

# LAMPLIGHTER

30 Shevat  
Parshas Terumah

1124

31 January  
5774/2014

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## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Teruma, opens with G-d's command to Moses: "Speak to the Children of Israel, that they may bring me a contribution, from every one whose heart prompts him... gold, and silver and copper." As we find out further in the Torah reading, the Jews responded in droves, donating much of their wealth for the purpose of erecting the Tabernacle in the desert. Vast amounts of precious metal were amassed, necessary for making all of the Tabernacle's many implements.

Obviously, the person who donates gold is at a higher level than one who donates silver or copper - commodities that are worth far less. Our Sages interpreted the contribution of each metal as symbolic of the different levels that exist in the giving of tzedaka (charity).

The Hebrew word for "gold" is "zahav," an acronym for "he who gives in fullness of health (ze hanoten bari)." This refers to the highest level of charity, when one shares his wealth with others solely to fulfill the mitzva (commandment) of tzedaka.

Kesef (silver), stands for k'shey esh sakanat pachad - when a person gives tzedaka because he is fearful, hoping that the merit of his charity will prevent evil from befalling him. This level of giving tzedaka is lower than the first, for the giver is motivated by the desire for personal gain.

The lowest level of charity is that of copper - nechoshet, the letters of which stand for netinat choleh she'omer tenu - the charitable donation of one who is ill. This person, motivated by the desire to alleviate his own suffering, remembers to fulfill the mitzva of tzedaka only when he himself is in pain, hoping thereby to alleviate his misery.

On a deeper level, the differences between gold, silver and copper symbolize the differences between the First, Second and Third Holy Temples. Gold, the most precious metal, alludes to the First Holy Temple, the most perfect and complete of G-d's dwelling places. Silver, although valuable, is worth far less than gold. This alludes to the Second Holy Temple, which was missing five items present in the First, among them the Ark of the Covenant.

These deficiencies reflected the fearful state of the mind of the Jewish people at that time, who worried that the Holy Temple would once again be destroyed. Indeed, history proved that their fears were legitimate. Lastly, copper is symbolic of our present condition, while we yet suffer the pains of the exile. Like one who is stricken with any other illness, we must cry out to our Father in Heaven, begging Him to establish the Third and Final Holy Temple that will last forever.

*Adapted from a talk of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Vayigash 5752*

## The Gold Standard

By Eli Pink

The *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) was an impressive structure, constructed of acacia wood, gold, silver, copper and luxurious animal hides. The laws and discussion of the *Mishkan's* construction span five Torah portions, and would, at first glance, seem irrelevant to us nowadays. The *Mishkan* ceased to be used almost 3000 years ago with the construction of the first Temple in Jerusalem, of what consequence all these laws?

Interwoven through the story of the *Mishkan*, however, are numerous ethical and moral lessons and practical advice that we continue to live by to this day. One of them pertains to the materials used in the construction project.

Almost everything in the *Mishkan* was made of, or plated with, gold, silver or copper. We know that the Jews left Egypt with an excess of gold - as evidenced by their making of the Golden Calf - why then did G-d instruct that the lesser materials of silver and copper should also be used in the *Mishkan's* construction? Surely pure gold would have looked much more spectacular.

Recently, during a weekly discussion group in a school here in Leeds, we were talking about intermarriage. One of the boys asked me a perceptive question: "If you were sitting in my place," he asked, "and were not a rabbi with a religious upbringing, could you honestly say that you would only marry a Jewish girl?"

My response was that being born into a religious family and being a rabbi means that I face different challenges (thankfully, intermarriage isn't one of them) than those brought up in a different way. And vice versa. G-d throws each of us the challenges that He feels that we can deal with, no more but no less.

As each of us struggles with our challenges, each on our own level, the struggle is precious to G-d. Whether we would classify ourselves as "gold," "silver" or "copper" is irrelevant, as long as we are working in the holy field of making a home for G-d in this world, a modern day *Mishkan*.

The commentaries note that the altar that was used for the sacrifices in the Temple was copper-coated. The objective of the altar was to bring forgiveness, and it was therefore fitting that it not be made of gold, a material that does not tarnish, rather copper. Copper tarnishes, but can be restored to its former state, demonstrating that just as tarnished metal can be returned to its former shining state, so too, even one who may be classified as "copper," "tarnished copper" at that, remains a shining Jew, ready and able to sparkle.

# Slice of LIFE

## FROM BENEDICTINE MONK TO REBBE'S ASSISTANT

by Michael Freund

For three years, Aharon Calderon was a monk at a Catholic monastery in South America, living an austere existence of contemplation and introspection. But amid all the silence, he heard the call of eternity, leading him to embrace Judaism. This is his story.

Aharon Calderon was born 36 years ago, in the city of Parana, capital of Argentina's Entre Rios province. "I was born into a Catholic family, though it was not a very religious one," Calderon says. "But my parents did send me to a Catholic high school."

The ideal of helping people greatly appealed to him. At school, Calderon found himself taking a growing interest in religion, confident that it would offer him a framework in which he could give to others while also achieving his own sense of spiritual satisfaction.

After high school, he attended a Catholic seminary for two years, where he had his first experience with missionary activity. Along with his fellow students, Calderon was charged with assisting a group of Indians from a less affluent part of Argentina. At the time, he enjoyed it immensely. It seemed to embody the idea of universal love that he was always hearing about in school.

In retrospect, however, Calderon says it proved to be an important moment, one in which the first seeds of doubt regarding the Church were planted in his mind, albeit subtly. "The work gave me a great deal of satisfaction because I was helping people. However, it also created a spiritual vacuum within me, because it was to a certain extent superficial."

Continuing, Calderon asserts that, "To give can also be a form of falsehood. And this, by the way, was the first intuitive criticism that I had regarding the Church: we would help the poor, give them second-rate food and drink, and then go back to our comfortable institution, where we would take a warm bath, relax and eat expensive delicacies."

At the age of 19, Calderon sought out what he terms "a more archaic, more ancient

order, one more connected with Catholicism's roots." He found and joined a Benedictine monastery.

"It was a contemplative order, where the monks were forbidden to speak most of the day," Calderon says. The enforced silence, he says, was a powerful experience, and it gave him an opportunity for self-exploration and discovery.

Among other things, Calderon spent a lot of time engaged in inner reflection and in reading the Bible. "When a person connects to their true self," he says, "they can then discern the existence of the Creator, of a solitary being Who protects, creates and sustains the universe."

It was during this period that Calderon began to develop a sense of unease with basic Catholic doctrine. One evening, Calderon was reading the Bible when he came to the verse, "Hear O Israel, the

L-rd our G-d the L-rd is One." As he thought about the text, he wondered why his own faith contradicted this most fundamental of principles.

Calderon's doubts persisted. Eventually, he decided to leave the monastery. But he remained intrigued by the world of the spirit and went to study theology at a Catholic university. While there, he decided to learn Hebrew. He found an adult-education institute where Hebrew was taught, and through the classes Calderon first met Jews.

The turning point came one day when, "I said to my friend, 'The Jews say every Friday, "The Children of Israel shall observe the Sabbath, to make the Sabbath an eternal covenant for their generations." If it is an eternal covenant, then G-d would not go back on it. So if we move it to Sunday, then we are making a mistake!"

"I understood then that there was no turning back. This was the spiritual point at which I decided to join the Jewish people."

Calderon had heard that an Orthodox rabbi had recently arrived in the city. One day, Calderon saw the rabbi walking in the street, so he introduced himself, and said that he wished to convert.

They later arranged a meeting, where Rabbi Moshe Blumenfeld, a Chabad-Lubavitch emissary in Argentina, said something that made a deep impression on Calderon. "He explained to me that I did not need to convert to achieve redemption... it was sufficient for me to keep the seven basic commandments required of a gentile."

"This," Calderon explains, "led me to

understand that the G-d of Israel is a G-d of love Who accepts all of mankind. By contrast, according to Christianity, anyone who does not accept their way of thinking is condemned to hell."

Calderon found Rabbi Blumenfeld to be warm and hospitable, and for the next two years, he spent a great deal of time with him studying Judaism. "I wanted to learn how Jews live. In the process, I watched, internalized and then connected to it."

Calderon decided that he wanted to go to Israel to convert.

"From the moment I arrived in Israel, I felt a connection with the Land and with the Jewish people." He began to study at a *yeshiva* in Jerusalem.

A few months later, a friend of Calderon's took him to see the Rebbe of Stropkov, of the Sanz dynasty. Calderon was immediately captivated by the Rebbe and by his personality. He found himself drawn to the Chassidic lifestyle.

Eventually, he went before a rabbinical court in Jerusalem and converted. After his conversion, Calderon continued to study while working. He married, and he and his wife Anya have three children. Calderon remains close to the Rebbe of Stropkov, serving as his assistant in Jerusalem's Meah Shearim neighborhood. Looking back, Calderon remembers something that Rabbi Blumenfeld told him. "He explained to me that the conversion must be like a fruit that ripens and falls by itself from the tree when it is ready. That is how I view my Judaism, as something natural and integral to me."

Calderon is proud of his spiritual journey, and he hopes that it will inspire more Jews to cherish their heritage. "Generally speaking, once people know that you have converted for no reason other than love for G-d and for the Torah, it causes them to feel proud and gives them yet another reason to appreciate their Judaism."

Biographical note:

**Rabbi Avraham Shalom Halberstam**, a descendant of the *Devrei Yehezkiel*, son of the *Devrei Chayim of Sanz*, is the present day Stropkov Rebbe in Jerusalem, living in Meah She'arim. He runs several *yeshivas* and *kolels* in Jerusalem and other cities in Israel. He is known for devoting himself to helping many who need to return to their Jewish roots.

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ISSUE 1124

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

The belief in the coming of Mashiach and the Messianic redemption is one of the fundamental principles of the Jewish faith. Every Jew must believe that Mashiach will arise and restore the Kingdom of David to its original state and sovereignty, rebuild the *Bet Hamikdash* (Holy Temple of Jerusalem), gather the dispersed of Israel, and in his days all the laws of the Torah shall be reinstated as they had been originally.



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

By the Grace of G-d  
12th of Nissan, 5734  
[April 4, 1974]  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

## Greeting and Blessing:

Following the pleasure of our meeting and conversation after the Farbrengen last night, I wish to add here in writing some thoughts which, for obvious reasons, I did not wish to express in the presence of others, namely, in regard to your son.

I am in agreement with the opinion of your brother-in-law mentioned in your letter, especially as he is a physician. I believe that the best help that can be given your son, in general, is to get him to work.

I should only add, and I trust your brother-in-law would concur, that in view of the fact that this would entail a change in your son's way of life for a period of time, it would be well if his job would, in the first stage at any rate, meet two conditions: Firstly, that it would not impose on him too much responsibility, so that he would not be frightened or discouraged by it. On the other hand, it should have a more or less rigid timetable and schedule, so that he would get used to a routine and orderly life, which, in my opinion, is the overriding consideration. If it is the kind of work which he might consider beneath him, it might be explained to him that it is only a start, and temporary, and, indeed, the first step to advancement. It is well known that here in the USA people at the top often take pride in the fact that they worked their way up from the bottom of the ladder.

After he adjusts himself to a part-time occupation of several hours a day, he could probably be induced to work half a day and in due course a full-time job.

Needless to say, the above is in addition to what we spoke about the importance of his feeling that his parents and friends have the fullest confidence in him . . .

. . . I reiterate my prayerful wishes to you and yours for a joyous Festival of Liberation, and may the Festival of Our Freedom bring you and yours true freedom, freedom from anxiety material and spiritual, from anything that might detract from serving G-d wholeheartedly and with joy.

And to carry over this freedom and joy into the whole year. Wishing you and yours a Kosher and inspiring Pesach,

With blessing,  
M Schneerson

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By the Grace of G-d  
5726 [1966]  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

## Greeting and Blessing:

Regarding your question about investing in stocks, generally I am not in favour of it, since this is largely a matter of speculation. Indeed, a prominent businessman once said to me that he did not wish to engage in the kind of business where he and an ignoramus have the same chance. It is particularly objectionable because of the anxiety and nervous strain that it creates in some people. Moreover, in these unsettled days, there is too great an element of speculation involved in the Stock Exchange. It is surely possible to find some more fitting investment opportunities, if an investment is contemplated, than the kind of thing which sends the investor scurrying for the first edition of the Stock Exchange report in the morning newspaper.

With blessing,

## CUSTOMS CORNER

There's more to giving than being nice. The world rotates on its axis, the galaxies and stars continue moving - because of giving. Nothing we own is really ours to begin with - G-d gives to us so we can give to others.

Giving is a mitzvah and a responsibility. As such, it comes with its own set of dos and don'ts:

The mitzvah says, you have to give something. Nothing in your pocket? Show some empathy, provide some kind and uplifting words. In no case can you just keep on walking.

- Standard Jewish practice is to give at least 10% of net income to charity.
- Give *tzedakah* (charity) to the needy, Torah schools, Jewish institutions, and/or humanitarian causes. A family member who is in difficult financial straits takes precedence over non-family. Likewise, local poor and charitable organizations take precedence over their faraway counterparts. And charitable causes in Israel take precedence over (non-local) charities in the Diaspora.
- No other mitzvah evokes as powerful a divine response as *tzedakah*. It makes sense: you take care of others, and G-d takes care of you. Our sages taught that *tzedakah* brings atonement and protects against harsh heavenly decrees.

# A WORD

*from the Director*

*This week's parshah teaches us about building the mishkan, the Sanctuary which travelled with the Jews through the desert. The walls of the mishkan were made of wooden planks cut from cedar trees.*

*We can learn a lesson from the use of cedar trees for the mishkan. The Torah calls the cedar trees atzei shittim, and this name helps us understand the lesson which the cedar trees teach us. The Hebrew word shittim comes from shtus something foolish.*

*Our sages teach us that a person will not commit a sin unless he thinks foolishly. Every Jew wants to be close to HaShem and to do what He wants us to do. So what foolish shtus could cause a person to sin? It's the yetzer hora, which tries to convince him that he can commit the sin and still be close to HaShem. The person doesn't always realize that this is not true, and that believing it is foolish.*

*That is one type of shtus, but there is also "good shtus." But how can shtus be good? Good things aren't foolish. Being foolish means doing things without thinking. Yet sometimes, doing something without thinking can be good. For example, before the Jews received the Torah, they said naaseh venishmah, "We will do and we will listen." They promised to do what HaShem said without waiting to hear what He would tell them to do.*

*Was that foolish? Well, the Jews didn't think about what HaShem would tell them to do before they made that promise. They promised to follow HaShem's instructions before knowing what they would be. This is good shtus. Good shtus means kabbalas ol deciding to fulfil HaShem's mitzvos, and studying the Torah just because HaShem tells us to.*

*Every Jew has a mishkan in his heart. Like the mishkan in the desert was built from atzei shittim, we can build our mishkan by teaching the part of ourselves which listens to the shtus of the yetzer hora, to do "good shtus."*

*J. I. Gutnick*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

## MASTERS OF SONG

In the first years after Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi became a Rebbe, the Chassidic interpretations which he gave of Biblical verses and Talmudic quotations were often condensed into one sentence. On one occasion, for example, he took as his text a statement from the Mishnah in tractate Shabbat: "All [animals] bearing a chain or ring (*shir*) may go out wearing their chain and may be drawn along by the chain." The context defines the restrictions applying to animals on Shabbos - under what circumstances may they more freely and be led from a private domain to the public domain.

Reading this same text on a mystical level, though, Rabbi Shneur Zalman gave the following interpretation: "All the masters of song (*shir*) - that is, the souls and angels who inhabit the World Above - go out in song and are drawn in song, that is, they may be either elevated or drawn down into This World through the outpouring of a worshiper's soul in melody."

When one of the Chassidim who heard this from the Rebbe's mouth repeated this thought to the few Chassidim who then lived in Shklov, they were most distressed, in anticipation of the attack which the local opponents of Chassidism would no doubt make on this seemingly bizarre interpretation of a straightforward legal statement. And in a short time their anxiety proved to be well founded.

In due course Rabbi Shneur Zalman had occasion to pass through Shklov, but since the local scholars had by now recognized that he was a luminary in the Torah world, many of them visited him and asked him various learned questions which had engaged their attention. He, however, offered no answers. They therefore decided to convene a gathering of scholars in the communal house of study that was known locally as "the cold *Beis Midrash*," and at this forum the visiting Rebbe would be asked to deliver a learned dissertation, and to answer all the questions that had been put to him. Rabbi Shneur Zalman accepted the invitation.

Ascending the pulpit he said: "Instead of delivering a discourse and answering questions, I shall sing you a melody. For there is a Mishnah which says: "*Kol baalei shir yotzein b'shir v'nimshachin b'shir*" -- that is, "souls and angels from the World Above may be both elevated and drawn down into This World through the singing of a melody."

And with this he began to sing a haunting melody and they heard in it the intense yearning of a lofty soul. A sweet stillness stole into the heart of every man there. In ways that they could not fathom, the thorny questions and problems that had brought them there all found clearly true answers. With his melody lending voice to his meditative attachment [*dveikut*] to the Divine, he refreshed their minds from the wellsprings of wisdom, and they could now gaze upon the Torah with a clearer eye.

One of their number, by the name of Rabbi Yosef Kolbo, had spent months of fatiguing exertion in an attempt to solve four near-insoluble

problems that not even the genius sages of Vilna and Polotzk could master. But by cleaving to the Source, the toughest of his problems resolved itself peacefully. Years later, when he had already become a steadfast disciple of Rabbi Shneur Zalman, this scholar recalled: "When those four problems resolved themselves in my mind, I felt like a small child."

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In 1804 an elder Chassid of Rabbi Shneur Zalman by the name of Reb Avraham Sheines of Shklov told this story to the Rebbe's grandson, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch. It was on the basis of this story that Rabbi Menachem Mendel later wrote a long Chassidic discourse which explains, among other things, the Kabbalistic connotations of the musical cantillation symbols that adorn the printed Hebrew text of the Torah.

[Source: Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from the rendition in *A Treasury of Chassidic Tales* (Artsroll), as translated by his colleague-mentor Uri Kaploun from Sipurei Chasidim by Rabbi S. Y. Zevin.]

Biographical note:

Rabbi Shneur Zalman [of blessed memory: 18 Elul 5505 - 24 Tevet 5573 (1745 - Dec. 1812 C.E.)], one of the main disciples of the Maggid of Mezritch, is the founder of the Chabad-Chassidic movement. He is the author of *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* and *Tanya* as well as many other major works in both Jewish law and the mystical teachings.

# Thoughts THAT COUNT

They shall make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell amidst them (25:8)

G-d desired a dwelling place in the lower realms. (Midrash Tanchuma, Naso 16)

This is what man is all about; this is the purpose of his creation and of the creation of all the worlds, higher and lower--that there be made for G-d a dwelling in the lower realms. (*Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi*)

And you shall make a covering... of tachash skins above (26:14)

The tachash was a multi-coloured animal, which was created specifically for the Tabernacle and existed only at that time.

Rabbi Hoshaya taught that it was a one-horned animal. (*Jerusalem Talmud*)

In truth, "Everything that G-d created, He created solely for His glory" (Ethics of the Fathers 6:11). It is only that, in our material world, a thing's exterior face often belies its intrinsic purpose.

But there was one creature, the tachash, which existed only in the time and place it was needed for the making of a "dwelling for G-d." Thus the tachash expressed the true nature of every creation: that it exists to the sole end of serving and revealing the divine essence implicit within it. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe*)

## CANDLE LIGHTING: 31 JANUARY 2014

BEGINS	ENDS
8:16 .....MELBOURNE .....	9:10
8:07 .....ADELAIDE .....	8:58
6:25 .....BRISBANE .....	7:15
7:02 .....DARWIN .....	7:51
6:25 .....GOLD COAST .....	7:15
7:02 .....PERTH .....	7:53
7:44 .....SYDNEY .....	8:36
7:55 .....CANBERRA .....	8:47
8:17 .....LAUNCESTON .....	9:11
8:16 .....AUCKLAND .....	9:09
8:26 .....WELLINGTON .....	9:20
8:20 .....HOBART .....	9:15
7:25 .....BYRON BAY .....	8:15
7:02 .....SINGAPORE .....	7:53



## CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS TERUMAH  
30 SHEVAT • 31 JANUARY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8:16 PM
	MINCHA:	8:25 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	8:55 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA	10:04 AM
	MINCHA:	8:10 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9:18 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS: SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MON-FRI:	8:00 AM
	MINCHA:	8:20 PM
	MAARIV: SUN-FRI:	9:10 PM