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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON **TERUMAH** - 5770

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from Torah in Motion <info@torahinmotion.org> to chaim shulman <internetparshasheet@gmail.com> date Fri, Feb 19, 2010 at 8:27 AM subject Terumah: The Aron of Eden mailed-by bizmailtoday.com

Terumah: The Aron of Eden

The Dvar Torah this week is dedicated in honour of the brit of Chaim Yosef Kelman. Mazal-Tov to Peninah, Maury and the entire family. May they merit to raise him to Torah Chupah and Maasim Tovim.

Shabbat Shalom

A Thought for the Week- Terumah Rabbi Jay Kelman

Judaism sees the sparks of the divine within the most mundane of activities. Revelation at Sinai is followed by a series of laws dealing with such topics as slavery, property damage, assault and battery, lost objects, and court procedures. While all societies have civil codes, Judaism sees these laws as rooted in the divine system of justice. Their observance no less (in fact more) than the "rituals" of Judaism embody the essence of Judaism.

These laws are followed by the commandment to build a mishkan, a sanctuary, to serve as an earthly abode for the resting of the Divine presence. Revelation must lead to social justice, even (especially?) in the most trivial of human interactions, which in turn leads to the manifestation of the presence of G-d in our midst.

The central component of the mishkan was the Aron Hakodesh, which housed the luchoot the tablets, and according to some, the entire Torah, testifying to the covenant between G-d and the Jewish people. Sitting on top of the aron where two cherubim, made from a solid single piece of gold. The cherubim faced each other with wings soaring upwards to heaven.

Our Sages note that the cherubim had the faces of children, one male and one female. It is the child within us, and only the child within us, that brings us closer to G-d. Full of innocence, purity, wholesomeness, and brutally honest it is the child who leads us to G-d. Yet to be corrupted by the deceit all around us and unable and unwilling to be let reality get in the way of

dreams, they must serve as our models. We must learn to give expression to our childhood yearnings as we age. We must learn to grow intellectually and emotionally and yet paradoxically maintain our childhood naïveté.

There is one other place where we have biblical mention of the cherubim. "And (G-d) chased away Adam and stationed the cherubim at the east of Eden, along with the revolving sword blade to guard the path of the tree of life" (Breisheet 3:24). Banished from the Garden of Eden for having eaten from the tree of knowledge, G-d surrounds the tree of life with cherubim lest man eat from that tree too.

It is the cherubim that protect the purity of the garden, preserving it from the ravages that man might bring. Like the child the garden is to remain devoid of sin. The Torah often compares man to a tree – both require much nurturing and often it is many years before it can give fruit. We plant trees, and more importantly nurture children, not knowing how successful our efforts will be. So much is beyond our control yet we give it our best efforts. It is the kruvim, the children, the Torah reminds us, who protect us, who grant us life and a future years after we "return to the ground" (3:19).

This idea is most subtly and beautifully alluded to in the biblical text. In the very next verse the Torah tells us that "and the man knew his wife and she conceived and gave birth to Cain". Despite having been told of their impending mortality they live on forever through their descendants, the bnei adam, the human race.

The Torah opens with the description of G-d's creation of male and female in His image. It takes 26 generations for man to build a tabernacle to house the divine presence for man to "create" a home for G-d. It is the kruvim, the innocent male and female children, who link the physical creation of G-d and the spiritual creation of man. May we merit the proper fusion of the physical and spiritual; the pure child and the sophisticated adult, suffusing our day to day activities with divine purpose. Shabbat Shalom.

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from Rabbi Dovid Gottlieb <yutorah@yutorah.org> reply-to yutorah@yutorah.org date Fri, Feb 19, 2010 at 3:15 AM subject **Parshas Terumah: The Message and Meaning of the Menorah**

By Rabbi Dovid Gottlieb, Rabbi of Congregation Shomrei Emunah, Baltimore, MD Parshat Terumah: The Message and Meaning of the Menorah The Menorah is the most well-known of the Klei Ha-Mishkan, "vessels" of the Tabernacle. In addition to the detailed description of its appearance, commentators have added numerous explanations of the Menorah's symbolic significance. Perhaps we can also gain insight from the Torah's presentation of the initial command to build the Menorah. "V'asisa menoras zahav tahor," and you [Moshe] shall make a Menorah of pure gold, "mikshah te'aseh ha-menorah," the Menorah must be beaten out, "yereichah, v'kanah, givi'eha, kaftoreha, u-feracheha mimenah yihiyu," its base, branch, goblets, knobs, and flowers will be [hammered] from it. (Shemos 25:31) Rashi cites a Midrash (Tanchuma, Beha'alo'secha #3) that is bothered by an apparent incongruity in the verse. Initially Moshe is told "v'asisa," indicating that he should make the Menorah, and yet the Torah subsequently uses the passive "te'asah," which implies that Moshe did not play an active role in the Menorah's construction. To resolve this discrepancy the Midrash teaches that at first Moshe tried to construct the Menorah but that "miskasheh bah," it was too difficult for him, and therefore Hashem told him to throw a block of gold into the fire and, as a result, "na'asis me'eleha," the Menorah was actually made by itself. Many

years ago I attended a "Sheva Berachos" celebration where Rav Aharon Lichtenstein discussed this Midrash and asked the following question: What about the Menorah was so hard for Moshe to figure out? After all, Moshe successfully completed many other difficult tasks, including building the other components of the Mishkan, so why, of all things, was it the construction of the Menorah that stumped him? R. Lichtenstein explained, homiletically, that it wasn't the physical labor of constructing the Menorah that confounded Moshe, but rather it was the apparent contradiction of its deeper messages. On the one hand the Menorah was to be made "mikshah," from one piece of gold. As Rashi elaborates, the Menorah could not be made by melding together different pieces into a larger whole - as one would typically - but instead had to be hewn out of a single piece of gold. Many "Ba'alei Derush" explain that the notion of mikshah represents the intended unity and togetherness - like one solid piece - of the Jewish people. On the other hand, the Menorah has more details and little pieces - it is more ungapatch - than any other item in the Mishkan. The intricate beauty of the various branches, bowls, goblets, knobs, and flowers all convey the notion of nuance and difference.

Moshe understood the symbolism of mikshah but, continued R. Lichtenstein, he couldn't comprehend how to harmonize this with the complexity of the detailed design. If the underlying message is one of unity then shouldn't every piece of the Menorah look and feel the same? And if there are so many different designs - highlighting the ideal of individuality and differentiated beauty - then why not make the Menorah from many different pieces of gold? With Moshe stymied by this challenge, Ha-Kadosh Baruch Hu Himself created the Menorah and, at the same time, taught Moshe - and all generations - a vital lesson about the Jewish community. The unity we strive for should not be confused with unanimity. The ideal of achdus does not require everyone to look or think the same. Beyond the unwavering principles of our faith and the non-negotiable demands of halacha, there is legitimate room for individuality and different ways of thinking. "Mikshah" can co-exist with the multiple designs and engravings. This lesson is of profound importance, but it is far from obvious - it even bewildered Moshe - and therefore we must continue to educate ourselves and our children about the true meaning of achdus. In addition to R. Lichtenstein's important insight, there is another lesson that can be derived from the final pasuk in this section. As part of his last instructions, Moshe is told "u-re'eh v'aseh," see and construct the Menorah (25:40). Explaining the curious reference of "u-re'eh" - see what? - Rashi quotes the teaching of the Talmud (Menachos 29a) that when Moshe couldn't figure out how to make it, God showed him a "Menorah shel Esh," a "Menorah of Fire." Once Moshe saw this blueprint he was then able to complete the Menorah. Numerous commentators have noted that this description of events - where Moshe ultimately builds the Menorah - seems to contradict the previous comments of Rashi that indicated that Hashem had in fact constructed the Menorah. The common explanation (see Sifsei Chachamim and Mizrachi) is that upon Moshe's initial difficulty, Hashem showed him the "blueprint," but when Moshe still couldn't complete the construction, he tossed the gold into the heavenly fire where the Menorah was supernaturally constructed. In light of this understanding, the Sefas Emes (5631) questions why Hashem didn't just make the Menorah Himself when he saw Moshe's initial struggles. Why go through the process of stopping and starting when the job could have been completed without any additional frustration for Moshe? The Sefas Emes explains that it was only as result of Moshe's repeated attempts that he received Heavenly assistance. Hashem would not interfere until Moshe had first tried really hard. He further explains that this was not a one-time occurrence limited to the construction of the Menorah, but is in fact a paradigm of a larger spiritual phenomenon; namely, that we are required to exert maximum effort before Hashem will "step in" to enable our success. Whether it's in realm of Torah study, tefillah, or any other aspect of religious observance, the Sefas Emes teaches that we must vigorously invest our natural strength and resources and only then will we merit the Siyata Dishmaya to succeed.

Two important lessons have emerged from the construction of the Menorah, one about the definition of achdus and the other about need for our utmost effort. A third lesson is the important convergence of these insights: Achieving the type of achdus that R. Lichtenstein spoke about can be elusive and therefore requires the persistent effort that the Sefas Emes describes. Genuine closeness with people who may think and look differently than we do is not easy, but even if our efforts fail once and even twice, we must persist until we achieve the ahavah, achvah, v'reus that should define the relationship between fellow Jews. To subscribe to this email list, please click [here](#) To view more shiurim on Parshat Vayechi please click [here](#) Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future 500 W 185th St. New York, New York 10033

from Rabbi Aryeh Striks <striks@vths.org> date Thu, Feb 18, 2010 at 7:15 PM subject **Mussar HaTorah - Parashas Terumah Mussar HaTorah Torah insights into human nature from the weekly parasha. Based on the talks of Rabbi A. Henach Leibowitz zt"l** (Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivas Chofetz Chaim - RSA) and dedicated in his memory. To view a three minute video of Rabbi Avrohom Stulberger on this week's parasha, visit [VTHSBlog.com](#) Have a Gut Shabbos! **Rabbi Aryeh Striks Valley Torah High School** PS To keep up with the latest news at Valley Torah, visit [VTHSBlog.com](#) everyday. Mussar HaTorah Torah Insights into Human Nature – Dedicated in memory of Rabbi A. Henach Leibowitz zt"l Based on the talks of Rabbi A. Henach Leibowitz zt"l, Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivas Chofetz Chaim – RSA © 2010 by Rabbi Aryeh Striks & Rabbi Shimon Zehnwirth. For more information call (818) 505-7999 or e-mail mht@vths.org

"And they shall take for me a portion..." (Shmos 25:2)

The Midrash (Shmos Rabbah 33:3) on this verse quotes Shir HaShirim (5:2), "I sleep but my heart is awake," and gives three explanations: Firstly, the Jewish nation "sleeps," – or despairs – over the Messianic redemption; but Hashem – our heart – remains awake to redeem us. Secondly, the Jewish people have given up hope on the mitzvos; but our forefathers' merit stands in good stead for us. Finally, the Jewish nation gave up hope that they will ever be forgiven for the sin of the golden calf; nevertheless, Hashem gave us the opportunity for atonement by asking us to build the Mishkan. This introduces our parasha, "Take for me a portion," to build the Mishkan.

The Yefeh Toar quotes a variant of this Midrash with an alternate second explanation: The Jews have given up hope on the mitzvos; but our heart is awake from acts of chesed, davening Shema and Shmoneh Esrei, going to shul, and going to learn in the beis midrash. In other words, even though the Jewish people felt despair over the mitzvos – which they felt were uninspired and not accomplishing anything – nevertheless they continued to keep these mitzvos (chesed, Shema, etc.), which reawakened them to do all the mitzvos properly.

The Midrash tells us that Jews did not have a positive outlook on their mitzvah observance. They felt that their mitzvos did not carry meaning. If this was their outlook, how could these few mitzvos that they were doing reawaken their excitement? How did their mitzvah observance become more meaningful, just by continuing to perform them, without any outside input? Furthermore, the mitzvos listed in the variant Midrash were not the mitzvos we tend to consider exciting, inspirational mitzvos; they were the seemingly routine, mundane acts of chesed, daily prayers and study. How could these "run-of-the-mill" mitzvos reawaken the Jews from their "deep sleep" of tired mitzvah observance?

We sometimes fall into the trap of waiting for rare and "exotic" mitzvos to inspire and energize us. We look for unusual customs and segulos (mystical practices) to adopt, or concentrate on newly-discovered stringencies, in hopes of raising our spiritual level and meriting success in our endeavors. In truth, however, every single mitzvah, done with simple, straightforward sincerity, has explosive power latent within it. Even

ordinary, everyday mitzvos have the ability to awaken us out of our stupor and breathe fire into our souls to perform all the mitzvos with fervor and zeal. A simple gesture of holding the door open for the next person, or giving tzedaka with a warm smile, can change our emotional attitude towards serving Hashem. Coming to shul on time, saying the daily prayers with attention to the plain meaning of the words, and learning Torah on a daily schedule are all basic practices that can have life-changing effects on a person, injecting fervor and meaning into his actions and thoughts.

The very same routine mitzvah that we feel lacks gusto and seems humdrum can often generate the spark that ignites a chain reaction of enthusiasm for Torah and mitzvos. Focusing on infrequent mitzvos, or on practices that have popular appeal, is not necessary. Instead, we must each attempt to unleash the power of the mitzvos that we are presently performing. This will infuse our lives with the exuberance and joy of rising each morning to greet a new day, appreciating the incredible privilege bestowed upon us, to serve the Creator of the universe with all our heart and soul.

Thanks to hamelaket@hotmail.com for collecting the following items:

from Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein <info@jewishdestiny.com>
reply-to info@jewishdestiny.com
date Thu, Feb 18, 2010 at 2:08 PM
subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein - Parshat Terumah

Jerusalem Post :: Friday, February 19, 2010
ADAR :: Rabbi Berel Wein

The month of Adar is designated in Jewish life as the month of joy and celebration. This is clearly due to the fact that the wondrous holiday of Purim occurs in the middle of this month. Purim is not a holiday in the sense that Pesach is, for example, but it sure is a holiday by any other reckoning.

A people constantly threatened with persecution and annihilation needs to be reminded regularly – at least annually – of its ultimate survival and of the defeat of its oppressors and enemies. Thus the advent of the month of Adar always signifies a time of reassurance and confidence in Judaism, the Jewish people and the Divine hand of Providence, so to speak, which hovers over us.

It is a month of renewed vitality, faith and purpose. And in Jewish life, joy is always associated with the concepts of observance of ritual and the strengthening of Jewish values and beliefs. Even though the holiday of Purim itself is restricted to only two days in the month, its spirit and joy permeate all of the days of Adar.

The rabbis stated that from the day that Adar begins we are already bidden to intensify our feelings of joy, faith and optimism. A happy event suffuses the atmosphere of life both before and after its particular day of occurrence. The whole month of Adar is viewed as a unit, as an entirety of good tidings and of happy events. The month takes on the vibrant coloration of the joyous days that fall within its allotted time.

Adar also marks the final month of winter. It therefore becomes the harbinger of the beautiful weather of spring and summer that is the climate of the Land of Israel. Though Europe and America have experienced a truly cold, snowy and windy winter, we here in Israel have escaped with our moderate and mild winter weather interspersed with the blessing of periodic days of life-giving rain.

In this, Adar fulfills its role of looking forward optimistically to better climes and times. Adar is, so to speak, the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel of winter and its inclement weather and sometimes dreary days. People are clearly affected by the climate where they live. The pervading darkness of the upper reaches of the northern hemisphere contributes to higher rates of suicide, depression, alcoholism and other negative behavior.

People do better in sunlight and warmth than in ice, snow and penetrating cold. The dramatic and continuing population shift in the United States for example to the warmer West and South is testimony to this fact. The coming of the month of Adar, above and apart from its aspects of Purim, is, by itself, a sign of hope and optimism. The sun will now shine more brightly and more often. As you can already fathom none of this brilliant journalism of mine really applies to those living south of the Equator. But since Israel is the center of the world and Israel is my home, everything written here should be considered valid.

Adar is also the sole month chosen by Jewish law to be a leap month. In every nineteen year, lunar-solar calendar cycle there are seven years in which an extra lunar month is inserted into the Jewish calendar. This extra month is always the month of Adar.

We can all use an extra dose of Adar every so often. The difficulties that Jews constantly live with need to be occasionally lightened by an additional dose of joy and optimism. People gladly bear the idea of two Adars while they would be less likely to accept a doubling of any of the other eleven months of the Jewish year.

The Talmud advances practical and logical reasons to explain why Adar was chosen to be the potential double month. All of these reasons are naturally valid and acceptable on their own – a late rainy season, an extension to the growing season for crops, etc.

The rabbis prevented King Chizkiyahu from doubling up Nissan instead of Adar. There is an underlying value that the month of Adar possesses what no other month in the Jewish calendar can lay claim to. This idea of the joy of survival, of the ultimate downfall of the wicked, of a better tomorrow in physical, spiritual and national terms, belongs exclusively to Adar. In the Jewish calendar, there is not substitute for this very special month. Shabat shalom.

from Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein <info@jewishdestiny.com>
reply-to info@jewishdestiny.com
date Thu, Feb 18, 2010 at 2:08 PM
subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein - Parshat Terumah
Weekly Parsha :: TERUMAH :: Rabbi Berel Wein

The Torah in this week's parsha dwells upon the giving of one's wealth, assets, time and talents for an altruistic public cause - in this case the construction of the Mishkan, the Tabernacle of Israel. The Torah lists a prerequisite for being able to give such a donation of effort and wealth. First the donor's heart must be willing and compassionate. Though charity is eventually realized in the actual act of giving, it begins within the heart of the giver.

Charity is an emotional and oftentimes gut-wrenching experience, both for the donor and the recipient. The Talmud indicates that the giving of wealth alone is insufficient to meet the true demands of charitable behavior and action. "God wants our hearts" is the Talmudic phrase that is applicable to charitable giving, as well as to most of Jewish life and law.

Giving without passion and sympathy is still giving, but it is imperfect. The heart must want before the hand signs the check. The Torah sets no goal or specified amount as to what one's donation to the Mishkan should or would be. Some people brought gold and silver, others gave items that would be considered to be less expensive and not as valuable.

The Torah makes no reference to these obvious differences. The copper and bronze mirrors that plated the altar, donated by the women of Israel, are given the same prominence in the Torah as the gold that was donated for the Holy Ark and the other artifacts. The Torah measures the giving by the intent of the heart of the giver.

As someone who has been engaged in Torah and Jewish fundraising for many decades, I can testify that when the emotion is present in the heart of the giver, the check is correspondingly larger. While I was in America recently I met a Jew from Israel who was collecting money to help a

destitute family cope with a very serious medical issue. While in Los Angeles, he was robbed at gunpoint and the few thousand dollars that he had collected was stolen from him.

Later, when I met him in a different American city, he told me that people were more generous to him after they knew what had happened, even though the purpose of his collection had not changed. I told him that it was the emotion of the unfairness of his loss that now touched the hearts of people and that naturally their donations increased

The nation of Haiti required enormous financial and social support from the rest of the world long before the devastating earthquake ravaged it. But it took the earthquake to reach the hearts of individuals, organizations and governments worldwide. The measure of the truly righteous is how open their hearts are to others' problems and needs "normally." This, in essence, is the lesson of Parshat Terumah – though the original Mishkan constructed by Moshe no longer exists amongst us.

Shabat shalom

From Ohr Somayach <ohr@ohr.edu>
to weekly@ohr.edu
subject Torah Weekly

**Ohr Somayach :: Torah Weekly :: Parshat Teruma
For the week ending 20 February 2010 / 5 Adar I 5770
by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - www.seasonsofthemoon.com**

Overview

G-d commands Moshe to build a Mishkan (Sanctuary) and supplies him with detailed instructions. The Children of Israel are asked to contribute precious metals and stones, fabrics, skins, oil and spices. In the Mishkan's outer courtyard are an altar for the burnt offerings and a laver for washing. The Tent of Meeting is divided by a curtain into two chambers. The outer chamber is accessible only to the kohanim, the descendants of Aharon. This contains the table of showbread, the menorah, and the golden altar for incense. The innermost chamber, the Holy of Holies, may be entered only by the kohen gadol, and only once a year, on Yom Kippur. Here is the Ark that held the Ten Commandments inscribed on the two tablets of stone that G-d gave to the Jewish nation on Mount Sinai. All of the utensils and vessels, as well as the construction of the Mishkan, are described in great detail.

Insights

The Furniture Was Divine

"They shall make an Ark..." (25:10)

In the 1930's, in the desert kingdom of Mukhtar, things changed a lot after they discovered oil.

The sheikh was eager to benefit his people and to add to his own prestige. He built roads and hotels, palaces and airports. They had everything. Everything, that is, except water.

The only liquid that was abundant in Mukhtar was black and viscous. It may have been black gold, but you still couldn't drink it.

Short of towing an iceberg from the Antarctic (a idea which was under consideration), no one had yet found a solution.

The sheikh decided that he would go to America, since America was a country where they had solutions for problems that people didn't even know they had. How much more, reasoned the sheikh, they must have a solution to a problem that was obvious.

The sheikh stayed in the Waldorf Astoria for two weeks. When it was time to leave he summoned the bellhop to take down his luggage.

The bellhop's jaw dropped when he opened the door to the sheikh's suite. There, sitting in the middle of the stateroom, was an enormous sea-trunk. It was so improbably large that it looked like some kind of magician's trick where scores of people would start to emerge from it one by one. Realizing that he was easily out-manned by such an object, the bellboy retreated to return with reinforcements.

It finally took six able-bodied porters and a truck to move the trunk out to the docks, where, not unsurprisingly, the sheikh's cabin trunk caught the eye of watchful customs officer.

"Good morning, sir! May I ask you what you have in this trunk?"

"Oh it's nothing officer, just a few presents for my people back home."

"Yes sir. Would you mind opening it up, please?"

"Well, really, officer, this is most unnecessary. I will take this up at the highest levels."

"That's your privilege, sir, but I'm afraid you'll still have to open this trunk."

When the lid of the trunk opened, the officer's eyes widened in disbelief. The entire trunk was filled with faucets of all kinds and shapes. Stainless steel, copper, modern, antique. Nothing but faucets. Faucets and faucets and more faucets.

"Officer, this is an amazing country. On my first day here I went into the kitchen and turned on one of these things, and, miracle of miracles, water just started to pour out of it! So now I am taking home to my people this brilliant invention. You westerners know a thing or two I have to admit!" G-d told Moshe to go and tell Bezalel "Make Me a Mishkan (a Sanctuary), an Ark, and Kelim (the other furnishings of the Sanctuary)". When Moshe told Bezalel, he reversed the order and told him to build an Ark, Kelim and a Mishkan.

Bezalel said to Moshe, "Moshe Rabbeinu, the way of the world is that a person builds a house, and then afterwards furnishes it. You're telling me to build the furnishings first. Where am I supposed to put them?"

Why did Moshe change the order?

Moshe wasn't giving Bezalel building instructions. He wasn't talking to him like an architect to a building contractor. Moshe was speaking conceptually, stressing what was the essence and purpose of the Mishkan. The Ark was the centerpiece of the Mishkan. The word for Ark in the Torah is "Aron" and comes from the word in Hebrew for light — 'Ohr'. The Ark was the light of the Mishkan for it contained the Holy Torah, which is the light of the world. Without the Ark, the Mishkan would have been merely a shell, merely a dry faucet — without the living waters of the Holy Torah.

•Sources: Talmud Berachot 55a, Rabbeinu Bachya, and a story heard from Rabbi Uziel Milevsky, zatzal

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subject Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum - Parshas Terumah

**Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum
Parshas Terumah**

And they shall accept for Me an uplifted donation. (25:2)

The Midrash quotes an intriguing dialogue that ensued between Hashem and Moshe Rabbeinu. When Hashem commanded Moshe concerning the building of the Mishkan, Moshe asked, "Is it possible for Klal Yisrael to make a Mishkan capable of serving as a place of repose for the Shechinah?" Hashem replied, "Even one Jew is able to do so by himself." Apparently, a hidden force, a concealed power, within every Jew is capable of transforming the entire world into good.

The greatest Jews, those who actually catalyzed outstanding transformation, stood alone. They acted by themselves, because they knew that they were not really alone. Hashem was always supporting their endeavors. In truth, everything that we achieve is really Hashem's doing. We just go through the motions. His blessing is our successful achievement. It began with Avraham Avinu. He had no supporting cast. Acting alone, he confronted an entire pagan culture. He fought kings and emerged triumphant.

This phenomenon has repeated itself throughout the generations. It is the power of one, which is usually interpreted as the power of one person acting alone. I think we can safely change that to the power of One - upper-case letter "O." When a person realizes that it is Hashem Who supports him, he then has the courage and fortitude to undertake the most difficult and seemingly impossible endeavor, because he realizes that he is not alone; the power of One accompanies him.

Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl, once said, "Give me one true yarei Shomayim, one uncompromising G-d fearing Jew, and through him I will bring merit to the entire world. When we think about it, we realize that most of the great spiritual success stories throughout time have been catalyzed by one individual with an idea, who worked resolutely to promote his cause, thereby meriting siyata diShmaya, Divine assistance, to achieve success well beyond his dreams.

As mentioned earlier, Avraham Avinu is the father of all success stories. We have been blessed throughout the generations with individuals of great stature, whose dedication to Torah and its values was paramount. These were the leaders of each community who stood up against the alien winds of change, that which would stop at nothing to undermine and impugn the character of Torah. At first, they rallied together support from the grass roots community, and later it continued to spread. They began with "one," and the numbers grew. The innovators plunged into uncharted waters to undertake projects and establish organizations that merited unparalleled siyata diShmaya, thereby allowing them to succeed beyond expectation. Among these spiritual giants was: Horav Marcus Lehmann, zl, who, after noticing that young people had nothing "kosher" to read, undertook to write historical novels primarily for young people. This brilliant talmid chacham, Torah scholar, certainly had other things to do, but Klal Yisrael needed these books. Imagine, the Chief Rabbi of Mainz was writing books for children! These books were soon devoured by adults, and an entire generation was infused with yiraas Shomayim. His weekly divrei Torah were circulated throughout Germany, and, in some of the smaller communities, served as the rabbinic sermon for the day!

Another of these spiritual giants was Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl, who stood up to the secularists in Germany. With dedication and sheer brilliance, he succeeded in saving the Orthodox Jewish community. His legacy continues to thrive today. Horav Yosef Breuer, zl, came to this country during World War II with a vision of rebuilding the Frankfurt Jewish community. He succeeded beyond his dreams. Horav Yechiel Schlesinger, zl, was determined to establish a yeshivah gedolah in Eretz Yisrael. Together with Horav Baruch Kunstadt, zl, and Horav Yonah Merzbach, zl, he founded Yeshivas Kol Torah. Who can forget the Ponevezer Rav, Horav Yosef Kahaneman, zl, the architect of Torah in Eretz Yisrael, post Holocaust? He had an idea and a burning passion to rebuild the Torah that the Nazis had attempted to destroy.

In this country, we were blessed with Horav Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz, zl, an indefatigable individual whose love for Torah and Yidden was relentless. In his own eyes, he considered himself a poshuter baal habayis, but, in the eyes of the world, he was the captain of Torah. He was joined by Horav Aharon Kotler, zl, and together they and a handful of Roshei Yeshivah established the American Torah world.

What was Cleveland before Horav Eliyahu Meir Bloch, zl, and his brother-in-law Horav Chaim Mordechai Katz, zl, arrived to establish Telshe? What was Baltimore before Horav Yitzchak Yaakov Ruderman, zl, laid the groundwork for Ner Yisrael?

Kiruv, Jewish outreach, did not exist before the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Horav Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, zl, sent out his shluchim throughout the world. The Bostoner Rebbe, Horav Levi Yitzchok Horowitz, zl, and Horav Shlomo Friefeld, zl, each in his own way - with his own unique approach - changed Yiddishkeit. In Eretz Yisrael, it was Horav Noach Weinberg, zl, who started a "movement" of kiruv through his Aish HaTorah programs. These are but a few of the individuals who represent the "power of one."

Another aspect of the "power of one" is the individual who devotes himself to saving one mitzvah by raising our awareness of its significance. At the forefront of this endeavor stands the Chafetz Chaim, zl, who devoted himself to teaching Klal Yisrael about the sin of lashon hora. When the Tzeilemer Rav, Horav Levi Yitzchok Grunwald, zl, came to America, he noticed the dismal condition of kashrus. He took it upon himself to ensure the Jewish community reliable kashrus supervision. These were gedolei Yisrael, Torah giants, who were inculcated from "day one" with an achrayus, a sense of responsibility, for Klal Yisrael. The reader might ask: "What does that have to do with me? I am a simple, plain Jew. I am not a gadol. What can I do?"

The individual who shatters this myth, who demonstrated that gadlus is defined by emunah, boundless faith, was Reb Yosef Rosenberger, zl, or - as he was endearingly referred to - "Mr. Shatnez." He came to America a penniless refugee, still bearing the physical and emotional trauma of the notorious Dachau concentration camp, but with an indomitable spirit and undaunted faith. While others came here with the hope of rebuilding, of revolutionizing America, he came with an idea. His idea was not a get-rich-quick scheme. It was a concept that would elevate kedushah, holiness. Expending time, tremendous effort, and, of course, siyata d'Shmaya, Reb Yosef taught America the importance of the mitzvah of shatnez. He realized his ideals by lighting a spark of idealism in the hearts and minds of others. He saved a mitzvah of the Torah from disappearing into oblivion. One mitzvah - one person - the power of "one."

And they shall accept for Me an uplifted donation, from every man whose heart moves him to make a free-will gift you shall accept My uplifted donation. (25:2)

We note that the gift is not to be given directly to G-d; rather, each individual should contribute to the community, who, in turn, shall set up institutions dedicated to Hashem's purposes. Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl, suggests that the implication is clear: it is not for individual donors to set up these institutions. They must be the fruits of labor of the community as a whole, whereby everybody shares in their upkeep. Nonetheless, there seems to be too much redundancy in this pasuk. The Torah emphasizes asher yidvenu libo, free-will gift, and terumah, uplifted donation. What is the difference between that which one gives to a poor man and the donation he gives to G-d's institutions? Tzedakah, charity, is tzedakah - or is it not?

The Kehillas Yitzchak enlightens us with regard to the tzedakah that is given to Hashem's establishments and its marked distinction from tzedakah given to the needy. Two aspects comprise a tzedakah donation: the individual's good intentions. Examples include: his overflowing heart which is sensitive to the needs of others; and the end result of his good deed: a poor man is sustained; a broken person is temporarily made whole; a floundering family is balanced. In other words, we consider both the motivation / attitude of the benefactor and the end result, the consequences of his giving.

When a person donates to the Mishkan, it is necessary for his motivation to be pure and virtuous. It must be a free-will offering that is dedicated l'shem Shomayim, for the sake of Heaven. Normally, tzedakah does not have to be given lishmah. The benefactor may have ulterior motives in giving. Veritably, that is true of the tzedakah given to a poor man. Then the primary goal is that the man receives his alms, he has food to eat, a place to rest his head, etc. As long as he is sustained, the attitude of his benefactor does not matter. All that matters is that he has benefitted from this interaction.

When one contributes "to" Hashem, it is an entirely different process. This contribution is governed by a different set of rules. Hashem does not need our contribution. In fact, whatever we give Him is actually His! There is nothing physical that we can give Him, since everything already belongs to Him. Only our attitude, our good intentions, our holy and pure thoughts matter. Those belong to us, and it is precisely those machashavos, thoughts, which comprised the lishmah aspect of our donation to the Mishkan.

They shall make an Ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits its length; a cubit and a half its width; and a cubit and a half its height. (25:10)

There were actually two Arons. Betzalel made the first one, which is described above. When Moshe Rabbeinu descended Har Sinai and took one look at the Golden Calf, he shattered the Luchos, Tablets, which he was carrying. This was followed by prayer and repentance, after which Hashem instructed him to prepare new Tablets upon which He would inscribe the Ten Commandments. To hold the second set of Luchos, as well as shards of the broken Luchos, Hashem instructed Moshe to make an Ark of wood, which would be used until Klal Yisrael built the permanent Ark. Rashi cites an opinion that after the permanent Ark was built, Klal Yisrael left the broken Tablets in the wooden Ark. The Ark containing the shards of the first Luchos accompanied Klal Yisrael into battle. Ramban, however, notes that most opinions agree that the two Arks were never in use simultaneously. After the permanent Ark had been constructed, everything was transferred there, and the wooden Ark was hidden.

Rashi's opinion that the Ark which accompanied them to the battlefield was the wooden one, containing within it the broken Luchos, begs elucidation. Why did they not take the one which held the Torah? Clearly, they wanted to make use of every merit available to them. The z'chus haTorah, merit of Torah, is an extremely powerful intercession. Why not use it? Horav Mordechai Yehudah Leib Saks, zl, explains that while Torah is a most effective advocate, a danger surfaces in applying it, due to an inherent weakness in the "system." The Achilles heel is that not everyone observes the entire Torah. This is the weak spot in the armor provided by the Torah. It can work only if everyone is aligned and on the same page. Regrettably, this is not a reality and, thus, can actually work against us. By taking the wooden Ark containing the broken-shards of the first Luchos, we are calling attention to Klal Yisrael's deficiency in achieving a proper spiritual calling. The wooden Ark presents an obsequious Jewish nation, asking for forgiveness, knowing fully well that the people have failed to live up to Hashem's expectations of them. The broken shards represent the nadir of sin, the sudden fall from grace when Klal Yisrael lost control of their faculties and swore allegiance to the Golden Calf. If all this is true, what merit do they have? What factor should catalyze favorable merit, so that they emerge victorious against their pagan enemies? It is not their merit but, rather, the wickedness of their enemy that brings about their downfall. This is consistent with the pasuk in Devarim 9:14, "Do not say in your heart, when Hashem pushes them away from before you, saying, 'Because of my righteousness did Hashem bring me to possess this Land and because of the wickedness of these nations did Hashem drive them away from before you.'" It is not because of your merit. It is because of their evil. The wooden Ark downplays our worthiness, instead, appealing to Hashem's compassion.

Make the Mishkan from ten curtains...Five curtains shall be joined together, and the other five from curtains as a covering for the Mishkan, you shall make eleven of them...and you shall put five together and the other six altogether. (26:1,3,6,9)

The Mishkan itself was comprised of curtains resting upon beams. The first set of five curtains was sewn together, as was the second set of five curtains. They were attached to one another by means of special hooks. It seems odd that they had to be attached. Surely, all ten curtains could have been sewn together into one great curtain, thereby obviating the need for hooks to join them. The Baal HaTurim suggests a symbolism for this requirement. The ten curtains correspond to the Aseres HaDibros, Ten Commandments, with each of the five curtains representing the five commandments which were on each one of the Two Tablets.

The Shem MiShmuel sees this symbolism as sending us a crucial message concerning the purpose of the Mishkan. The Mishkan had to be a constant reminder of the purpose of the whole system of worship: The observance of the Torah Revelation as encapsulated by the Ten Commandments. By going to the trouble of having us connect the two sets of five curtains,

rather than sew them all together, the Torah sought to retain the image of Matan Torah, the Giving of the Torah, in our minds.

I think we can take this reminder a bit further. The fact that there are two tablets with five commandments on each one - rather than all ten being on one large tablet - teaches us an important lesson. When all ten are together, there is room for suggestion that they might be listed in descending level of significance. When they are, however, placed side by side, the Torah is teaching us that a harmony exists between them, that they coincide with one another. One cannot observe the laws that address our allegiance to Hashem, while ignoring the five which address our relationship with our fellow man - and vice-versa.

The Shem MiShmuel says that the upper layer of goat hair curtains symbolizes the entire Torah system: the five curtains denoting the Five Books of the Written Law; and the six curtains representing the six books of the Oral Law. Thus, the Mishkan was a means to an end. It taught us the significance of Torah in our lives. The Mishkan brought us closer to Hashem via His Torah.

A similar idea applies to our modern day Mishkan: the shul. Its purpose is to elevate us spiritually by fostering a deeper and closer connection with the Torah. As Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl, explains, the Mishkan implies two distinct concepts: Mikdash - Sanctuary; and Mishkan - dwelling place. Mikdash designates the mission we are to discharge for Hashem. Mishkan expresses the denouement of the promise issued by Hashem to us in return for properly discharging our mission. When we increase our study of Torah we strengthen our observance, thereby allowing Hashem to rest His Shechinah in our midst. It is that simple.

You shall erect the Mishkan according to its manner, as will have been shown on the mountain. (26:30)

Moshe Rabbeinu was commanded a number of times concerning the injunction against deviating from the original design of the Mishkan and its vessels. Exactly as he had been shown on the mountain, should it now be constructed. The fact that this enjoinder is repeated a number of times indicates that there might be something "more" to it. Horav Meir Shapiro, zl, suggests that it has something to do with the overall design of the Mishkan - not from an architectural standpoint, but from a practical perspective concerning its accessibility to the various groups which it served.

Prior to the Giving of the Torah, Klal Yisrael was commanded in the mitzvas Hagbalah, establishing assigned boundaries around Har Sinai. "Bound the mountain and sanctify it" (Shemos 19:23). The Chidushei HaRim, zl, explains the practical reasoning behind this mitzvah. Why were they commanded specifically before Mattan Torah, the Giving of the Torah, concerning not overstepping the designated boundaries? It seems that Hashem also offered the Torah to the gentile nations. They rejected the offer, claiming that observing the Torah went against the grain of their national character. After all, how could they be expected to maintain a high moral posture and refrain from committing adultery? The media is filled with escapades of the most prominent and distinguished celebrities, politicians and sports figures. This is the way they live!

To deprive them of murder - either the actual taking of someone's life or its more "popular" substitute, character assassination, which seems to have become their favorite pastime - would be unthinkable. If they were divested of this callous form of entertainment, they might be compelled to act as sensitive human beings. This would be highly demanding.

The problem is that the nations had a reasonable objection to not being held accountable for refusing the Torah. They felt that Klal Yisrael so readily subscribed to the Torah because it does not inherently go against their grain. Nothing in the Torah stands in contrast with the Jewish psyche. To counteract this "excuse" on the part of the gentile nations, Hashem gave us the mitzvah of Hagbalah, which basically demanded order and discipline. At the time of Mattan Torah, each Jew had his preordained place, so as not to infringe upon his neighbor. It is a mitzvah which, in the area of spiritual ascendance, is non-conforming to Jewish nature.

A Jew is driven to move forward, strive higher - not maintain a status quo. In this area, the Jewish personality is not prone to regimentation and restraint. Thus, if the Jewish People were to accept the mitzvah of Hagbalah, it would seal the mouths of the gentile nations. The Jews were willing to go against their intrinsic nature.

The Lubliner Rosh Yeshivah applies this line of reasoning in his interpretation of the pasuk. During the Giving of the Torah, there were three stations, three pre-set boundaries, in place. Moshe Rabbeinu was permitted to ascend the mountain and enter into the Cloud where Hashem rested His presence. The next position was reserved for the Kohanim and Zekeinim, Elders. They were permitted to accompany Moshe part of the way up the mountain. The third boundary was designated for the remainder of the nation, who were instructed to encircle the mountain. Three levels of kedushah, holiness; three groups of people. The Mishkan's design incorporated a similar design, whereby it was sectioned off into three distinct ascending levels of kedushah, holiness. The inner sanctum, Kodshei HaKedoshim, Holy of Holies, was the domain reserved only for the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year. This was preceded by the Ohel Moed, or Heichal, which was designated for the Kohanim. Last, was the Chatzar HaMishkan, Courtyard, or - as it was referred to in the Bais HaMikdash - the Azarah. This section was appropriated for all Jews. The Torah repeats its instructions to adhere to the original architectural plan when rebuilding the Mishkan, as a mandate that there be three levels of kedushah as was demonstrated during the Giving of the Torah on Har Sinai. As the original Mishkan followed this design, so, too, must all subsequent structures conform to this prototypal concept. The Mishkan is a continuation of the Revelation which occurred on Har Sinai. Just as the mountain which was the scene of Revelation is the place from which Torah emanated to the Jewish People, the Mishkan is, likewise, the oracle of Torah teaching to the nation. As a continuation of Sinai, the Mishkan serves as the nation's focal point of spirituality.

Yehallelu Shemo b'machol, b'sof, v'chinor yezamru lo.

They will praise His Name in a dance; they will sing to Him with drum and stringed instrument.

Chazal describe this machol, dance. "In the future, HaKadosh Baruch Hu will make a dance for the tzadikim, righteous, in Gan Eden, and He will sit in their midst, and everyone of them will point their finger (at Him)." The Chafetz Chaim explains the idea of the circle: in a circle, no part of it is closer to the center than the other. All those dancing in the circle around Hashem are equidistant from Him. So, too, in the future, all the righteous will realize that they are all equal in their relationship to Hashem. The Chasam Sofer applies the same idea to their intentions. In other words, even though there were differences of opinion among the great Sages concerning halachic decisions, they all had the same intent: l'shem Shomayim, for the sake of Heaven. One said asur, prohibited, while the other opined, mutar, permitted; one said tamei, ritually impure, while the other claimed tahor, pure; but they all meant the same thing, and they all had the proper aim and purpose. Thus, they all remain equally positioned in relation to Hashem. In memory of Our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents R' Naphtali Michael ben Nesanel z"l MaRas Sara Riva bas R' Yaakov Meir HaKohen a"h Dedicated by The Rothner Family

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Terumah: Support System

Parshas Terumah: Support System

By Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky *Matzav.com*

The Aron Kodosh in the Mishkan, the Tabernacle, contained the most precious spiritual gift that was transmitted by Omnipotent to mortal - the two Luchos - the Tablets handed from Hashem to Moshe at Sinai. The receptacle had to be worthy of the insert. It therefore had to be intricately constructed with its symbolism as meticulously configured as its beautiful design. The Aron consisted of three contiguous boxes of gold, wood, and gold, each inserted in the other. It contained a golden crown bordering its edge and a golden cover adorned with cherubim. These angelic figures faced each other, their wings spread, as they represented the profound love of a nation and their Creator.

But a seemingly insignificant item which was connected with the Aron holds perhaps the most symbolic of all the many peripheral adornments. The Torah tells us that the Aron was to be fitted with gold plated wooden staves. Then Moshe is told, "You shall insert the staves in the rings on the ark, with which to carry the ark" (Exodus 25:13). The Torah goes on to state: "The staves shall remain in the ark; they shall not be removed" (Exodus 25:14). The sages explain that the Torah is thus meting a prohibition for anyone to remove the staves that were used to carry the ark from place to place in the Jewish sojourn in the desert and beyond. What needs examination, however, is the phraseology of the command. When referring to the staves, instead of commanding, "You shall not remove them," the Torah is seemingly prophesizing, "they shall not be removed." Why didn't the Torah just command, "the staves shall remain in the ark; you shall not remove them"? By stating, "they shall not be removed" it seems that instead of talking to us - the Torah is talking to history. Can it be that the Torah is foreshadowing the relationship between the Holy Ark itself and the staves that carry it? What important symbolism do the staves bear that intrinsically connects them with the Holy Ark they are meant to support? Can insignificant staves actually become part and parcel of the arks very essence?

During World War II many young Jewish children were harbored by a myriad of monasteries throughout Europe. At the end of the war, the Vaad Hatzalah sent representatives to the monasteries to try and reclaim the orphaned children to their heritage. Many of the children who found refuge did so at a young age and they had but a few recollections of their birthright.

When Rabbi Eliezer Silver, who was the Rabbi of Cincinnati, Ohio and a very influential member of the Vaad, came to a particular hermitage in the Alsace-Lorraine region of France, he was met with hostility. "You can be sure, Rabbi, if we had Jews here we would surely hand them back to you immediately!" exclaimed the monk in charge. "However, unfortunately for you, we have no Jewish children here."

Rabbi Silver was given a list of refugees and was told that they were all Germans. The monk continued, "the Schwartzs are German Schwartzs, the Schindlers are German Schindlers and the Schwimmers are German Schwimmers."

Rabbi Silver had been told that there were definitely close to ten Jewish children in that hermitage and was not convinced. He asked if he could say a few words to the children as they went to sleep. The monk agreed. Rabbi Silver returned later that evening with two aides, and as the children were lying in their beds about to go to sleep, they entered the large dorm room. He walked into the room and in the sing-song that is so familiar to hundreds of thousands of Jewish children across the globe he began to sing "Shema Yisrael Ado..." unexpectedly — in mid sentence — he stopped. Suddenly from six beds in the room the ending to that most powerful verse resounded almost in unison. "Hashem Echad!"

He turned to the priest. "These are our children. We will take them now!" The children were redeemed, placed in Jewish homes, and raised as leaders of our community.

Perhaps the Torah is make a powerful prophecy in addition to a powerful regulation. The Torah talks about the peripherals that help bear the burden of the Torah in a unique way. "In the rings of the ark the staves shall

remain - they shall never leave!" Perhaps it is a prediction in addition to a charge.

The wooden staves that are adapted to carry the message of Torah, the tunes, the customs, and the small nuances, are much more than gold-plated sticks. They may not be as holy as the ark, but they will never leave its sides. They will be remembered long after the Aron has been captured. They will be cherished long after the golden ark has been buried. And it may very well be that when the cherished handles of those staves, jutting ever so slightly from the ground, are pulled from the mire, the entire Torah is eventually raised with them.

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Rabbi Yissocher Frand on Parshas Terumah You Shall Have A Dream

At the end of the description of the Menorah, the pasuk [verse] says, "(U'Re-ay v'asay..." -- "And see and construct according to the pattern that you were shown on the mountain" [25:40]. The Baal HaTurim has a very cryptic and enigmatic comment on this pasuk: "There are only 3 times in all of Tanach that a pasuk begins with the word 'u'Re-ay' ['And see']".

The other two occurrences are both in Tehillim -- "And see sons to your children, peace on Israel" [128:6] and "And see if I have an evil way; and lead me in the way of Eternity" [139:24]. The Baal HaTurim seems to provide us with a "Jewish Crossword Puzzle". The trick is to find the connection between these three pasukim [verses]. The Baal HaTurim himself suggests a common thread, but I will discuss an alternate explanation from the Shemen HaTov.

Rash"i on our pasuk comments that Moshe was puzzled about the appearance of the Menorah, until HaShem [G-d] showed him a replica of the Menorah made out of fire. Moshe was able to conceptualize all of the other Kaylim [vessels] of the Mishkan, but somehow he had difficulty conceptualizing the complex shape and structure of the Menorah. Therefore, HaShem formed a Menorah out of fire and showed Moshe exactly what the Menorah looked like. However, even that did not help. We know from another statement of the Sages that even after Moshe saw the image of the Menorah, he still could not construct it. Finally, HaShem instructed Moshe to (have Betzalel) throw the gold into the fire, and the Menorah was created miraculously.

The question must be asked: HaShem knew Moshe's capabilities. If, ultimately, HaShem knew that Moshe would not be able to construct the Menorah on his own, why did HaShem ask him to do something that he could not do?

The Shemen HaTov answers: it was vital and crucial for Moshe to see the shape and form of the Menorah -- even if he would not be able to duplicate it. A person must have a vision of what is required and expected. If one does not have the vision, he cannot even begin. One must have a dream, whether that dream can be realized and become a reality or not. The minimum that is absolutely necessary is the perception of a direction and goal.

The initial image that HaShem showed to Moshe was the vision of the Menorah. Moshe was then at least aware of the dream -- the ultimate goal. If later, Moshe could not construct the Menorah himself, then HaShem would help, but at least Moshe knew what he was trying to accomplish. There are many things in life that are beyond our capabilities. We need the Help of Heaven to accomplish them. However, in order to be able to invoke

the Help of Heaven and reach that dream, we must first possess the dream and the vision. This is what we learn from the pasuk: "See and construct, according to the image that I showed you on the mountain."

Our Sages teach us that children, life and sustenance are dependent upon 'Mazal' [fortune]. We can do very little about how many children we will have; what type of children we will have; how our life will turn out; how our livelihood will go. These are things that are up to HaShem. But we must have the dream on our own.

The Shemen HaTov explains that this is what Dovid HaMelech [King David] is saying in the second of the pasukim in Tehillim "And see..." [139,24]. HaShem, I do not know what You have in store for me, but if it is not the type of productive life that I dream for, please fill it in, in accordance with those dreams. The dreams, however, are mine.

In addition, the Shemen HaTov explains that this is the connection that the Baal HaTurim is making to the first of the pasukim: "And see children to your children; peace on Israel". We never know what we will see from our children. Who knows? There are so many factors. We can try, put in effort, pray, and do everything within our power. But who knows what will happen? There are so many factors that mold and affect a child. But we must have dreams for our children. I, like you, want to see children from my children. I want to see my grandchildren sharing my values. I want to see my children committed to Torah. I want them to be G-d fearing, honest Jews. I want to see from them, children who share those values as well. That is the definition of "Peace upon Israel".

These things are not always up to us or under our control to carry out, but we must have the dreams and the wishes. We must always have the proper directions and goals.

Transcribed by David Twersky Seattle, WA; Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman, Baltimore, MD

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Coming Home to Visit Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky (TorahWeb Foundation)

The Rambam (Hilchos Beis Habchira 1:1) cites the pasuk from Parshas Teruma concerning the constructing of the Mishkan as the source for the mitzva to build a Beis Hamikdash. A fundamental purpose of the Beis Hamikdash, notes the Rambam, is to be able to visit Hashem three times a year on the Shalosh Regalim. Why does the Rambam single out the mitzva of aliyah l'regel as a primary reason for the Beis Hamikdash? There are daily Korbanos, Shabbos and Yom Tov Korbanos, and many mitzvos associated with the Beis Hamikdash. What is it about visiting on the Shalosh Regalim that elevates this mitzva to the very essence of what the Beis Hamikdash was built for?

According to the Rambam the obligation to build a Beis Hamikdash is derived from the pasuk- "V'asu li mikdash v'shachanti bsochum - They should make me a sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst." The word "v'shachanti" defines the essence of the Beis Hamikdash. Mikdash is synonymous with Mishkan which comes from the word lishkon- to dwell. Hashem's presence in the Mishkan and Beis Hamikdash is called Shechina, also derived from the word lishkon. What is the significance of the term lishkon and why does it encapsulate the message of the Beis Hamikdash? The primary parsha that deals with aliyah l'regel is in Sefer Devarim at the end of Parshas Reah. There are several mitzvos in Parshas Reah that place aliyah l'regel in its proper context. Bnei Yisrael are about to enter Eretz Yisrael and disperse throughout the land. Much of Parshas Reah deals with the challenges that will arise from this new reality. It is no longer practical

to bring a Korban every time one wants to eat meat. The Torah gives us a new heter- to slaughter and eat meat not as a Korban. We cannot travel to Yerushalayim all the time to eat our Maaser Sheni so the Torah permits us to redeem it and bring the money to Yerushalayim when possible. There are also potentially tragic consequences to being geographically distant from the Beis Hamikdash. The ir hanidachas- the city that becomes completely idolatrous- is described in Parshas Reah as being in "one of the cities Hashem gave you." Only far from the presence of Hashem could such a tragedy occur. We know that historically being physically distant from the Beis Hamikdash was a concern for the Jewish people. In Sefer Yehoshua, we read about how the tribes who lived on the other side of the Jordan River built their own mizbeach lest their children think they have no connection to Hashem and His Mikdash. The proliferation of bamos-private areas to offer Korbanos- during the period of the first Beis Hamikdash was a response to the fear of being distant geographically from Hashem. However, this response was absolutely prohibited by the halacha. What is the correct way to address this very real concern of physical distance creating a barrier between Hashem and the Jewish People now dispersed throughout Eretz Yisrael?

The mitzvah of aliyah l'regel is the proper solution to this problem. Although we cannot live in physical proximity to the Beis Hamikdash throughout the year, our three yearly visits reinforce our connection to the Mikdash and to Hashem's Presence that dwells there. Hashem becomes our shachen (neighbor) for each Yom Tov. The geographic closeness forges a bond that lasts from regel to regel. Hashem's Presence in the Beis Hamikdash is referred to as the Shechina. Hashem dwells, so to speak, in the Beis Hamikdash and we come to be His neighbors. The Mishkan that was physically accessible to the Jewish People who encamped around it at all times was replaced by a Mikdash which at times would be physically remote. The Miskan dimension was retained, however, through the mitzvah of aliyah l'regel.

The Rambam saw in the mitzvah of aliyah l'regel not just another mitzvah associated with the Beis Hamikdash, but the very purpose of the Beis Hamikdash, that purpose being to be a place of Shechina- a place for a people dispersed throughout the land to become close to Hashem physically and, ultimately, spiritually.

During the period of the first Beis Hamikdash the disruption of aliyah l'regel by Yeravam ben Nevat brought about tragic consequences. The Northern tribes who were prevented from visiting the Beis Hamikdash three times a year eventually lost their connection to Hashem. Rampant Avoda Zara eventually brought about the exile of the Ten Tribes.

We turn to Hashem asking Him to return His Shechina to Yerushalayim. May we once again merit to visit Hashem in His Beis Hamikdash and thereby remain close to Him throughout our lives.

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Rav Kook List

Rav Kook on the Torah Portion

Terumah : The Tachash and the Erev Rav

The Talmud gives an enigmatic account of the Tachash, the mysterious creature whose beautiful multi-colored hide was used to cover the Tabernacle:

"The Tachash that lived in the time of Moses was a unique species. The Sages could not determine whether it was domesticated or wild. It only appeared at that time for Moses,

who used it for the Tabernacle; then it was hidden away."
(Shabbat 28b)

What is the significance of this unique animal? What was its special connection to Moses, that it made its appearance only during his lifetime? And why did Moses incorporate the colorful Tachash in the Tabernacle, albeit only for its outermost covering?

Mixed Blessings from Mixed Multitudes

In Aramaic, the Tachash is called Sasgona, for it was proud (sas) of its many vivid colors (gona). According to Rav Kook, the multihued Tachash is a metaphor, representing the desire to include as many talents and gifts as possible when building the nation. Even talents that, on their own, might be negative. The metaphor of the Tachash specifically relates to Moses' decision to allow the Erev Rav - 'mixed multitudes' from other nations - join the Israelites as they left Egypt.

The Erev Rav caused much grief to the Jews of that generation. They instigated the sin of the Golden Calf and other rebellions against God in the wilderness. And their descendants throughout the generations continued to bring troubles upon Israel. Nevertheless, the culmination of the End of Days will be blessed by these difficult and diverse forces. All of the troubles and suffering they caused will be ultimately revealed as for the best, as the absorption of the Erev Rav within Israel will enrich and complement the nation.

One disturbing aspect of the Erev Rav is the phenomenon of many dynamic forces abandoning the Jewish people during its long exile among the nations. Yet this is not a true loss, since only that which is essentially foreign to the inner spirit of Israel is cast off. These lost elements of the Erev Rav were ultimately incompatible to Knesset Yisrael, the soul of the nation; thus, they were unable to withstand the pressures and demands of exile. It saddens us to lose that which we thought was part of Israel, but in fact they were never truly assimilated within the nation's soul.

This outcome provides a benefit to the world at large. As these 'fallen leaves' join the other nations, they bring with them much of what they absorbed from the holiness of Israel. As a result, other peoples have become more receptive to the spiritual heritage of Israel.

Was the Tachash Domesticable?

The Sages were in doubt as to the ultimate fate of the multi-talented Erev Rav. Would they be truly absorbed within Israel, enriching the people and remaining forever part of us? Or would they only serve as a positive influence on the world, outside the camp of Israel?

The Sages expressed this doubt by questioning whether the Tachash was a domestic creature. A wild animal cannot be trained and will not permanently join man's home. It can be influenced only in an indirect fashion. A domesticated animal, on the other hand, is completely subservient to mankind and is an integral part of his household. Would the Erev Rav be ultimately rejected, like wild animals which cannot permanently join humanity? Or would they be domesticated and incorporated into the house of Israel?

Moses and the Tachash

Just as the Tachash only made its appearance in Moses' time, so too this inclusion of foreign talents was only possible in that generation. No other generation could take it upon itself to add alien forces to the nation. Once the Erev Rav have made their contribution, the nation's restoration requires their purging. "I will purge your dross... and then you will be called the city of righteousness, faithful city" (Isaiah 1: 25-26).

We usually avoid destructive forces which may delay and hinder the ultimate good. However, a far-reaching vision can detect the purpose which underlies all human activity, as all actions ultimately fulfill the Divine Will. The great hour of Exodus resonated with the farthest vision and the ultimate redemption. Moses, the master prophet, "the most faithful of all My house," saw fit to include those varied forces that would ordinarily be

rejected. Yet, like the skins of the Tachash, they were only suitable for the most external covering.

"The new heavens and the new earth which I will make, are standing before Me." (Isaiah 66: 22)

All of the wonderful forces of the future world, "the new sky and the new earth," are not really new. They already exist. Even now, they are "standing before Me." Moses planted these diverse gifts like seeds within the people. Like seeds, they rot in the ground, but ultimately they will sprout and bring forth new life. The brilliant future light, with all of its myriad colors and expansive breadth, is not new, but secreted away. This resplendent light is hidden, like the multihued Tachash, until the time will come for it to be revealed once more.

(adapted from Ein Eyah vol. III pp. 105-107)

Comments and inquiries may be sent to: mailto:RavKookList@gmail.com

Weekly Halachah - Parshat Yitro 5750

Rabbi Doniel Neustadt (dneustadt@cordetroit.com)

Yoshev Rosh - Vaad HaRabanim of Detroit

Chasan and Kallah: The Seven Festive Days

Reciting Sheva Berachos: Laws and Customs

[Part III]

Before Birkas ha-Mazon is about to be recited, two cups of wine¹ or grape juice are prepared. Since two separate mitzvos are about to be fulfilled – Birkas ha-Mazon and Sheva Berachos – two kosos shel berachah are used. To use one kos for both mitzvos would violate the Talmudic principle of ein osin mitzvos chavilos chavilos, literally, mitzvos should not be “bundled together.” Indeed, some poskim hold that in order to properly comply with this rule, the second cup – the one over which Sheva Berachos will be recited – should not even be filled at the same time as the first. Rather, the first cup should be filled before Birkas ha-Mazon is recited and the other should be filled before the Sheva Berachos are recited.² While other poskim³ disagree and allow both cups to be filled at the same time before Birkas ha-Mazon⁴ – and this is the more prevalent custom⁵ – it is recommended by some poskim⁶ that each cup be filled by a different person so it does not appear as if the two mitzvos are being lumped together.⁷

Both cups should hold at least a revi'is, approx. 3 fl. oz., but no matter how large the cup is, it should be filled to the top.⁸

When a silver wine cup (becher) or a crystal wine goblet is available, paper or plastic cups may not be used.⁹ L'chatchilah, the becher or goblet should not be chipped, cracked or wobbly, neither the rim, the stem, nor the base. But if nothing else is available, a flawed cup may be used, as long as the cup can hold at least 3 fl. oz.¹⁰

[If wine or grape juice is not available, any other beverage which is considered chamar medinah may be substituted.¹¹ If there is enough wine or grape juice for only one cup, it should be used for Birkas ha-Mazon and the chamar medinah used for the second cup. If there is enough wine, grape juice or chamar medinah for only one cup, both Birkas ha-Mazon and the Sheva Berachos are recited over that one cup. According to many poskim, Sheva Berachos may be recited even in the absence of any beverage.¹² It is a hiddur mitzvah that both cups be of similar size and quality.¹³ When two similar cups are not available, the bigger and more valuable cup should be used for Birkas ha-Mazon and the lesser one for Sheva Berachos.¹⁴ The liturgical poem Devai haser is recited before Birkas ha-Mazon as part of the zimun. [There are conflicting customs as to whether or not Devai haser is recited on Shabbos.] During the zimun, the words ha-simchah bi' meono are added.¹⁵

After Birkas ha-Mazon is completed,¹⁶ the first wine cup that was used for Birkas ha-Mazon is placed on the table but is not drunk from yet. Sheva Berachos are then recited over the second cup. If several people are reciting the Sheva Berachos, as is customary, the cup is handed from one person to

the next. The blessing of borei pri ha-gafen is recited last so as not to prolong the pause between the blessing and the drinking of the wine which follows. But if, by mistake borei pri ha-gafen was recited first, the other six berachos are recited and then the cups of wine are drunk. Similarly, if any of the Sheva Berachos was recited out of order, it does not matter.¹⁷

Although some poskim are critical of the practice,¹⁸ it is customary for the guests to join in singing aloud parts of the asher bara blessing.

At the conclusion of the six berachos, borei pri ha-gafen is recited by the person who led Birkas ha-Mazon. He should have kavanah (intent) to exempt all those who are present so that they can drink without reciting their own borei pri ha-gafen. He then drinks at least a cheekful (1.6 fl. oz.) from the first cup. [It is preferable that he drink an entire revi'is so that he meets the requirement for reciting Al ha-gefen.]

Since it is appropriate and customary to drink from the second cup as well,¹⁹ the borei pri ha-gafen which was recited over the first cup covers the second cup too.²⁰ Furthermore, it is a long-standing and commonly practiced minhag Yisrael²¹ that the chasan and kallah²² [and, very often, many of the guests²³] drink a bit of wine from each of the two cups after mixing wine from both cups into a third cup. This mixture is then divided into two cups, one for the chasan and one for the kallah, and they, in turn, pass their cups around to the rest of the men and women, respectively. There are conflicting opinions about when the wine should be mixed: some hold that in order to avoid the problem of kos pagum, the wine should be mixed before anyone drinks from either cup.²⁴ Others hold that it should be mixed after some wine was drunk from the first cup.²⁵ The kos pagum problem can then be rectified by adding some wine from the bottle into the third cup before it is passed around.²⁶

A suggested procedure is as follows: After drinking a revi'is from the first cup, part of the second cup is poured into the first cup, thus mixing the wines and rectifying the kos pagum problem at the same time. Part of the wine in this [first] cup is then poured back into the second cup, resulting in two cups of mixed wines which can now be given to the chasan and kallah. When the Sheva Berachos ceremony takes place during seudah shelishis on Shabbos and Birkas ha-Mazon is completed after sunset but during bein ha-shemashos,²⁷ the regular procedure is followed.²⁸ But if Birkas ha-Mazon is not over until nightfall, drinking the wine becomes a problem since no beverages may be drunk after nightfall until Havdalah is recited. There are many different opinions about the correct procedure under these circumstances and one should follow his custom or the directive of his rabbi. Rav M. Feinstein ruled that only the chasan and kallah should drink, and between them, they should consume no more than a cheekful from both cups of wine.²⁹

1 Red wine is preferable. 2 Chochmas Adam 129:7; Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 149:1. 3 Taz, E.H. 62:7; Kaf ha-Chayim, O.C. 190:1. 4 Before washing mayim acharonim. 5 Sova Semachos 4:7. There are, however, some communities that follow the first view and fill the second cup after Birkas ha-Mazon. 6 Ezer mi-Kodesh, E.H. 62; Maharam Shick, O.C. 64. 7 Kaf ha-Chayim 190:1 writes that the second cup should not be placed in front of the person who is leading Birkas ha-Mazon, but rather in front of the person who is going to recite the [first of the] Sheva Berachos. 8 Rama, O.C. 183:2. It need not, however, be filled to overflowing; see Mishnah Berurah 9 and Emes l'Yaakov, O.C. 183:2. 9 Igros Moshe, O.C. 3:39. Other poskim are not particular about this requirement. 10 Mishnah Berurah 183:11 and Sha'ar Ha-Tziyun 14. 11 A shehakol, though, is recited instead of ha-gafen. 12 Sova Semachos 4:5. 13 Ezer mi-Kodesh, E.H. 62. 14 Rav M. Feinstein (Oholei Yeshurun 5:3). 15 Ha-simchah bi' meono is added whenever guests are invited to a meal in honor of a chasan and kallah, even when Sheva Berachos are not recited, e.g., when the last Sheva Berachos ends after sunset of the seventh day; when only three people ate bread; when no panim chadashos participated. 16 The person leading Birkas ha-Mazon may not speak until after he drinks the wine upon concluding Sheva Berachos; Mishnah Berurah 183:21. 17 Chochmas Adam 129:8; Be'er Heitev, E.H. 62:1 quoting Igros ha-Rambam. See, however, Igros Moshe, E.H. 4:84 who hesitates about reciting yotzer ha-adam after asher yatzar. 18 See Sova Semachos 4:26, based on Mishnah Berurah 65:4. 19 Since six berachos were recited over it. 20 In some communities, a separate borei peri ha-gafen is recited over the second cup. 21 Dating back to the days of the early Rishonim; see Igros Moshe,

O.C. 4:69-1. 22 Since the Sheva Berachos ceremony is being held in their honor, it is fitting that they partake of the wine. They are, however, under no halachic obligation to do so. 23 Since it is a mitzvah min ha-muvchar to partake of any kos shel berachah. Whoever drinks the wine should not speak until after he has drunk. If he did, he must recite his own borei pri ha-gafen. 24 Kaf ha-Chayim 190:1. When pouring wine from the two cups into a third, one should be careful to leave at least a revi'is in the original cups (based on Mishnah Berurah 271:51). 25 Aruch ha-Shulchan, E.H. 62:18. 26 Sdei Chemed (Pe'as ha-Sadeh, Berachos 31), quoting the Aderes. 27 Depending on the various opinions and on the locality, bein ha-shemashos could be anywhere from nine minutes to thirty minutes past sunset. 28 Mishnah Berurah 299:14 and Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 24. If, however, the wedding took place on Sunday [before sunset], the Sheva Berachos must be recited before sunset. 29 Igros Moshe, O.C. 4:69-1. See also Oholei Yeshurun 5:15.

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Assembling Portable Cribs and Adjusting Shtenders on Shabbos By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

Question #1: I am having a lot of company for Shabbos and we have a small house. During Shabbos, I would like to remove the extra leaves from the table and set up the "porta crib," and then in the morning fold up the crib and put the table leaves back. May I do this on Shabbos?

Question #2: I have an adjustable shtender that I usually leave at the same height. May I adjust it on Shabbos?

Question #3: The house is very crowded and stuffy because we are celebrating a kiddush. May I remove a door or a window to allow some additional ventilation? (I was asked this shaylah in Israel where doors and windows are hinged in a way that they are easily removable.)

Question #4: May I remove the pieces of glass from a broken window on Shabbos?

Before discussing these shaylos, we need to explain the halachos of construction on Shabbos, and how they apply to movable items such as household furnishings and accessories.

CONSTRUCTION ON SHABBOS

Boneh, building or constructing, is one of the 39 melachos of Shabbos that are derived from the construction of the Mishkan. Included in this melacha is performing any type of home repair or enhancement, even if only a minor repair (see Gemara Shabbos 102b). Thus, it is prohibited min haTorah to hammer a nail into a wall in order to hang a picture (Rashi, Eruvin 102a s.v. halacha). Similarly, one may not smooth the dirt floor of a house because this enhances the "structure" (Gemara Shabbos 73b).

Sosair, demolishing or razing, is also one of the 39 melachos, since Bnei Yisroel disassembled the mishkan whenever they moved it from place to place (Gemara Shabbos 31b). Therefore, any demolition of a building is prohibited min haTorah if the ultimate results are beneficial, such as razing part of a building in order to renovate it.

If there are no benefits to the demolition, it is still prohibited midirabbanan. Thus, wrecking the house because someone is angry violates Shabbos only midirabbanan (according to most Rishonim) since there is no positive benefit from the destruction (Pri Megadim 314:11 in Eishel Avraham). It is also prohibited because of other reasons, such as bal tashchis (unnecessary destruction) and being bad for one's middos (see Gemara Shabbos 105b). We already have enough information to answer questions #3 and #4 above, regarding removing a window to ventilate the house and removing pieces of glass from a broken window. Both of these activities are prohibited min haTorah since they involve the melacha of sosair for positive results.

Therefore, a Jew may not remove the window or the broken glass unless there is a life-threatening emergency. If the broken window is dangerous (but not life threatening), one may ask a non-Jew to remove the broken pieces of glass.

CONSTRUCTION OF MOVABLE ITEMS

Do the melachos of boneh and sosair apply to movable items, keilim (sing., kli), as well, or only to buildings? In other words, does the Torah's prohibition refer only to something connected to the ground, or does it include the construction of a movable item?

This question is disputed in the Gemara and by the Rishonim, who debate whether keilim are included in the prohibition of building and destroying on Shabbos (Gemara Beitzah 10a). There are three basic opinions:

1. Keilim are not included in the prohibition of boneh and sosair.
 2. Keilim are totally included in the prohibition of boneh and sosair.
 3. A compromise position in which total construction or destruction of a kli is prohibited min haTorah, but minor improvement is not (Tosafos Shabbos 74b and 102b). The halacha follows this opinion (Shulchan Aruch 314:1).
- WHEN DOES BONEH APPLY TO KEILIM?**

Assembling or improving a kli in a way that involves strength and skill constitutes boneh, and disassembling it involves sosair. Therefore, it is prohibited min haTorah to assemble a piece of furniture in a way that its parts are now extremely tight since this involves strength and skill to do the job properly. Similarly, replacing the handle on a hoe or other appliance is prohibited min haTorah since it requires skill and strength to do the job properly (Gemara Shabbos 102b).

What is considered tight? It appears from sources that anything as tight as one would nail it together is considered tight enough to be prohibited min Hatorah.

Assembling furniture without tightening the pieces is not prohibited min haTorah, but is prohibited midirabbanan out of concern that one might tighten them (Tosafos Shabbos 48a s.v. ha; Hagahos Ashri Shabbos 3:23). Therefore, one may not assemble a bed, crib, or table even without tightening the pieces since these pieces of furniture are usually tightened (Kaf HaChayim 313:63). However, there is a minority opinion that permits assembling such an item very loosely (Chazon Ish).

Example:

One may not assemble a crib on Shabbos. Assembling it in a very tight way may involve a Torah prohibition, whereas assembling it without tightening the pieces is prohibited midirabbanan since one might assemble it tightly. (However, porta cribs which are meant to be assembled and taken apart, have a different halacha as I will explain shortly.) According to most authorities, if one usually tightens the crib very tightly, it is prohibited to assemble it even very loosely, whereas according to the Chazon Ish, one may assemble it loosely.

FIXING A BROKEN APPLIANCE

Repairing a broken appliance on Shabbos follows the same guidelines as assembling. Therefore it is prohibited when the repair requires skill and strength even if one repairs it in a temporary way.

Therefore, if the leg of a bed or table fell out, one may not reinsert it even temporarily out of concern that one might repair it permanently (Shulchan Aruch 313:8). In this instance, Chazal decreed that the bed or table itself becomes muktzah in order to ensure that someone does not repair it (Rama 308:16). Again, according to the Chazon Ish, one may insert it loosely.

TWO EXCEPTIONS

There are two exceptions to this rabbinic prohibition, when one may assemble or repair an item in a non-permanent way. The first is on Yom Tov (Tosafos Beitzah 22a; Shulchan Aruch 519:2, Magen Avraham and Gr"a ad loc.). One may use a temporary repair to fix a furniture item for a Yom Tov need.

Example:

A leg fell off the table on Yom Tov. Repairing the table in a proper way is prohibited min haTorah, and therefore on Shabbos I may not even reinsert the leg into the table in a temporary way. However on Yom Tov, I may reinsert the leg without performing a proper repair if this is the most convenient table to use.

ANOTHER EXCEPTION

If the broken or disassembled item is usually repaired or assembled without strength or skill, I may repair it in a temporary fashion. Chazal did not forbid this since it is unlikely that it will cause any Torah violation (Gemara Shabbos 47b with Tosafos).

Example:

In the time of the Gemara there existed a type of bed called "a coppersmiths' bed." Apparently, it was common that coppersmiths traveled from place to place making their living as itinerant repairmen, and took portable beds with them that they reassembled at each destination. May one assemble this bed on Shabbos or is it considered construction? The Gemara quotes a dispute on the subject. According to the Tanna who contends that keilim are totally included in the prohibition of boneh and sosair, one may not assemble these beds on Shabbos (Shabbos 47a).

However, the conclusion is that one may assemble these beds on Shabbos. That is because these beds were never assembled very tightly and therefore it is not considered boneh to construct them, nor does it qualify as a rabbinic prohibition. However, an appliance that was assembled very tightly would be prohibited to assemble even loosely since it might be tightened (Tosafos ad loc.; cf., however, Chazon Ish).

Assembling the typical porta crib is similar to assembling a coppersmiths' bed. Thus, one may assemble a porta crib on Shabbos and fold it up afterwards.

TABLE LEAVES

Inserting table leaves also does not require skill or strength and is therefore permitted on Shabbos. However, some tables have a clamp to tighten the table after inserting or removing the leaf. This might be considered tightening enough to be prohibited and I refer you to your local Posek.

THE SCREW – AN INTERESTING INVENTION

About three hundred and fifty years ago, the poskim began discussing appliances held together with screws. Around this time a drinking cup became available where the cup part screwed into a base. Does screwing this appliance together on Shabbos constitute boneh?

The halacha question here is as follows: Although this cup does not require someone particularly strong or skilled to assemble and disassemble, screwing the base on makes the cup into a well-made permanent appliance. Thus, the screw enables someone who is not particularly skilled to build a strong appliance.

The early poskim debate this issue. The Magen Avraham (313:12) rules that screwing an appliance together constitutes a melacha min haTorah (see Shaar HaTziyun 313:32), Maamar Mordechai disagrees. In practice however, Maamar Mordechai concludes that one should follow the stringent ruling of the Magen Avraham, and this is the accepted halachic practice. Thus, screwing the cup together is considered manufacturing a cup.

Similarly, today one can purchase furniture that one takes home and assembles by oneself. One might argue that assembling this furniture is prohibited min haTorah even though it is made in a way that an unskilled person can assemble it. Thus, the definition of "skill and strength" is not whether the assembler needs to be skilled or strong, but whether the appliance is made into a permanent, well-made appliance.

BINOCULARS

Focusing a pair of binoculars involves turning a screw to make it tighter and looser. Does this violate boneh on Shabbos?

The poskim rule one may focus binoculars on Shabbos (Kaf HaChayim 313:73; Ketzos HaShulchan 119:12). They explain that there is a qualitative difference between screwing the base onto the cup, which creates an appliance, and screwing the binoculars, which is the method of using it. One may use an appliance, just as one may use a house by opening and closing the doors and windows. This is not building an extension onto the house, but is rather considered normal, daily usage.

SHTENDER

Many shtenders are tightened and loosened by the use of a screw. May one adjust the shtender by loosening and tightening the screw? Does it make a difference how often one adjusts the height?

According to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and Rav Vozner, one may adjust the height of the shtender on Shabbos since this is considered using the shtender, not making a new appliance (Shulchan Shlomo 313:7; Shu"t Shevet HaLevi 6:32; cf. Minchas Yitzchok 9:38, who prohibits).

SALTSHAKER

Question:

I forgot to fill the saltshaker before Shabbos, and now I realize that it is empty. May I unscrew the saltshaker on Shabbos to fill it, or is this considered demolishing and repairing the saltshaker?

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ruled that it is permitted to open, refill and close the saltshaker on Shabbos without violating boneh. Although the saltshaker is indeed screwed closed, it is typically not screwed as tightly as one screws furniture or the cup we described earlier (Minchas Shlomo 1:11:4 s.v. gam nireh). The same applies to opening and closing a baby bottle. Although it is opened and closed by screwing, since it is intended to be opened and closed constantly, it is not considered demolishing and reconstructing it.

CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

We may ask ourselves, why is the screwing of a cup together or removing a window off its hinge considered a melacha? Both cases only take seconds to complete and are not at all strenuous.

Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch (Shmos 20:10) notes that people mistakenly think that work is prohibited on Shabbos so that it should be a day of rest. He points out that the Torah does not prohibit doing avodah, which connotes hard work, but melacha, which implies purpose and accomplishment. Shabbos is a day that we refrain from constructing and altering the world for our own purposes. The goal of Shabbos is to allow Hashem's rule to be the focus of creation by refraining from our own creative acts (Shmos 20:11). Through not building for one day a week, we demonstrate and acknowledge the true Builder of the world and all it contains.

Ohr Somayach :: TalmuDigest :: Sanhedrin 9 - 15
For the week ending 20 February 2010 / 5 Adar I 5770
by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach

Price and Power of Fame - •Sanhedrin 14a

Receiving rabbinical ordination was considered a great honor and yet Rabbi Zeira tried to avoid it. His reason was based on a statement by Rabbi Elazar urging one to keep a low profile in order to survive. It was only when he heard another statement of this Sage that no one achieves greatness unless all of his sins are forgiven that he finally sought ordination.

In his commentary on this transition of Rabbi Zeira, Rabbi Zvi Hirsh Chayot offers this explanation. As long as one is not renowned he is not subject to criticism. The moment he achieves fame, however, people began examining his shortcomings. He is thus rendered incapable of reproving others since they challenge him to first correct his own faults.

This was Rabbi Zeira's concern regarding accepting ordination, and the honor and responsibility that would go along with it. But when he realized that accepting such greatness he would be absolved of sin, he felt that this would make his reproof effective and he therefore consented to ordination.

What the Sages Say

"No one achieves greatness unless all of his sins are forgiven."

•Rabbi Elazar - Sanhedrin 14a