



of the Torah took place during the story of Purim (Shabbos 88a). This is no coincidence. The Torah can be given only when there is Jewish unity. At the original kabbalas haTorah on Shavuot, the singular form (VaYeChan) is used in reference to Am Yisrael (Shmos 19:2). Rashi explains: as one person with one heart. This prerequisite for receiving the Torah was recreated on Yom Kippur and during the story of Purim with similar results.

IV Jewish unity cannot possibly be realized without authentic Torah leadership, which requires humility and concern for others. Moshe Rabbeinu was our greatest leader and the humblest of men. He gave us the Torah on Shavuot and Yom Kippur. On Purim, the Torah was reaccepted under leadership of Mordechai. Although his humility is not stated openly in the Megillah, an insight can be gleaned from the cantillation (ta'amei hamikrah) of the Megillah. Two psukim - 3:12 and 8:9 recount the calling of the scribes to write the king's orders in nearly identical terms. In the first, Haman's commands were written; in the second, Mordechai's. The emphasis, as denoted by the highest and longest cantillation, known as the pazer, is remarkably different. In Chapter 3, the Pazer is on the word "Haman". In Chapter 8, Mordechai's name is read with the least significant note (munach), and the emphasis of Pazer is reserved for the word "Yehudim," the Jews. This is the fundamental difference between the two types of leaders. Generally, leaders are largely concerned about their own welfare, as was Haman and the Megillah drops us a hint of this by stressing his name as he would have. Authentic Torah leaders, such as Mordechai, however, are devoted to the Jewish people in general, and the people who follow them in particular. Their own needs are downplayed and muted similar to the note on Mordechai's name, and the needs of the Jew are emphasized.

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daily lives we have the opportunity to wear the tzitz, the golden headband of the kohein gadol, and thereby, through the study of Torah, bring the holiness of Hashem into our daily existence. In addition, we can place the choshen, the breastplate of the kohein gadol on our hearts and strive to love every Jew. In this way we will merit to bring to fruition the glory that is Hashem's mission for the tribes of Israel.

Rabbi Bertram Leff Rabbi Leff is the editor of Torah Insights.

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From: [yated-usa@ttec.com](mailto:yated-usa@ttec.com) Korts Un Sharf-Short and Sweet Purim Vertlach V'keilim Mikeilim Shonim-and the vessels were varied 1:7 The Targum Sheni remarks that when the gentiles drank from the holy vessels of the Bais Hamikdosh, their face became distorted and changed. This alludes to the custom of wearing a mask and costume to disguise ones identity on Purim. -Keren Yeshua

Vatehi Esther Noseas Chain-and Esther was very charming 2:15 Chazal state that every nation felt that Esther originated from them; Haman also thought that she came from Amalek and so he did not feel threatened by her. This was part of the miracle of Purim. -Chasam Sofer

V'doesiehem Shonos Mikol Am V'es Dosei Hamelech Einom Osim: And their laws are different from every other nation; they do not obey the laws of the king. 3:8-9 This can be interpreted in the Purim spirit, as an implied threat to Achashverosh. Haman said, "Their laws vary, from nation to nation-The Jews celebrate every Yom Tov as a result of a gentile king: Pesach because of Pharaoh, Chanuka because of Antiochus. However they still do not have a day of celebration for your downfall, Achashverosh! Therefore, let us scheme to destroy them, and then their Father will come to their aid, and they will have a Yom Tov in your memory." -Rav Meir Shapiro

Revach V'Hatzolo Yaamod Layehudim-The Jews will have their salvation from a different venue; you and your father's house will be lost. 4:14 Mordechai warned Esther: "If the salvation will not come from you, a descendant of Shaul Hamelech, who has the potential to rectify his crime of sparing Agog, then King Shaul will be 'lost' in the next world, punished for his crime of letting Amalek live. -Alshich

V'chol Zeh Aineu Shove Li-and all this is not enough for me 5:13 Haman depicted his immense wealth, his illustrious children, his important position...why would he bother about an old Jew who refuses to bow down to him? Haman realized that all his wealth and possessions were really Mordechai's, because Mordechai had a document that stated Haman was his slave. Since everything a slave owns belongs to his master, Haman was eager to get rid of Mordechai as soon as possible. -Ben Ish Chai

Asher Heichin Lo-that he prepared for him 6:4 For him-for himself. It is possible that Haman wanted to come to the king to say that he can no longer tolerate Mordechai's presence, can no longer live in the same town as the Jew, and he is ready to commit suicide on the gallows he had prepared. Haman hoped that Achashverosh would reassure him that he would hang Mordechai instead. This is the meaning of, 'he prepared for himself'. -Imrei Emes

Vayisaper Haman L'zeresh Ishto-and Haman related the events to his wife, Zeresh 6:13 Why did Haman feel the need to repeat the whole story of his downfall, which was already public knowledge? Haman blamed his wife for all his misery. "It is your fault; you advised me to go to the king early in the morning," he said. -Ben Ish Chai

Horotzim Yotzu Mivuhalim-the couriers left, confused 8:17 When the couriers left to deliver the earlier letters, they were not confused! Earlier, they had gone to spread an evil decree against the Jews, a customary and usual occurrence. However, when they were bidden to spread a positive decree regarding the Jews, they were confused and uncertain. -Minchas Halevi

Ad D'lo Yoda-'til you don't know the difference between 'cursed is Haman' and 'blessed is Mordechai' The wealthy people curse Haman, because they have to empty their purses and give to the poor. The poor people bless Mordechai, who caused them to have this day of bounty.

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Parashat Tezaveh-Shabbat Zachor February 27, 1999 Rabbi Bertram Leff

In 1940, the American Agudath Israel organization convened a memorial gathering upon the passing of the great rabbinic leader of Eastern Europe, Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinski, zt"l. At the gathering, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, zt"l, described Rabbi Grodzinski's leadership of European Jewry by comparing it to the vestments of the kohein gadol described in our parshah.

The High Priest wore a golden headband (tzitz) engraved with the words, "Kodesh LaHashemùHoly to Hashem." The headband "shall be on his forehead always, to bring them favor before Hashem." Another essential component of the kohein gadol's vestments was the choshen, the breastplate that contained twelve stones representing each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The Breastplate of Judgment was to be "on Aaron's heart when he comes before Hashem, and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel on his heart constantly before Hashem." Rav Soloveitchik explained that the tzitz, the golden band worn on the forehead of the kohein gadol, represents the intellect, the knowledge of Torah that a leader of Israel must possess. The choshen, the breastplate, symbolizes the heart of love, commitment and devotion to Klal Yisroel, to the tribes of Israel.

Jewish leadership encompasses a love for each Jew and a concern for the needs of every segment of the Jewish people, represented by the names of each of the tribes engraved in each stone on the breastplate.

The kohein gadol of each generation, men such as Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinski, the Rav said, integrated into their leadership the tzitz and the choshenùgreat intellectual knowledge of Torah coupled with a heart full of love and devotion to Klal Yisroel.

This Shabbos, Shabbos Zachor, is the Sabbath before the festival of Purim. If we were to analyze the leadership of Mordechai and Esther we would find that their leadership of the Jewish people reflected intellect and heart, Torah knowledge and compassion for the future of the Jewish nation.

G-d has given each of us the potential to be a spiritual kohein gadol, to combine both Torah learning and commitment to the Jewish people. In our

However, on Purim it is a mitzva to drink, and when one is drunk he forgets about his financial status, whether he is rich or poor. This is the meaning of the verse: A person should become drunk until he is no longer capable of discerning whether he belongs in the category of those who bless Mordechai, or those who curse Haman. -The Maggid of Vilna

WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5759 SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS TETZAVEH AND PURIM By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav. WOMEN'S OBLIGATION TO HEAR PARSHAS ZACHOR QUESTION: Are women obligated to go to shul to hear the Torah reading of Parashas Zachor? DISCUSSION: There is a Biblical mitzva to read Parashas Zachor from a Sefer Torah once a year. Although the Rabbis have instituted that Zachor be read in public on the Shabbos before Purim, the mitzva can be fulfilled by performing it at any time during the year. Most poskim, therefore, consider the reading of Parashas Zachor to be a mitzva which is not time-bound, thus making it obligatory upon women(1). There is, however, a view in the Rishonim that holds that women are not obligated to hear Parashas Zachor(2). Making mention of the evil perpetrated on us by Amalek is a mitzva that is limited to those who can and will fight against Amalek. Since women do not go out to war, they are exempt from the mitzva of mentioning the treachery of Amalek. There are conflicting views among the poskim as to what is the practical halachah. Some rule that women are obligated in Parashas Zachor(3) while other poskim note that it is commonly accepted that women do not go to shul to hear Parashas Zachor(4). Since there is no clear-cut ruling(5), it is commendable for women to make the effort to go to shul to hear the public reading of the Parashah(6). Indeed, in many congregations it is the accepted practice for women to do so. Men or women who are unable to go to shul should read Parashas Zachor aloud for themselves from a Chumash since, according to some poskim, one can fulfill the mitzva in this fashion(7). It is questionable if a Sefer Torah may be taken out of the Aron ha-Kodesh specifically to read Parashas Zachor for women. Harav M. Feinstein is quoted(8) as strictly prohibiting this practice(9).

MISHLOACH MANOS: THE BASIC MITZVAH Mordechai and Esther, with the approval of the Rabbis of the time, introduced a mitzva assei(10) which obligates every person to send two different kinds of foods to one friend on Purim. Two basic reasons are given for this mitzva: There are impoverished people who are too embarrassed to collect tzedakah for themselves and will therefore not have food for the seudas Purim. By establishing a system whereby everyone receives packages of food on Purim, the rabbis ensured that even the most reticent of individuals will have food for the Purim seudah(11). Sending food to a friend or an acquaintance is an expression of goodwill and fraternity. On Purim we wish to instill and perpetuate these feelings(12). The goals of both of these reasons must be met in order to fulfill the mitzva properly. For instance: One who sends clothing for mishloach manos does not fulfill the mitzva(13) since he did nothing for his friend's Purim meal. Similarly, one who sends mishloach manos anonymously does not fulfill the mitzva(14) since no friendship or goodwill is generated between him and the recipient. Nowadays, we are witness to a marked proliferation of mishloach manos. Although mishloach manos is a relatively easy mitzva to fulfill, if one is unaware of the halachos, he could send dozens of mishloach manos and still not properly fulfill the mitzva. In addition, a clear distinction must be drawn between the minimum requirements for fulfilling the mitzva, and the hiddur mitzva, the more exacting form of fulfilling the mitzva. There are also some little known halachos which are important for those who wish to fulfill the mitzva according to the views of all the poskim. We have thus split the halachos into two parts - the first part discusses the basic rules, and the second part discusses chumros and hiddurim for those who wish to embellish upon this once-a-year mitzva. Mishloach Manos: THE BASIC RULES WHO SHOULD SEND: Men and women are personally obligated in

this mitzva(15). Married women are obligated in their own right and are not exempted by their husband's mishloach manos(16). It is sufficient, however, for husband and wife to send mishloach manos together, as if it is coming from both of them - and the recipient recognizing that it is coming from both(17). Some poskim hold that children over 13 - even those who are being supported by their parents - are obligated(18), while others exempt them since they do not own anything in their own right(19). Parents should educate their children in the mitzva of mishloach manos as they do with every mitzva(20).

WHAT TO SEND: Any combination of two kinds of food(21), or one food and one drink(22), or two kinds of drink(23), is sufficient. Two pieces of the same food are considered as one food(24). Some poskim(25) specify that the foods be ready to eat and require no further cooking, while others(26) allow even uncooked foods to be sent. TO WHOM TO SEND: To any Jewish(27) adult(28), wealthy or poor, with whom you are acquainted or to whom you are related. Although men should send to men only and women to women only(29), families may send to each other(30). Mishloach manos should not be sent to a mourner(31) during the year of mourning for his parents, or during the thirty days of mourning for other relatives(32). A mourner who receives mishloach manos need not return them, and the sender fulfills his mitzva by sending those mishloach manos(33). It is permitted for a woman to send to the wife of a mourner(34). A mourner must send mishloach manos - even if he is in the middle of shivah. A mourner should refrain from sending "items of simchah" (items that elicit laughter and merriment)(35).

WHEN TO SEND: Mishloach Manos should be sent and received on Purim day(36). If it is received at night or on the days before or after Purim, the sender does not fulfill the mitzva(37). If it is sent before Purim but is received on Purim, some poskim hold that the mitzva is fulfilled(38) while others hold that it is not(39).

HOW TO SEND: The sender himself may deliver the mishloach manos directly to the recipient(40). Some poskim(41) hold that it is preferable to send it via a messenger. The messenger may be a minor or a non-Jew(42). When sending with a messenger, it is proper to verify that the mishloach manos was indeed delivered(43), especially if the messenger is a minor or a non-Jew(44).

FOOTNOTES: 1 Minchas Chinuch 603. 2 Sefer ha-Chinuch 603. 3 Binyan Tziyon (8) quoting R' Nosson Adler; Yeshuos Malko (3); Mahri"l Diskin (5:101); Minchas Elazar (2:1-5). 4 Toras Chesed (37). See Avnei Nezer O.C. 509 and Marcheshes 1:22 who maintain that this is a time-bound mitzva. Harav C. Kaniewsky (Ta'ama d'Kra) quotes the Chazon Ish as having exempted women. 5 Many major poskim - Chayei Adam, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, Mishnah Berurah and Aruch ha-Shulchan - do not address this issue. 6 See Yechaveh Da'as 1:84; oral ruling of Harav M. Feinstein (Halichos Bas Yisrael, pg. 297). 7 See Nitei Gavriel 4:9-10. 8 Mo'adei Yeshurun (Purim, pg. 47). 9 See also Mikra'ei Kodesh (Purim, 5) who prohibits reading from the Sefer Torah expressly for women. Harav S.Y. Elyashiv is quoted (Halichos Bas Yisrael, pg. 296) as ruling that a minimum of ten men must be present for such a reading to take place. See Minchas Yitzchak 9:68. 10 The poskim (see Achiezer 3:73) refer to this mitzva as a mitzva mi-divrei kabbalah, a rabbinical mitzva which is incorporated into the written text (Esther 9:22). Accordingly, we do not say safek d'Rabbanan l'kulah in regard to the mitzvos of Purim (Tzafnas Panei'ach to Rambam Megillah 1:1). 11 Terumas ha-Deshen 111. 12 R' Shlomo Alkavatz in Manos ha-Levi quoted in Teshuvos Chasam Sofer O.C. 196. 13 Mishnah Berurah 695:20. 14 Kesav Sofer O.C. 141. 15 Rama O.C. 695:4. 16 Magen Avraham 695:12; Chayei Adam 155:33; Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 142:4; Mishnah Berurah 695:25; Aruch ha-Shulchan 695:18. 17 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (written responsum quoted in Halichos Bas Yisrael, pg. 303 and oral ruling quoted in Halichos Sheisah, pg. 354). Accordingly, the amount sent should be double the minimum amount of mishloach manos. 18 Aruch ha-Shulchan 694:2 (concerning matanos la-eyvonim); Orchos Chayim 695:2 quoting Me'orei Ohr. 19 Responsa Kinyan Torah 1:132. It follows that if the children have their own possessions, then they are obligated like any adult. 20 Pri Megadim 695:14; Eishel Avraham 695; Kaf ha-Chayim 695:57. This means that parents should give their children food or money so that they can fulfill the mitzva - Chanoch l'Na'ar, pg. 66. See, however, Kinyan Torah 1:132 who holds that it is sufficient chinuch to allow the children to deliver the mishloach manos. 21 O.C. 695:4. 22 Mishnah Berurah 695:20. 23 Aruch ha-Shulchan 695:14. 24 Ibid. See Tzitz Eliezer 14:65; 15:31. 25 Magen Avraham 695:11; Ma'asei Rav 249; Chayei Adam 135:31; Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 142:2; Aruch ha-Shulchan 695:15. 26 Pri Chadash O.C. 695; Ha'amek She'ilah 67:9; Shevet Sofer O.C. 23; Yechaveh Da'as 6:45. Mishnah Berurah 695:20 quotes both views without rendering a decision. 27 Responsa Beis Yitzchak (Y.D. 2:142). 28 Aruch ha-Shulchan 695:18 rules that one fulfills the mitzva by sending to a minor, but many poskim (Ya'avetz 1:121; Yad Sofer 24; Kaf ha-Chayim 694:12; Birur Halachah, pg. 405) rule that one does not fulfill the mitzva in that manner. 29 Rama 695:4. 30 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (oral ruling quoted in Halichos Beisah, pg. 354). 31 Unless he is the rav of the city - Divrei Malkiel 5:237. 32 Rama O.C. 696:6. 33 Kesav Sofer O.C. 139. 34 Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (oral ruling quoted in Penei Baruch, pg. 322). 35 Mishnah Berurah 696:18. 36 Rama 695:4. 37 Aruch ha-Shulchan 695:16. 38 Be'er Heitev 695:7 quoting Yad Aharon; Responsa Beis She'arim O.C. 381; Chelkas Ya'akov 1:102. 39 Aruch ha-Shulchan 695:17; Levushei Mordechai O.C. 108. 40 Yehudah Ya'aleh O.C. 207; Eishel Avraham 695; Kaf ha-Chayim 695:41; Tzitz Eliezer 9:33.

41 Mekor Chayim 694; Binyan Tziyon 44 quoted by Mishnah Berurah 695:18; Chasam Sofer (Gitin 22b). 42 Chasam Sofer (Gitin 22b); R' Shlomo Kluger (Sefer ha-Chayim 695); Da'as Torah 695:4; Chelkas Ya'akov 1:103. 43 Achiezer 3:73. 44 Chelkas Ya'akov 1:104.

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From: owner-ravfrand[SMTP:owner-ravfrand@torah.org] "RavFrاند" List - Rabbi Frاند on Parshas Tetzaveh

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frاند's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 183, Candle Lighting on Friday Night. Good Shabbos!

Parshas Tetzaveh

Let's Get It Right The First Time -- At Least The last two parshiyos (pl. of parsha) detailed the construction of the Mishkan [Tabernacle], its vessels, and the garments of the Kohanim. After everything was in place, they were ready to begin the Service which was to be performed in the Mishkan (and eventually in the Beis HaMikdash, the Holy Temple). At the end of this week's parsha, the Torah describes the concept of "Chanukas HaBayis", the process of "Anointing the House". There is a halacha called "Avodasam M'Chanchasam" -- that the first use of the objects in the Mishkan consecrated them and made them holy. The Torah explains this ceremony: "And this is what you shall do upon the altar: Two lambs, one year-old, consistently (Tamid)". [Shmos 29:35] Every single day (including Shabbos and Yom Kippur) the service in the Temple included a lamb which was brought in the morning and a lamb which was brought in the evening. In Parshas Pinchas [Bamidbar 28: 1-8], the Torah repeats this portion of the Continual Offering (Korban Tamid), reiterating the command to bringing a lamb in the morning and a lamb in the evening. However, there is one distinction between the texts of the two otherwise-identical commands: In Tetzaveh it says: "Es haKeves HA-echad ta'aseh ba'boker" THE one lamb you shall offer in the morning... And in Pinchas it merely says: "Es haKeves echad ta'aseh ba'boker" One lamb you shall offer in the morning... The text in Pinchas does not contain the Hebrew "Hay ha-Yediah," the definite article, the equivalent of "the" in English. In other words, here in Tetzaveh, the first time that the altar was consecrated, the Torah refers to the lamb as "THE" lamb, whereas in Pinchas when we were commanded for all future generations, it is only referred to as "a" lamb.

The Brisker Rav, zt"l, says that the Torah is hinting at something. Normally, the two lambs -- the one brought in the morning and the one brought in the evening -- were fundamentally independent. The inability or failure to bring one of them would in no way reduce the obligation or the ability to bring the other one. In this sense they were like the Tephillin (phylacteries) of the head and the Tephillin of the hand. If for some reason a person cannot put on Tephillin on his arm, that does not stop him from putting on Tephillin on his head (or vice versa). However, the Brisker Rav says, there was one exception -- the first time the Korban Tamid was brought. On that first day, when the altar was being dedicated, it was necessary to bring both offerings. If the Kohen had failed to bring the morning offering, he would not have been allowed to bring the afternoon offering either. That is why the verse uses the definite article to single out "THIS" lamb, which is different from all others.

The Shemen HaTov draws an ethical lesson from the distinction between the day of the altar's consecration, and all succeeding days. Beginnings are extremely important. When we start something new, it is critical to "get off on the right foot," to do it right. When we hope to set the proper tone for something that is destined to last for years and years, there is no room for any deviation from the ideal. If it can not be done right at the outset, it is better that it not be done at all.

Even though in future generations, the two lambs could be offered one without the other -- in a less than optimum fashion -- the initial day of

offerings must be done in exactly the right manner. This, he says, is the meaning of the Hebrew expression "Kol Hascholos Kashos" (all beginnings are difficult). The reason for this is because beginnings are so important. They have to set the tone. Anything less than just right will not do.

It is said in the name of the Gaon of Vilna, that if a congregation is so particular in procuring material for a new Shul building that even the handles on the axes used to chop down the wood are made by G-d fearing people, then they are guaranteed that the prayers uttered in that congregation will always be said with proper intention (kavanah). This is the same idea. If it is built "right" from the beginning, it will be an entirely different Shul. I remember when the present Beis Medrash [House of Study] of Ner Israel Yeshiva was built. When we first moved into the new Beis Medrash, the Rosh Yeshiva zt"l [the Dean, of blessed memory] urged the students to make a special effort not to utter any idle words in that Beis Medrash -- at least for the first week. The way the original students acted the first week in the Beis Medrash would set the tone for years and decades of future students. Beginnings are crucial. The way in which a parent starts out teaching a child, or a couple starts out a marriage, or the way that any endeavor is started -- should be good and right and correct.

Abraham's Prayer Was An Antidote for Achan's Sin Joshua placed a ban (cherem) on private use of the spoils from the city of Jericho -- the first city conquered by the Jews upon entering Eretz Yisroel. Achan, however, stole something from that booty. As a result of Achan's sin, Jews fell in battle during the next military encounter -- against the people of Ai. G-d was angry with the Jewish people and it was necessary to identify the culprit and to administer the proper punishment. Ultimately Achan was stoned and the verse relates that "G-d's Anger subsided" (vaYashav Hashem m'charon apo). But there is an unbelievable Gemara [Talmudic passage] concerning this incident. The Gemara comments on this incident, "A person should always pray before calamity strikes, for had Abraham not prayed between Beis El and ha-Ai, not a remnant of the Jews would have remained (after that battle)" [Sanhedrin 44b]. This means that, technically, as a punishment for Achan's sin of taking something from the Cherem of Jericho, the Jewish people should have been destroyed. If not for the fact that Abraham had built an altar and prayed there when he entered Israel for the first time hundreds of years earlier, that is indeed what would have happened! But what did Achan do that was so terrible? True, he was not supposed to touch those spoils. But is theft a capital offense? And for the entire Jewish nation, yet? The answer is because this was the FIRST. This was the beginning of the conquest. Beginnings have to be done correctly. Joshua wanted to make that first entry into the Land perfect. The city was to be conquered and everything in it was to be holy. But one man ruined it and thus should have ruined the entire venture. The nation itself should have been destroyed. The only thing that saved Klal Yisroel, the Congregation of Israel, was the fact that there was a "beginning before the beginning". When Avraham Avinu came into Eretz Yisrael hundreds of years before, he made the beginning properly. Avraham davened [prayed] between Beis El and ha-Ai. That acted as an antidote. So many of our beginnings are done inadvertently. We do not remember the first time we read Aleph-Beis. We do not remember the first verse we learned from Chumash or the first page of Talmud. We do not remember our first experiences of marriage. For some of us, these beginnings are history and there is nothing we can do about them. But there are still beginnings that remain. If they do not remain in our lives, they remain in the lives of our children. And if not in our children's lives then in our grandchildren's lives. Let us not forget the importance of a beginning and how we can set the tone for generations by doing it right.

Personalities & Sources: Brisker Rav -- Rav Yitzchak Ze'ev (Velvel) Soloveitchik (1887-1959); took over from his father (Rav Chaim Soloveitchik) in Brisk; escaped during World War II to Eretz Yisroel. Shemen HaTov -- Rabbi Dov Weinberger - contemporary author, Rov in Brooklyn, NY Transcribed by David Twersky; Seattle, Washington twersky@aol.com Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Yerushalayim dhoffman@torah.org Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 for further information. RavFrاند, Copyright (c) 1999 by Rabbi Y. Frاند and Project Genesis, Inc. Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 6810 Park Heights Ave. http://www.torah.org/ Baltimore, MD 21215 (410) 358-9800

Dvar Torah: Parshat Zachor/Purim 5757

Rabbi Moshe Shulman

The Dawn of Purim

More than any other holiday in the Jewish calendar, Purim seems to speak to us most clearly. It is certainly the most enjoyable holiday; and it is probably the most widely celebrated, with the possible exception of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. But I sometimes wonder if behind all the "boo"ing for Haman, the costumes, the feasting and the running around the city giving each other gifts, we really understand its significance.

Our Sages offer a remarkable statement comment regarding Purim: "At the time of the Mashiach, even if all the holidays of the Jewish calendar were to become obsolete, Purim would remain... Even if all the books of the Bible were to become obsolete, Esther would remain..."

Even more astounding, is the following anecdote recorded in the Talmud: (tractate Shabbat) "When the Jews stood at Mount Sinai, G-d lifted the mountain upon their heads and said: 'If you accept my Torah - it shall be well, and if not - you shall be buried underneath this mountain.' Raba responded: If that is so, then the Jews have an excuse not to observe [the Torah], for they were coerced into accepting it! The Sages answered: They subsequently re-accepted the Torah WILLINGLY during the days of Achashveirosh..."

To see Purim as more lasting than all the other holidays of the year, more significant than even the Revelation at Sinai is a remarkable perspective indeed. What could these statements mean? Evidently, we learn how Jewish history was dramatically altered by the story of Purim. Something about our relationship with G-d changed after the story of the Megillah, never to be the same again.

Teach our Sages: "MIZMOR LA'AYELET HASHACHAR - A Psalm for the Morning Dawn. This is Esther. Why is Esther likened to the dawn? Just as the dawn marks the end of night, so too, Esther marks the end of the age of Miracles."

Night symbolises fear, hardship, tragedy. Light brings renewed hope, and joy. Yet, the Talmud describes, as the period of darkness, the time when miracles were common, when prophecy flourished, when we had a tangible reminder of our relationship with G-d in the breastplate of the High Priest. This breastplate functioned like a "telegraph" communication with the Almighty. Whenever we wanted to know if we were or were not doing the right thing all we had to do was come to the Temple and ask. All this was forever silenced with the destruction of the First Temple. A new era began without prophecy and without miracles, without a breastplate or a High Priest. Yet our Sages describe this as the era age of light?

The answer is a resounding Yes! Because the world was not intended to be a stage for miracles. G-d put nature into place for our benefit, not so that He would have to alter it every time we got into trouble!! A nation which trusted in G-d SIMPLY BECAUSE they could see His miracles, did not truly understand what trust in G-d is all about. There is no great trick to believing in G-d when He splits the waters of the ocean, or opens up the sky in great theatrics of thunder and lightning. Even the magicians of Egypt could recognise the "finger of G-d" in the Ten Plagues!! For that G-d did not have to take us out of Egypt!

No, G-d wanted us to trust in Him when His presence was more subtle!! It is not the Revelation of Sinai which exemplified the more profound faith; it was the story of Esther. It was the story of a people who looked at history and saw the Almighty; who looked at unrelated events and saw a pattern; who looked at "coincidence" and saw "Providence".

Work backwards. The Jews were saved because Esther "happened" to be the queen, "in the right place at the right time." Why? Because the king "happened" to need to replace his old queen, because she "happened" to disobey his command. "Blessed be Vashti", for had she not disobeyed Achashveirosh, Esther would not have been there to save our people!

Achashveirosh was willing to give his infamous ring to Mordechai, after killing Haman, because Mordechai had been proven as a loyal servant. How? He "happened" to have overheard an assassination attempt on the king's life,

and "happened" to mention it to Esther, who, in turn, related it to Achashveirosh in Mordechai's name. Achashveirosh discovered Mordechai's involvement in all of this because he "happened" to be glancing at the book of Chronicles, and come across that particular event, while Haman "happened" to be standing in the courtyard...

One could look at all this and say "coincidence", or "fairy tale". We looked at this and said, "How powerful G-d is, to be able to control the events which shape the history of the world without ever having to change the laws of nature even once." Some simply see history; we see Providence.

We underwent a major revolution in our thinking. For the first time, we understood that even without the Temple, without prophets, without aberrations of nature pointing to G-d's existence, we could still believe in G-d and perceive His presence, perhaps even more profoundly now than ever before.

At Mount Sinai we were not coerced physically into accept the Torah. But we were coerced - psychologically. The miracles of the Exodus, the drowning of the Egyptian Army, the Revelation at Sinai - these were too obvious to allow room for doubt. That was coercion. In Persia, however, they could have denied G-d's Role in what happened. They could have easily said, "Trust in Man". Instead they said, "Trust in G-d."

Esther ushered in a new era of light and hope. Purim became the symbol of our triumph over history, our "miraculous" survival in every generation, and in every exile. Whether in Spain, France, England, Europe, Morocco, America, or Canada - no matter where we lived, we understood that our survival was by the Hand of G-d. We could serve a G-d who was hidden as well as we could serve a G-d who was Revealed.

Today, we see major events in Jewish history, such as the Re-establishment of the State of Israel, and we point to G-d's Providence, thanking Him for making it happen. We look at the renewal of Jewish spirit and religious life in North America and we say the Almighty is bringing us closer. We understand how we can be involved in historical and political process, and still attribute success or failure to the Almighty. In fact, our entire language of religion is based on an understanding born out of the story of Purim.

Esther WAS the dawn; We had re-accepted the Torah, re-evaluated our relationship with G-d. We learnt to look with new meaning on the word "history". And Purim was to destined to become the most profound event in the life of our people.

Happy Purim. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~akiva/HOJMI> [From 2 years ago]

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From jr@sco.COM Fri Mar 6 01:41:25 1998 [ From last year] Josh Rapps  
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Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Inyanei Purim (Shiur date: 3/5/74)

The Rambam in Hilchos Megila Vchanukah devotes the first 2 chapters of Hilchos Megila and Purim and the last 2 chapters to Hilchos Chanukah. Why did he link them together? The Shulchan Aruch reverses this order and places Hilchos Chanukah before Hilchos Purim. Historically, Purim preceded Chanukah by some 200 years. The Rambam in Hilchos Chanukah links Chanukah to Purim (3:3) and says that anyone who is obligated to fulfill Mitzvas Megila is obligated in Mitzvas Hadlakas Ner Chanukah. Why does the Rambam emphasize so strongly this link between Chanukah and Purim?

The Rambam in the preamble to Hilchos Megila and Hilchos Chanukah says that they contain 2 Mitzvos Mdivrei Sofrim that are not included in the 613 biblical Mitzvos. The Rambam clearly disagrees with the Baal Halachos Gedolos (BHG) who includes 7 Rabbinic Mitzvos including Purim and Chanukah in the 613 Mitzvos. The Rambam says that it is a well known principle that Megila is a Takanas Neviim, enacted by the prophets.

The Rav said that the Rambam did not put Purim first simply because historically Purim preceded Chanukah. The Gemara (Megila 7a) says that Esther requested that the Anshei Kneses Hagedolah establish Purim for

subsequent generations as a holiday, as a day on which the Megila is read (see Rashi). (They were reluctant to do so out of fear of provoking the nations that surrounded them.) The Gemara says (14a) that there were 48 prophets and 7 prophetesses in Jewish History, and none of them removed or added any Mitzvos with the exception of the obligation to read the Megila (enacted during the period of the latter prophets). What was the basis for permitting this addition? It is a simple Kal Vchomer, if Bnai Yisrael said Shira when they were saved from the hand of Pharaoh who did not threaten them with physical extinction, how much more so should they be obligated to recite Shira on Purim when they were saved from death at the hands of Haman.

Apparently Chazal were concerned with the prohibition of Baal Tosif, of adding new Mitzvos beyond the 613 biblical obligations. Why were Chazal so concerned about Megila? After all there are many Shevusim by Hilchos Shabbos as well as Shniyos Larayos that are not biblical in nature, yet were enacted by the Rabbis. The general category of Seyag L'Torah comes under the heading Mishmeres Lmishmarti and not Lo Tosiifu Vlo Tigreu Mimenu. Avos Drabi Nasan says that Seyag is enacted to reenforce a Lav Kal, a minor prohibition. No one has ever questioned the concept of Seyag. In fact Shlomo Hamelech enacted Seyagim as well. Megila was the first time that Chazal registered a concern about adding a Mitzvah. The Rambam says that when Hashem caused them to see that there was a hint to Megila in the Torah they accepted it. It was the Kal Vchomer cited in the Gemara that clinched it and negated the concerns of Chazal. Reading the Megila is equivalent with the recitation of Hallel. However, how did this resolve Chazal's concern of Lo Tosifu? If this Mitzvah to recite Hallel via the Megila is a Mitzvah Drabanan, then why were they concerned at all?

The Rav explained that there are some Mitzvos that the obligation (Chiyuv) and the fulfillment (Kiyum Hamitzvah) are both rabbinic in origin. For example Arava on Hoshana Rabbah. There are other Mitzvos where the Chiyuv is Rabbinic but the Kiyum Hamitzvah is Biblical. For example the Rambam in Hilchos Avel says that there is a Rabbinic obligation to visit the sick, to comfort the mourners, to eulogize the dead, to provide for weddings etc. The Rambam says that these are acts of kindness that have no upper limit and even though these obligations are Rabbinic they all come under the category of Vahavta Lrayacha Kamocha. Apparently according to the Rambam there is a Kiyum Doraysa. Yet, these are distinct Rabbinic obligations and the Rambam discusses which has precedence if one is faced with performing both at the same time. On the other hand, all these acts of Chesed are equal from the viewpoint of the biblical obligation of Vahavta Lrayacha Kamocha. We do not find other biblical Mitzvos that the Rambam discusses which instantiation of a Mitzvah should take precedence. Other Mitzvos that are Rabbinic in obligation yet have a Kiyum Doraysa are Krias Hatorah and Tefila where the concepts of Tefila and Krias Hatorah are biblical in that they are connected with Talmud Torah and Avodah Shblev. These Mitzvos have in common that the general obligation to perform the Mitzvah is Doraysa (Talmud Torah, Avodah Shblev), but the particulars of when and how the Mitzvah is to be performed is Drabanan. We find that the patriarchs all prayed. [The Rav said in the name of his father, Reb Moshe ZT"L, and his grandfather Reb Chaim ZT"L that the Rambam is correct that Tefila is Doraysa because it was impossible to imagine that Klal Yisrael did not pray until the Anshei Kneses Hagedolah came along.]

Megila is a Mitzvah Drabanan but there is a Kiyum Doraysa of Hallel, in that we are obligated to recite praise of Hashem and relate the great miracles that He performed on our behalf. The biblical obligation to praise Hashem can be fulfilled on any day around Purim, it was the Rabanan that fixed the obligation to praise Hashem on the fourteenth day of Adar. The use of the Megila as the vehicle for expressing Hallel to Hashem is Drabanan. Besides the obligation to recite Hallel, the Megila is a vehicle to perform the Mitzvah to obliterate the memory of Amalek, M'chiyas Amalek. (One of the reasons Chazal resisted including Esther in Kisvei Hakodesh was that it would constitute a fourth reference to Amalek. Besides the Megila, Amalek is mentioned 3 times in Tanach. Chazal thought that there was a maximum of 3 times Mdoraysa that Amalek could be mentioned as derived from the verse

Ksov Zos Basefer (Megila 7a) until they realized that there was a biblical hint that it could be mentioned a fourth time in the Megila, which is part of Kesuvim). The third reason that Krias Hamegila is a Kiyum Doraysa is because Megila is part of Torah Shbichtav, so reading it fulfills the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah. Therefore there is no problem of Lo Tosifu, because even though the obligation is Rabbinic, the required action fulfills a well defined Kiyum Mitzvah Doraysa.

When it came time to enact the holiday of Chanukah, Chazal had the same question again of Lo Tosifu. The answer was to look at Purim. The Gemara said that based on a Kal Vchomer we recite Hallel (the Megila) on Purim (as noted above the distinction between Geulas Mitzrayim which was from physical bondage, as compared to the Geulas Purim that was from death to life). The same reasoning applied to Chanukah, which was a time of Gzeiras Shemad, forced conversion, where there was also a life and death struggle. Chanukah, like Purim, is also a Rabbinic Mitzvah that has a Kiyum Doraysa, that of offering Shevach V'hodaah to Hashem and to publicize the great miracle that occurred. The Rambam discusses the laws of Megila first because Purim is a prerequisite to understanding Chanukah and how it was enacted by Chazal. That is why the Rambam links them so tightly and says (Hilchos Chanukah 3:3) that anyone who is obligated in the Mitzvah of Krias Megila is obligated to kindle candles on Chanukah.

How did Esther know that a Chiyuv Hamitzvah that is Drabanan and has a Kiyum Hamitzvah Doraysa does not violate Lo Tosifu? One could ask the same question regarding the 4 fast days: how was Jeremiah permitted to enact these fast days? Didn't this violate Lo Tosifu? The answer is that since the obligation to fast in a time of crisis is Doraysa, Jeremiah was able to enact a Rabbinic obligation to fast specifically on these 4 days. The fact that we keep the 4 fast days that are mentioned in Zechariah is also a major proof in favor of establishing the holiday of Purim and the associated day of fasting.

The Rambam defines Megila (and Chanukah) as Takanas Haneviim, a Mitzvah Mdivrei Kabalah. A Mitzvah Mdivrei Kabalah is a Mitzvah Drabanan that is mentioned in Tanach where Hashem instructs the prophet regarding it. There are 3 Mitzvos Mdivrei Kabalah: Mikra Megila, Kibbud Voneg Shabbos (Hilchos Shabbos 30:1), the fast days (Hilchos Taanis 5:4). The proof that Esther was right was that the Megila was included in Kisvei Hakodesh, granting it the same status of Divrei Kabalah as Kibbud Voneg Shabbos and the 4 fast days which were never considered as violations of Lo Tosifu.

It is interesting to note that the prophet has a dialogue with Hashem where he is told to keep the four fast days. Despite this, fasting on these days is still considered a Rabbinic obligation, even though the Kiyum Hamitzvah of fasting and praying to Hashem in a time of crisis is a biblical one. These Mitzvos are even more paradoxical in that if one would desecrate the written section in the Navi where these Mitzvos are mentioned he would violate an Issur Doraysa and receive lashes for desecrating Kisvei Kodesh, however the obligation to fulfill the Mitzvah itself is Rabbinic in nature.

The Rambam (Megila 1:1) says that everyone is obligated with the Mitzvas Krias Hamegila, including women, converts and freed slaves. Why are only freed slaves obligated? After all, Canaanite slaves has similar obligations to women so why did the Rambam omit them? (This is the only Mitzvah that a woman is obligated to perform but an Eved Canaani is not.)

Also, why did the Rambam mention converts explicitly? Converts are obligated in all Mitzvos? Chazal derive from the words Kal Hanilvim Alayhem in the Megila that there was a special edict to include converts, including all future converts, who otherwise would not have been included in the Mitzvas Purim. We do not find special mention of converts by other Mitzvos. Why single out converts with regards to Purim? (Actually this question can be asked on the Megila itself.)

The Rav explained: the Megila describes how the Jews were victorious in battle and how they came to enact the days of celebration after their victory. It is explicitly stated that the Jews outside of Shushan rested on the fourteenth day of Adar while the Jews of Shushan rested on the fifteenth. This was a spontaneous act of rest after the miracle of vanquishing their

respective foes. The following year they celebrated on the same days as a Minhag, custom. The Megila later notes that Mordechai wanted to codify the observance of these days as days of feasting and Yom Tov on all the Jews and on all those that joined them, Al Kal Hanilvim Alayhem. Mordechai enacted the days of Purim as days of feasting and joy based on the Minhag of the previous years that they had already established to celebrate these days. The distinction between when Chanukah and Purim begin bears this point out. The Jews completed their victory and began their celebration immediately on the twenty fifth of Kislev. Purim is celebrated the day after the victory was concluded. Why not celebrate immediately after the victory on the thirteenth of Adar? Because Mordechai simply codified the Minhag which was that they rested on the day after the victory.

Since the celebration of Purim was based on the Minhag established by those that participated in the victory, anyone who did not participate in the festivities that first year would not be included in the obligation in subsequent years. Even though many people converted to Judaism in that period, Vrabis Misyahadim, however these people did not fully share the great joy of the salvation of the Jewish nation from imminent destruction. They were mourning for the many members of their own (former) family who conspired to murder the Jews and were killed during the battle. That is why there was a need to enact a special edict to include converts in the celebration of Purim and for them to accept upon themselves to observe the Mitzvah of Krias Megila and the days of Purim. Only in his subsequent letter to codify the Minhag, did Mordechai seek to establish the days of Purim as days that work was forbidden. In the same letter he sought to include the converts that did not participate in the celebration immediately after the great victory. Bnay Yisrael did not accept the Issur Melacha because that was not part of the original Minhag, but they did accept the days of Purim as days of feasting and happiness based on the Minhag. They also accepted that all converts, including future generations, should celebrate Purim.

Had a convert been obligated in Purim because he is obligated in all Mitzvos like any other Jew, then there would be no reason to exclude an Eved Canaani, who has the same level of observance as a woman based on Gzeirah Shava of Lah Lah. Since Eved Canaani was not included in the Takanah of Kol Hanilvim, only complete converts were, he is not obligated in Megila even though women are. However a freed slave was included in the Takanah of Kol Hanilvim Alayhem.

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From: :owner-os-special@vjlists.com Ohr Somayach - Purim 5759 Special  
Boo the Villain & Cheer the Hero by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach  
<http://www.ohr.org.il/special/purim/villain.htm> The arch villain of the Purim story, says the Sage Rava, was a master of incitement through slander. What is recorded in Megillas Esther (3:9) is only the tip of the iceberg of this vicious Jew-hater's tirade intended to cool relations between the king and the Jewish exiles and to incite to commit genocide.

"Yeshno am echad -- there is one nation" is how Haman begins his pitch. This, explains Rava, was a response to the king's initial reluctance to embrace Haman's proposal for a final solution to his Jewish problem. "I am afraid," said Achashverosh, "that their G-d will punish me, just as He punished those before me who tried to destroy this people." "Yeshno" was Haman's reassuring answer. The letters making up the word "yeshno" can be read and pronounced in more than one way. The simple meaning is "there is." But on an interpretive drush level, this word can be read as "yoshanu;" Haman reassured the king that he need not fear Divine retribution because the Jews were "yoshanu" in regard to fulfillment of G-d's commandments.

The commentaries offer two different approaches as to what "yoshanu" means. "Yoshanu" can mean "they changed," implying that the Jews deviated from the mitzvot which G-d commanded them. It can also mean "they slumbered," which communicates an image of Jews lacking any interest in these mitzvot. Either way, Haman intended to convince the king that the Jews were vulnerable because of their laxity in practicing the

religion that had protected them against earlier oppressors. "But they have rabbis among them who will pray for them," objected a worried Achashverosh. "Am echad -- they are one nation," replied Haman, "and their religious leaders are no more observant than the rest of the people."

Almost everything Haman said in his ensuing diatribe sounds like a forerunner of all the lies concocted by Jew-haters throughout history. However, his point regarding what makes Jews vulnerable to attack from these enemies serves as a warning for every Jewish generation, especially our own.

Judaism today suffers from both kinds of "yoshanu." There are those who wish to "change" the ancient faith -- to reform or reconstruct it. Then there are those who, despite their determination to cling to tradition, are "slumbering" in their observance -- going through the motions of fulfilling the commandments but lacking understanding and enthusiasm. The real crisis comes, as Haman so acutely pointed out, when those who are supposed to be the spiritual leaders join the flock rather than lead it. Where Haman made his fatal error in assessing Jewish strength and weakness was in ignoring the impact of a true Jewish leader, Mordechai, who was capable of inspiring his people to prayer and repentance -- to teach them to abandon their efforts to "change" and to rouse themselves from their "slumber." This hero of the Purim story is the prototype of Torah leaders throughout history, who have saved their people from both physical and spiritual annihilation.

Perhaps this is all summarized in the classic Purim song "Shoshana Yaakov" in which we sing "cursed be Haman who wished to destroy me; blessed be Mordechai the Jew." Haman was certain he could destroy the Jews, because they were no longer loyal to the Torah way of life which had always protected them against their foes. Furthermore, Haman saw no one among them who could steer them back to the path of the true Jew. We curse him both for his evil intentions, and for his denigration of our capacity to bounce back when led by a "Mordechai the Jew." We bless Mordechai to this very day for providing the type of leadership which enables Jews to abandon dangerous change, wake up from their spiritual slumber -- and be saved from every enemy.

The Eyes of Doves By Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair  
<http://www.ohr.org.il/special/purim/eyesdove.htm> The silent rush of air passing over feathered wings at a thousand feet. A dove flies high over the fields, its eyes probing the distance. Looming out of the morning mist a haystack about a quarter mile ahead. A lone dove in an unfriendly sky. No other birds in sight. It scrutinizes the sky with its piercing gaze. Will it be safe to land? The dove has no talons. Its wings will not carry it fast enough to escape its many predators. The eyes of a dove are its only protection. The Torah is the blueprint of reality. Through this blueprint, the great Rabbis of every generation have illuminated and elucidated the world we live in. They know this blueprint to a depth and subtlety which is almost beyond comprehension. They can see into the depths of the world's construction just like a builder visualizes a building by looking at its blueprint. Nothing is new to them because everything is in the Torah. G-d gives these Torah sages a power -- a distant hint of prophecy -- to guide the Jewish People. It is they who can read His "guidebook" better than anyone else. Everything is contained in the Torah, either explicitly or covertly, but it takes a Rabbi Akiva, a Maharal or a Vilna Gaon to be able to accurately extract its meaning and apply it to a contemporary context. The great talmidei chachamim (Torah Scholars) of every generation are given a unique insight into the ways of the world. This qualifies them to lead the Jewish People as no one else can.

Gut Feeling Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's students asked, "why did the Jews of Persia deserve Haman's decree of annihilation?" They answered "because they benefited from the meal of that evil Achashverosh." To flaunt his power and wealth, Achashverosh decided to throw a party of mind-boggling dimensions that lasted for six months. At the end of this party, Achashverosh threw another party for all who were present in Shushan the capital. Mordechai issued a ban on attending the feast even though the food was kosher. Mordechai knew that there was something very non-kosher about this meal. The prophet Yirmiyahu had prophesied that the Babylonian exile would end after seventy years. Achashverosh was

aware of this prophecy, and according to his calculations seventy years had already passed. Emboldened by this, he took out the holy vessels of the Temple at his feast and caroused with them. Despite Mordechai's ban on the feast, the Jewish People ignored him. They surmised that it would be considered an unforgivable sleight to the king's honor were they not to attend. Conventional wisdom would have agreed with them. Wasn't this a case of a life-threatening situation, which made it not just permissible, but a mitzvah to attend the feast? But Mordechai's decree was not based on gut feeling nor conventional wisdom. It was based on Torah wisdom, reality seen through Torah knowledge. Conventional wisdom and gut feeling would have put all the blame on Mordechai. Surely, what provoked Haman to issue his genocidal decree against the Jewish People was his fury when Mordechai refused to bow to him. Wasn't it Mordechai himself who placed the Jewish People in jeopardy by his stiff-necked refusal to bow? Wasn't this another case of a life-threatening situation calling for the temporary abrogation of Torah law? Conventional wisdom would also have dictated that Esther reveal her Jewish background to Achashverosh so that he would favor the Jews. And yet Esther's hiding of her identity, on Mordechai's instructions, was a key factor in the redemption.

The Eyes Of Doves In the Song of Songs the verse states, "Your eyes are doves." The Midrash tells us that "your eyes" refers to the Sanhedrin, the supreme legislative body of the Jewish People. The Sanhedrin are the "eyes of the congregation." They can see behind the mask of reality, beyond the grasp of mere conventional wisdom. The power of leadership flows from the people. In every generation G-d promises us there will be spiritual leaders, great Torah sages, who are given by G-d the ability to advise and direct the nation. However, when the Jewish People refuse to listen to these spiritual giants, following instead after politicians and those with no more insight than the rest of us, then our spiritual leaders become powerless to influence or to help. When G-d told Moshe to go and speak to Pharaoh, he said: "Behold, the Children of Israel have not listened to me, so how should Pharaoh listen to me? And I have sealed lips." (Shemos 6:12) If the Jewish People had listened to Moshe, his mouth and lips would have been opened and his words would have affected even Pharaoh, but since the Children of Israel did not listen, Moshe's "lips were sealed." A Torah Scholar is not just someone you go and ask whether or not your chicken is kosher. A Torah Scholar is someone who knows the nature of every action, thought and word. Is it kosher? Is it "fit?" The modern world lionizes non-conventionality. What is truly unconventional is the wisdom of our great Rabbis. It is bounded neither by the mores or the exigencies of the moment. Implicit in the command of "Hear O Israel!" is the understanding that G-d speaks to us through his appointed emissaries at all times and in all places.

Sources: \* Tractate Megillah 12a, \* Meam Loez, Shir HaShirim Raba 1, \* Sfas Emes, Rabbi Reuven Subar General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Eli Ballon Prepared by the Jewish Learning Exchange of Ohr Somayach International 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103 Jerusalem 91180, Israel Tel: 972-2-581-0315 Fax: 972-2-581-2890 E-Mail: info@ohr.org.il Home Page: <http://www.ohr.org.il> (C) 1999 Ohr Somayach

itself. It doesn't need to be trumpeted to the skies. Nothing is more infectious than the truth. There is a Jew who sits in a most frugal apartment in Yerushalyim. He has never made any television appearances. He has never been interviewed on any chat show. No-one has ever advertised him. And yet the Jewish world beats a path to his door when it needs a halachic decision. His status and fame come entirely from his piety, plus the fact that, in most areas of Judaism, he knows the law better than anyone else. And everyone else knows it. In the Beis Hamikdash, the ketores - the service of burning the incense - was performed away from public eyes, in private. Yet its scent could be detected as far away as Jericho, over twenty miles away. When a person puts all his effort into living correctly, in accordance with the truth of the Torah, then, even though he may not broadcast his virtues, the nation will seek him out. His life may be a quiet understatement, but all his actions will radiate inner purity and holiness like a beacon. Source Rabbi Moshe Feinstein Written and Compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair General Editor: Rabbi Moshe Newman Production Design: Eli Ballon © 1999 Ohr Somayach International

Peninim Ahl HaTorah: Parshas Tezaveh by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum Hebrew Academy of Cleveland

"And you will command Bnei Yisrael and they shall take for you pure olive oil, beaten for light, to fuel the eternal light." (27:20) Upon reading the text, one understands this pasuk to be commanding Moshe to instruct Bnei Yisrael in the preparation of oil for the Menorah. The words, however, have a different grammatical connotation. It means that Moshe will command Bnei Yisrael concerning the oil at some future point. In order to convey to Moshe that a command would be issued immediately, the Torah should have said, command, which, indeed, it does in Sefer Vayikra. In Vayikra 24:1, Hashem instructs Moshe to command Bnei Yisrael to prepare olive oil. The advanced notice of a command is unusual. Why does Hashem forewarn Moshe about an upcoming command? What is unique about the pure olive oil that it receives so much preliminary attention?

Horav David Feinstein, Shlita, posits that the concept of "pure olive oil" serves as an analogy for an approach to Torah study. Just as the oil had to be pure from its initial emergence from the press in order to be acceptable for the Menorah, so, too, must one study Torah in a pure and untainted manner. Oil that had once contained impurities, albeit now thoroughly refined, was still not suitable for the Menorah. Likewise, when we teach Torah, we must teach in a manner that prevents the admission of any "impurities" which would later require cleansing. Once the lesson has been tainted, purification is extremely difficult.

What are the ramifications of this idea? When we approach the study of Torah, we must manifest a conviction that we are studying dvar Hashem, words of the living G-d. Torah is absolute truth because it originates from the source of truth. Questions are welcomed and encouraged as long as they are genuine and represent a search for the truth. At no time may one entertain a question challenging the validity of Torah. Questions must serve to clarify a specific matter, so that we can better understand. Torah study is the basis for a Jew's total perspective on life. It molds and shapes the manner in which he views world society, its cultures and values. It protects him from the harmful influence of his broader environment.

We now understand why the mitzvah of preparing the pure oil merited a special announcement that it would be given in the future. Hashem made this announcement to Moshe, who was pure himself. Having received the Torah directly from Hashem, Moshe committed every fibre of his being to the concept of pure Torah-without embellishment. Thus, he should be the one to command Bnei Yisrael regarding the pure oil. He was the most qualified, because he reflected the very concepts he would teach, in his personal life and demeanor. In order to learn and to accept Torah from a rebbe, it is essential for the teacher to represent the ideals and values that he is transmitting. Moshe lived the ideology that he taught!

"And these are the garments they shall make." (28:4) Horav A. Henach Leibowitz, Shlita, cites a story from the Talmud Shabbos 31a from which we can glean a significant lesson regarding the impact of Torah study

<http://www.ohr.org.il/tw/5759/shmos/tetzaveh.htm>

SILENT BROADCAST "Upon it shall Aharon bring the spice incense..." (30:7) Advertising is the touchstone of contemporary society. The art of advertising is not to sell a product, it is to sell to people a perception of themselves which will result from buying the product. Maybe the little blue stripes will keep your teeth looking brighter. Maybe they won't. What sells the product however, is not the promise of brighter teeth, it is the lifestyle of people who have brighter teeth. As we all know, people with brighter teeth are never unhappy. They never feel tired. They flit effortlessly from one party to another. They jetset across the world without a bank manager or a mortgage in sight. And all for the price of a tube of toothpaste. Now that's what I call value for money! In an age where illusion has become reality, where people send wreaths to TV stations when soap-operas stars "die" and are written out of the script, selling the Brooklyn Bridge has never been easier. All you need is a lot of money. And airtime. The truth, however, sells

on one's life. A gentile was once passing by a classroom where a rebbe was teaching Parshas Tetzaveh to a group of young students. The rebbe was describing the beauty and splendor manifested by the vestments of the Kohen Gadol. The students and the eavesdropper were totally captivated with the detailed descriptions of the impressive garments. The gentile thought to himself, "I will convert to Judaism, so that I can become a Kohen Gadol. One day I will be the proud owner of these vestments." He went off to Hillel, the pre-eminent sage of that time, with a request that he convert him, so that he could become the Kohen Gadol. Hillel responded that the gentile first would have to study Torah and become proficient with the many intricate laws of the avodah, service, in the Bais Ha'Mikdash. The gentile began studying Torah in earnest. He was diligent and zealous in his studies. All went well until he came across the pasuk in Bamidbar 1:51, "And the stranger that approaches (the Sanctuary) shall surely die." He wondered who was this "stranger" to which the Torah was referring. He was subsequently told that this law applied to anyone who was not born a Kohen. Even a Jewish king was prohibited from entering the Sanctuary! When he heard this, he concluded that certainly one who was not born Jewish could never have a chance to enter the Sanctuary. So, how could he ever become a Kohen Gadol? Nonetheless, he continued studying Torah, eventually converting to Judaism. Horav Leibowitz asks a compelling question. Since the driving force in the gentile's study was his desire to become the Kohen Gadol, why did he not turn back as soon as he became aware that his studies would not lead to his goal? What changed his attitude, so that he was now willing to convert despite his inability to ever wear the priestly vestments of the Kohen Gadol? Was he not aware of the hardship and sacrifice that he would endure as a Jew without reaping his intended benefits? Only one change had transpired in this young man's life, only one new factor had made the difference. He had studied Torah! This study had such a profound impact on him that literally his whole perspective on life changed. It initiated a new outlook, a new understanding, an altogether different attitude from that which he had manifested previously. He was now content to share his fate with that of the Jewish people, despite the lack of the special incentive which had motivated him earlier. Now let us think about this. If a gentile who studied Torah purely for personal reasons became inspired to the point that he desired to convert, how much more so should Torah leave a lasting impression upon us? After all, we study Torah l'shem Shomayim, for the sake of Heaven. How do we assess the impact Torah study has on us? Perhaps the easiest, and probably the most effective, manner would be to focus on our peers who do not study Torah. Sometimes we do not fully appreciate how full our lives are until we look around and note the emptiness of those who do not live as we do. The more we study, the more we see to it that our children and those around us study, the better individuals we become, both as human beings in general and as Jews in particular.

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From: Jonathan Schwartz[SMTP:jschwartz@y-mail.yu.edu] To chabura  
 Subject: Internet Chaburah -- Parshas Tetzaveh/purim

Prologue: Tetzaveh begins with the command to take Shemen Zayit for the lighting of a ner tamid. The Possuk notes "V'yikchu Eilecha" taking for you. Rav Yaakov Moshe Charlop ztl. (Mei Marom vol. 5) notes the strangeness of the term "Eilecha." Rav Charlop points out that the actual taking of oil was for a ner tamid. Yet, in the same sense that one finds difficulty assuming the oil was for use by klal yisroel, Hashem wants us to realize that he too, does not need the ner. Hence the oil is Eilecha, for you to prove that you heed his word. At times we find heeding the word of Hashem to be an easy task. The ways of Hashem are pleasant (Deracheha Darchei Noam) and often keeping his word is not inconvenient. The challenges arise when we are involved in a lifestyle where convenience opposes dvar Hashem. At those moments one must remember that temporary convenience is not worth the Chayei Olam. The Ner Tamid should illuminate our proper life path for many years, sometimes even if it forsakes the temporary moment. The lesson of purim is the opposite challenge. We have the opportunity to recognize the nissim nistarim that seem to occur

during the regular life's course. We celebrate those nissim with an extra mode of simcha - ad d'lo yada. (V'lo Ad

Excuse me or just an excuse?? (Special thanks to Mr. Michael Fiscus, Dr. Gerry Zahtz and Dr. E. Pineles for assistance) There is an interesting remark in the Rema (Orach Chaim 695:2) that warrants clarification. The Rema notes that one who causes damage to his friend on Purim due to the simcha of the day, he is patur from paying for the damage. The Mishna Berurah (13) notes that the Bach did not apply this rule across the board. Rather, the Bach made a person responsible to pay for a "Heizek gadol" (Great damage) and for damages that are physical instead of monetary. Additionally, one who attacks his friend intentionally is chiyav to pay. There are many questions to be asked about this din. What is its basis? Based upon what situation do we determine whether something is heizek gadol or kattan? What is Kavanna to be mazik? And where is the differentiation between shogeg and maizid in the Rema? In the very next siman, the Rema addresses the issue of damage on purim again. This time, he writes that people who steal from each other through the venue of simcha are not violating the issur of "lo Tigzol" as long as they do not violate the precept set aside by the leaders of the city. Again different questions arise. What is the nature of the special dispensation we call "simcha"? Additionally, does the Rema believe that there is no sin involved like he says in this siman or does he believe that there is a sin but that one who violates the precept does not have to pay? (There is a basic nafka mina in this chakira - The mishna Berurah discusses whether one can make a beracha on something he has taken from his friend on purim. According to the MB, it is ok, however, the Shela argues, noting that it is not Mishnas Chassidim to do so. (MB 696:31) It seems as if they argue if an issur exists here (and one couldn't make a beracha) or if it does not (and he could)?) It seems that the concept of stealing as a joke is grave indeed. The Rambam (Hil. Genaiva 1:2) writes that one cannot steal (Goinev) as a joke. The reasoning he employs is so that one not become used to acting this way. This halacha appears to be the source for the opinion of the Shela. Yet, is there a difference between Genaiva (as the Rambam utilizes the din) and Geziala (the issur avoided in the Rema)? When discussing the laws of Damages (Choshen Mishpat 388), the Rema again notes that one riding a horse to greet a chosson, who damages his friend through the foolery, is patur from paying for the damage. Still, Beit Din should make special rules to prevent people from acting this way. Why does the Rema add the caveat about the Beit Din if there is a heter? The source for this Rema is in a Tosfos in Sukka (45a, MiYad) Tosfos notes that a gadol can take the lulav from a kattan on Hoshanna Rabba because that is the order of the day. Tosfos notes that the same is true regarding Simchas Chosson where if someone riding a horse rips his friend's suit or damages his horse, he would not have to pay. Rav Soloveitchik (Rishumei Shiurim-Reichman) notes that Tosfos must have understood this heter to be based in a special condition of Beit din during a period of simcha that one damaging his friend because of the simcha would be patur - due to mechila. However, this heter mechila applies only to monetary damage and never applied to heizek haguf. Based upon the Rov, we can see that the main idea here is one of mechila. If that is true, then how can one make a beracha - if the issur still exists? To that there is a basic principle that suggests that once there is no monetary requirement, the issur falls off. That being the case, why does the Shela argue and why does the Rema utilize two different ideas in Hil. Purim? The Aruch Hashulchan (Choshen mishpat 378:18-19) discusses the case of one who damages his friend on Friday. According to the Aruch Hashulchan, if he was rushing for the mitzva of shabbos, he is patur. The Reason cited is that Zmano Bahul Alav - the mitzva has serious time constraints. Perhaps the simcha of purim too, has time constraints in that it too, only applies during the day of purim. That mitzva - simchas haChag, must be achieved and henceforth we use many different venues to achieve it (ad d'lo yada, mishloach manos, matanos l'evyonim etc.) . If so, one damaging his friend on purim, through derech simcha, should be patur -PROVIDING THAT HE INTENDED TO BE b'SIMCHA. Without this intention, he loses the heter of zmano bahul alav. Hence, the Rema allows one at a wedding or a purim meal to be patur from damages because

there is a zmano bahul and beit din gives him special dispensation because of his mitzva zealous status. Thus, the term shogeg and meizid don't apply. He MUST be Meizid - Meizid for simcha - in order to be patur here. Therefore, the phrase of the Rema - Lo tizgol - is specific. Genaiva implies a straying from God's word inherently. One who is patur cannot be patur from genaiva. If there is a shaila of genaiva, the individual must be chayav. Only if there is a chashash gezaila can he possibly be patur. Still, the Shela writes that this zealousness in simcha never existed as a matter of piety. Lav mishna Chassidim he zu. Hence, to the shela it must be some other intention that caused the individual to bring the damage. Therefore he is chayav and one cannot make a beracha on the food that was taken. The Rema and Aruch Hashulchan concede the difficulty in judging one's motivation behind the damage and recommend stopping it in all cases as a result. Battala News Mazal tov to Dr. and Mrs. Avi Penstein on their recent marriage. Mazal Tov to Dr. Avraham Belizon upon his aufruf and forthcoming marriage.

From: owner-shabbat-zomet[SMTP:owner-shabbat-zomet@vjlists.com] Shabbat-B'Shabbato - Parshat Tetzave (Zachor) SHABBAT-ZOMET is an extract from SHABBAT-B'SHABBATO, a weekly bulletin distributed free of charge in hundreds of synagogues in Israel. It is published by the Zomet Institute of Alon Shevut, Israel, under the auspices of the National Religious Party. Translated by: Moshe Goldberg

A MITZVA IN THE TORAH PORTION: "All the Women Honored their Husbands" [Megilat Esther 1:20] In the Purim spirit ...

If not for the Torah, we would have learned modesty from the cats. Since this is a well known statement by the sages, we should feel perfectly justified in learning about the trait of modesty even from the Queen of Shushan, Vashti. After all, she refused to appear in immodest attire before the king and his ministers, and there can be no doubt that she deserves unlimited praise for her position. The problem is that on the other hand she was not ashamed to appear dressed immodestly at the party she made for the women. Is this a proper way to behave? A new Talmud student confronted his teacher with a problem: When he started studying the Talmud, Rashi's commentary was printed on the right side of the page, but when he turned the page it was printed on the left. "What is the meaning of this change of heart?" he asked. His teacher replied, "You should be aware, that Rashi was a woman, and as is written, 'All the honor of a woman is to be kept within' [Tehillim 45:14]. That is why the commentary is always on the inside of the page." But the student was visibly shaken by the very idea: "Rashi, a woman?!" "Yes," his teacher answered, "it must be so, because if this is not true there is a serious contradiction in the words of Rashi. Do you remember Rashi's question when Boaz asks, 'Whose girl is this' [Megilat Ruth 2:5]? Rashi asks, 'Is it proper for Boaz to ask about women?' But in another place, it is Rashi who asks, 'And where was Dina?' [Bereishit 32:23]. Well, is it proper for RASHI to ask about women? The only plausible answer is that Rashi was a woman, who could therefore express interest in women." "But, Rabbi," the student responded, "in this week's Torah portion I read Rashi's explanation that the Eford is 'like a cloak worn by a woman riding a horse' [Shemot 28:4]." And when I asked how Rashi could know this, I was told that Rashi indeed was troubled by the meaning of the word Eford, but when he left his house for a moment he happened to see the immodest image of a woman riding a horse. As one who never let his eyes stray to unseemly sights, he understood that this was a sign from heaven of how the Eford looked. However, if Rashi was a woman, what was immodest about the sight of a woman riding a horse?" And in this we have come full circle, back to the first question about Vashti. It may be that we can learn the customs of modesty from the way she handled herself in front of the king and the ministers, but even in front of other women Vashti should have maintained properly modest behavior.

From: owner-daf-insights[SMTP:owner-daf-insights@shemaisrael.com] Subject: Insights to the Daf: Special Purim edition! INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim Rosh Kollel: Rabbi Mordechai Kornfeld daf@shemaisrael.co.il YOM KIPURIM, "K'PURIM"

QUESTION: In its description of the Avodah on Yom Kipur, the Torah (Vayikra 16:8) describes the unusual way in which the Kohen Gadol is supposed to choose the Korbanos of the two Se'irim (goat offerings). The Torah commands that a "Goral," (throwing of lots) be conducted in order to choose which Se'ir will be offered as the Se'ir for Hashem and which Se'ir will be used as the Se'ir ha'Mishtale'ach (the Se'ir la'Azazel). Two lots are placed in a box. One of the lots is inscribed with the word "la'Shem" and the other with the word "la'Azazel." The two Se'irim are placed on either side of the Kohen Gadol, who reaches into the box and chooses the lots for each Se'ir. No other Korban is chosen in this unusual manner. What insights can be gleaned from the strange manner in which the Torah requires that the goats of Yom Kipur be chosen?

ANSWER: [I] The reason for the unusual manner of choosing the goats on Yom Kipur touches upon the fundamentals of Jewish belief. We know that the basis of Eemunah is the belief in Hashem's individual supervision of all of our actions and that nothing in the world outside of Hashem's will. It is that belief which is the basis for the belief in reward and punishment and for our obligation to fulfill the Mitzvos.

On Yom Kipur, the entire nation repents and asks Hashem to forgive the sins of the past year. The most important part of this process of Teshuvah is strengthening one's Eemunah in Hashem. This is done by realizing that every single act that one did was under the watchful eye of Hashem, and that everything that occurs to us was orchestrated by Hashem.

It is the Goral that demonstrates most powerfully this "Hashgachah Pratis" of Hashem in every detail of the world's existence. When a Goral is conducted, one has no input or influence on the

outcome of the Goral. By choosing the Se'irim in this manner, we are proclaiming our belief that Hashem, and not "chance," determines the outcome of seemingly random acts. By relying on the outcome of the Goral we show that our every experience is a direct result of Hashem's supervision of what occurs. A Goral exemplifies that what seems entirely random, actually demonstrates the exclusive involvement of Hashem.

In fact, we find that the Hashgachah of Hashem was shown by the Goral with particular clarity. During the era in which the Jewish people were found deserving, the Goral la'Shem always came up in the Kohen Gadol's right hand, and when they were not deserving it did not (Yoma 39b). The people's belief that Hashem watches over them at all times was strengthened through the Goral.

Since it is these Korbanos -- the Se'ir la'Shem and the Se'ir la'Azazel -- which effect atonement for the Jewish people, it is fitting that they be selected in a manner which engenders this most important element of Teshuvah.

[II] Whenever the Jews weaken in their belief that Hashem is watching closely their every action, Hashem immediately sends Amalek to "wake them up" (Rashi to Shemos 16:8). The verse describes how Amalek attacked the Jews after they were redeemed from Mitzrayim and says "Asher Karcha ba'Derech" (Devarim 25:18). RASHI there says that "Karcha" means "they \*chanced\* upon you" (from the word "Mikreh"). Amalek set for themselves the goal to convince the world that everything is random and left to chance. They attacked the Jewish nation as they left Mitzrayim to show that the good fortune of being freed from bondage was merely happenstance; one day they experience redemption, the next day war -- it is all by chance. The only way the Jewish people were -- and are -- able to defeat Amalek is by directing their attention to Hashem and to the belief that He, and only He, controls everything in the world. This is the meaning of the verse, describing Moshe's actions during the war against Amalek, "And [Moshe's raised] hands were Eemunah" (Shemos 17:1) his arms upraised in prayer were a source of Eemunah (see Mishnah Rosh ha'Shanah 29a). When we realize that everything is directed by Hashem, we successfully defeat the forces of Amalek.

Amalek is the leading grandson of Esav, whose guardian angel is none other than the Satan himself ("Sama'el" -- Rashi, Sukkah 29a and Sota 10b, from Tanchuma, Vayishlach 8 -- Midrash Raba at the end of Devarim identifies Sama'el with the Satan and the Angel of Death). The Se'ir la'Azazel, according to the Midrash (Ramban, Vayikra 16:8) is meant as an offering to "appease the Satan." We silence the Satan the same way we silence Amalek, Satan's people -- by showing that there is no Mikreh and that everything is directed by the hand of Hashem. We choose the Se'ir la'Azazel \*specifically\* by way of a Goral, thereby showing our belief that "chance" is orchestrated by the active guidance of Hashem.

[III] Chazal tell us that Haman is descended from Amalek (see Rabeinu Bachyei Shemos 16:17). When Haman plotted against the Jewish people in the times of Purim, he used the same strategy that Amalek had used centuries earlier. He conducted a Goral, or a "Pur," in order to choose a day on which to attack the Jews. He chose to use a Goral in order to show that the force of nature, of chance, is powerful enough to destroy the Jewish People.

Mordechai realized Haman's intentions. He told to Esther "Kol Asher Karahu" (Esther 4:7). The Midrash says that Mordechai was telling Esther that "the one about whom it is written 'Asher \*Karcha\* ba'Derech' is plotting to attack us!" Mordechai described Haman this way to show that Haman was taking advantage of the fact that the Jews of the time had weakened in their Eemunah in the Hashgachah of Hashem. Haman -- i.e. Amalek -- used that as an opportunity to attack them. The response to such a threat is to regain the realization that Hashem is involved with everything in the world and to recognize the hidden hand of Hashem even in a time of "Hester Panim," a time of "Haster Astir Panai ba'Yom ha'Hu" (Devarim 31:18, Chulin 139b). The Jews had to overcome their lack of Eemunah and realize Hashem's hand in the world.

This is alluded to in the Megilah, which was purposely written without any mention of the name of Hashem. That shows that even when the hand of Hashem is not openly apparent, it is nevertheless active in the world, albeit hidden.

This is why the festival was named "Purim," in recognition of the "Pur" which Haman conducted (Esther 9:26). The Jews realized that the real cause of their troubles was their weakness in Eemunah and their mistake in thinking that there is such a thing as Mikreh, chance, as represented by a Pur or Goral. Their victory was assured when they did Teshuvah and came to the realization that even a Goral is directed by Hashem. In that sense, "the Pur of Haman was turned into \*our Pur\*" (from the Tefilah after the reading of the Megilah). The forces of randomness were shown to be non-existent, and everything was indeed seen to be guided by Hashem.

[IV] The Tikunei Zohar calls Yom ha'Kipurim as a "day which is like Purim" ("Yom k'Purim"). In what way Yom Kipur similar to Purim? The common theme of both days is the understanding that everything is determined by Hashem, even the seemingly random outcome of a Goral and Pur.

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The Weekly Daf #263 Yoma 51 - 57 Week of 8-14 Adar 5759 / 24 February -2 March 1999 Parshas Tetzaveh <http://www.ohr.org.il/yomi/yomi263.htm>

A Direct Line In order to make his once a year entry into the kodesh kodashim (Holy of Holies) on Yom Kippur, the kohen gadol had to pass through the heichal area. Both Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Yossi agree that in the second Beis Hamikdash a single paroches (curtain) separated the heichal from the kodshei kodashim and that it was folded back a bit at its northern end to enable the kohen gadol to enter. Their point of disagreement is the route he took to reach this entrance. Rabbi Meir contends that he walked between the golden altar and the table, which meant that his route traversed almost the center of the heichal. He did not set eyes on the heichal until he actually reached the paroches, turned right until the northern end and entered. Rabbi Yossi's opinion is that he walked between the table and the northern wall, so that he was in a direct line with the entrance to the kodshei kodashim. Rabbi Meir explains his position by pointing out that it would be disrespectful to the kodshei kodashim to walk along a route that affords a view of its sacred interior

all along the way. Rabbi Yossi's rejoinder is that Jews are so beloved by Hashem that this was not considered a problem. Rabbeinu Chananel's explanation of Rabbi Yossi's statement is based on the difference between how the kohen gadol entered the sacred precincts of the Beis Hamikdash all year long and on Yom Kippur. All year long he was required to wear a special garment called a meil which had bells attached to its bottom hem "and its sound would be heard when he entered the sanctuary" (Shmos 28:35). This was like an envoy of the people announcing his arrival to the king and requesting permission to enter. On Yom Kippur, the kohen gadol entered the holiest of all areas without the meil, signifying that on this day he had a greater degree of privilege because of Hashem's love for the people he represented. There was therefore no need for him to hesitate walking along a route that offered a view of that holy area. Rashi's approach is that Jews are so beloved by Hashem that they require no agent to bring their prayers before Him. Every Jew can pray directly to Hashem, as King Solomon put it in his prayer to Hashem at the dedication of the first Beis Hamikdash (Melachim I 8:38). Their emissary on Yom Kippur may therefore enter in such bold fashion. The prayer of a Jew has a direct route to the kodshei kodashim from which it rises upwards to Heaven. Physical access to this sacred area is limited, however, to the emissary of all Jews -- the kohen gadol on Yom Kippur. It therefore follows that he should, on that day, have the same free access and not hesitate to follow the most direct route to the kodshei kodashim. \* Yoma 52a

The Missing Ark The high point of the Yom Kippur service in the Beis Hamikdash was when the kohen gadol entered the kodesh kodashim and placed the incense in front of the holy ark. Since there was no holy ark in the second Beis Hamikdash, the incense was placed on a stone which marked its place, and was called even shesiah -- the foundation stone, from which, say our Sages, the creation of the world began. What happened to the holy ark? One opinion in the gemara is that it was taken into Babylonian captivity along with the other sacred vessels. Another is that when King Yoshiyahu anticipated the imminent exile prophesied in the Torah (Devarim 28:36), he ordered the holy ark concealed in some secret subterranean passage to prevent its being taken into captivity. But why did those who built the second Beis Hamikdash at the end of the Babylonian Exile not make a new holy ark? If they lacked the original one, either because it was in foreign hands or because its hiding place was unknown, why didn't they make a new one? This question is raised by Rabbi Shmuel Strashan (Rashash). His approach in answering it is based on the Torah command "You shall place in the ark the testimony (the luchos upon which the Ten Commandments were etched)" (Shmos 25:16). This would seem to indicate that the purpose of the ark is to contain those sacred Tablets, and once they were gone there was no longer any need for an ark. He notes, though, that some commentaries write that even though the urim ve'tumim were missing in the second Beis Hamikdash, the choshen breastplate which contained them (Shmos 28:30) was nevertheless worn by the kohen gadol to complete his full array of eight garments. If so, perhaps the ark, too, should have been made in order to complete the array of sacred vessels, even if it could not fulfill its primary purpose of housing the Tablets? The same instruction of placing the Tablets in the ark, he explains, is repeated five passages later, and Rashi grapples with the need for this reiteration. It may be, Rashash suggests, that the reiteration is to stress that with no Tablets there is no need for the ark. \* Yoma 53b

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