Overview

A harboring was taught the method for kindling the menorah. Moshe sanctifies the Levi'im to work in the Mishkan. They replace the firstborn, who were disqualified after sinning with the golden calf. The Levi'im are commanded that after five years of training they are to serve in the Mishkan from ages 30 to 50; afterwards they are to engage in less strenuous work. One year after the Exodus from Egypt, Hashem commands Moshe concerning the Korban Pesach. Those ineligible for the Korban Pesach request a remedy, and the mitzvah of Pesach Sheini, allowing a “second chance” to offer the Korban Pesach one month later, is detailed. Miraculous clouds that hover near the Mishkan signal when to travel and when to camp. Two silver trumpets summon the princes or the entire nation for announcements. The trumpets also signal travel plans, war or festivals. The order in which the tribes march is specified. Moshe invites his father-in-law, Yisro, to join the Jewish People, but Yisro returns to Midian. At the instigation of the Eruv Rav — the mixed multitude of Egyptians who joined the Jewish People in the Exodus — some people complain about the manna. Moshe protests that he is unable to govern the nation alone. Hashem sends an incessant supply of quail for those who complained that they lacked meat. A plague punishes Miriam with tzara'as, or leprosy, after she is cured before traveling. 

Insights

Street Heather

“Miriam and Aharon spoke against Moshe regarding the Cushite woman that he had married.” (12:1)

Imagine a Native American, who has spent all his life on the reservation in Canyon de Chelly, Arizona, finding himself on the East Side of New York City around 29th and Lex. He walks down the street and stops. His attention is riveted on a nearby window. Straddling the window is a rectangular metal box about three feet long by eighteen inches high. It blasts out hot air, chugging away in a relentless mechanical symphony. He lifts his eyes. Brownstone apartments rear upwards to the sky. And in each and every window he sees the same metal box. Hundreds of them, all belching hot air into the humid Manhattan sky.

He thinks to himself “These white men sure love the heat. It’s so hot today — and they still put these contraptions in their windows to heat the street!”

When Miriam found out that Moshe had separated from his wife, she thought that he had become conceited. She thought Moshe viewed himself as being so close to G-d that he had risen beyond a normal marital relationship, that his self-imposed monasticism was a product of an inflated ego. Of course, what would be considered conceit in Moshe, would to us appear humility beyond anything we have ever seen or experienced. We have no parameters to equate our concepts of conceit and humility to Moshe. But, on that exalted level, Miriam thought that Moshe had succumbed to pride.

But how could Miriam have thought that Moshe was acting out of pride? The Torah calls Moshe the “humblest of all men.” Surely Miriam knew the Torah’s evaluation of Moshe. How could Miriam have even suspected his motives?

Moshe may have been the humblest of all men, but he wasn’t a sheleper. Being humble doesn’t mean...
walking around hunched over with a miserable look on your face. Moshe knew that he was the king. But he also knew that compared to Hashem, he was nothing. His humility lay in understanding, like no man before or since, exactly how small he was compared to Hashem. It was because Moshe worked on himself to this point that Hashem concretized his awareness by speaking to him “face to face.” Then Moshe’s humility became visceral. He could “see” how small he was.

Humility is not something you can judge from the outside. There are some people who seem very humble, but inside they are watching everyone watching them be humble. They are starring in their own mental movie called: “A Life of Total Humility.” On the other hand, a king may appear to behave in a rather grand fashion, whereas inside he genuinely sees himself as totally unworthy.

Sometimes things aren’t quite the way they seem. Sometimes a cool air-conditioner can look like a street heater blasting out its own hot air.

**You Can Always Get What You Want**

*“Why should we be made less by not offering Hashem’s offering in its appointed time among the Children of Israel.” (9:6)*

You can always get what you want. It all depends on how much you want it. Our Rabbis teach us that according to the way we desire to go — so are we led. If we want to travel the spiritual path, we will find opportunities for spiritual growth opening up all around us. If, however, we want to go in the other direction, we will find a million Technicolor dreams to lose ourselves in. What you want is what you get.

In this week’s Parsha we learn of the mitzvah of Pesach Sheni — “Pesach Two.” “Pesach Two” was not a sequel to a “Pesach One.” It wasn’t that Pesach One was such a big hit that we were given another chance to relieve it all over again. No. It happened that, through no fault of their own, there was a group of people who weren’t able to bring the Pesach offering on the 14th of Nissan. They didn’t have time to ritually purify themselves before Pesach. They appealed to Moshe and Aharon that they be allowed together with Moshe. “Where shall I get meat to give to this entire people?”

Hashem’s reply was that Moshe should gather seventy men from the elders of Israel, to take them to the Tent of Meeting and have them stand there together with Moshe.

Ostensibly, this was a strange reply. Hashem planned to give the Jewish People the meat they craved. So, wouldn’t Moshe have been better served by gathering seventy ritual slaughterers (shochtim) rather than seventy elders?

The craving for meat, for the physical things of this world, is no more than a physical expression of a spiritual lacking. The desire for meat wasn’t the disease — it was only the symptom. The Jewish People said that they craved meat, but in reality their souls craved spirituality.

Our Rabbis teach us that someone who loves money will not be satisfied with money, he will want more. They also say that someone who loves Torah will want more. The desire for money is no more than the
physical expression of a spiritual lacking — the desire for Torah.

It’s a good doctor who can tell the difference between the symptom and the disease.

Sources:
Street Heater - The Malbim, Rabbi C.Z. Senter
You Can Always Get What You Want - Rabbi Yosef Tzeinvort
heard from Rabbi Yehoshua Bertram
Symptoms and Syndromes - Rabbi S.R. Hirsch heard from Rabbi Mordechai Pitem

Haftorah:
Zecharia 2:14-4:7

BIO-DEGRADATION
“For behold I will bring you My servant — the flourishing one” (3:8)

Why is the Mashiach referred to as the “flourishing one?” Even though today it seems that all remnant of the majesty of the Royal House of David has been uprooted and has vanished into nothingness, nevertheless, the root is still living, hidden and dormant.

Immediately prior to the coming of Mashiach there will be a tremendous confusion in the world. Everything will seem to have gone haywire. The natural order will be turned on its head: Age will bow to youth. Ugliness will be trumpeted as beauty, and what is beautiful will be disparaged as unattractive. Barbarism will be lauded as culture. And culture will be dismissed as worthless.

The hunger of consumerism and the lust for material wealth will grow more and more, and it will find less and less to satisfy its voracity. Eventually Esav/Rome/Materialism will grow so rapacious that it will become its own angel of death. It will literally consume itself and regurgitate itself back out.

But from this decay, the line of David will sprout, like a plant that springs forth from no more than the dirt of the ground. After three wars of confusion, at the appropriate moment, the Mashiach will appear like a majestic tree flourishing from barren ground, laden with fruit, revealed to all.

Malbim, Ohr Yesharim in the Haggadah Migdal Eder Hachadash

LOVE OF THE LAND
SELECTIONS FROM CLASSICAL TORAH SOURCES WHICH EXPRESS THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL AND EREZ YISRAEL

MITZVAH MONOPOLY

Eretz Yisrael is sanctified above all lands. How is the sanctity expressed? The barley for the omer offering on Pesach, the wheat for the two-loaves offering on Shavuos, and the bikkurim brought to the kohen in the Beis Hamikdash from the first produce of the seven species (mentioned in the Torah in connection with the blessing of the Land) must all be grown only in Eretz Yisrael.

Masechta Kelim 1:6
Masechta Mikvaos 8:1

Eretz Yisrael is pure and its mikvaos are pure.