



28th February 2009 – שבת פרשת תרומה – ד אדר תשס"ט

Ohr Yerushalayim News

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

Mazel Tov!

Mazel Tov to Mr & Mrs Fagelman on the birth of a granddaughter.

אסתר מגילת Shiurim

The second in a series of three shiurim by Rabbi Kupetz שליט"א on the subject of **אסתר מגילת** will take place this Sunday from 8.00-9.00pm in the Shul. There will be a Minyan for Maariv at 7.45pm

Pre-Pesach Shiurim

The Rov will be giving two shiurim for ladies relating to Pesach. The shiurim will take place on 17th and 31st March at 8.15pm at 48 Waterpark Road.

Rov's Gemoro Shiur

The Rov's gemoro shiur will be starting Meseches Taanis after Purim. Anyone wanting to join should please contact the Rov.

Kiddush This Week

The Kiddush this week is sponsored in honor of Yehuda (Markus) Johnson.

The shul holds a Kiddush every Shabbos Mevorchim. We invite members to contact Chizky to arrange sponsorship.

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Ark of Inclusion

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

In this week's portion, Hashem commands the Jewish nation to build the Mishkan. Each one of the utensils is specified as to how it should be constructed, its width, its length, and its height. The type of material whether it was gold, silver, or copper, is enumerated and the details of its ornaments are provided.

The procedure for the construction of each vessel is preceded by a command stated in the singular form: "And you shall make" "And you shall make a show bread table." "And you shall make a Menorah." "And you shall make an Altar."

The command is directed toward Moshe to delegate the construction. The Aron Kodesh, the Holy Ark is different. Its command is not stated in the singular form, rather in the plural. The Torah does not say and you shall make a Holy Ark, it states, "And they shall make a Holy Ark." The commentaries ask, why was the command to build the Ark the only one that was given to a group?

In a small shul in Yerushalayim, a daily Daf HaYomi shiur was held each morning before Shacharis. An elderly Russian immigrant attended the shiur. Quiet as he was, his behavior in the shiur intrigued the lecturer. He would never ask a thing. Often he would nod off. Sometimes, when the Rabbi quoted a particular Talmudic sage, the old man's face would light up - especially when the Rabbi mentioned an opinion from an obscure Talmudic personality.

This behavior continued throughout the summer. Always quiet, the man would sometimes nod off, and at other times he would perk up. Then winter came. The group of men would gather around the table in the frigid mornings huddled close as they would warm to the strains of the

Talmud and the straining heater in the old synagogue. The old man never missed a class.

One morning a rare snow blanketed Jerusalem. No one showed up to the shiur except the Rabbi and the elderly Russian Jew. Instead of giving his usual lecture, the Rabbi decided he would ask the old Jew a little bit about himself.

"Tell me," he inquired, "I watch you as I say my shiur. Sometimes you look intrigued but at other times you seem totally disinterested. The trouble is I would like to make the shiur more interesting for you during its entirety, but I can't seem to make out what perks you up and makes you doze?"

The old man smiled. "I never had a Jewish education. I can barely read Hebrew. I do not come to the shiur for the same reasons that the other men come." He paused as his eyes pondered his past. "You see, I was a soldier in the Red Army during World War II. Every day our commander would herd us into a room and put a gun to our heads. He commanded us to recite the names of every member of the Politburo. And we did. We learned those names backwards and forward. I come to this class to hear the names of every rabbi in the Talmud. If I cannot learn at least I will know the names of all the great sages! "That," he smiled "is my Daf HaYomi!"

Although the show bread table, the Menorah, and the Altar can be constructed by individuals -- the Ark that holds the Torah is different. One man cannot make it alone. It must be a communal effort. Just as the Torah cannot be learned by one man alone, its Ark cannot be built by an individual either.

The Torah is given for everyone to learn and to experience - each one according to his or her own level and ability. Lighting a Menorah is a clear-cut ritual delegated to the Kohain. The Altar is used for the sacrifices brought by the kohanim. The Torah is for

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת תרומה

Candle Lighting	No later than 5.28pm
Mincha	5.33pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.38am
Mincha 1 st / 2 nd Minyan	1.30pm / 5.29pm
Rov's Mishnayos Shiur	5.59pm
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	6.34pm
Sunday 1 st / 2 nd Minyan	7.20am / 8.20am
Monday / Thursday	7.10am
Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday	7.20am
Mincha & Maariv All Week	5.40pm
Shabbos Next Week	5.41pm

everybody. And each individual has his own Shas and Daf HaYomi. Each person has his share in Toras Yisrael.

Everyone extracts something holy from the Torah. To some it may be extrapolative halachic theory, while for others it may be the refinement of character. And still for others it may be the names of Abayai and Rava.

A Real Place of Holiness

Rabbi Label Lam (Torah.org)

"You shall make the Altar of acacia wood, five cubits in length and five cubits in width-the Altar shall be square- and three cubits in height. You shall make horns on its four corners, from it shall its horns be; and you shall cover it with copper." (Shemos 27:1-2)

We find ourselves flooded with so many intricate details describing the building and its individual vessels. The hard question has to be asked. What is our motivation to in learning this seeming archaic lesson in architecture? The truth is that there are more than principles of building at play here. This is Torah and the Torah is neither teaching history nor cosmology alone but is rather a teaching book. Let us then rephrase the original tough question. What lessons of life can we gain from reviewing the construction of the Tabernacle?

The Midrash HaGadol offers a tiny key-hole-opening for us to see the Tabernacle as a teaching tool: "Why is the Altar compared to copper? The sages learned that there were two Altars. One was gold and one was copper. The one of gold is comparable to the soul of man. The one of copper represents the body of man. The golden Altar rested in the inner sanctum while the copper Altar was in the outer courtyard. The gold covered Alter was not seen by the nation but the copper one was available to be seen. The Altar of gold was more expensive than the Altar of copper. Upon the golden Altar were brought incense and spice offerings while on the copper Altar they would sacrifice the flesh of animals. Just as gold is more valuable than copper, so is the soul more valuable than the body. Just as each day they drew close through animal sacrifices before the Holy One blessed be He on the Altar of copper, so a person needs to acknowledge- confess, and review his deeds each and every day constantly before the Master of the World and serve Him with body and soul."

The Chovos HaLevavos devotes one of thirty items of a suggested list of things to contemplate about to meditating on the advantages of the soul over the body. He quotes King Solomon (Mishlei 4:23), "From all the things you guard, protect your heart (mind) because from it flows out life." The heart is superior to any other organ or limb because it is the key to life in this world and the next explains the Lev Tov. The more inward a thing, the more valuable and advantageous it is. Therefore more than all the things that a person watches, protects, secures, and ensures, he needs to do so for his intellect. When we see a high gate, planes overhead or a police presence one can only begin to imagine what King Solomon had in mind for the mind.

We also learn that the physically active bodily has to be checked and kept in check daily. Our actions require constant scrutiny and maintenance to be a proper vehicle for the holiness it carries and represents. Again King Solomon writes, "The righteous one knows the nature of his beast..." (Mishlei 12:10) It is not ignored but neither is it to be aggrandized and adorned out of proportion. From the Tabernacle amongst other things we can learn how to rank various values and how to prioritize our material and spiritual resources. Maybe some of these ideas are too obvious when stated but with a brief scan of the world around it seems to be an all too rare combination, this simple balance and proportion between inner and outer worlds, between shows of symbolism and the presence of lasting substance.

I once heard that the difference between a great person and everyone else is that a great person is greater in his private life than in his public life and everyone else is just the opposite. It is harder than it looks to create a real place of holiness.

A Heart of Wood

Rabbi Naftali Reich (Torah.org)

It was breathtakingly beautiful, but ordinary human eyes never feasted on it. Secluded in the Holy of Holies, the holy Ark of the Torah was visited only once a year - by the High Priest on Yom Kippur, the holiest day on the Jewish calendar. Nevertheless, the Arks glittering beauty,

transcendent holiness and aura of mystery loom large in history and legend.

The Ark sits at the very core of Judaism. It is the eternal depository of the Tablets that Moses received directly from Hashem, and as such, it is the ultimate symbol of the power and glory of the Torah. It is the crown jewel of the Temple, a spectacular vision of pure gleaming gold adorned with two golden winged cherubs. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Ark is popularly known as "the golden Ark."

But that is not how the Torah describes it. "And they shall make an Ark of cedarwood," the Torah declares. Then the Torah goes on to describe how this Ark is to be constructed. A wooden ark is placed inside a golden ark. Then a second golden ark is placed inside the wooden ark. The rim is then covered with gold, effectively encapsulating the wooden ark entirely in gold. The Talmud explains that this is meant to signify that a true Torah scholar is equally pure within and without.

A number of questions immediately come to mind. Why does the Torah describe it as "an Ark of cedarwood" when, in fact, not a speck of wood is visible? Why isn't the popular "golden Ark" a more appropriate description? Furthermore, if the ark is meant to symbolize the absolute integrity of the Torah scholar, his total purity within and without, why is a layer of wood interposed between the two layers of gold? Wouldn't total purity mandate that the Ark be solid gold through and through rather than a gold veneer on a wooden base?

The commentators explain that gold and wood represent two distinct aspects of the human personality. Gold represents the sublime and ethereal aspect, spirituality in its purest form. Wood, on the other hand, represents the human connectedness with the earth, the prosaic, the mundane. Just as a tree is rooted in the soil, so is a person rooted in the physical world and the society of other people.

The ideal Torah scholar is more than just a golden ethereal spirit passing through the world in blissful oblivion of the realities of human struggle. At his core, he must have a heart of wood, rooted in this world and supremely sensitive to the physical needs of other people. This then is the Jewish paragon, not a monastic recluse nor a sensualist but a person imbued within and without with the true spirit of Torah yet rooted in human society, reaching out with yearning to the divine and with kindness and compassion to the mundane.

In this vein, perhaps we can detect a further symbolism in the choice of wood for the essence of the Ark. Gold, for all its beauty, is static; it does not grow. It is stuff of which angels are made. Wood, however, is alive and always grows. The Torah clothes a person in golden garments, and at his core it imbues him with the vitality of wood so that he can flourish and grow as a person for his entire life.

A young man went to bid his wise old grandfather farewell before embarking on a long journey.

"And where are you going my child?" asked the old man. "I am going to see a very great sage," he replied, mentioning the name of a famous luminary. "I always wanted to see what an angel looks like." The old man smiled. "Then you are making a mistake. The sage you mentioned is not an angel. He is the ultimate of what a man can be, and believe me, that is greater than an angel."

In our own lives, we must retain our perspectives as we strive to be more spiritual. The Torah does not want us to achieve spirituality by withdrawing from the world and isolating ourselves from the society around us. On the contrary, the Torah wants us to retain a powerful connection with the hustling, bustling world around us and to imbue it to the best of our abilities with the spirit and sanctity of the Torah. If we can clothe ourselves within and without with the golden garments of the Torah yet retain a deep-rooted vitality in our hearts, we can indeed enjoy the best of both worlds.