

LAMPLIGHTER

26 Adar
Vayakhel-Pekudei
Parshas HaChodesh
Shabbos Chazak
1077
8 March
5773/2013

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In the previous Torah portions of Teruma and Tetzaveh, G-d commanded Moshe to build the Mishkan (Sanctuary) and make all its vessels. This week, in Vayakel and Pekudei, G-d's command is transmitted to the Jewish people and carried out in full.

Without exception, everyone participated in the building of the Sanctuary. Jews from all walks of life, men and women, rich and poor, all contributed as much as they were able.

Their contributions, however, were not equal in value. As no specific amount was required, some donated less and some donated more, according to their individual inclination and financial ability. Thus there were contributions of gold and silver and contributions of oil and wood, if that was all a person was capable of donating.

Significantly, the type of contribution a Jew offered had nothing to do with his connection to the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary belonged to every Jew in equal measure: the rich man whose donation was extremely valuable, and the poor man whose donation was more humble. Every Jew was connected to the Sanctuary to the same degree. "Both the one who gives more and the one who gives less; provided that he does so for the sake of heaven."

Although the individual contributions may have varied, the intention behind the offering was always the same. All Jews wanted to build the House of G-d; all Jews thus shared equally in its construction.

Moshe emphasized this equality among Jews, regardless of their donations, when he said, "See I have called by name Betzalel the son of Uri, the son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehudah...and Oholiav the son of Achisamach, of the tribe of Dan...He has filled them with wisdom of heart...of those who do any work, and of those who design artistic work." Betzalel and Oholiav were both in charge of all the artisans who worked on the Sanctuary.

Betzalel came from a very well-connected family. The grandson of Miriam, his tribe of Judah was one of the most prestigious. Oholiav, by contrast, was not distinguished by his lineage. A grandson of one of the maidservants, his tribe of Dan occupied a much lower rung on the social ladder.

And yet, both men were appointed to oversee the holy work, as it states, "Betzalel and Oholiav, and all those filled with wisdom of heart...did all kinds of work for the service of the Sanctuary."

In building the Sanctuary all Jews are equal. It makes no difference if one is rich or poor, a descendent of the most exalted parentage or a child of the simplest people. The only qualifier is that the Jew's heart be directed toward heaven!

Adapted from Likutei Sichot, Volume 26

The Final Exam

By Yossy Goldman

Transparency and accountability -- these are the new buzz words for 21st century corporate governance. No doubt all upright, honourable people welcome every genuine effort to stop corruption and dishonesty in whatever sphere of society -- corporate, governmental or personal. But is this really a new phenomenon? Is ours, in fact, the first generation in history concerned about such issues?

We learn that way back in the days of Moshe a transparent accounting and detailed audit was conducted over the donations made by the Israelites towards the building campaign for the Sanctuary and its sacred vessels. The contributions of gold, silver and copper were all weighed and totalled, so that no one could cast any aspersions on the integrity of Moshe and his team. In fact, the commentaries derive from this episode that those in charge of communal charity funds should likewise hold themselves accountable. We all need to be "innocent in the eyes of G-d and man."

Ethics of the Fathers reminds us to consider that one day we will all face ultimate accountability. After 120 years, when we pass on, each of us will stand before the heavenly tribunal to give a *din v'cheshbon*, a "full justification and an accounting" for the way we lived our lives.

It's fascinating to note that somehow the Talmud (Shabbos, 31a) was able to get wind of the actual questions we will be asked by that supernal tribunal. Oddly enough the first question is not going to be "Did you believe in G-d," or "Did you fast on Yom Kippur?" Believe it or not, the first question on this final exam is: "Did you deal faithfully in business?" Not how religious you were with G-d but how you conducted your business affairs. Were you honest and fair with people?

The second question, however, does go to the heart of our Jewishness. "Did you set aside fixed times for Torah study?" It would appear that familiarizing oneself with Torah and becoming a knowledgeable Jew is the key that opens the doors to everything else in Jewish life.

Is it not an anomaly of our times that many of our most brilliant legal minds -- attorneys, advocates and judges -- may have never opened a single page of the Talmud, Judaism's classic encyclopaedia of law? Or that some of our finest doctors may be completely unfamiliar with the medical writings of Maimonides, the great 12th century physician and scholar? Or that our brightest business magnates remain Jewishly ignorant, even illiterate?

When it comes to crossing a red light, ignorance of the law is no excuse. No traffic cop will buy the story that the driver didn't know it was illegal. In our day and age, with so many new opportunities for Torah study available, Jewish ignorance just doesn't wash. If the Talmud was once a closed book, today it's available in English -- and there are teachers to go with it too. Jewish studies opportunities abound in every community. And if one is geographically challenged, the internet can work wonders. You'll even find yourself a virtual Rabbi!

Let's ensure that when the Cop in Sky pulls us over to "ask a few questions" we'll all be able to answer in the affirmative.

Slice of LIFE

Reb Yehuda Schwartz, a Chabad Chassid in France, was a truck driver for Daniel Amram's (another Chabad Chassid) meat importing firm in Paris.

Reb Yehuda's job was to distribute kosher meat throughout France. As our story begins he was driving a large truck that Amram had just bought second-hand from a well-known used car company.

He sensed something was wrong when he began the trip; the brakes and steering wheel seemed to be unusually stiff, but he told himself that it was probably because the truck had been refurbished before sale. He loaded up and drove off.

Near the end of the day he was riding on a bridge high above a river at about fifty miles per hour when it happened. He began braking for a traffic light in the distance, but when he pushed on the pedal it just sank limply to the floor and stayed there! He had no brakes!

He had to think fast. There were cars in front of him. He tried downshifting but he was going downhill; too fast to help, still going fifty, in a second he would plow into the car in front of him. To the left was oncoming traffic, there was no time. He had to act fast.

He grabbed the steering wheel, yelled 'Shema Yisroel' and, at the last moment, turned it sharply to the right. The truck swerved crazily and shook, hit the curb and flew. His safety belt held him down but he bounced wildly as the truck plowed through the barrier-railing (lucky no one had been on the sidewalk!) and arched over the water!! In a second he would plunge into the cold, murky current far below - he could almost feel the impact! He braced himself and prayed to G-d for help and shuddered.

But the truck didn't fall! It just hovered in the air - in mid-air!!

The next day all the newspapers in France carried the picture of his truck, balanced like a seesaw on the edge of the bridge half way through the railing over the water.

It was a miracle!!

But it was an expensive one. The city of Paris presented Daniel Amram with the bill. Damages to the bridge were over ten thousand dollars, the towing was another thousand and the traffic ticket another thousand - not counting the damages to the truck.

Daniel was used to miracles and was

thankful for this one too - but now he was angry. That used-car company had signed and sworn that the Truck was in 100% working order. If anyone was to blame it was them!

He took them to court.

A week later he appeared in court for the pre-trial hearing accompanied by his lawyer. It wouldn't be an easy case, he would have to prove that the brakes didn't work when they bought the truck, but he was ready for a fight.

The defendant entered the courtroom alone - an elderly, well-dressed gentile. He glanced at Amram as the charges were read.

But to everyone's surprise, after hearing the charges, the old man turned to the Judge and announced that, although he was wealthy and could easily win the case by hiring the best lawyers in France, because he sees that his opponents are Chassidic Jews he decided to forfeit and will pay all damages including the fine.

Daniel was amazed; such a miracle he never expected. The Judge and police were so surprised and impressed that they cancelled the fine on the spot and the case was dismissed.

As everyone was leaving the courtroom the gentile walked over to Daniel and said that he would be willing to have the truck towed to his garage, some three hours away, and fixed at his expense as well. He even offered that when the truck would be finished, to take Yehuda the driver back with him to pick it up the next time he would be in Paris.

Daniel could not believe his ears, but afraid that the fellow might change his mind he just smiled, shook the man's hand, said 'thank you' over and over again and kept quiet.

Three weeks later the old man returned to Paris and picked up Yehuda. About an hour into the ride back to the garage he turned to him and asked "You are a follower of Lubavitch aren't you? And so is your boss Mr. Amram. Correct?"

Schwartz answered to the positive. "So I thought! Well, how is your great Rabbi Shneerson? I hope he is well.

Ahh! I see you are surprised. Well it so happens that I know your Rabbi very well."

He saw that Schwartz was all ears and he continued.

"You see during the war, things were terrible here in France. Everything was upside down. But I decided that I wouldn't succumb to the insanity and I enrolled in the Sorbonne to learn mathematics.

"It was there that I got to know your Rabbi. He was in my class. He was truly a different type of human being. Besides being very polite and charming, he was incredibly intelligent

and there was something royal about him. He didn't speak much but when he spoke everyone listened. And the most incredible thing was that he never seemed to listen in class or even look at the lecturer, he was always reading some Hebrew book that was on his lap.

But he always knew the answers.

"The classes were very difficult but in those terrible times our financial situation was worse. In fact the only way some of us, me included, could make ends meet was by going into the country early every Monday morning and buying baskets of produce that we would sell wholesale to the vendors for market day. But it meant we had to miss the Monday lecture which was the main lecture of the week.

"So the first time your Rabbi Shneerson saw that we were missing, he took notes for us in great detail and gave them to us when we returned. It was terribly kind and thoughtful of him and in fact if it wasn't for him none of us would have passed.

"Well, at the end of the semester the final test was so difficult that the professor announced that he would give us five hours to finish instead of the allotted three. So we were all surprised when your Rabbi gathered all his papers after a half an hour, put them in the envelope and handed them in.

"Everyone was watching. The professor must have figured that he didn't know the answers so he pulled out the papers and had a look. Well, when he saw they had all been filled out he scoffed aloud and said incredulously to the Rabbi before the entire class, "What, were you cheating or is this some sort of sorcery?"

"The Rebbe just looked at him, did not say a word and left the room.

"Well, you can imagine how amazed everyone was when the tests were checked and it was discovered that the Rebbe had answered everything 100% correctly!!

"It was the talk of the University. In fact on graduation day the professor actually apologized to him in front of the entire student body. But even that professor could not contain his wonder. On the stage, as he was giving him his diploma he asked if he could please explain how it was humanly possible for him to finish the exam so quickly and accurately?"

"I'll never forget the Rebbe's answer. He said

"The Jewish people have a book of wisdom called the Talmud and one who learns it properly can understand all answers to the test."

Published by **The Chabad House of Caulfield** in conjunction with the **Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.**

P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA
Phone 0468 379 128
Email: lamplighter@rabbinicalcollege.edu.au

The Lamplighter contains words from sacred writings. Please do not deface or discard.

ISSUE 1077

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The Tzemach Tzedek once said that Moshiach will delight in the company of unscholarly, self-sacrificing Jews. The simple and artless earnestness, with which unscholarly Jews serve G-d and pray and read Tehillim, will be recognized in its true worth. A unique chamber will be set aside for them, and they will be envied by the greatest of intellectuals.



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

B"H Aleph d'Rosh Chodesh Tammuz, 5710
June 15, 1950

This is in reply to your question regarding the significance of the custom during the marriage ceremony that the bride makes seven circuits around the groom under the Chuppah [wedding canopy].

The answer to this question, it seems to me, has to cover the following sub-questions: 1) The significance of the circuit, 2) its repetition seven times, 3) the bride circling around the groom and not vice versa, 4) the bride then joining the groom, standing by his side within the circle.

I trust that the following may give you a satisfactory answer.

It is stated in the Zohar (Part III, 7:2) that marriage, which is a union of two distinct persons, is in reality a union of two halves of the same soul. Each one, when born, possesses but half of that soul which becomes one and complete only in wedlock, through Chuppah and Kiddushin [sanctification].

This is why marriage is one of the greatest soul-stirring experiences of the bride and groom, for their respective souls have found at last the other half. Something of this joy is experienced, by way of illustration, at the re-union of two close relatives or beloved friends who had been separated for decades.

To a certain extent, therefore, the marriage marks the beginning of a complete and full life, while the pre-marital life of either the bride or groom may be considered in the nature of a preparatory period.

The union of the two parts of the same soul is not a union of two identical halves which make one whole. But they complement each other, each of them enriching the other with powers and qualities which hitherto were not possessed by him or her. For the "masculine" and "feminine" parts of the souls have basic differences, reflecting, broadly speaking, and the character differences of the genders. One such difference is what our Sage called "the nature of the male to conquer," i.e., the propensity of the male to conquer new provinces (in business, profession, science, etc.) outside his home. This quality is generally not found in the female. On the other hand, the woman is called in our sacred literature the "Foundation of the House," for within the house her personality and innermost qualities are best expressed and asserted (Psalms 45:14).

It has been mentioned earlier that marriage, in a sense, marks the beginning of a full life. The wedding ceremony reflects this by an allusion to the beginning of all life. The Blessings of Betrothal (Birchoth Hanesuin) also begin with a reference to the creation of the first man, the first woman, and their wedding.

Ever since the Creation of the world, human life has been based on the seven-day cycle. G-d created the world in six days and hallowed the seventh as a day of rest. Man was then commanded to work for six days of the week, but to dedicate the seventh as a Sabbath unto G-d. When a Jew is about to set up a home and begin a full life, it is fitting that this basic principle of a happy life should be symbolized during the wedding ceremony.

Hence the "Seven Days of Feasting," and the "Seven Blessings" (Sheva Berachoth). This brings us also to the seven circuits of the bride around the groom.

Bearing the above in mind, as well as the earlier introductory remarks concerning the basic character differences between the male and female, the ceremony of the seven circuits which the bride makes around the groom suggest the following explanation:

The groom, who takes the initiative in bringing the union to fruition, is initially the centre of the new Jewish home. He is the first to take his place under the Chuppah. When the bride is led to the Chuppah, she proceeds to make a circle around the groom. This symbolizes the delineation (in space) of their own world within the outer world, with her husband-to-be as its centre. She continues to make circuits one after the other seven times, symbolizing that she, the "Foundation of the House," founds an edifice that would be complete on the first day of each and every week to come as on the second, third, etc., to the end of all times and seasons, a lasting and "eternal edifice" (with the infinity of the "cycle"). Her own contribution to this sacred union is also implied in the fact that she makes the circuits around the groom.

Having completed the seven circuits, she stands beside her husband-to-be in the centre of the circle, for after the preparations for the building of their home, both of them, the husband and the wife, form its centre. From here on, throughout the entire ceremony both the bride and groom form the centre of the holy ceremony, like king and queen surrounded by a suite of honour. Their lives become united into one full and happy life, based on the One Torah given by the One G-d.

With all good wishes and kindest personal regards,

CUSTOMS CORNER

Mar'it Ayin

One may not perform certain actions that appear to be forbidden, even if one is in fact doing them in a permissible way. This is called mar'it ayin (lit., "what appears to the eye"). This is only forbidden if the activity is something that is usually forbidden but is now being done in a permissible way. If, however, the activity is usually permissible, one need not be concerned that people will suspect him of doing it in a forbidden way. Here are some examples:

If one cooks (and eats) meat in almond milk or the like, one should place almonds or another indicator, such as packaging from the food, in area so that no one should think that he is transgressing the prohibition of cooking and eating meat and milk together.

One may not eat in a non-kosher restaurant even if he can ensure that all of the food being served to him is kosher.

One may not hang wet clothes out to dry on Shabbat as it may appear that he washed them on Shabbat.

A WORD

from the Director

This Shabbos we read Parshas HaChodesh. There is a known dictum from the Baal Shem Tov, that everything can provide a lesson, understandably this too must provide us with an eternal lesson in service to G-d.

Parshas HaChodesh speaks of the sanctification of the new month. This corresponds to service in a new manner ("Chodesh" meaning "new"). This is seen from the fact that on Rosh Chodesh Nissan (about which it is said "this month shall be for you" - which is the reading of Parshas HaChodesh) they began to offer the congregational sacrifices from the new donations. That is, not only is one's service in the manner of "rising in holiness," but it is a completely new service, infinitely greater than before.

The lesson from this in service to G-d: A Jew must know that from the perspective of his essence he is above the world, for his soul is "hewed from under the Throne of Glory" - and even higher. On the other hand, he must realize that his soul has descended "from a high roof to a deep pit" - to this physical world, for the purpose of revealing, through his service, G-dliness also in the "deep pit." Thus a Jew need not be affected by the concealments and obstacles in the world, for from the perspective of his essence, he transcends the world.

Nevertheless, also this service follows prior service - Shabbos Parshas HaChodesh follows Shabbos Parshas Parah, the latter being the idea of purification from undesirable things. Before that is Shabbos Parshas Zachor, the idea of eliminating obstacles from one's service to G-d. Prior to that is Shabbos Parshas Shekalim, which is the service of giving the "half-shekel," symbolizing the idea of atonement. It is only after the prior preparation of the above services that we can attain the service of Parshas HaChodesh - completely new service, infinitely greater than before.

J. I. Guterlich

IT HAPPENED

Once...

In one of the narrow lanes of the Jerusalem neighbourhood of "Beth Israel" stands a large, handsomely-build synagogue. For a hundred years, a marble plaque affixed to its north wall has borne the legend:

"For everlasting remembrance in the House of G-d. This synagogue has been erected by the generosity of a donor, whose name shall remain hidden and concealed, who contributed a sum of 110 napoleons of gold."

For many years, it was presumed that the funds were provided by one of the wealthy citizens of Jerusalem who wished to preserve his charity from the taint of pride by remaining anonymous. Few knew the true identity of the donor and the story behind his donation.

Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Porush was a man of modest means, though large sums of money passed through his hands. He was the secretary of one of the "kollel" societies which supported the poor Jews of Jerusalem with funds collected for that purpose throughout the Diaspora. Rabbi Shlomo was responsible for the sustenance of several hundred families whose support had been pledged by the Jewish community of Minsk and its environs in White Russia.

One year, as Passover approach, the arrival of funds was delayed. Rabbi Shlomo know that the money will be forthcoming, but in the meantime, the families he was responsible for had to be provided with matzos, wine and other festival needs. He therefore turned to a neighbour of his, Reb Faivish Stoller, a carpenter who worked hard all his life and had managed to put aside a considerable sum. Faivish agreed to loan him his life-savings-200 napoleons of gold-until the money will arrive from abroad.

Shortly after Passover, the long-awaited messenger arrived from Minsk. The purse he brought contained only 110 napoleons, but an accompanying letter promised that the remainder was on the way. Rabbi Shlomo lost no time in bringing the money to his neighbour.

Several weeks later, the rest of the money arrived. But when Rabbi Shlomo brought the 90 gold coins to Reb Faivish, a most unpleasant surprise awaited him. The elderly carpenter, whose memory had begun to fail him, had lost all recollection of the first payment, and was adamant in his insistence that he had received nothing of the 200 napoleons owed.

No written contract recorded the loan or the payment, for the two men had had absolute trust in each other. Now they had no recourse but to present their case before the bet-din (rabbinical court) of the venerated chief rabbi of Jerusalem, Rabbi Shmuel Salant.

From a Halachic standpoint, this was a textbook case: the borrower admits the loan, but claims that a partial payment has been paid, which the lender denies. This is a classic example of modeh b'miktzat ("one who partially admits" an otherwise insupportable claim); in such a case, the burden of proof rests with the lender, but the borrower must take a "biblical oath" in affirmation of his argument.

Upon hearing the verdict of the bet-din, Rabbi Shlomo turned pale. Never in his life did he imagine that he would be required to take an oath in court, never mind a "biblical oath" performed upon a Torah scroll! He begged to be given several days to think over the matter.

When the bet-din reconvened, Rabbi Shlomo announced that he was prepared to pay the disputed 110 napoleons out of his own pocket rather than take an oath. He only asked that he be given a few weeks to raise the money. Faivish Stoller agreed, and it appeared that the matter had been settled. But Rabbi Shmuel Salant would not allow this arrangement. "I'm sorry," he said to Rabbi Shlomo, "but this is not a private matter that can be settled between the litigants. It involves communal funds. As one who is entrusted with charity moneys, your honesty must be beyond reproach. Unless it is decisively established that the money was paid as you claim, people will talk. I therefore insist that you take the oath."

Again Rabbi Shlomo requested, and was granted, a short respite. For three days he fasted, wept and recited psalms. On the fourth day he came before the bet-din and swore that he had paid 110 napoleons to Faivish Stoller.

Shortly thereafter, Rabbi Shlomo put up his modest home for sale. To his family he explained that he had intended to sell the house in order to avoid taking the oath, and now he did not want to benefit from money he had "saved" by swearing on a Torah scroll. To the proceeds of the sale he added almost all of his savings to make the sum of 110 napoleons, which he presented to a committee that was raising money to build a new synagogue. His only stipulation was that no mention should be made of the source of the money.

Several months later, Faivish Stoller appeared in the small apartment to which Rabbi Shlomo had moved after the sale of his home. Without a word, he placed on Rabbi Shlomo's table a purse containing 110 napoleons of gold, which he had uncovered in a drawer in his workshop.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

Six days work shall be done; and the seventh day shall be holy... (35:2)

Here the Torah describes the Jew's work in the course of the week as a passive endeavour--"Six days work shall be done" (not "six days you shall do work"). For the Jew regards his workday endeavours not as the source of his sustenance, but merely as a "vessel" in which to receive G-d's blessing. (*The Chassidic Masters*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 8 MARCH 2013

| BEGINS | | ENDS |
|--------|------------|------|
| 7:34 | MELBOURNE | 8:30 |
| 7:27 | ADELAIDE | 8:22 |
| 5:56 | BRISBANE | 6:47 |
| 6:48 | DARWIN | 7:37 |
| 5:54 | GOLD COAST | 6:46 |
| 6:27 | PERTH | 7:20 |
| 7:06 | SYDNEY | 8:00 |
| 7:15 | CANBERRA | 8:10 |
| 7:27 | LAUNCESTON | 8:25 |
| 7:34 | AUCKLAND | 8:29 |
| 7:37 | WELLINGTON | 8:35 |
| 7:28 | HOBART | 8:27 |
| 6:54 | BYRON BAY | 7:46 |



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI
26 ADAR • 8 MARCH

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| FRIDAY NIGHT: | CANDLE LIGHTING: | 7:34 PM |
| | MINCHA: | 7:50 PM |
| | KABBOLAS SHABBOS: | 8:25 PM |
| SHABBOS MORNING: | SHACHARIS: | 10:00 AM |
| | LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA: | 10:21 AM |
| | MOLAD FOR THE MONTH OF NISSAN: | |
| | TUESDAY | 6:21 14 CHALAKIM AM |
| | MINCHA: | 7:40 PM |
| | SHABBOS ENDS: | 8:30 PM |
| WEEKDAYS: | SHACHARIS SUN-FRI: | 9:15 AM |
| | MINCHA: | 2:10 PM |
| | | 7:40 PM |
| | MAARIV: | 8:30 PM |
| | | 9:30 PM |