miser



Rav Meir Shapiro, zt"l, was once on a fundraising trip on behalf of his Yeshivah, Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin. He visited a wealthy businessman who was known for his miserly attitude towards anything that did not help him gain a financial profit.

Rav Shapiro knocked on his door and the businessman greeted him. He said, "Dear Rabbi, you must have the wrong address. I do not believe in giving to Tzedakah."

Rav Meir Shapiro replied, "You are mistaken. I did not come to collect Tzedakah. I came to visit the sick person that is here."

Confused, the miser said, "Rebbe, who is this sick person? I don't know of anyone in my home that is ill."

Rav Shapiro responded, "You are wrong. Someone in this house is quite ill. You are the one that is not well."

The man said, "I think you have gotten the wrong information about me. I am feeling fine, and I am not ill."

Rav Meir Shapiro got stern and said, "Shlomo Ha'melech says in Koheles (5:12), 'There is a terrible illness that I have seen, and that is riches hoarded by their owner, to his detriment.' Yet, you claim not to be ill!"

"Rebbe," the miser replied, "that's a nice P'shat, but if the Rav wants to visit sick people, there is a hospital down the block which is filled with sick people. There, the Rav can visit to his heart's content. Why are you bothering coming to me?"

"It is very simple," explained Rav Meir Shapiro. "Chazal teach us that one who visits the sick takes away a sixtieth of his illness. Therefore, if I visit someone who suffers from typhus, I will leave and take one sixtieth of his typhus with me. Your illness is the incorrect management of the wealth Hashem gave you. If I visit you, I will leave with at least one-sixtieth of your wealth. Is that so bad? The Yeshivah can really use that kind of help!"

Rav Shapiro's words made an impression on the miser, and the seriousness of his condition. *[Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg's Torah U'Tefilah.]*

Accelerated Learning By Avrohom Barash

R' Chaim of Volozhin, founder and Rosh Yeshivah of the famous Yeshivah of Volozhin, also bore the burden of ensuring the institution's financial stability.

During one difficult period, R' Chaim heard of a wealthy man who was offering to support the Yeshivah on a steady basis, pledging a considerable sum.

R' Chaim traveled to the man's town to thank him personally, and the man told him that he had no family. All he asked in return was that when his time would come to leave this world, R' Chaim would undertake to say Kaddish and to study Mishnayot in his memory. The bargain was struck and the money was sent regularly every month. The man was one of the main supporters of the Volozhiner Yehsivah.

After several years, the man passed away on a hot summer's day. Remembering his promise, R' Chaim traveled to the city where the funeral was taking place, and recited kaddish there. Following the funeral he returned home, went to the Bet Midrash and sat down to study Mishnayot. He encountered a very complicated passage which he could not understand. Due to his fatigue from the journey,

coupled with the strain of struggling to fathom the Mishnah and the extreme heat of the day, R' Chaim fell asleep.

The man who had just recently been buried appeared to him in a dream and said, "Rebbi, I must thank you heartily for saying kadish for me; it was a great source of merit for my neshamah – as is your learning Mishnayot for me. Regarding this Mishnah which you find difficult: I will explain it to you…"

When R' Chaim awoke, he was astounded. He remarked, "I know that if a person provides support for Torah, then in the Next World he will acquire knowledge of Torah. I understand that in Heaven he deserves to be granted Torah knowledge, which he enabled others to achieve during his lifetime on this earth. What I did not realize is that it happens so quickly! It is only shortly after his funeral and already he can explain a complicated Mishnah in Seder Taharot that I do not understand!"

Parsha Points to Ponder by R' Ozer Alport

Who got a tattoo in this week's parsha?



The Midrash teaches that when Hashem commanded Moshe to make the Menorah (25:31), He showed him a fiery representation of its appearance, but Moshe still had difficulty grasping it. Hashem then engraved a picture of the Menorah on Moshe's palm and told him to use that as his blueprint, but even then, Moshe continued to struggle, until ultimately Hashem told him to throw a lump of gold into the fire, and the Menorah emerged fully formed.

The Ichud B'Chidud cites Rav Chaim Kanievsky, who posits that this engraving on Moshe's palm did not violate the Torah's prohibition (Vayikra 19:28) against tattoos, as it was not an external image superimposed on his skin. Rather, Hashem created it as an innate part of Moshe's body, analogous to the creases and folds that are naturally found on a person's hands.

FACEBUKER SHABBOS TABLE TALK

Continuing the Legacy of Rabbi Dovid Winiarz of blessed memory

וְהַקֵּמֹתָ אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן כְּמִשְׁפָּטוֹ אֲשֶׁר הָרְאֵיתָ בָּהָר ***And erect the mishkan according to its rules as you were shown on the mountain.*** 26:30)

The Talmud asks, "Is there a rule or judgment for wood?" It answers, "Rather, the beam that merited to stand in the north should be placed in the north (the next time.) In the south, it should be placed in the south."

What we learn from this is that if someone has a special role, we do not take it away from them and give it to someone else for no reason. In fact, even objects, like the beams of the Mishkan, are to be treated with sensitivity.

Have you ever seen a fancy silver adornment on the headpiece of a Talis? That is done to ensure the same part of the garment that is placed on the head today, will be placed there tomorrow.

This is a very compelling lesson which should give us pause before we do something that may make another feel "less" than they were before.

What is curious, though, is that these beams were never set up before. On Mount Sinai, Hashem explained to Moshe how everything would fit together, but never actually assembled it. How then, could we say that the beams which had previously been in the north should remain in the north?

One thing about G-d is that before anything was built, He had the entire plan in mind. The last thing erected was the first thought. In that case, though the beams weren't actually there, they were as good as established since Hashem had already constructed the Mishkan in His desire. Additionally, when being thoughtful about the feelings of others, even if one never actually got the position, but was only considered for it and perhaps promised it, or even if they merely believe themselves deserving of it, we must be aware and try to avoid paining them.

In this way we create a home for the Al-mighty – inside ourselves.

SEFAS TAMIM
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דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־ אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ "Speak

to the Bnei Yisroel, and they shall take for Me, Terumah, from every person whose heart is so moved…"(25:2)

The words "take for Me, Terumah" would appear to be the incorrect words to use. The correct words to use would be "give to me, Terumah".



Rav Eliyahu Dessler ZT"L in his Michtav M'Eliyahu explains that the best way that one can become close to another individual is to give something to him. When one gives to another, one forms a close bond with that person.

Based upon this Michtav M'Eliyahu, perhaps we can say that when one gives Terumah to Hashem, one becomes close to Hashem and there is no greater gift that one can receive from Hashem than

becoming close to Him. Therefore, when Bnei Yisrael were enjoined to give Terumah to Hashem, the correct term to use was "take" because Bnei Yisrael were taking from Hashem far more than they were giving Him, because of the benefits that they would be receiving by becoming close to Him.

The benefits of closeness to Hashem are manifold. **Rav Nosson Wachtfogel ZT"L**, the Mashgiach of the Lakewood Yeshiva, explains that Hashem has generously provided each person with vast amounts and various forms of wisdom, qualities, and capabilities. To access all that Hashem has bestowed, one must achieve closeness to Hashem – Deveikus. This closeness is contained deep within the soul of man and is part of the nature of man. However, one does not readily feel and cannot readily achieve closeness to Hashem because there are barriers that stand in the way.

The essence of our service in this world is to remove these barriers. One of the barriers that stands in our way is caused by dishonesty. Working on our honesty and integrity is a sure way to remove this barrier and become closer to Hashem.

Perhaps this is also alluded to in the verse we quoted above, "… take for Me, Terumah, from every person whose heart is so moved…"

The word in Hebrew for the word "from" in this verse is "**מאת**". The Kabbalistic works say that this word refers to truth, because if you unscramble the letters, you get "**אמת**". In other words, the verse could be read to mean that one should come close to Hashem by giving Terumah (as in our first thought above – giving creates a close bond between the giver and recipient) or through "**מאת**" which is "**אמת**".

"The world exists for the sake of kindness." - Rashi

Etz HaChaim – R' C.T. Blau – Holy Heart

It is not so well known, but the Mishna Berura writes **להלכה** that before one *davens* Shemoneh Esrei, one is meant to imagine that they are literally standing inside of the **קודש הקדשים**. **סימן צד ס״ק ב** [Also see **שו״ע** siman **צה,ב**]



Rav Mattisyahu Salmon said in wonderment that he does not understand why this basic kavana which is brought **להלכה** in Shulchan Aruch is not something they are mechanech at all to the children when they are younger.

Rav Shalom Schwadron זצוק״ל said over the following story: One night the **נצי״ב** walked into the Yeshiva of Volozhin and he found a young Talmid crying. Knowing his financial situation, the **נצי״ב** asked him if he was crying because he needed something, perhaps he hadn't eaten and he wanted bread to eat?

The boy responded, "This was not the reason for my cries, but rather, I worked many, many long hours trying to figure out and understand the **רשב״ם** on Daf **כט** in **בבא בתרא** and I am not being **מצליח** to understand… This is why I'm crying."

The **נצי״ב** told the boy that once, he too, could not understand the **רשב״ם** and he went to the kever of **Rav Chaim M'Volozhin** and there he cried and davened to Hashem that he should grasp and be able to understand the Rashbam's holy words.

The boy in the story grew up to be **Rav Shimon Shkop**, one of the greatest people of his time.

In this week's parsha it says that we should make a Mishkan for Hashem, so that Hashem can rest among us.

Can we build a mishkan in the year 2023? Can we build a mishkan without even a penny to our name?

The answer is yes! There is another type of mishkan that we have the ability to build, yet it is not one that we can see. It is a mishkan that we build in our heart - **בלבבי משכן אבנה** . Which means to make a **מקדש מעט** in our heart. Which means that our Jewish heart can also become **קודש הקודשים**.

When we use our heart for the **עבודה שבלב** we allow Hashem **כביכול** to enter our heart and we live with Hashem!

The whole purpose of **מצות** is to gain a closer **דביקות** with Hashem. It would be dreadful if a person would go through life being frum, **מדקדק במצות** , davening on time, eating the right hechsher... yet without any heart thinking of, or having a relationship with Hashem! He missed out on life!

What do we think **עולם הבא** is going to be? **גשמיות** in a **רוחני** way? No! It is all the pleasure of our close relationship with Hashem. No pleasure can be a **משל** for that.

We can bring Hashem within our hearts, into this world. Hashem wants to rest with us. We just have to make it available for Hashem to actually rest in our **לב**. We have to clean it out, make space, and allow Him to come in. Take all our **קנאה, תאוה, וכבוד מידות רעות** out of our hearts, and instead, fill our hearts with **רוחניות**, desire to do **מצות** and of course living with Hashem.

With our heart built for **ועשו לי מקדש**, then **ממילא** there will be **ושכנתי בתוכם** !

"Bitachon does not mean that things will always go well, but it does mean that Hashem is always with us and that we can handle whatever comes our way." – Rabbi Noach Weinberg

The Impact And Power of Tefillah

There was once a group of hoodlums who would try in every which way to get money. One time one of the members of the group noticed that when saintly Rebbah's would come to any town the people would leave them money.

There was one fellow by the name of Moshe that approached his friends with his brilliant idea. "Listen" he said "I will pretend to be Rebbah and you guys will be my chasiddim. We will go from town to town and receive a lot of money.

The friends were a bit skeptical but they decided to go along with it. The plan was that one of the "chassidim" would come to the town a day before the Rebbah and would ask in shul, "Does any one know when the heiligeh kvechiver Rebbah is coming?" He would get the whole town excited and the next day the Rebbah would come.

When the next day came, Moshe the "Rebbah" with his regal streimel and bekasheh, surrounded by a few "chasiddim" came marching into the town of shnipichuch.

The Gevirim in the town were already all fighting over who would merit to host the great Tzaddik. Everyone lined up to get a slot with the "Rebbah". Each person came in with their requests. One wanted a blessing for parnassa. The next a shiduch for his older son.

Money was coming in at a fast pace and the group was very enthusiastic about the success they were having. Of course inwardly they were bursting with laughter for they never dreamed at how well things would work out.

The day was coming to an end and everything seem to have gone smoothly, until the last visitor came in crying. "Rebbah," he said, " I need a blessing for my daughter." "She should find a shidduch," the "Rebbah" said. "No, no, Rebbah she is deathly ill and she needs a refuah shelaima".

Suddenly the reality of Moshe's thievery and deceit struck him like a bolt of lightning. "What am I doing?" he though. "Fooling people that I have power of blessing and stealing their money."

Moshe was beside himself. The man just started crying more. "Please Rebbah, I beg you to give a blessing to my child that she should have a refuah shelaima." Moshe told him that he was unable to help.

After the person left Moshe the ganav turned to Hashem, and, crying bitter tears said, "Master of the world, I know I am wicked and have acted wickedly. I accept the punishment for my evil deeds. But please G-D, I beg of you, please heal this poor girl and grant her a complete recovery."

With that he took off his royal garb and ran for the entrance of the town. The towns people wondered why the great Rebbah was leaving his fancy streimel and garb behind, but they asked no questions.

As Moshe was exiting the town he heard a man screaming from behind. "Rebbah, Rebbah, your prayers worked! My daughter sat up and the doctors told me that only a true miracle could have made this happen. Your prayers were answered!"

BROOKLYN TORAH GAZETTE To Really Care

In Poland a decree was once issued against shechita. A delegation of respected Yidden went to beg one of the ministers to annul the decree, but they were unsuccessful. When they returned, they met with **the Chofetz Chaim** and updated him.

Upon hearing their report, the Chofetz Chaim said to them: "***Did any of you faint at the meeting? If it truly mattered, you would have fainted***! And then the minister would have seen that the matter was of great importance to you."

Mr. Charlie Harary - A Gift of Our Heart



A few years ago, I was sitting in an office in Manhattan, its captivating city views facing opposite me. Inside, I glanced from side to side, taking in the hanging pictures which featured the office's owner standing next to an array of reputable dignitaries, celebrities and politicians. Behind the pictures was a desk filled with deal toys, or so-called trophies, which must have been gifted to him at the close of a deal.

Aside from all this, though, my eyes wandered to something peculiar. It was a small glass case with a tie inside. But the tie was not something you'd expect anyone to wear. It was ugly, to give it a word. I couldn't envision anyone feeling comfortable walking around in it, and I certainly couldn't understand why this respected business owner had made such an artifact visible for everyone to see. The entire time I spent there, I couldn't shake the thought of why this glass case with this tie was situated there. It was so evidently out of place.

After the meeting had concluded, I approached the business owner, my curiosity in toe. "Can I ask you something?" I asked. "Sure, what is it?" "That frame over there, with the tie inside… What's the story behind it?" "Oh that," he said. "Actually, I received that for my fiftieth birthday from my son. My wife planned this special gala and invited a bunch of my family and friends. I received a lot of gifts and it was a spectacular evening. Towards the end of it, my son came up to me with a gift. I unwrapped it, and there this tie was. It wasn't the most flattering, to put it mildly. "Where'd you get this?" I asked

him. "Your credit card," he replied. "And where you'd get my credit card?" I asked further. "Mommy!" The look in his eyes was irresistible.

"I remember that day," the owner said with a gleam in his eye. I could see the owner's love that welled up within him as he cast his mind back to that moment, his son's joy overwhelming everything else that surrounded that birthday evening. "I put it here because my son gave it to me. No matter what it looks like or what other people think, he gave it to me. And if he gave it to me, well, then, that's the most precious thing a father could have. That's the most precious thing I could hang here in my office." The man's eyes stared back at the tie, its ugliness fading into oblivion, beauty and love replacing it.

And with that, I shook his hand, and made my way out the door, the oscillating thoughts that swirled in my mind making me think about the beauty that such gifts can bring to life.

There are many types of gifts in life, but two primarily occupy our exchanges with others. One is a gift we give for a gift we get. In that regard, it's not really a gift in the purest sense of the word. We give something because we want something in return. It need not be a tangible gift we receive in return. We may give something because we are seeking appreciation in turn. We may want to be liked by the receiver or gain something else that otherwise may not have motivated them to hand it off to us.

But then there is another type of gift. And this type of gift doesn't have anything attached to it. It is not fueled by an underlying motivation for something to come back to us and enhance our own lives in self-interested ways. It emanates from a place within which whispers to us, "I love you… I like you… and I want you to know that." But we then wonder how such emotions can be expressed. How can they be packaged in ways that will touch the other's heart?

Words are tender and words can touch others, but there is something we look to enwrap such sentiment around. And we call that a gift. But this gift is vastly different than the first kind.

This was the kind of gift this father received from his son.

It didn't need to look nice. In fact, it could have been the most unappealing item of all. Your child brings home a drawing and you can't make out what it is. But they hand it to you, their eyes glistening with that unadulterated love that melts your heart, and all you say is, "Thank you, sweetie." It is a token of nothing less than pure love. And that is the greatest gift.

When G-d asked of us the build the Mishkan, the Tabernacle, he turned to us and requested that we bring donations. Gold, silver, turquoise wool, scarlet… you name it. The Mishkan was a magnificent home, an abode for nothing less than the Divine Presence.

But it's hard to understand why G-d would ask us to bring our possessions and contribute them toward the building of the Mishkan. Here we are a nation of slaves who have just been liberated from the claws of Egypt, and G-d is asking for us to hand over our belongings to Him. G-d owns everything in the world.

Why can't he just give us the Mishkan entirely ready to go? Or at the least, why can't He provide us with the material and we'll build it. Why must we, a nation just freed from the shackles of bondage, donate what we have?

The Torah tells us something particular. It calls for those who give anything to the Mishkan to give a "donation of the heart."

Hashem doesn't need anything from us. He doesn't need our gold or our silver. He has everything He'll ever need. But there is one thing Hashem wants from us.

Our heart. The gift of our heart. - Yes, our gift would take the shape of valuables, but that was just the exterior casing; that was just the

tie. What rested inside, what was really desired above all else was… our heart.

That is how G-d builds His home. With our hearts.

Hashem owns everything in the world. Giving him another nugget of gold is not going to make Him any wealthier or make Him any happier. But what He does seek from us, what He does want from us is a relationship. And at the nucleus of such relationship is our heart, our feelings, our yearnings and desires to love Him. And love Him deeply and dearly.

Judaism asks a lot of us. It requires that we take action and sculpt our lives in many different ways around religious practice. We may head to shul and give charity; we may shake a Lulav, eat matzah, or conduct a host of other actions. And in this process, it's easy to get caught up with the feeling that we're doing this in exchange. G-d needs something from me. "Okay, G-d… here it is. Here's my mitzvah…" And then we wait. We look and wait for what G-d will give us in return. I gave you charity, G-d, so give me back in return what I need. We are transactional with G-d, engaging in a form of exchange.

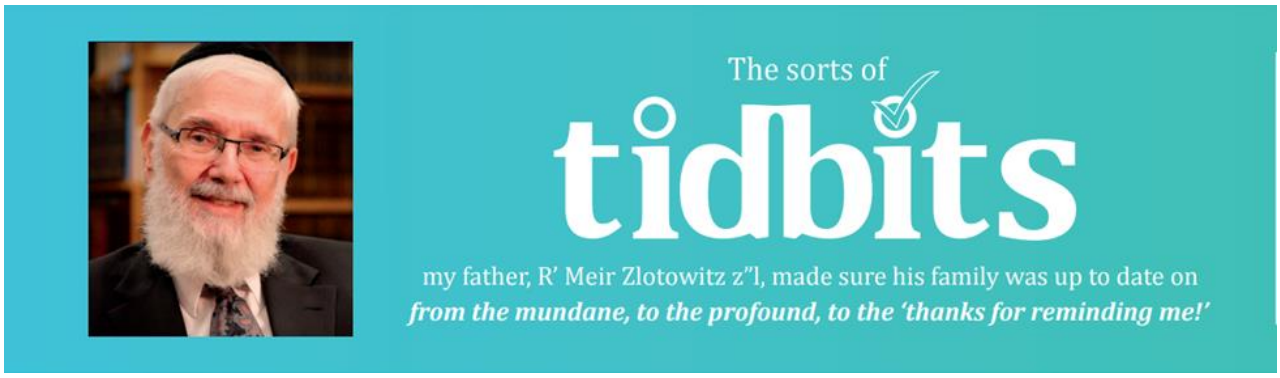
But this isn't a real relationship. That is Amazon.com. Hashem is looking for something else. Something very, very different.

"It doesn't need to be perfect," He tells us. "It's not really about the gift. You don't need to get it all right. It can even be a tie that is not the most perfect and extravagant of all. All I want is you. A relationship with you. Your heart." That's all G-d asks of us, implores from us, His dear, beloved children.

Feeling this, the outpouring of a gift to G-d is a beautiful gesture. It flows forth with undulating emotion, with unreserved love. It is a gift, perhaps even a physical gift, but beneath it beats our heart. G-d doesn't look just at our hands. He doesn't just look at what we hand over. He looks at our hearts. And if that's there, we have everything.

G-d loves you. He always has and He always will. Like a father, willing and wishing for his son to give him a gift, but not because the father needs it. The father has everything he needs. But because he wants to feel his son's heart. He wants to feel the pulse of his love and look into his eyes and cry together with him, loving him forever and ever. And then some more.

There's nothing more beautiful and beloved than that.



For the Shabbos Table

וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה "***And they shall take for Me a donation***" (Shemos 25:2)

The Parashah discusses the donations of Bnei Yisrael toward the construction of the Mishkan. However, instead of the pasuk stating "veyitnu li terumah'', 'and they shall give to Me a donation,' the Torah says "veyikchu" 'and they shall take'. Why say that every Jew will "take" his donation for Hashem's Mishkan?

R' Moshe Feinstein zt"l explains: The pasuk is teaching us that while it appeared on the surface that the Bnei Yisrael contributed their own wealth for the construction, the truth is that all wealth belongs to Hashem; He grants wealth for safekeeping, until the time that it could be contributed for a worthy cause, in this case the building of the Mishkan.

When one dedicates his wealth to the Mishkan or other worthy causes with a full heart, he is fulfilling the original purpose for which

he took the money into his possession in the first place - to allocate it in accordance with its Owner's wishes. Therefore, the pasuk accurately states that Terumah: Bnei Yisrael 'shall take for Me a donation'.



Thank You Hashem – Terumah

Chazal teach that the windows in the Beis Hamikdash were narrow on the inside and wide on the outside, almost like a funnel.

The reason for this was that the function of those windows was not to bring light in but rather to send light out – to light up the world with the reality of Hashem's hashgacha and His presence in our physical reality.

In the same way, the windows of each and every Jew's mikdash m'at of his or her personal avodas Hashem must be fashioned in this manner as well.

In addition to focusing on our own growth and the degree to which we are succeeding in transforming our lives into a chariot for the Divine, we must also remain cognizant of the world around us and how sorely it needs the unique light that only we are able to share. When we merit any measure of spiritual illumination and clarity, it is imperative that we use it to influence our surroundings, sharing what we have learned and felt with our fellow Jews so that they too may merit to host our Father in heaven in the structure of their daily lives.



The Alter of Novardok, zt"l, stated, "A person should be willing to give up all his tomorrows for one today, so that he doesn't end up wasting all his todays on one tomorrow!"



Terumah

The Jewish People donated their gold, silver, copper and valuable items to the mishkan.

Giving things that are precious to us is not natural. We are born with our fists clenched, wanting to grab everything we can. But we are in this world to work on ourselves. We can become givers by using the gifts we were blessed with for a higher purpose.

We can give money to tzeddakah and we can share our talents with others. We can give a sincere compliment. We can give advice. There are so many ways to give, to improve and to become more selfless.

May we be able to overcome our natural desire to take and be blessed with the energy and resources to always be on the giving end!



וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבַּיִת וּמִחוּץ תְּצַפֶּנּוּ

You shall cover it (the Ark) with pure gold, on the inside and on the outside, you shall cover it.... (Shemos 25:11)

By writing "on the inside" before "on the outside", the Torah seems to indicate that, for some reason, the gold on the inside was even more significant than the gold on the outside.

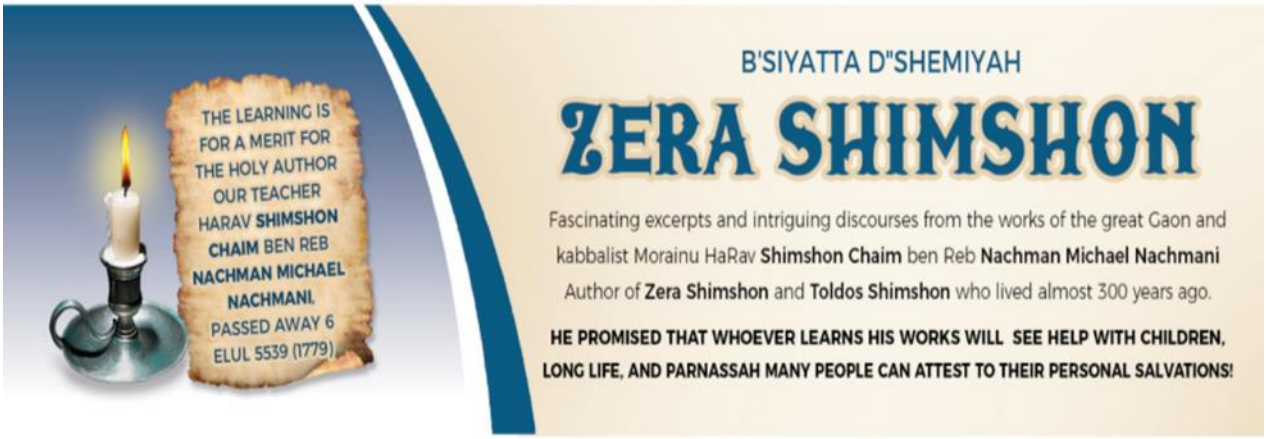
Why is the "inner gold" of the Aron more significant than the "outer gold"?

Menucha's Answer: Based on what Chazal taught us (Yuma 72), the gold of the ark represents achievements that the Torah helps one to gain. The "outside gold" represents the Torah knowledge that a

person acquires, while the "inner gold" represents the inner nature person – the character traits that the Torah helps one to improve.

It's taught in the name of **Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk** that the Torah is spiritual food and its effects on a person are parallel to that of regular food. If a person eats properly, its effects will be recognizable on his outward appearance. Similarly, someone who learns Torah properly, his inner character should be influenced for the good.

We see that the verse mentions "inside" before "outside", emphasizing that the prime purpose of Torah learning is to positively influence one's inner nature.



וְעָשִׂיתָ שֻׁלְחָן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים "***And you shall make a table.***" (25:23)

The Mishna teaches (Avos 3:5), "Three people that sit together to eat but do not discuss words of Torah, it is as though they have eaten from sacrifices from Avoda Zara. Whereas three people eating together and do discuss Torah, it is as though they have eaten from the table of Hashem (the Mishna uses the word 'Makom' to refer to Hashem).

The reason why the Mishna uses the number three is because even if these people who have not discussed Torah make Zimun before they say Birchas Hamazon, it does not outdo the negative effect of them having eaten together without discussing Torah (see Rav Ovadia MiBartenura on this Mishna).

The negative effect that eating without discussing Torah at the meal is because this makes the eating a purely mundane act. This makes the food, which becomes part of the person, fuel his earthly desires, which in turn is what leads one to sin.

On the other hand, when Torah is discussed at the meal, even though the same physical food is being eaten, something entirely different happens to it.

This can be understood with the words of the Shach (on the Torah), when explaining the bread - the Lechem Hapanim - that was kept on the Shulchan, he explains why it was called the Lechem Hapanim, the 'Bread of Faces'.

When Hashem spoke to Moshe Rabbeinu, the Torah describes it as (Devarim 5:4), that Hashem spoke with him, פָּנִים בְּפָנִים ,face to face.

The term 'Lechem Hapanim' is a borrowed term from that description. When the Kohanim ate from this holy bread, it sanctified them in a tremendous way. The borrowed term from the description of how Hashem spoke to Moshe Rabbeinu is to show the level of holiness that the Kohanim attained when eating it.

The Shach continues and writes that every person that speaks Torah at his meal taps into the holiness that the Kohanim had when they ate the Lechem Hapanim!

This is what the Mishna means when it says that three people eating together that do discuss Torah, it is as though they have eaten from the table of Hashem. This turns the physical bread (and food) into a spiritual fortification against the tests of this physical world.

"The essence of Bitachon is to trust in Hashem's constant love and care for us, and to believe that everything that happens is a reflection of that love." – Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel

A Message from the Kalever Rebbe - Teach Children the value of their Prayers

"***The cherubim shall have their wings spread upwards, shielding the ark cover with their wings***." (Shemos 25:20)

A Child's Prayer

The first Kaalover Rebbe, **R' Yitzchak Isaac, zt"l**, would go to the town's school every morning to simply answer "amen" to the Brachos recited by the children.

The Baal Shem Tov, zt"l, even in his youth, would gather the children and walk with them to school so that he could answer "amen" to their brachos.

There are other countless stories that reflect the value that the tzaddikim placed on the tefilos of children throughout the generations. They cherished these pure tefilos and taught the children the immeasurable importance of their tefilah.

Holy Voices

Chazal explains (Shabbos 119b) that the entire world's existence is only sustained by the air from the mouth of schoolchildren, because it is not tainted by sin. Their tefilos have the unique power to nullify the ill intentions of the enemies of the Jewish people. As it says (Tehilim 8:3), "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings You have established strength because of Your adversaries, to put an end to enemy and avenger".

Mordechai HaTzadik understood the incredible power of children's tefilos. Therefore, when the decree to annihilate the yidden was established, Mordechai sought to harness this power to nullify the decree and destroy the yidden's enemies.

The Midrash (Esther Rabba 8:7) taught that he gathered 22,000 children and prayed with them. When Hashem heard the holy voices of these children, when He heard their tefilos and outcry caused by

their suffering and persecution, His abundant Mercy was aroused, and Hashem set in motion the miracle of Purim. Immediately, Haman dressed and escorted Mordechai by horse. Everything was changed for the ultimate goodness.

The Zohar relates (Volume III 204b) an astonishing story: When R' Yossi from Pekin passed away, the people gathered to take care of the deceased. When they entered his home, they found his young son standing beside his father's bed, crying aloud, and praying to Hashem for the loss of his father who had been taken from him. Then, R' Yossi opened his eyes and was returned to life!

This story demonstrates the unimaginable power of a child's tefilah, a prayer that is uttered with the purity only a child can possess, that innocently flows from the depths of their heart. These prayers can even resurrect the dead.

A Prayer for All

Nowadays, these tefilos are needed even more to replace the holy sacrifices which have been unfilled since the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash.

The renowned **Maggid from Dubna, R' Yaakov**, explained this idea through a wonderful parable:

There was once an extraordinarily wealthy man who was unpleasant to everyone. He was rude and judgmental. He acted entitled. Eventually, everyone began to distance themselves from him, and they harboured animosity in their hearts against him.

However, the man's business began to fail and eventually his entire fortune was gone. He had become poor and destitute. His situation became so dire that he didn't even have a single slice of bread in his house. And, with no other options, he had to go knocking door-to-door seeking charity and handouts. As he went from house to house, his pleas were met with ridicule and shame. They recalled how he treated people when he was wealthy. No one was willing to help him.

So, he returned home broken, desperate, and veiled in a cloak of misery.

He gathered his children and said to them, "Listen carefully children. Usually, a father provides for his children because they cannot support themselves. They haven't developed the tools or education yet to work in a business that demands a certain skill set. But we no longer have a business. Now, in our current circumstances, our "business" is to knock on doors and depend on the generosity of others. Therefore, I need your help. You need to go to "work". Your innocence and grace will rouse their mercy and kindness whereas I cannot. They will give you something, and they will inadvertently be supporting me as well."

The lesson of this parable is clear. When the Beis HaMikdash stood and the sacrifices were offered, when the world was flowing with an abundance of mitzvos and Torah, the children were sustained by their fathers. After all, the children did not have a role in the Beis HaMikdash. But now, because of our sins, we have been exiled from our lands, and our only Avodah, our work, is to ask for mercy and kindness.

Therefore, the children, as in the parable, are more suited for this work. They are pure and their breath is not tainted by sin (Shabbos ibid). They can arouse that mercy and kindness through their tefilos. As their tefilos sustain and support them, they will, inevitably, support the "fathers" as well. The answer of their prayers answers the prayers of all.

Purifying the Atmosphere

R' Yehoshua of Dinov, zt"l, explained with this, the reason why many tzaddikim and pious yidden are not meticulous to daven at sunrise, as has become the custom for many. The Bnei Yissachor wrote that his rebbe, the Chozeh from Lublin, praised this explanation.

The explanation is as follows: Our world has become infected and polluted by the forces of impurity. Therefore, it is difficult for our tefilos to rise to the Heavens. There are spiritual obstacles and hindrances. Therefore, it is fitting to delay shachris, the morning prayers, until the school children have had an opportunity to daven. Their tefilos and their purity pierce through the impurities, they break through the thick veil of all the superficiality and obstacles; their tefilos literally purify the spiritual atmosphere. Therefore, as their tefilos rise, as they eradicate all the obstacles, so too, the prayers of everyone can now rise to the heavens without delays or obstructions.

Teach their Value

Each child on his own level, needs to understand how valuable their tefios are. Therefore, it is incumbent on the parents and teachers to encourage children to daven to Hashem. To teach them how beautiful and cherished their tefilos are in the Heavens.

They need to lovingly explain to them how much Hashem values their tefilos and that through their tefilos they can have an incredible impact by drawing goodness and brachos into this world on behalf of their families, friends, and the entire Jewish people.

This is the deeper meaning of our pasuk when it says, "The cherubim shall have their wings spread upwards". The cherubim were in the image of innocent children. Their wings-hands spread upwards to signify tefilah, as Moshe said to Pharoah (Shemos 9:29) "When I leave the city, I will spread my hands to the L-rd".

These cherubim protected and shielded the Aron HaKodesh that contained the Torah and the Luchos. This serves as a symbol for the yidden to remember the importance of children's tefilos that protect all of the Jewish people who study Torah.

The Weekly Vort

■ **ויקחו לי תרומה – *Let them take for Me a portion…*** (25:2). The term **ויתנו**, *you shall give*, would seem to be more appropriate than **ויקחו**, *you shall take*.

The Gaon HaMalbim explains based on the Mishna (Avos 3:8), *"Give Him from His own, for you and your possessions are His."* One must never be stingy in matters of *tzedakah* and of expenditures for *mitzvos*. One must realize that he is spending Hashem's money and not his own and therefore give happily and magnanimously. - Hence, man *takes* his livelihood from Hashem so that he will be able to contribute to worthy causes.

This might be compared to a parent who showers a child with wealth and gifts, and then asks the child to share it with him. Although it was the parent who gave the gifts in the first place, it is a source of joy to him when the child shares it. Likewise, although Hashem grants us the wealth, He rejoices when we *take* and then give it back to Him. (**The Torah Treasury**)

■ **וארבעים אדני כסף – *Forty silver sockets*** (26:19).

These sockets constituted the base of the *Mishkan*. In all, they numbered one hundred. Some authorities derive from here a support to the ruling made in the *Shulchan Aruch* that a Jew should make one hundred *brachos* a day.

The Baal HaTurim notes that just as the hundred sockets supported the *Mishkan*, so too, the hundred daily *brachos* are the spiritual supports for our lives. (**Kol HaTorah – R' Elie Munk**)

"That man is richest whose pleasures are cheapest."

Vedibarta Bam – Weekly Torah Inspiration - Rabbi Sruli Ginsburg – Pure Gold

וְעָשִׂיתָ כַּפֹּרֶת זָהָב טָהוֹר



There was a lid covering the Aron, - the Kapores (lid). It was made out of pure gold. But we know that it wasn't just a lid. On top of the lid were the cherubim - **וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב מִקְשָׁה**. These were two statues of young children. They would face each other. They would both have wings which would spread upwards and inwards towards each other. The space between the cherubim and the wings was actually the holiest place – it was the place from where Hashem spoke to Moshe Rabeinu.

The Torah said that the cover and the cherubim must be made/beaten out of one block of gold- **מִקְשָׁה**. If this is the case, I have a question: We know that the Torah is very accurate with every word, and we know that there is a difference between 9k gold and 24k pure gold. When the Torah states **זָהָב טָהוֹר**, it means 100% pure gold.

So, the lid had to be made out of pure gold, and the cherubim had to be made out of the same block of gold – which means that they were also pure gold. But when the Pasuk describes the cherubim, it says **וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב** – a lower grade gold. Why? How?

I think perhaps that there is a very simple, but very important lesson: The lid of the Aron was to cover the Torah- the Luchos that were inside. However, the two cherubim on top (as many meforshim explain) were images of two little children that represented children that learn Torah.

The Torah is זָהָב טָהוֹר – it is absolutely perfect. But the children that learn Torah, as much as we would want, are not always cut out to learn at the highest level. Not every chil has the ability to learn Torah to perfection.

What should we do with children that have difficulty in learning Torah? Do you ignore them, or deny them a place in the schools or chadorim? – Chas v'sholom!

The Torah says, that you take those two cherubim, those children that are זָהָב – but not זָהָב טָהוֹר and you connect them as one with the Torah!

Every child regardless of their ability in leaning Torah, even if they are not perfect, – **must** have a place where to learn and connect to the Torah! - When we do this, it creates the holiest place!



Rabbi's Message - Rav Chaim Soloveitchik of Yeshivat Reishit & Rav of Kehillat Ohr Sholom, Ramat Beit Shemesh

The Torah teaches that the Mishkan was made from "Atzei Shitim Omdim," which were non fruit bearing trees. The Midrash asks why the Mishkan had to be made with specifically non fruit bearing trees.

It answers that Hashem wanted to teach us by example that when building our own homes, we should not use fruit bearing trees.

What does this Midrash mean? Is this simply a lesson in "bal tashchis," that we should not waste fruit trees to build our homes? Isn't the Torah's prohibition regarding wasting things enough to cover that? What is added by the command to use this type of wood for the Mishkan?

Perhaps the explanation is as follows: When a person grows a fruit tree, the results can be seen fairly quickly. Within a few years there can already be actual fruits growing on the tree. However, with non-fruit trees, it takes a lot longer for it to reach the height and overall growth where it can be put to good use.

The Midrash can be teaching that Hashem wanted the Mishkan built from a type of tree which takes years to yield success as an example for how we should approach building our spiritual homes. - Raising spiritual children and creating a holy home is not something which happens overnight. It can take years of effort and toil before results can be seen. But we must be inspired to persevere with patience by learning from the example of the Mishkan.

May all of us learn this important lesson and commit ourselves to the years of toil and effort to build our own spiritual homes.

Torah Wellsprings ~ R' Elimelech Biderman

"I Will Dwell Among Them"

It states (25:8) **וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם**, "They shall make a Mishkan for me, so that I may dwell among them."

The Alshich Hakadosh asks why the Torah writes, **וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם** -"I will dwell among them," in the plural tense? The Mishkan is one building, it should state **וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכוֹ**, "I will dwell *in it*."

The Alshich HaKadosh answers that **וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם**, "I will dwell in them," means that Hashem will dwell "in them – in Klal Yisrael".

Every Yid has the potential to be the abode for the Shechinah, and this is a great merit.

The concept of becoming a dwelling place for the Shechinah is especially relevant in Adar, because the sefarim teach that **אדר**

stands for דר – א, the Alef is the Alufo Shel Olam, master of the world. He is דר - dwells, in this world.

The Maor Einayim teaches that this is the special joy of Adar. Hashem dwells with us, and that is the greatest joy. This is particularly felt during the month of Adar, and therefore, it is appropriate to rejoice the entire month. **משכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה**

Rabbi Jeremy Golker – The Transformative Power of Torah



Let me share with you an amazing idea related to Parsha's Truma. Parsha's Truma, of course, deals with the building of the Mishkan and all the Keilim in the Mishkan. One of them, the first that is mentioned, is the Aron, the Aron which contains the Luchos and represents Torah and Limud HaTorah. And of course, the Passuk tells us that it's made up of three boxes. The Aron had, first of all, a gold box and then a wooden box and then a smaller gold box, and therefore it was made in that fashion.

And the Gemara describes that it represents the person, the Talmud Chacham, who learns Torah and has got to be תּוֹכוֹ כְּבָרוֹ. "***His inside must be like his outside***." This represents the ideal of sincerity, integrity, and the absence of hypocrisy. - Just like the Aron, the inside was gold, the outside was gold. Well, so too, a Talmud Chacham has got to be genuine. He's got to be real through and through. **תּוֹכוֹ כְּבָרוֹ**.

The Gemara in *Berachos 28a*, it is recorded: **On that day that they removed Rabban Gamliel from his position and appointed Rabbi Elazar ben**

Azarya in his place, there was also a fundamental change in the general approach of the study hall as they dismissed the guard at the door and permission was granted to the students to enter. Instead of Rabban Gamliel's selective approach that asserted that the students must be screened before accepting them into the study hall, the new approach asserted that anyone who seeks to study should be given opportunity to do so. As Rabban Gamliel would proclaim and say: Any student whose inside, his thoughts and feelings, are not like his outside, i.e., his conduct and his character traits are lacking, will not enter the study hall.

The Gemara relates: On that day several benches were added to the study hall to accommodate the numerous students. Rabbi Yoḥanan said: Abba Yosef ben Dostai and the Rabbis disputed this matter. One said: Four hundred benches were added to the study hall. And one said: Seven hundred benches were added to the study hall. When he saw the tremendous growth in the number of students, Rabban Gamliel was disheartened. He said: Perhaps, Heaven forbid, I prevented Israel from engaging in Torah study. They showed him in his dream white jugs filled with ashes alluding to the fact that the additional students were worthless idlers. The Gemara comments: That is not the case, but that dream was shown to him to ease his mind so that he would not feel bad.

Rabban Gamliel, the head of the Sanhedrin, famously declared that any student whose "inside is not like his outside" (*tocho kevaro*) was not permitted to enter the House of Study. He sought only those whose commitment to Torah was as deep in their hearts as it appeared in their actions. And says the Gemara, as a result, when Rav Gamaliel saw that the Bais HaMedrash was exploding and that hundreds, thousands more students came along, he got very despondent and said, maybe I held back Torah from the Jewish people.

The Gateshead Rav [Rabbi Rakow] used to say, why are we describing the proliferation of students as a result of this change of policy in terms of benches? Why not say 1,000, 2,000 students came along? Why say 400 or 700 benches were added?

The Maharsha notes the striking language of the Gemara. Why describe the growth in terms of benches rather than students? He

suggests that this phrasing subtly reflects a shift in quality. The earlier students embodied spiritual depth; the later influx, while numerous, was characterized in more material terms, symbolized by the benches themselves. - It alludes to the point that the quality of the boy who now entered the Beis Medrash wasn't the same as the original ones, i.e. their focus was on the gashmius of the yeshiva, the benches. That was really their focus, so therefore the quality of boys it attracted were not indeed **תּוֹכוֹ כְּבָרוֹ**, and therefore we sort of symbolize this by talking about the benches, the gashmius of the yeshiva.

Okay, asks the **Chidushai Harim**, why was Ram Gamliel sad? He saw the applications coming to his desk. He could have easily changed the rules, and he would have seen hundreds more boys come. Why was he sad? What surprised him? He could have had more students if he wanted to.

Says the Chidushai Harim, an amazing thing. He was sad because he saw that now they changed the entrance criteria. The boys who were not previously Tocha Kabaro became Tocha Kabaro. It was through the Limud HaTorah that they became first-rate boys. - And that's what made him despondent.

And therefore the message is, we see through the Koach of Torah, as symbolized by the Aron, that that Torah can transform a person from being less real to more real. It can transform a person to become **תּוֹכוֹ כְּבָרוֹ**.

Chazon Ish — Chesed & Ahavas Yisrael

"A single word of encouragement can revive a broken heart." - He believed emotional support is often more powerful than material help.



A Life-Changing Perspective -The Power of a Giver by Rabbi Meyer Yedid

I don't know if we can completely shift our mindset after years of viewing success in a certain way. But imagine how different life would be if we stopped comparing ourselves to others and instead focused on our own abilities.

What if we genuinely believed that we are achieving greatness just by doing our best — even if, by some external measure, it's not as much as the next person? Life would be richer, more fulfilling, and filled with simchah. Because at the end of the day, Hashem measures us by effort, not results.

The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 12:3) relates a remarkable conversation between Hashem and Moshe Rabbeinu. When Hashem instructed the Jewish people to build a Mishkan — a dwelling place for the Divine Presence — Moshe was overwhelmed. The very idea seemed impossible.

בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁאָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם, אָמַר מֹשֶׁה מִי יוּכַל לַעֲשׂוֹת לוֹ מִקְדָּשׁ שֶׁיִּשְׁרֶה בְּתוֹכוֹ -- אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא אֵינִי מְבַקֵּשׁ, לְפִי כֹּחִי אֶלָּא לְפִי כֹּחָן

When Moshe heard the command, "Build Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell within it," he could not comprehend it: *What? Build a home for You? How can we possibly build a home for the Creator of the Universe?* He recalled the verse, *"Behold, the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain You!"* If even the vastness of the heavens cannot contain Hashem, how can a mere structure in this finite world serve as His dwelling place?

Hashem responded: *I am not asking you to build a Mishkan according to My infinite ability. I am asking you to build it according to **your** ability.*

At first glance, Hashem's response may sound like encouragement: *Just do your best; that's all I expect.* But, in truth, the Midrash is saying something far deeper. Hashem is revealing a fundamental principle about our spiritual efforts: When we genuinely do our best, it is literally as if Hashem Himself has done it with His infinite ability.

This means that when a person builds a home for Hashem according to his own limited human capability, then, in the spiritual realm, it is viewed as if Hashem built it with His boundless power. There is no difference. The sincere effort of a finite human being is, in Hashem's eyes, equivalent to an act of Divine infinity. - When we push ourselves to our limit, Hashem views it as if we have touched His limit — as if we have done the impossible.

This Midrash is not just about the *Mishkan* — it is about every endeavor in life, every mitzvah we do, every challenge we face.

When a person struggles to learn Torah despite distractions, exhaustion, or difficulties, but still learns according to his ability, in *Shamayim,* it is considered as if he has mastered the entire Torah. When a person gives *tzedakah* according to his ability, even if it is a small amount, it is as if he has given endless wealth.

Hashem does not expect us to accomplish the impossible. He expects us to do our best. And when we do, He transforms our best into infinite greatness.

"A person was not created for himself, but to help others in whatever way he can." ~ Chofetz Chaim.

משל למה הדבר דומה

In his late twenties, Yosef Yozel Horowitz was anything but a learned scholar. He was a powerhouse of industry, a "hardware tycoon" who owned a massive chain of eighty retail stores. Wealthy, influential, and deeply rooted in the business world, Yosef seemed destined for a life of commercial success. However, that all changed when he met the legendary *Mussar* master, **R' Yisroel Salanter *zt"l***.

R' Yisroel Salanter was famous for his soul-stirring lectures, and the young businessman found himself drawn to them. A deep bond formed between the merchant and the scholar, but one specific lecture hit home so hard that it completely reshaped Yosef's world.

In a move that stunned his peers, he walked away from his empire, closed all eighty shops, and left his life of luxury behind.

To find true clarity, he retreated into the forest. For five years, he lived in a small, secluded cabin, surviving on simple meals brought to him by locals. When he emerged, he wasn't a businessman anymore; he had become a scholar of great prowess. He spent the rest of his life focused on the youth of Russia, eventually building eighty *yeshivos* and becoming the legendary **Alter of Novhardok *zt"l***. He traded his eighty hardware stores for a legacy of spirit and *Torah*.

In the opening words of *Parshas Terumah*, *Hashem* commands *Bnei Yisroel*: *"Take for Me an offering."* – Strictly speaking, you don't "take" an offering; you give one. So why the word "take?"

The answer is a beautiful truth about life: In the spiritual world, the only things we truly "take" with us are the things we have the courage to give away for a higher purpose. The only assets that become eternally ours are the spiritual ones performed with deep affection.

Parshah Pearls

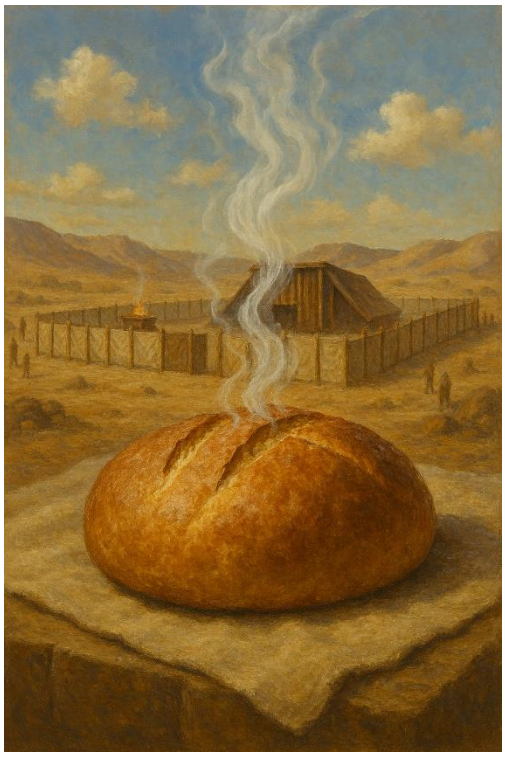
● It Depends Which Way You're Looking

וּפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו - *"And their (the Keruvims') faces turned towards one another"* (25:20).

Another Pasuk in Divrei HaYamim II 3:13 writes **וְהֵם עֹמְדִים עַל־רַגְלֵיהֶם וּפְנֵיהֶם לַבָּיִת** "***And their faces turned towards the house".***

To resolve this discrepancy, Chazal establish the first Pasuk when Yisrael are performing the will of Hashem, and the second Pasuk, when they are not.

When two Jews look towards one another (i.e. take interest in each other's needs), that is synonymous with performing the will of G-d. But when each one looks only at his own house (to see to his own needs and not concern himself with anybody else), that is called not performing the will of G-d, says the **K'sav Sofer**. Either way, this was reflected in the position of the two Keruvim.



● Serving Hashem with Warmth

וְנָתַתָּ עַל־הַשֻּׁלְחָן לֶחֶם פָּנִים לְפָנַי תָּמִיד - *"The Lechem ha'Panim shall be before Me always"* (25:30).

The Torah writes in connection with the Lechem ha'panim "Hot when it was taken", from which Chazal learn that it was as hot when it was removed from the Shulchan as when it placed there.

There are many Jews, says R. Yosef Shaul Natanson, who get very excited when they begin performing Mitzvos. As time passes however, they cool down slowly but surely, like regular bread, which comes out of the oven hot, but which gradually loses its heat.

From the Lechem ha'Panim we can learn, he says, that in the service of G-d, we need to retain one's heat with the passing of time, so that our enthusiasm does not wane. As Rashi explains in the second Parshah of the Sh'ma " ... My Mitzvos, that I am commanding you today" - 'each and every day they should be fresh (as if they have been commanded that today)!'



● **Food Limitations**

"And you shall make for it a border" (25:25).

The Shulchan, **the K'li Yakar** explains, symbolizes the food that we eat. The Torah is warning us here, he says, to place limits on how much we eat; to eat modestly, and not to turn our meals into extreme culinary experiences.



R' Meir Shapiro on the keruvim

Rabbi Meir Shapiro (the founder of Daf Yomi and Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin) is often quoted for a beautiful and penetrating insight regarding the keruvim atop the Aron HaKodesh.

The Torah describes the keruvim as: "**וּפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ אֶל אָחִיו**" — their faces toward each other (Shemos 25:20). Yet elsewhere: "**וּפְנֵיהֶם אֶל הַבַּיִת**" — their faces toward the House (Divrei HaYamim II 3:13).

Chazal and the commentators note the apparent contradiction.

R' Meir Shapiro explained: These two descriptions are not contradictory — they describe a deep principle in avodas Hashem and Jewish life.

The keruvim faced each other — representing love, unity, and proper relationships between Jews (bein adam l'chaveiro). At the same time, their faces were oriented toward the Beis HaMikdash — toward Hashem (bein adam laMakom).

True closeness between Jews exists only when both are simultaneously facing Hashem. - If two people merely face each other without a shared orientation toward holiness, the connection lacks permanence. But when both are directed toward the Shechinah, their unity becomes sacred and enduring.

The way to achieve authentic ahavas Yisrael is not by turning away from Hashem toward people — but by standing together facing Hashem.

The Keruvim – by Reuven Eckstein

We have two very different sets of keruvim:

Keruvim of Gan Eden — after the sin of Adam, guarding the way to the Tree of Life (Bereishis 3:24). Rashi says that these were **מַלְאֲכֵי חַבָּלָה** - 'Angels of destruction.'

Keruvim on the Aron in Parshas Terumah — representing the resting place of the Shechinah.

Why do the keruvim of Gan Eden appear as fearsome, guarding forces, while the keruvim in Parshas Terumah represent holiness, intimacy, and revelation?

Rabi Meir Shapiro says that In Gan Eden: holiness must be protected from man. In the Mishkan: holiness is entrusted to man.

If you take a child out of shul/cheder/yeshiva, and leave them to the street atmosphere, then this child can turn from holy to **חַבָּלָה** Chas v'sholom.

"Chesed done with a smile is worth more than chesed done with effort alone." - Warmth is itself a mitzvah. ~ Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach.

The Specific Placement Of Furniture Within The Mishkan – by Reuven Eckstein

וְשַׂמְתָּ אֶת־הַשֻּׁלְחָן מִחוּץ לַפָּרֹכֶת וְאֶת־הַמְּנֹרָה נֹכַח הַשֻּׁלְחָן עַל יֶרֶךְ הַמִּשְׁכָּן תֵּימָנָה וְהַשֻּׁלְחָן תִּתֵּן עַל־יֶרֶךְ צָפוֹן - 26:35 'And you shall place the table on the outer side of the dividing curtain and the menorah opposite the table, on the southern side of the Mishkan, and you shall place the table on the northern side.'

Why do we first place the table then the menorah, and after this we move the table again?

Because אִם אֵין קֶמַח, אֵין תּוֹרָה; אִם אֵין תּוֹרָה, אֵין קֶמַח

First we must have food, sustenance, then we get Menorah/Torah. But once we have the Torah, we no longer need the food (Shulchan). Once Torah is achieved, physicality becomes secondary.

Rabbi Leiby Burnham - The Best of the Best

Of all those vessels in the Mishkan, the holiest was the Aron, the Ark of the Covenant. - Resting atop the Aron was the *Kapores*, the golden cover, and upon it stood the *Keruvim*, two-winged, child-faced figures fashioned from gold. The Torah states (*Shemos* 25:18): "And you shall make two cherubim of gold… hammered out shall you make them, from the two ends of the cover."

Chazal note a striking detail. While many of the Temple vessels designated to be made of gold could, in pressing circumstances, be fashioned from other materials, such as silver or wood (see *Menachos* 28b), the *Keruvim* could not. They had to be gold, exclusively and without compromise (*Mechilta* to Shemos 20:20). Why was that?

Rabbi Meir Shapiro, the illustrious founder of *Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin* and the visionary behind the Daf Yomi movement, offered a profound explanation.

The Aron represents Torah itself. It housed the *Luchos* and symbolized the covenant of learning and Divine wisdom. The *Keruvim*, however, are different. They bear the faces of children and represent the transmission of Torah to the next generation.

Torah does not endure merely because it is studied. It endures because it is taught carefully, lovingly, deliberately to children from their earliest years, until it becomes second nature to them. It is absorbed not only intellectually, but existentially and becomes identity.

When Rabbi Meir Shapiro's students once sought to honor him, they organized an extraordinary *siyum*: in a single day, the entire yeshivah collectively completed the entire Talmud. That gesture was not merely a gift, but a living embodiment of his vision: Torah flourishing in the hands of devoted students who would carry it forward.

And that is why the *Keruvim* must be gold.

In many areas of communal life, adjustments can be made. Economies can be found and substitutes can suffice. But when it comes to teaching Torah to our children, when it comes to the future of Klal Yisrael, there are no substitutions. There is no "other metal." You do not economize on eternity.

The message of the golden Keruvim is clear: invest the finest resources, the deepest care, and the highest standards into Torah education. Support institutions that shape young minds and hearts. Give the gold.

For it is through the children and their learning, their growth, their internalization of Torah, that the covenant continues, generation after generation.

FACEBUKER SHABBOS TABLE TALK

Continuing the Legacy of Rabbi Dovid Winiarz of blessed memory

While the measurements of the vessels of the Mishkan were to be followed precisely for their construction, hence they appear to be merely practical numbers, much commentary has been written about them.

The Aron, the Holy Ark which housed the luchos, had dimensions which were each "broken." That is to say, they were not simply full units, but rather each had some partial dimension, being two and a half, or one and a half, cubits depending on the dimension.

The lesson, say numerous sources, is that when it comes to Torah, symbolized by the Aron, one must always feel incomplete, and strive for more. He must seek guidance and assistance from others, also alluded to by the half-measures. - In contrast, the Shulchan, the table which represents material success and Heavenly blessing in the physical world, had complete measurements. It was two cubits by one cubit. This is to teach us that in financial matters, one must always feel like he is complete, as Yaakov told Esav, "I have everything."

However, one measurement of the table is incomplete - its height. Height represents striving and reaching for more. Regarding this, says the **Kli Yakar**, one should satisfy himself with less. Even if he can afford something, he should try to do without it so as to not completely satisfy his desires. In this way, he shows mastery over the baser instincts.

Another lesson from the "broken" measure in the height of the table: this teaches us the one time a person should not be satisfied with his financial status. Height represents moving upward, or in this case, money used for spiritual purposes. When it comes to using his money for tzedaka, supporting Torah, and doing mitzvos, most of us

are prone to feel satisfied with what we've already spent. In this case, the Torah teaches that we must still feel incomplete. We must continually seek to use our material wealth for spiritual purposes.

The Chofetz Chaim comments that the Aron had broken measurements to show that everyone has a share in Torah, some by learning it and some by supporting it (though they must, of course, learn on their own as well.) That may be why in this aspect, the Aron and Shulchan are equal. They are the same height to symbolize that spending our money properly can be as sacred an act as the study of Torah, uplifting us greatly in the process.



The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh says that once we received the Torah, even if a person is at the terrible state of being in the lowest of the low, no matter what - he is never ever gone! He is never ever lost because as soon as he latches himself onto the Torah, the koach HaTorah has the power to pull him out of the muddiest mud!

Rav Chaim Voloshin writes that the Torah is like a mikvah tahara, it actually purifies a person.

Rav Kalman Krohn brought many boys back to Yiddishkeit simply by learning with them the sweet words of Talmud Bavli!



We know that there are hidden secrets hinted to in all the vessels of the Mishkan. The Chofetz Chaim explained that the Menorah that had the ner tamid which represents the eternity of the Jewish people. No matter how many nations tried to oppress and obliterate us, Klal Yisroel remained, even through the darkest periods of history, and Klal Yisroel will continue to remain.



דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ־לִי תְּרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְּבֶנּוּ לִבּוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמָתִי - "Speak to the Bnei Yisroel, and they shall take for Me, Terumah, from every person whose heart is so moved…" (25:2)

The words "take for Me, Terumah" would appear to be the incorrect words to use. The correct words to use would be "give to me, Terumah".

Rav Eliyahu Dessler ZT"L in his Michtav M'Eliyahu explains that the best way that one can become close to another individual is to give something to him. When one gives to another, one forms a close bond with that person.

Based upon this Michtav M'Eliyahu, perhaps we can say that when one gives Terumah to Hashem, one becomes close to Hashem and there is no greater gift that one can receive from Hashem than becoming close to Him. Therefore, when Bnei Yisrael were enjoined to give Terumah to Hashem, the correct term to use was "take" because Bnei Yisrael were taking from Hashem far more than they were giving Him, because of the benefits that they would be receiving by becoming close to Him.

The benefits of closeness to Hashem are manifold. **Rav Nosson Wachtfogel ZT"L**, the Mashgiach of the Lakewood Yeshiva, explains that Hashem has generously provided each person with vast amounts and various forms of wisdom, qualities, and capabilities. To access all that Hashem has bestowed, one must achieve closeness to Hashem – Deveikus. This closeness is contained deep within the soul of man and is part of the nature of man. However, one does not readily feel and cannot readily achieve closeness to Hashem because there are barriers that stand in the way.

The essence of our service in this world is to remove these barriers. One of the barriers that stands in our way is caused by dishonesty. Working on our honesty and integrity is a sure way to remove this barrier and become closer to Hashem.

Perhaps this is also alluded to in the verse we quoted above, "… take for Me, Terumah, from every person whose heart is so moved…" The word in Hebrew for the word "from" in this verse is "**מֵאֵת**". The Kabbalistic works say that this word refers to truth, because if you unscramble the letters in "**מֵאֵת**", you get "**אֱמֶת**". In other words, the verse could be read to mean that one should come close to Hashem by giving Terumah (as in our first thought above – giving creates a close bond between the giver and recipient) or through "**מֵאֵת**" which is "**אֱמֶת**".

Torah Wellsprings ~ R' Elimelech Biderman



וְעֲצֵי שִׁטִּים - "***and acacia wood***." (25:5) The wood was used for building the Miskan.

Rashi asks, 'Where did they get these [***acacia*** trees] in the desert?'

Rabbi Tanchuma explained that our father Yaakov foresaw **בְּרוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ** that the Yidden were destined to build a Mishkan in the desert, so he brought cedars to Egypt and planted them. He commanded his sons to take them with them when they left Egypt. — [from Mid. Tanchuma 9]

Everybody asks the following question: What's going on here? Yaakov Avinu had to plant and bring **עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים** with him years before, so that the Yidden would have wood to build the Mishkan in the desert?

The **אַבְנֵי־שֹׁהַם** -the precious stones for the choshen were brought directly by the clouds from shomayim.

Rashi explains that regarding **עֹרֹת תְּחָשִׁים** -the skin of the **תַּחַשׁ** animal, it only existed at that time especially for the purpose of being used in the Mishkan. - So why did Yaakov instruct the Yidden to carry the trees all the way from Eretz Yisrael to Mitzrayim and then into the desert? The **רִבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם** could have also created/brought the trees/wood in various miraculous ways!

There is a powerful Lubavitcher vort that explains this.

Yaakov Avinu knew that **הקב"ה** could supply and provide the wood for the building of the Mishkan in any manner. However, Yaakov saw that **כְּלַל יִשְׂרָאֵל** would be enslaved in Egypt for many long years. 210 years of tremendous suffering. He wanted to encourage **כְּלַל יִשְׂרָאֵל** that one day they would be redeemed, therefore he took along the **עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים** as a concrete symbol of hope to encourage them through the long and dark Galus! One day soon, their suffering would end and they would be free! There will yet be a Mishkan! There will yet be times of joy to come!

When a person knows that his suffering is temporary, he can withstand and endure it if he can see that there will be an end to his troubles. The pain becomes easier to bear. It is easier for him to stay positive.

We know that Galus Mitzrayim represents all the hardships and challenges in life. Our redemption from it is the source of all salvation.

Knowing this, we can take comfort and chizuk in our personal Galus as well as the general Galus - that the pain will soon be over!

Remember that the pain is temporary! Stay strong, you will yet be redeemed!



ויקחו-לי תרומה (כה:א) - *They shall take for me a portion (a donation)*

Why does it say **ויקחו** (they shall take)? Surely it should have said **ויתנו** (they shall give)? After all one gives **צדקה**?

The **בית הלוי** answers with a **משל**: A fly was trapped in a glass jar of sugar. Can the fly boast to all his fly-mates who are outside the jar, 'Look how rich I am! I have a whole jar of sugar!!' Of course not. Since he is trapped inside the jar, he can't take the sugar to his nest. He is engaged in a jar of sugar.

So too a rich man: His gold is not his own. He can't take it with him to the next world. He is trapped in this big world next to a pile of gold. However, the money with which he has done **מצוות**, has become his. Only this money he can take with him to the next world. That is what the **פסוק** means: when you give **צדקה** you are the one who is taking since the money you give you acquire for yourself forever. Now it is truly yours.

Two people came to the **הפלאה** with complaints: One was a woman who complained that her husband was giving too much **צדקה**. The other person complained that he had a rich brother who refused to help his poor brother.

The **הפלאה** called the husband and the rich brother to hear what they had to say for themselves.

When the husband was asked to explain his behaviour, he replied, "Who knows how long I have left to live? I want to chap as many **מצוות** as possible! [In any case one can't take money with him to the next world.]"

When the **הפלאה** asked the rich brother why he refused to share some of his wealth with his poor brother, the wealthy man replied,

"I don't know how long I am going to live. Perhaps I will live for many years so I might need my money to look after myself in old age."

The **הפלאה** said to both the husband and the rich man, 'may both of you be protected from that which you fear.'

The rich man died young and the **בעל צדקה** lived a long life.



מִשֶּׁנִּכְנַס אֲדָר מַרְבִּים בְּשִׂמְחָה

During the month of **אדר** (in a **שנה פשוטה**) the theme of the weekly **פרשיות** is, as this week, the building of the **משכן**. The **ספרים** give the following reason for this: The **מדרש** writes at the beginning of this week's **סדרה** a **משל** of a king who married off his only daughter to a king of a different country. After the marriage, the new son-in-law wanted to take his new queen back with him to his country. The father-in-law said, 'she is your wife, I can't stop you from taking her, but because she is my only daughter I find it very difficult to separate myself from her. Pleases, one request I ask you; wherever you move to, build a house for me so that I can always live near my daughter.

So too, says Hashem to the yidden I have given you My **תורה**, I cannot detach Myself from it so I request from you wherever you go please make a house [the **משכן**] for Me so that I can dwell there.

בית אחד עשו לי שאדור בתוכו - "Make me one house so that I may dwell within it." מדרש שמות רבה

The **חידושי הרי"ם** writes that the name **אדר** comes from the word **שאדור** [I will dwell] for **חודש אדר** is a month of **השראת שכינה** when Hashem comes close to the **אידן**. And that is why we must be **בשמחה** during the whole month of **אדר** for the **גמרא (שבת ל.)** tells us that the **שכינה** only rests where there is **שמחה**.



The **אבן עזרא** learns that **וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי** means silk, which comes from silk worm (**תולעת**).

The **רבנו בחיי** argues and says since silk worms are not **כשר**, it can't be that its thread was used for the **משכן** as only things which were **טהור** were used for the **משכן**.

"משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה"





