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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON KI SISA - 5786

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TheTorahAnyTimes **Rabbi Noach Isaac Oelbaum** **When Smallness is Greatness**

The Arizal taught an extraordinary idea.

Every mitzvah a Jew performs today, even the smallest mitzvah, carries greater significance in Heaven than the mitzvos performed in the days of the Tannaim and Amoraim.

At first glance, this seems difficult to understand. How could a mitzvah performed in our generation compare to the mitzvos performed by the giants of the Talmud?

The Arizal explains that the answer lies in the spiritual environment of our time. We live in a generation of yeridas hadoros, a generation of spiritual decline. The Divine Presence is hidden; there is profound hester panim, concealment of Hashem's face in the world; and emunah is challenged in ways that earlier generations rarely experienced. Precisely because of this concealment, the spiritual struggles of our generation are far greater.

When a Jew therefore performs even a small mitzvah today, it is often done in the face of confusion, distraction, and enormous spiritual obstacles. But specifically because the challenges are so great, the value of every mitzvah becomes immeasurably precious.

Now, if the Arizal already felt that the mitzvos of his generation, in the sixteenth century, possessed such elevated value, how much more so in our generation today. The spiritual tests we face are ones that earlier generations could hardly imagine. The distractions, the pressures, and the temptations of modern life are challenges that even the doros harishonim could fathom.

Yet despite all of this, Jews continue to serve Hashem.

The Pnei Menachem, the Gerrer Rebbe, offered a remarkable insight related to this idea.

Perhaps one reason the exile has been so long is because of the tremendous nachas ruach Hashem derives from the struggles of His children during this period. When Mashiach comes, the yetzer hara will no longer exist (Sukkah 52a). The inner battle that defines human spiritual life today will disappear. Without that struggle, the dynamic of overcoming temptation will no longer be part of the human experience. But today, every Jew who resists the yetzer hara, every Jew who struggles and still chooses kedusha, gives Hashem immeasurable pleasure. Hashem sees the difficulty of the nisayon. He sees the confusion of the world. And He sees a Jew who nevertheless chooses

Torah, chooses mitzvos, and chooses to rise above the pull of the yetzer hara. That victory brings enormous nachas ruach to the Ribbono Shel Olam. Perhaps, suggested the Pnei Menachem, this is part of the reason the exile continues. Hashem treasures the spiritual heroism of His people during these difficult times.

So never doubt the smallness of yourself. Because, in Heaven, it is just the opposite. It is greatness.

From: Chaim Shulman with some help from chatgpt **The Second Luchos, the Birth of the Oral Torah, and the Acceptance of Torah on Purim**

Parashas Ki Tisa recounts one of the most dramatic turning points in the Torah: the breaking of the first luchos and the giving of the second. What initially appears to be a tragic collapse of the covenant ultimately becomes the foundation for the form of Torah that has sustained Jewish life ever since. When Moshe descends from Har Sinai carrying the first luchos and sees the sin of the *zevul*, the Torah describes his reaction: "וישליך מידי את הלוחות ועגל הזהב וישבר אותם תחת ההר" "He threw the luchos from his hands and shattered them beneath the mountain." (*Shmos 32:19*)

At first glance, the shattering of the luchos appears to signal the failure of the entire Kabalas Hatorah. Yet the Torah quickly moves toward renewal. After Moshe prays for forgiveness on behalf of the Jewish people, Hashem commands him: "פסל לך שני לוחות אבנים כראשונים." "Carve for yourself two luchos of stone like the first." (*Shmos 34:1*)

These words mark the beginning of a new stage in the unfolding of Torah.

The First Luchos: Pure Divine Revelation

The Torah describes the first luchos in striking terms: "הלוחות מעשה אלקים הוא והמכתב מכתב אלקים הוא." "The luchos were the work of G-d, and the writing was the writing of G-d." (*Shmos 32:16*)

Everything about them was entirely divine. The stone itself was created by Hashem, and the writing engraved upon them was likewise the direct work of Hashem.

By contrast, the second luchos begin differently. Before Hashem inscribes the words of the covenant, Moshe must hew the stone himself.

Chazal emphasize the significance of this change. Rashi, quoting the Midrash, explains that when Moshe was told "פסל לך"—"carve for yourself"—Hashem also told him "פסולתן שלך", that the chips from the carving would belong to him (Rashi to *Shmos 34:1*). The Gemara adds that Moshe even became wealthy from these fragments (*Nedarim 38a*).

The point is not Moshe's wealth. Rather, the Midrash highlights that the second luchos were formed through human effort. The covenant was now being rebuilt through a partnership between heaven and earth.

The Midrash: The Second Luchos Introduced an Expanded Torah

An important explanation appears in *Midrash Shmos Rabbah* (46:1). The Midrash teaches that when the second luchos were given, they came together with "halachos, midrash, and aggados." In other words, the second luchos included the entire Torah, not just the 10 Commandments, and included the Torah she-be'al peh, the Oral Torah, as expanded on by the Beis Halevi (18). The first luchos contained the written revelation of the Torah. The second luchos brought with them the interpretive tradition that would develop through study, discussion, and transmission across generations. This idea explains the dramatic shift from the first luchos to the second. The first represented Torah in its perfect, heavenly form. The second introduced a Torah that would now unfold through human engagement and intellectual effort.

Torah After the Sin: The Role of Human Effort

Later meforshim expanded on this Midrashic insight. The *Netziv* (Ha'amek Davar to *Shmos 34:1*) explains that before the sin of the Egel Hazahav, Israel stood at such a high spiritual level that Torah could have remained entirely clear and fully revealed. But after the sin, Torah would now have to be acquired through pilpul—through analysis, reasoning, and study. The second luchos therefore mark the beginning of the Torah that must be developed through learning and interpretation.

A profound formulation of this idea appears in **Rav Yitzchak Hutner's** Pachad Yitzchak (Shavuos, Maamar 11). Rav Hutner explains that if the first luchos had remained intact, Torah would have remained perfectly transparent. The breaking of the luchos introduced complexity and struggle into Torah learning. That struggle gave rise to the world of machlokes, interpretation, and discovery that characterizes Torah study in every generation. In Rav Hutner's words, the broken luchos ultimately gave birth to the depth and creativity of Torah she-be'al peh.

Yom Kippur: The Day the Second Luchos Were Given

Chazal teach that Moshe descended with the second luchos on Yom Kippur, after forty days of prayer and repentance following the sin of the Egel Hazahav. Rashi notes this chronology in his commentary to Devarim 9:18, based on the traditional timeline preserved in **Seder Olam Rabbah**.

This explains why Yom Kippur became the eternal day of forgiveness for the Jewish people. It commemorates the moment when Hashem restored the covenant after the Egel and gave the second luchos. The Torah that emerged from that moment was therefore a Torah born from teshuvah.

Purim: The Voluntary Acceptance of Torah

The story does not end with Har Sinai or with Yom Kippur. The Gemara teaches that centuries later, during the days of Achashverosh, the Jewish people accepted the Torah again: "אמר רבא: אף על פי כן הדור קבלוה בימי" "אחשורוש, דכתיב: קיימו וקבלו היהודים" "Rava said: Even so, they accepted it again in the days of Achashverosh, as it says: 'The Jews fulfilled and accepted.'" (*Shabbas 88a*)

The Gemara's statement refers back to another teaching that the Torah at Har Sinai was accepted under extraordinary divine pressure that כפי עליהם הר כגיגית Hashem held the mountain over the people.

Purim represents a different moment. There was no open revelation, no thunder and lightning, no visible miracles. In fact, the name of Hashem does not appear even once in the entire Megillah.

Yet in that hidden world the Jewish people declared: "קיימו וקבלו היהודים" "The Jews fulfilled and accepted."

Tosafos (Shabbos 88a) and other meforshim explain that the coercion at Har Sinai related particularly to **Torah she-be'al peh**, whose depth and complexity require great intellectual effort. While the Written Torah was readily accepted at Har Sinai, the demanding nature of the Oral Torah required additional commitment. According to this view, the declaration of קיימו וקבלו in the days of Achashverosh represents the moment when the Jewish people willingly embraced that responsibility. The **Maharsha** (Shabbos 88a) explains that the events of Purim completed the acceptance of Torah begun at Har Sinai. In the days of Achashverosh, the Jewish people reaffirmed the covenant not through overwhelming revelation but through their own voluntary commitment. Similarly, the **Maharal of Prague** (Tiferes Yisroel ch. 32) explains that Har Sinai revealed the authority of Torah, but Purim revealed the love of Torah—the willingness of the Jewish people to embrace it freely.

The Torah That Endures

Seen together, these moments form a remarkable progression. At Har Sinai, Torah was revealed from heaven. With the second luchos, Torah became a covenant sustained through human effort—one that included halakhah, midrash, and interpretation. On Yom Kippur, that covenant was renewed through teshuvah after the sin of the Egel. And on Purim, the Jewish people embraced that Torah willingly, even in a world where Hashem's presence was hidden.

The first luchos represented perfect revelation. The second luchos created something deeper: a Torah that lives through the partnership between Hashem and the Jewish people.

It is this Torah—the Torah of study, debate, interpretation, and renewal—that continues to live in every generation.

From Chaim Shulman

Parshas Ki Sisa: Avoiding Evil

(Summarized from *רוח אליהו* by *Rav Elya Svei zt"l*)

Sur Meira – Turn Away from Evil

The Midrash (Shemos Rabbah 43:6–8) discusses when Klal Yisroel first began thinking about making the Golden Calf. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai says that they only did so based on a misunderstanding of the verse. But could it really be that they began considering making the calf so quickly? The Torah states: "אחד עשר יום מתרב דרוך הר שעיר" "Eleven days from Chorev by way of Mount Seir." (Devarim 1:2)

Rabbi Yehudah bar Rabbi Ila'i says that they were with HaKadosh Baruch Hu only **one day**.

Rabbi Meir says **not even one day**. Rather, they stood at Har Sinai and said with their mouths "**Na'aseh veNishma**", yet their hearts were already inclined toward idolatry.

As the verse states: "וַיַּחַדְתֵּם לִי שֵׁנִים וּבְלִשׁוֹנְכֶם יִכְזְבוּ לִי" "They enticed Him with their mouths, but with their tongues they lied to Him." (Tehillim 78:36)

The Mirrer Mashgiach **Rav Yerucham Levovitz zt"l** asks (Daas Torah, Parshas Bo): How did Chazal know to diminish the acceptance of **Na'aseh veNishma** to such an extent? How could they say that perhaps only one day—or not even a full day—passed before the people's hearts had already turned away?

After all, Klal Yisroel had reached an extraordinarily lofty level at Sinai. Why would Chazal cast doubt on their acceptance?

The Test of Authenticity

Rav Yerucham explains the matter as follows. In physical matters everyone understands that there must be a **test of authenticity**. When a person goes to purchase merchandise, he knows he must bring along someone knowledgeable who can determine whether the merchandise is genuine.

Already in earlier times manufacturers began producing **counterfeit goods**—items that looked identical to real products.

There were fabrics that appeared to be wool or silk, and an ordinary person could not distinguish whether the material was authentic or merely an imitation. Therefore, one needed an expert who could recognize the difference. What is the ultimate test? **Time**. If the product is genuine, it remains strong and durable over time. If it is counterfeit, it quickly deteriorates.

Authentic Spirituality

The same principle applies in **ruchniyus**, spiritual matters. One must discern whether something is **true spirituality** or merely an imitation. Here too, the test is **whether it endures**. True spirituality endures.

As the Navi says: "דְּבַר אֱלֹהֵינוּ יָקוּם לְעוֹלָם" "The word of our God shall stand forever." (Yeshayah 40:8)

Anything that does not endure reveals itself as lacking true substance.

This is also the distinction Chazal describe between the righteous and the wicked.

The verse states: "בְּפֶרֶת רְשָׁעִים כְּמוֹ עֵשֶׂב וַיִּצְיָצוּ כָּל פְּעֵלֵי אָוֶן לְהַשְׁמָדָם עֲדֵי עַד" "When the wicked flourish like grass and all evildoers blossom, it is only so that they may ultimately be destroyed forever." (Tehillim 92:8)

At first glance, the wicked may appear to flourish. But their success is temporary.

In contrast: "צַדִּיק כְּתֵמַר יִפְרַח וַיִּרְחַץ בְּלֶבְנוֹן וַיִּשְׁקֶה" "The righteous shall flourish like the date palm; he shall grow tall like a cedar in Lebanon." (Tehillim 92:13)

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The Eternal Root of Klal Yisroel

When speaking about Klal Yisroel, Bilaam declared: "מֵרֶאשׁ צִירִים אֶרְאֶנּוּ" "I see them from the mountain tops, and I behold them from the hills." (Bamidbar 23:9)

Rashi explains: I look at their origins and the roots of their beginning, and I see that they are firmly established in the hills of their forefathers.

This expresses the unique quality of Klal Yisroel: Their roots are eternal.

The foundations laid by the Avos ensure that the Jewish people endure forever. Even when a Jew stumbles, the underlying foundation remains intact.

Knowing Hashem Without Intermediaries

Another question remains: How could the same people who declared

Na'aseh veNishma later sin with the Golden Calf?

The **Meshech Chochmah** explains that the mistake of the people was subtle. Bnei Yisroel could not fully grasp that HaKadosh Baruch Hu's has direct **השגחה** of the world without intermediaries.

They therefore thought that Divine governance operates through agents.

Initially they believed that **Moshe Rabbeinu** served as that intermediary.

When Moshe delayed returning from the mountain, they panicked and sought another intermediary. Thus they made the Golden Calf.

Their error was not a denial of God, but the lack of belief of Hashem's direct governance of the world, believing that a **mediator** was necessary between man and God. But the truth is that there is **no intermediary**.

The Difference Between a Human and an Angel

The Meshech Chochmah adds a profound insight. The Jewish people assumed that, just as angels carry out Divine tasks, perhaps humans must also rely on heavenly intermediaries. But this is incorrect.

An **angel** is merely a messenger whose role is to carry out a specific mission.

A **human being**, however, was created to serve Hashem directly. Man is meant to stand before HaKadosh Baruch Hu himself.

When a person serves Hashem directly, no intermediary is needed. That is the pure faith of Torah.

From: **Ira Zlotowitz** <Iraz@klalgovoah.org>

date: Mar 5, 2026, 7:02 PM

subject: Tidbits for Parashas Ki Sisa - Parah 5786 in memory of Rav Meir Zlotowitz

Parashas Ki Sisa - Parah • March 7th • 18 Adar 5786

Parashas Parah is leined this week (the Shabbos before Parashas HaChodesh). Two Sifrei Torah are taken out, and the maftir of Parashas Parah (Bamidbar 19:1-22) is read from the second sefer. Parashas Parah discusses the preparation and use of the parah adumah ashes. Some maintain that this k'riah is a mitzvah d'Oraisa. Many congregations say Yotzros during Shacharis. Av Harachamim is omitted.

At 2:00am this Motzaei Shabbos, March 8th, the USA (and Canada) will change the clock forward one hour, shifting from Standard Time to Daylight Savings Time. Eretz Yisrael won't change their clocks until Friday morning, March 27th; in the interim there will be a six hour time difference between the eastern time zone and Eretz Yisrael.

Daf Yomi - Shabbos: Bavli: Menachos 55 • Yerushalmi: Beitzah 45. Siyum this Wednesday, mazal tov! Masechta Rosh Hashana begins next • Mishnah Yomis: Kereisos 6:8-9. Siyum is today, mazal tov! Masechta Me'ila begins next • Oraysa (coming week): Yevamos 38a-40a • Kitzur Shulchan Aruch: 7:35-End

Make sure to call your parents, in-laws, grandparents and Rabbi to wish them a good Shabbos. If you didn't speak to your kids today, make sure to connect with them as well!

Parashas Parah is this Shabbos, Parashas Ki Sisa.

Shabbos Parashas HaChodesh is next Shabbos, Parshas Vayakhel - Pekudei, and is Shabbos Mevorchim Chodesh Nissan as well.

Pesach begins on the evening of Wednesday April 1st.

Summaries

KI SISA: Bnei Yisrael are counted using the Machatzis HaShekel • The Kiyor • Formulation of the Shemen HaMishchah and the Ketores • Betzalel and Oholiav are appointed to lead the Mishkan construction • Mitzvah of Shabbos • Forty days after Moshe went up the mountain, Bnei Yisrael fear that Moshe will not return • The Chet HaEigel • Hashem states His intention to destroy His people • Moshe intercedes • Moshe descends from the mountain and, seeing people celebrating the Eigel, shatters the Luchos • The Leviim execute 3,000 idol worshippers • Plague strikes Bnei Yisrael • An angel, not the Shechinah, will accompany Bnei Yisrael • Moshe sets up his tent outside the camp • Moshe successfully intercedes to have the Shechinah escort Bnei Yisrael • The second Luchos • The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy • Bnei Yisrael should not learn from the nations • Observe the Shalosh Regalim • Aliyah l'Regel • Firstborn animals are to be brought as a korban •

Shabbos • Basar b'Chalav • Moshe's face shines from the Shechinah and he wears a veil to hide it

Parashas Parah: An unblemished, completely red heifer that has never done any work is slaughtered on Har Hazeisim, a mountain opposite the Beis Hamikdash, and its blood is sprayed in the direction of the Ulam doors • The cow is burned there together with cedar wood, hyssop, and a thread of dyed crimson wool; the resulting ashes are mixed into spring water • This mixture is sprayed onto one who is impure with tumas meis, on the third and seventh days of the seven-day purification process • An impure person (including tumas meis) who enters the Mikdash is punished by kareis • Laws of tumas meis

Haftarah: The haftarah relates the prophecy of Yechezkel (36:16-38), listing the purification process that Hashem will perform upon us at the time of the final redemption.

Dvar Torah

"וַיֵּרָא אֶת־הַעֲגֹל וּמַחֲלַת וַיִּתְרַאֲף מֹשֶׁה וַיִּשְׁלַח מִיָּדוֹ אֶת־הַלְּחָח וַיִּשְׁבֵּר אֹתָם"

"And he saw the Golden Calf and the dancing, and Moshe became upset and threw the Luchos from his hands and broke them" (Shemos 32:19)

Surely the worship of the Golden Calf was egregious enough to upset Moshe Rabbeinu. If so, why does the Torah highlight that Moshe witnessed the dancing that accompanied the sin as well?

Seforno writes that when Moshe witnessed their simchah in doing the sin, he understood that the sin would have a permanent and lasting impact. Rav Ahron Dovid Willner shlit'a explains that while a sin may be reversible, when performed joyfully it causes the sin to become deeply ingrained in a person's psyche.

The same is true regarding the effect of a mitzvah that is performed joyously. The joy infuses the mitzvah into a person. The Arizal is quoted as saying that his lofty levels were attained through performing mitzvos with great simchah (M.B. 669:11). As we are marbin b'simchah in Chodesh Adar, the great simchah shel mitzvah should imbue the effect of these mitzvos into our hearts (Sefer Abir Yaakov).

Please reach out to us with any thoughts or comments at: klalgovoah.org

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Continuing from <https://parsha.net/shmos/Terumah86.doc>

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subject: Parashat Mishpatim

Hachazarah

By Rabbi Chaim Jachter

Halachah, Volume 35

5786/2026

Hachazarah Part Three

Opening an Oven or Warming Drawer – Rav Willig vs. Rav Neuberger OU Kosher (Daf HaKashrus 19:10 pp.59-60) and theaStar-K(<https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/476/oven-kashrus-for-shabbos-use/>)doanota permit opening a warming drawer on Shabbat since one may ignite the oven's fire. Although many Poskim share this concern, Rav Mordechai Willig is not concerned about this, since one does not intend to ignite the fire and there is a delay between opening and ignition (a Psik Reisha L'Achar Zman, see the Shiltei Gibborim, Shabbat 45a:2; The Laws of Cooking and Warming Food on Shabbat pp. 143-144).

However, Rav Yaakov Neuberger (The Laws of Cooking and Warming Food on Shabbat, p. 280 in the Hebrew section) questions Rav Willig's assertion, noting that he investigated the matter and found that after opening the oven, the fire ignites in less than ten seconds. In response, my wife Malca and I experimented in our oven and found that in six tries, it took from seventeen to thirty seconds for the fire to turn on from the time we opened the door. Significantly, the Star-K (ibid.) regards the result of opening the oven door as grama (indirect), fitting the results in the Jachter home.

Rav Yisrael Rosen of the Zomet Institute (Techumin 34:23) defines a delay for grama purposes as ten seconds, arguing that ten seconds is the amount of time which people in general regard as a delay. The Star-K defines the delay as fifteen seconds (<https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/4629/oven-kashrus-for-yom-tov-use/>). I reported my findings to Rav Willig, who was grateful for our defense of his ruling. Even according to Rav Neuberger's findings, there is room to be lenient, as the Grama time delay might be defined as shorter than ten seconds. Rav Yisrael Rosen writes (Techumin 34:23) that the Zomet Institute prefers to use ten seconds as a time delay, but in case of great need, they consider a delay of two to three seconds sufficient. Elsewhere, the Star-K (<https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/6473/urns-pump-pots-in-halacha-part2/>) writes that five seconds suffice to count as Grama. These numbers are based on the idea of Toch Kedei Dibur (the time it takes to say "Shalom Alecha Rabi") being considered an interruption in many Halachic contexts (see, for example, Nedarim 87a). Accordingly, a delay of this length suffices to disconnect the person from the resultant action, the definition of Grama.

The Shiltei Gibborim

Another potential criticism of Rav Willig's approach is that the Shiltei Gibborim only presents as a possibility that Psik Reisha L'Achar Zman is permitted. One may respond that Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:10) permits opening a refrigerator on Shabbat even when its motor is running based on the Shiltei Gibborim. Moreover, Rav Auerbach and Rav Willig support their contention on our entering and leaving our thermostatically regulated homes on Shabbat despite the inevitable resultant impact of the summer heat and winter cold on these systems. Thus, we have accepted the Shiltei HaGibborim's suggestion in practice.

Rav Neuberger responds that it is not inevitable that one will trigger the heating when entering the house in the winter. He argues that the heat may already be running at the time. Moreover, he suggests that the body heat of those entering the house may help balance out the cold air.

We may respond to the first point, that we have never heard of people not entering the home until the people inside report that the heat is already running (as some do regarding opening a refrigerator when its motor is not running. Regarding the second point, it is difficult to imagine that Rav Neuberger's point is true, especially on very cold days.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's Lenient Consideration

Another point supporting Rav Willig is an argument Rav Auerbach advances that causing fire or the motor to go on earlier is not considered melacha, since the person is not introducing anything new; rather, he is merely altering the pace and rhythm of the device's cycle. Rav Auerbach writes about refrigerators:

Allowing heat into the interior of the refrigerator does not cause it to function any differently. Rather, the refrigerator is built such that it turns on the motor when a certain temperature is reached, and by letting warm air in, one merely causes that to happen sooner, but does not cause anything to happen faster than it would have otherwise. It seems, therefore, that even if one were to intentionally and immediately cause the motor to run sooner, because this melacha is transient, and one also cannot say that this causes the refrigerator to attain its function... it is not even a rabbinic prohibition.

Rav Auerbach's point is equally relevant to causing the oven fire to ignite by opening its door. Although no other Poseik advances this argument, and even Rav Auerbach himself did not rely on it alone, it is a potent S'nif L'Hakel, lenient consideration.

Conclusion

The consensus appears to be concerned about opening ovens and warming drawers when their fire is not ignited (see, for example, Dayan Yaakov Yechzekel Posen, Kitzur Hilchot Shabbat p. 51). However, Rav Willig is not a lone voice. Rav Dovid Ribiat (The Thirty Nine Melocho's, p. 1220) is also lenient, noting, based on a ruling of Rav Moshe Feinstein (Teshuvot Igrat Moshe O.C. 4:74 Bishul – 28), that "Most ovens will not automatically ignite when the door is opened," and that it is therefore permissible to open the

door of these ovens on Shabbat. He further cites (n. 86 ad. loc.) an expert who reports that, "In general, the thermostats in ovens are not that sensitive to the extent that they would quickly change due to a temperature change." If one wishes to be strict about this matter, it is not difficult to do so, as one merely needs to wait until the fire ignites before opening the oven (the oven fire turns on and off fairly frequently). Moreover, the OU and Zman Technologies have developed a system that enables one to open the oven without igniting the fire (<https://www.zmantechologies.com/shabbos-keeper-ovens>).

In terms of a warming drawer, the OU recommends that caterers ask a non-Jew to open the door. The Amirah L'Nochri prohibition does not apply to a Psik Reisha (Mishnah Berurah 277:15, Teshuvot Igrat Moshe Orach Chaim 2:68, and Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchatah 31:1 and footnote 1). However, those who are lenient have strong authority and reasoning upon which to rely.

Hachazara Part Four

Malca's Practice – Low Flame and an Inverted Pan on a Blech

My wife Malca warms food for Shabbat lunch by lighting a low flame on the stove and placing a Blech on it before Shabbat. She places an inverted, empty pan on the Blech and, on Shabbat day, places cold chicken from the refrigerator on top of the inverted pan an hour or so before lunch. The chicken becomes hot but never reaches Yad Soledet Bo of 120 degrees Fahrenheit (and probably not even 113 degrees Fahrenheit). This strategy also eliminates the concern of reheating the liquids that accompany the chicken.

Malca's approach satisfies Rav Moshe Feinstein (Teshuvot Igrat Moshe Orach Chaim 1:94), who permits placing food in a place where it will never reach Yad Soledet Bo. Malca's approach also constitutes a valid Kedaira Al Gabei Kedaira according to the Magen Avraham (318:26).

Malca has been doing this for years, and the food she makes is delicious, but never reaches the 120 degrees standard or even the 113 degrees Fahrenheit standard of Yad Soledet Bo.

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First, Rav Nissim Karelitz (cited in Orchot Shabbat 37:10; Rav Yosef Shalom Eliashiv disagrees) considers the part of the Blech where food will not reach Yad Soledet Bo as near (Smicha) but not on the fire. Second, Malca places the food on an inverted pan, which is not on the fire, even by Rav Eliashiv's standards, even though it does not contain food. The Mishna

Brura (318:90), Bi'ur Halacha (318:6 d'h Ad Shetehei and 318:14 d'h L'Hafig), and Shmirat Shabbat Kehilchata (1:36) support this understanding. Accordingly, one who follows Malca's lead should not move the chicken off the inverted pan after the Shabbat afternoon meal, even to a part of the Blech where the food will not reach Yad Soledet Bo, as this would run counter to Rav Eliashiv's view.

Conclusion - Malca's approach is rock solid, and all families can benefit from her wise guidance.

from: TorahWeb <torahweb@torahweb.org>date: Thursday Mar 5, 2026, 8:19 PM subject: **Rabbi Yakov Haber** - The Two Days of Purim Revisited
Rabbi Yakov HaberThe Two Days of Purim Revisited Eight years ago, I had the privilege of writing a dvar Torah presenting four different approaches as to the reason that Purim is the only holiday observed on different days depending on whether one lives in an unwalled or a walled city, even though both days are partially celebrated everywhere. Briefly summarizing: Ramban theorizes that the separate celebration on the fifteenth was meant to highlight that the Jews residing in all Jewish walled cities – who did not initially feel the need to celebrate since they felt protected by the walls of their city against Haman's willing partners – erred, since without Divine protection, the wall would not help them. By contrast, Ran opines that there was a wish to commemorate the extra day of victory experienced by Shushan, a walled city. Both Shem Mishmuel and Pachad Yitzchak maintain that the two days of Purim highlight some unique aspect of the battle against Amalek manifested during the Purim salvation. Shem Mishmuel notes that in the times of Esther, even absent a Jewish king, a necessary unifying presence enabling battling Amalek, the Jewish unity caused by the decree of Haman allowed them to successfully battle this nation. Just as even if the Jews appear externally distinct and apart, internally they can still be united, so too, even though there are two separate days of Purim, essentially, they are part of one holiday. Alternatively, Pachad Yitzchak contrasts the first day of Purim's defensive battle against Amalek and the second day's offensive battle. Although when I initially presented these important concepts, it was on a theoretical plane, recent events have directly catapulted them into "halacha l'ma'aseh."

The approximately seven and a half million strong Jewish yishuv in the Holy Land (kein yirbu!) is once again living under daily, deadly, missile attacks, now from two fronts: from Iran in the East and from Hezbollah in the North, modern-day Amalekites sharing Haman's visceral hatred of the Jewish people, seeking to destroy them for "refusing to bow" to Moslem dhimmihood and for daring to reclaim sovereignty of their Divinely promised land. However, this latest threat comes in a fundamentally different context from the past. This past Shabbos, when we read Parshas Zechiras Amalek,[1] after months, if not years, of precise intelligence gathering, the Israeli Air Force obliterated much of the top-tier leadership of the terror-sponsoring state of Iran, the modern-day Persia, with thousands of pounds of bombs without a single plane being lost in the operation! This included its monstrous "religious" leader, Ali Khamenei (osiyos Haman!) yimach shmo – one responsible for the creation of a network of proxies terrorizing the Jews in Israel and elsewhere for over thirty years through multifaceted, nefarious methods, one responsible for thousands of deaths worldwide. Arur Haman, Baruch Mordechai! The relatively weak response of Iran compared to the past is reflective of the enormous Divine Providence the Jewish people have witnessed over the past two and half years through so many Divine agents in weakening the Iranian regime, both by destroying its terror proxies and directly harming Iranian capabilities. Among these are the IDF, the various missile defense systems, a right-wing government and a philosemitic, pro-Israel president at the helm of the United States who is actively partnering with Israel to neutralize the Iranian threat once and for all.

All of the above-mentioned reasons for the two days of Purim are eerily relevant to the current situation. The lesson of Shushan Purim according to Ramban is not to attribute the salvation to the physical causes but to reflect on the sibas hasiba, the One who is the Cause of causes before Whom the

natural and the supernatural are one and the same, merely agents of His specific Providential intervention. Inculcating this message – so pointedly relevant to this current war – in our mindsets remains a constant challenge. While recognizing the mesirus nefesh or our brave pilots, our soldiers fighting in Lebanon and those manning the anti-missile batteries and having sufficient gratitude toward them, we must simultaneously reflect on the true Master Planner who caused all of this to happen in perfect synchrony to be ready for the right moment in history and feel profound gratitude and closeness to Him. The recent tragic casualties of a direct missile strike in the heart of a largely populated city, so close to home, serve as an open reminder to never take physical, earthly protection as a given, and to fully realize that we are always dependent on Divine mercy, regardless of whatever tools Hashem Yisbarach chooses to utilize.

Ran's teaching that an extra salvation – seemingly only relevant to a specific segment of the Jewish people – should also be celebrated by all is also relevant to the present reality. Whereas at first glance, the current distress and constant, miraculous salvations are only relevant to the yishuv in Eretz Yisrael, all of world Jewry has its eyes and ears peeled toward the East, pouring out their hearts to Avinu Shebashamayim to protect all of the Jewish people as well as celebrating its salvations.

In the lead-up to and during the last two and a half years of difficult war and many losses, many internecine, conceptual battles have been taking place among the Jewish people. Among them are right-wing versus left-wing views of running the State of Israel, religious and secular divides, intense disputes over the role of Yeshiva students in Israel's army and the arrests of significant numbers of them, in turn touching upon debates over secular versus religious values and viewing Torah scholars as central pillars in Jewish society or worthless pariahs (chas v'shalom). Even though these disputes are not easily resolvable, as Mori v'Rabi Rav Mayer Twersky shlit"a recently noted, the first step in resolution, or at least détente, is reflecting deeply on the feelings and vantage point of one's opponents. Shem Mishmuel's impactful statement of the power of Jewish unity in defeating Amalek is extremely pertinent now. We hope that the current lull in internal Jewish fighting, uniting around the urgent battle against our enemies – who do not distinguish between religious and secular or right-wing or left-wing – will be counted in Heaven as a display of achdus adding sources of merit in the battle against conceptual, modern-day Amalekites.

Finally, Rav Hutner's distinction between defensive and offensive battles against Amalek is directly relevant to the various rounds of attacks against Iran in the past months. Even offensive battles in these contexts are really just assuring that our enemies do not threaten us in the future. The total eradication of the Biblical Amalek assures that this nation would no longer serve as either a physical or a spiritual threat to the Jewish people. We hope and pray that those taking up the role of the Biblical Amalekites will be similarly totally defeated soon.

While realizing that Jewish history is constantly being written before our eyes and that Hashem did not reveal His ultimate game plan to us, we hope and pray that by the end of this epic battle, the Jewish people will be safer and that we will be ever closer to the Final Redemption!

[1] Notably, this fell on the 11th of Adar, the earliest day of the "z'maneihem" (Esther 9:31) – the multiple authorized times for reading the megilla. (See Mishna Megilla 2a.) A recent news report indicated that this operation was backed up by several months; the timing seems of Biblical significance!

from: YUTorah <yutorah@comms.yu.edu>

date: Mar 5, 2026, 5:38 PM

subject: We all count

Of Holy Cows and Unholy Calves

Rabbi Daniel Z. Feldman

The Red Heifer, or Parah Adumah, is considered one of the most mysterious commandments in the Torah. The reasoning behind its structure—a protocol to purify those who are impure, yet also with the potential to confer impurity on the pure—is considered so elusive that even the wisest of all men, King Solomon, lamented his inability to comprehend the "Parah-dox" (Ecclesiastes 7:23; see Niddah 9a and Yoma 14a).

The mystery extends beyond its basic concept and includes a contemporary practice that teaches about it. Public Torah reading, for the most part, is a rabbinical obligation. The one exception generally noted is the reading of the commandment to remember the attack of Amalek before Purim (according to many understandings). However, a number of the medieval commentators, such as Rashba (Berakhot 13a), have included another reading as a biblical obligation: Parashat Parah, the section describing the Parah Adumah protocol, which appears originally in Parashat Chukkat (Numbers 19:1-22) and is traditionally read right after Purim. This notion is quoted as well in Shulchan Arukh (Orach Chaim 146 and 685:7).

This is a somewhat puzzling assertion. It is unclear where exactly in the Torah we find such a commandment, leading some authorities to reject the possibility (see Magen Avraham, O.C. 685). Others maintain that the entire statement is actually a scribal error and that the reference was not to Parashat Parah but to another section referred to with the same initials, such as the aforementioned passage about Amalek or "Parashat Purim." Still others, hesitant to label as error a statement found in numerous rishonim, offer innovative theories to explain the source.

One theory that is put forward concerns those select concepts and commandments that the Torah has distinguished with an imperative of "remember" (zekhirot). Authorities differ as to the precise count of these precepts, but they include prominently such concepts as Amalek, Shabbat, and the Exodus from Egypt. Indeed these three find halakhic expression: we remember Amalek through the special Torah reading; Shabbat through kiddush Friday night; and the Exodus is mentioned twice daily in the third paragraph of the recitation of the Shema, among many other practices. However, one concept that appears to deserve inclusion seems to lack halakhic representation. The Torah commands: "Remember, do not forget, how you angered Hashem your God in the desert" (Deuteronomy 9:7; see Nachmanides' commentary).

If so, how come no ritual or reading commemorates the incident of the Golden Calf? Should there not be an implementation in Jewish practice of this obligation?

Therefore it is suggested that perhaps this could indicate a source for a biblical obligation of Parashat Parah. The Rabbis perceived a linkage between the commandment of Parah Adumah and the sin of the Golden Calf. As Rashi quotes (Numbers 19:2): "Let the mother come and clean up the soiling of the child."

The adult cow symbolizes the parent, and in atoning for the sin it is "cleaning up" the mess of the calf.

Within that understanding, it may be posited that the sin of the calf is indeed commemorated in an indirect manner. Rather than directly evoke the disgraceful episode of the Golden Calf, we choose a less embarrassing path, reading about the commandment that atones rather than the transgression that incurred guilt.

Such a reading would reflect the nature of the obligation of remembering the calf. The focus is not on the sin, but on the path back from impurity. The Torah wishes to impress upon the psyche that even in the aftermath of egregious moral failure, the route of return remains open.

However, there were those who assumed a different theme in this commandment of remembering. Some suggest that we are told to constantly recall the instance of the calf as a cautionary measure. At the time of the sin, the Jewish people were on an extremely high level of spirituality, so close to the giving of the Torah. One might believe himself invulnerable to temptation or moral error. The incident of the calf must therefore always be remembered to warn that no one is protected in that manner.

If that is the theme, then it might seem that using the Parah Adumah as a reminder would be ineffective. It may represent atonement, perhaps, but the message of vigilance would be lacking.

However, it could be suggested that even this motif is present as well in the Parah Adumah. We are well aware of the central paradox of this commandment: is the Red Heifer a vehicle of purity or of impurity?

It may be that this is precisely where the warning lies. One may feel that if he is involved in a religious activity—a rite of purification—he is insulated from spiritual failing. Yet we find that even this activity contains the elements of impurity.

The message is clear: no context or activity is a spiritual guarantee. Only constant self-awareness ensures that behavior is actually proper and praiseworthy.

from: YUTorah <yutorah@comms.yu.edu>

date: Mar 5, 2026, 5:38 PM

subject: We all count

Fear and the Choice of Courage Rabbi Moshe Taragin

Moshe's delay in returning from Sinai unsettled the young nation. Had he perished in the fire atop the mountain? The people panicked and demanded that Aharon create a substitute leader.

Aharon attempted to stall them by asking for their gold jewelry, assuming they would hesitate to surrender their newly acquired wealth.

But fear overcame greed.

The people willingly surrendered their gold to create the calf. Their fear of uncertainty was stronger than their attachment to wealth.

Fear continued to haunt the nation throughout the desert. Each hardship triggered complaints and threats to return to Egypt.

The most dramatic example occurred with the meraglim, when panic caused the nation to collapse emotionally.

Fear is legitimate. Panic is not.

Faith does not eliminate fear, but it reframes it. When a person believes that life is guided by God, fear loses its absolute power.

Courage emerges when the question shifts from "What will happen to me?" to "What is being asked of me?"

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date: Mar 5, 2026, 5:38 PM

subject: We all count

Leftover Ink and Beams of Light Rabbi Immanuel Bernstein

Toward the end of the parsha the Torah describes Moshe's face shining after receiving the Torah.

The Midrash explains that the radiance came from leftover ink used in writing the Torah, which Moshe placed upon his face.

Rav Yosef Leib Bloch explains that every mitzvah contains lessons extending beyond the act itself.

The "leftover ink" symbolizes the ability to apply Torah lessons to life.

Rabbi Meir demonstrated this idea when he allowed a woman to spit in his eye to restore peace in her home, deriving the lesson from the Torah law of the sotah, where God's name may be erased for marital peace.

Rav Elazar Menachem Shach similarly applied Torah principles in everyday life, once refusing to cut ahead of children in a grocery line because a minor cannot waive his rights.

The true greatness of Torah is when its lessons move from the sanctuary into daily living.

from: Kol Torah Webmaster <webmaster@koltorah.org>

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Hachazarah parts 3 & 4

By Rabbi Chaim Jachter

Hachazarah Parts Three & Four

Continuing from <https://parsha.net/shmos/Terumah86.doc>

Opening an Oven or Warming Drawer – Rav Willig vs. Rav Neuberger OU Kosher (Daf HaKashrus 19:10 pp.59-60) and theaStar-K(<https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/476/oven-kashrus-for-shabbos-use/>)doanota permit opening a warming drawer on Shabbat since one may ignite the oven's fire. Although many Poskim share this concern,

Rav Mordechai Willig is not concerned about this, since one does not intend to ignite the fire and there is a delay between opening and ignition (a Psik Reisha L'Achar Zman, see the Shiltei Gibborim, Shabbat 45a:2; The Laws of Cooking and Warming Food on Shabbat pp. 143-144).

However, Rav Yaakov Neuberger (The Laws of Cooking and Warming Food on Shabbat, p. 280 in the Hebrew section) questions Rav Willig's assertion, noting that he investigated the matter and found that after opening the oven, the fire ignites in less than ten seconds. In response, my wife Malca and I experimented in our oven and found that in six tries, it took from seventeen to thirty seconds for the fire to turn on from the time we opened the door. Significantly, the Star-K (ibid.) regards the result of opening the oven door as grama (indirect), fitting the results in the Jachter home.

Rav Yisrael Rosen of the Zomet Institute (Techumin 34:23) defines a delay for grama purposes as ten seconds, arguing that ten seconds is the amount of time which people in general regard as a delay. The Star-K defines the delay as fifteen seconds (<https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/4629/oven-kashrus-for-yom-tov-use/>). I reported my findings to Rav Willig, who was grateful for our defense of his ruling.

Even according to Rav Neuberger's findings, there is room to be lenient, as the Grama time delay might be defined as shorter than ten seconds. Rav Yisrael Rosen writes (Techumin 34:23) that the Zomet Institute prefers to use ten seconds as a time delay, but in case of great need, they consider a delay of two to three seconds sufficient. Elsewhere, the Star-K (<https://www.star-k.org/articles/kashrus-kurrents/6473/urns-pump-pots-in-halachah-part2/>) writes that five seconds suffice to count as Grama. These numbers are based on the idea of Toch Kedei Dibur (the time it takes to say "Shalom Alecha Rabi") being considered an interruption in many Halachic contexts (see, for example, Nedarim 87a). Accordingly, a delay of this length suffices to disconnect the person from the resultant action, the definition of Grama.

The Shiltei Gibborim

Another potential criticism of Rav Willig's approach is that the Shiltei Gibborim only presents as a possibility that Psik Reisha L'Achar Zman is permitted. One may respond that Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:10) permits opening a refrigerator on Shabbat even when its motor is running based on the Shiltei Gibborim. Moreover, Rav Auerbach and Rav Willig support their contention on our entering and leaving our thermostatically regulated homes on Shabbat despite the inevitable resultant impact of the summer heat and winter cold on these systems. Thus, we have accepted the Shiltei HaGibborim's suggestion in practice.

Rav Neuberger responds that it is not inevitable that one will trigger the heating when entering the house in the winter. He argues that the heat may already be running at the time. Moreover, he suggests that the body heat of those entering the house may help balance out the cold air.

We may respond to the first point, that we have never heard of people not entering the home until the people inside report that the heat is already running (as some do regarding opening a refrigerator when its motor is not running). Regarding the second point, it is difficult to imagine that Rav Neuberger's point is true, especially on very cold days.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's Lenient Consideration

Another point supporting Rav Willig is an argument Rav Auerbach advances that causing fire or the motor to go on earlier is not considered melacha, since the person is not introducing anything new; rather, he is merely altering the pace and rhythm of the device's cycle. Rav Auerbach writes about refrigerators:

Allowing heat into the interior of the refrigerator does not cause it to function any differently. Rather, the refrigerator is built such that it turns on the motor when a certain temperature is reached, and by letting warm air in, one merely causes that to happen sooner, but does not cause anything to happen faster than it would have otherwise. It seems, therefore, that even if one were to intentionally and immediately cause the motor to run sooner, because this melacha is transient, and one also cannot say that this causes the refrigerator to attain its function... it is not even a rabbinic prohibition.

Rav Auerbach's point is equally relevant to causing the oven fire to ignite by opening its door. Although no other Poseik advances this argument, and even Rav Auerbach himself did not rely on it alone, it is a potent S'nif L'Hakel, lenient consideration.

Conclusion

The consensus appears to be concerned about opening ovens and warming drawers when their fire is not ignited (see, for example, Dayan Yaakov Yechzekel Posen, Kitzur Hilchot Shabbat p. 51). However, Rav Willig is not a lone voice. Rav Dovid Ribiat (The Thirty Nine Melochos, p. 1220) is also lenient, noting, based on a ruling of Rav Moshe Feinstein (Teshuvot Igrot Moshe O.C. 4:74 Bishul – 28), that "Most ovens will not automatically ignite when the door is opened," and that it is therefore permissible to open the door of these ovens on Shabbat. He further cites (n. 86 ad. loc.) an expert who reports that, "In general, the thermostats in ovens are not that sensitive to the extent that they would quickly change due to a temperature change." If one wishes to be strict about this matter, it is not difficult to do so, as one merely needs to wait until the fire ignites before opening the oven (the oven fire turns on and off fairly frequently). Moreover, the OU and Zman Technologies have developed a system that enables one to open the oven without igniting the fire (<https://www.zmantechologies.com/shabbos-keeper-ovens>).

In terms of a warming drawer, the OU recommends that caterers ask a non-Jew to open the door. The Amirah L'Nochri prohibition does not apply to a Psik Reisha (Mishnah Berurah 277:15, Teshuvot Igrot Moshe Orach Chaim 2:68, and Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchatah 31:1 and footnote 1). However, those who are lenient have strong authority and reasoning upon which to rely.

Hachazara Part Four

Malca's Practice – Low Flame and an Inverted Pan on a Blech

My wife Malca warms food for Shabbat lunch by lighting a low flame on the stove and placing a Blech on it before Shabbat. She places an inverted, empty pan on the Blech and, on Shabbat day, places cold chicken from the refrigerator on top of the inverted pan an hour or so before lunch. The chicken becomes hot but never reaches Yad Soledet Bo of 120 degrees Fahrenheit (and probably not even 113 degrees Fahrenheit). This strategy also eliminates the concern of reheating the liquids that accompany the chicken.

Malca's approach satisfies Rav Moshe Feinstein (Teshuvot Igrot Moshe Orach Chaim 1:94), who permits placing food in a place where it will never reach Yad Soledet Bo. Malca's approach also constitutes a valid Kedaira Al Gabei Kedaira according to the Magen Avraham (318:26).

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However, it could be suggested that even this motif is present as well in the Parah Adumah. We are well aware of the central paradox of this commandment: is the Red Heifer a vehicle of purity or of impurity?

It may be that this is precisely where the warning lies. One may feel that if he is involved in a religious activity—a rite of purification—he is insulated from spiritual failing. Yet we find that even this activity contains the elements of impurity.

The message is clear: no context or activity is a spiritual guarantee. Only constant self-awareness ensures that behavior is actually proper and praiseworthy.

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subject: We all count

Fear and the Choice of Courage

Rabbi Moshe Taragin

Moshe's delay in returning from Sinai unsettled the young nation. Had he perished in the fire atop the mountain? The people panicked and demanded that Aharon create a substitute leader.

Aharon attempted to stall them by asking for their gold jewelry, assuming they would hesitate to surrender their newly acquired wealth.

But fear overcame greed.

The people willingly surrendered their gold to create the calf. Their fear of uncertainty was stronger than their attachment to wealth.

Fear continued to haunt the nation throughout the desert. Each hardship triggered complaints and threats to return to Egypt.

The most dramatic example occurred with the meraglim, when panic caused the nation to collapse emotionally.

Fear is legitimate. Panic is not.

Faith does not eliminate fear, but it reframes it. When a person believes that life is guided by God, fear loses its absolute power.

Courage emerges when the question shifts from "What will happen to me?" to "What is being asked of me?"

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Leftover Ink and Beams of Light
Rabbi Immanuel Bernstein

Toward the end of the parsha the Torah describes Moshe's face shining after receiving the Torah.

The Midrash explains that the radiance came from leftover ink used in writing the Torah, which Moshe placed upon his face.

Rav Yosef Leib Bloch explains that every mitzvah contains lessons extending beyond the act itself.

The "leftover ink" symbolizes the ability to apply Torah lessons to life.

Rabbi Meir demonstrated this idea when he allowed a woman to spit in his eye to restore peace in her home, deriving the lesson from the Torah law of the sotah, where God's name may be erased for marital peace.

Rav Elazar Menachem Shach similarly applied Torah principles in everyday life, once refusing to cut ahead of children in a grocery line because a minor cannot waive his rights.

The true greatness of Torah is when its lessons move from the sanctuary into daily living.

Ki Tisa 5786: Mishkan & Shabbos

Michal Horowitz <donotreply@wordpress.com>

Mishkan & Shabbos

By Michal Horowitz on March 5, 2026

Parshas Ki Tisa begins with the topic of Mishkan, a continuation of the preceding parshios of Terumah and Tetzaveh.

From the beginning of Terumah (Shemos 25), through the opening chapters of Ki Tisa (Shemos 30:11-31:18), the beautiful plans for the Mishkan have been laid out for us.

We have learned about (including but not limited to) all the materials to be collected for its construction, the aron kodesh (holy ark), shulchan for the lechem ha'panim (golden table for the twelve loaves of bread), the golden menorah, mizbayach ha'nechoshes (copper altar), coverings, beams, walls, sockets and courtyard of the mishkan, the bigdei kehunah (priestly vestments), mizbayach ha'zahav (the golden altar for incense offerings), the machatzis ha'shekel annual contribution, spices for the anointing oil and spices for the ketores, the construction of the kiyor (the laver for washing of hands and feet before the avodah in the mishkan was performed), and the master craftsmen who were to oversee the building of the Mishkan and all of its keilim (vessels).

Interestingly, when the instructions for Mishkan conclude in our parsha, the Torah moves abruptly to a different topic, one that is seemingly unrelated to Mishkan.

Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: "And you shall speak to the Children of Israel, saying: However, you must observe My Sabbaths, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, so that you may know that I am Hashem Who sanctifies you. You shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy to you...For six days work may be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to Hashem. Whoever performs labor on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death.

"וַשְׁמְרוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתָם בְּרִית עֹלָם - The Children of Israel shall guard the Sabbath, to make the Sabbath throughout their generations as an eternal covenant. בְּנֵי וּבְיַד בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲזוּת הוּא לַעֲלֵם כִּי־עָשִׂיתָ יָמִים. וְעָשָׂה ה' אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּבְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנְפָשׁ - It is a sign forever between Me and the Children of Israel, for in six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He ceased and was refreshed" (Shemos 31:12-17).

Why, at the end of all the details regarding Mishkan, does the Torah shift its focus to Shabbos?

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, the Rav zt'l, teaches, "There is an equation between the Sabbath and sanctity - the Sabbath is a source of holiness. There

is, therefore, a commonality between the Sabbath and the Mikdash. There exists both a sanctuary in space and a sanctuary in time.

"Of the two imperatives, the Sabbath is clearly the more significant.

Otherwise one would have been ordered to violate the Sabbath for the construction of the Mishkan. Sabbath as a sanctuary is more significant than the Mishkan as a sanctuary. The Temple is not indispensable for the survival of the people, but the Jew cannot survive without the Sabbath" (Chumash Mesoras HaRav, Shemos, p.284).

In a fundamental teaching of Rav Soloveitchik, we learn that there are two different sanctuaries in this world. There is the sanctuary in space, the Mishkan (and Mikdash). And there is the sanctuary in time, Shabbos. While both Mishkan and Shabbos are of crucial importance to Am Yisrael, to paraphrase the Rav: we have existed for almost 2,000 years without the sanctuary in space, without the Mikdash. And while we yearn, pray, hope and long for the speedy rebuilding of this holy place and space - may it be immediate and in our days - "we could not have survived one week without Shabbos."

Hence, the concluding verses of Mishkan are about Shabbos. This teaches us that while the building of Mishkan is certainly very important, it does not push off Shabbos. When Shabbos comes, the construction of Mishkan is put to rest. And when Shabbos comes, our work must also be put to rest.

Shabbos is a day to focus on the sanctuary in time that Hashem gifts to us (Shabbos 10b) and a day to reconnect with Hashem, putting all of our weekly focuses aside.

Furthermore, Rav Soloveitchik teaches that "The Yalkut Shimoni suggests that (there) are three sanctifications on earth: God's Name, Sabbath and the people of Israel (Yalkut Shimoni 830). Yet we know of many other sanctifications: the Land of Israel and the Temple, among others. In fact, however, all other sanctifications derive their kedushah from the first three.

"The Land of Israel and the Temple were sanctified by the people of Israel.

In contrast, the sanctification of the Sabbath preceded the sanctification of Israel. It was God who sanctified the Sabbath, and in turn, it is the Sabbath that sanctified Israel. Thus, the words of the Friday night Amidah begin: you sanctified the seventh day for Your Name; it was God Who sanctified the Sabbath. In the morning Amidah, the words, and the two tablets he [Moses] brought down upon his arm and in them were written about guarding the Sabbath signify that the sanctification of Israel was realized through giving them the Sabbath" (Chumash Mesoras HaRav, Shemos, p.284-285).

Thus we learn that the primary source of all sanctity is HKB"H b'kevodo u've'atzmo - the Almighty Himself. And from that Primary Source of sanctity, the kedusha of Shabbos is derived (Bereishis 2:1-3), and from Hashem's glory, and the kedusha of Shabbos, the nation of Israel attains her elevated holiness.

May we cherish the gift of Shabbos, appreciate our role in bringing holiness to the world, make time for Hashem - and His Torah and mitzvos - in our lives, and transmit our glorious mesorah to the coming generations.

In the merit of our shemiras Shabbos, and our living elevated lives of distinction and holiness, as is befitting of Am Yisrael, may we merit the yom she'kulo Shabbos u'menucha l'chayei olamim with the ultimate redemption, in our days and in our time.

Michal בברכת בשורות טובות ושבת שלום