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TERMINAL ON

“And Aaron did thus.” (8:3)

What is a mitzvah?

A mitzvah is a container, a vessel that receives light from above. Our job in this world is only to create these containers, to prepare them and make them ready to receive the light. This light from above, this spiritual energy, is already being broadcast constantly from Hashem. We have no idea what this spiritual light is, or how it reaches this world. Indeed, it is not for us to know. Our only job is to make the vessel to contain it, to prepare and make ready the spiritual ‘terminal’ to receive the light. This we do by performing and fulfilling the *mitzvos*.

The Rambam writes that if a non-Kohen took the Menorah out of the Sanctuary and the lamps were lit there, the mitzvah is still valid even though the lamps were lit by a non-Kohen. However, *the cleaning and the preparation of the lamps of the Menorah can only be done by a Kohen*, and if anyone else performs this service, the mitzvah is void. Thus, it must be that the cleaning and the preparation of the lamps is *the essential part of the mitzvah*.

Ostensibly, this is hard to understand: How can it be that what seems like a glorified cleaning job is the essence of the mitzvah, and the actual lighting itself - secondary?

The essence of all mitzvos is to prepare and create the vessel to receive the celestial light from Hashem. To make sure that the ‘terminal’ is turned on and ready to receive. That’s our job in this world. We cannot create the light ourselves, but we can make ready the vessel that holds the light so that it will radiate to the world.

• Adapted from *L'Torah U'Moadim*
Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin

INSIGHTS

ANYONE FOR KUGEL?

“And the man Moshe was extremely humble, more so than any man on the face of the earth.” (12:3)

One cold Russian morning, the Chafetz Chaim arrived in Moscow. He was met at the station by a solitary colleague. There were no crowds thronging the platform, no sea of well-wishers eager to get a glimpse of one of the greatest human beings to walk the planet. There he was. Just a solitary Jew in a cloth cap carrying a modest travel case.

The reason that the station was deserted was because the Chafetz Chaim had written to his colleague and asked him not to reveal the exact time of his arrival. As they were leaving the station, the colleague turned to him and asked him why he had wanted to keep his arrival a secret? For this had deprived the masses from giving him the honor that a *talmid chacham* of his stature demanded.

The Chafetz Chaim replied “I have no doubt that you eat *kugel* on Shabbos. If, however, on Friday you suddenly had a strong desire for *kugel*, and you went into your kitchen, the *rebbe-tzin* would certainly suggest that you eat something else. *Kugel* is very delectable — but it’s only for Shabbos. That’s why I asked you to keep my arrival a secret — the honor that I would receive from all these people is like *kugel*, it’s only for the next world — ‘the day that is totally Shabbos.’

Our Sages warn us in the strongest possible terms against status-seeking and honor. We are told to be *extremely* humble. Why should it be

that this character trait is emphasized over all others?

There can be no reward for a mitzvah in this world. A mitzvah is a spiritual entity. This world is a physical world. **So, necessarily, the only reward a person can receive here is a physical reward. But a mitzvah, being totally spiritual, can never be adequately recompensed in this world. The currency just doesn’t exist here.** However, if a person derives status and honor from doing a mitzvah, even though this honor is illusory, he has nevertheless received a kind of recompense, *because status and honor are felt as spiritual entities*. Thus, by deriving a surrogate benefit from the counterfeit currency of honor in this world a person can arrive at the First National Bank of *Olam Haba*, and find that he exchanged his priceless diamonds — the eternal reward for his mitzvos — for Monopoly money.

Kugel may be sweeter than sweet, but if you eat it here, you won’t be able to eat in the next world, in the world that is ‘completely Shabbos.’

THE HIDDEN LIGHT

“And Aaron did so” (8:3)

“This teaches the praise of Aaron — that he didn’t change.” (Rashi)

Why was it so praiseworthy that Aaron didn’t change? That he ‘*did so*.’ But surely everyone is supposed to do the *mitzvos* just ‘*so*.’ What special quality did Aaron bring to his lighting of the Menorah that made it ‘*so*’?

In Sefer Bereishis (Genesis), after each creation, the Torah records ‘And it was *so*’ — exactly as it should be — complete and perfect. However, when the Torah speaks of the creation of light — “Let there be light!” — it doesn’t say afterwards “And it was *so*.” *continued on back page*

A

aron is taught the method for kindling the *Menorah*. Moshe sanctifies the *Levi'im* to work in the *Mishkan*. They replace the first-born, who were disqualified after sinning with the golden calf. After five years of training, the *Levi'im* serve in the *Mishkan* from ages 30 to 50; afterwards they 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 thus is given the *mitzvah* of *Pesach Sheini*, which allows a “second chance” to offer the *Korban Pesach* one month later. 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 *Bnei Yisrael*, but Yisro returns to Midian. At the instigation of the *Eruv Rav* (the mixed

multitude of Egyptians who joined the *Bnei Yisrael* in the Exodus) some of the people complain about the manna. Moshe protests that he is unable to govern the nation alone. Hashem tells him to select 70 elders, the first *Sanhedrin*, to assist him, and informs him that the people will be given meat until they will be sickened by it. Two candidates for the group of elders prophesy beyond their mandate, foretelling that Yehoshua instead of Moshe will bring the people to Canaan.

Some protest, including Yehoshua, but Moshe is pleased that others have become Prophets. Hashem sends an incessant supply of quail for those who complained that they lacked meat. A plague punishes those who complained. Miriam makes a constructive remark to Aaron which also

implies that Moshe is only like other Prophets. Hashem explains that Moshe’s prophecy is superior to that of any other prophet, and punishes Miriam with *tzara’as*, as if she had gossiped about her brother. Moshe prays for her, and the nation waits until she is cured before traveling.

OVERVIEW



יום זה מְנוּבָד
 "THIS IS THE MOST
 PRECIOUS OF DAYS..."

"It is the first of the holidays."

In Parshas Emor (Vayikra 23:2,3) the Torah records the command of Hashem to Moshe to teach the people about all the "mikraei kodesh" - the holidays - which He begins with the command to observe Shabbos. What does Shabbos have to do with the holidays? The explanation which Rashi quotes from the Sages is that one who violates the holidays is considered as if he violated the Sabbaths as well, and one who observes the holidays is considered as if he had observed the Sabbaths. This concept of the holidays as an extension of Shabbos sanctity is expressed in our musical tribute to Shabbos as the first of the holidays.



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WATER ON TAP

Sharona Shapiro

<mshapiro@pluto.mssc.huji.ac.il> wrote:

Dear Rabbi:

I have never used this forum before but I understand that you give answers to halachic questions. Here is mine: I have a Brita water filter pitcher. Can I refill it on Shabbat and allow the water to go through the filter? Thank you very much and tizku l'mitzvot.

Dear Sharona Shapiro,

As you know, there are 39 categories of creative activity forbidden on Shabbat. One of them is *borer* — selecting one type of food or object from a mixture. Pouring wine or water through a cloth in order to strain out sediments or dirt is an example of *borer*.

But let's say for example you have a full glass of wine, and you only want to drink half. So you pour half back into the bottle. All you've done is to separate 'wine' from 'wine.' This is not an example of *borer*, since there was no 'mixture' to begin with.

So too in the case of a water filter. Most people looking at a glass of clean tap water see nothing but pure water. Even though we all *know* it's full of impurities, we accept it and drink it as is. Since we don't view it as a 'mixture' of water and impurities, the impurities are therefore considered part of the liquid itself. It's therefore OK to run it through a water filter.

This is true for most people. However, if you personally would never drink the water without filtering it, then for you the impurities can't be considered part of the liquid; filtering them would be *borer*. Neither may someone else filter the water for you; but if someone filters water for himself, you may drink it.

Sources:

- Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 319:10
- Ibid. Bi'ur Halacha "Ho'el"

MIX AND MATCH

Layve Rabinowitz

<yeshcol@global.co.za> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

Can you wear a yarmulka made out of linen and wool?

David Teten <DTETEN@bear.com> wrote:

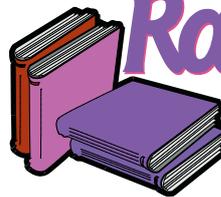
Dear Rabbi,

Is it permissible to wear a wool coat on top of a linen shirt, since they are not the same garment?

Dear Layve Rabinowitz

and David Teten,

Ask the
 Rabbi



The Torah forbids wearing *Shatnez* — a garment made of sheep's wool and linen. A 'garment' is defined as something which provides warmth or protection from the sun. A yarmulka fits this definition. So if it contains wool and linen, you can't wear it.

According to the Torah the wool and linen must be **connected** to be considered *Shatnez*. However, the Sages prohibited wearing a woolen garment over a linen one, or vice versa, if you can't remove the inner garment without removing the outer one. In such a case, it is considered as if the fabrics are connected.

Which reminds me of the following exchange:

Mother: Where is your brother? He's going to be late for school!

Son: He's upstairs getting dressed.

Mother: What's taking him so long?

Son: He accidentally put his shirt on backwards, and now he's trying to turn it around without taking it off.

Sources:

- Deuteronomy 22:11, Leviticus 19:15
- Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah 300
- Mishna Kelayim 9:3

YIDDLE RIDDLE

Last week we asked: "Which verse do we say every day in the prayers, that starts and ends with the same three words in the same order?"

Answer: The last verse in the third paragraph of the *Shema*. It starts and ends with the words 'Ani Hashem Elokaichem' — 'I am Hashem, your G-d.' However, we add the word 'Emet' (True) at the end of the verse in order to say 'Hashem Elokaichem Emet' — 'Hashem, your God, is True,' as in the verse in Jeremiah ch.10.

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SHOWING OFF THE SHOWBREADS

“You shall arrange them (the twelve show-breads)...on the pure table before Hashem.” (Vayikra 24:6)

The designation “pure table,” observed the sage Reish Lakish, implies that it is capable of contracting a state of impurity. But, he asks, how can any wooden vessel designed to always be stationary ever become impure?

The answer is that this table in the Sanctuary was actually moved from its place during the Festivals when Jews made their pilgrimage to the *Beis Hamikdash*. It was raised from its place and carried out to show the breads to the *olei regel* (pilgrims), who were told: “See how beloved you are before your G-d.”

This love, explains Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, was expressed in the miracle which Hashem made in regard to the showbreads by enabling them to remain as warm on the day they were removed from the table as they were when arranged on the table although it was the eighth day after being baked.

Tosefos points out that the term “warm” used here is in accordance with the opinion that the showbreads were baked on Shabbos and were still warm when arranged. According to the other opinions that they were baked on Erev Shabbos the miracle was that although they were nine days old they remained as soft when removed as when arranged.

Rashi in Chumash (Vayikra 24:10) cites the explanation of the sage Rabbi Berachia that the blasphemer used the showbread as a springboard for his irreverence. “It is the manner of a king to eat fresh bread every day,

not cold bread nine days old!” The mention of cold rather than **hard** bread seems to favor the opinion that they were baked on Shabbos and became cold from staying so long on the table. But his reference to it being nine days old is an indication that he holds that they were baked before

four of them together.

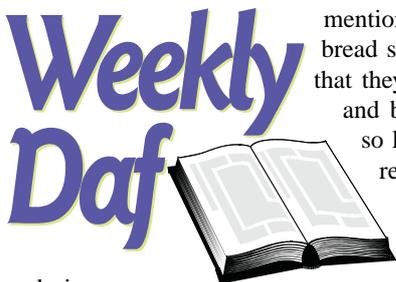
This categorization is expanded upon in the Midrash (Vayikra Rabbah 30:12) which lists four classes of Jews corresponding to the four species:

The *esrog* has both taste and fragrance and symbolizes the Jews who have to their credit Torah learning and good deeds. The *lulav* has taste (dates grow on the palm tree) but no fragrance just like certain Jews who have Torah learning but lack good deeds. The *hadass* has fragrance but no taste like those Jews who have good deeds but lack Torah learning. Finally, the *aravah* has neither taste nor fragrance like those Jews who possess neither Torah learning nor good deeds.

What does Hashem do with such Jews? To eliminate them is unthinkable. So the Holy One, blessed be He, commands us to bind all the species together so that each of them will atone for the others.

It is interesting to note that in our Talmudic section the fragrant but fruitless *hadass* is placed in the same category as the totally barren *aravah*, while in the Midrash the good deeds of the *hadass*-people place them in one category with the *lulav* and *esrog*. It may be suggested that the Jew who has good deeds may sometimes have amongst them the support of Torah study which makes him a partner with the scholars whose learning he makes possible. In this manner the Jew described in our Gemara as a species which bears no fruit moves up into the company of those which do.

• Menachos 27a



Insights, explanations and comments for the seven pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle.

Shabbos and that the blasphemer was ridiculing the bread placed before the King as being both cold and stale.

• Menachos 29a

OF FRUITS AND FRAGRANCE

There are four species involved in fulfilling the mitzvah of taking the *lulav* during the Festival of Sukkos. Two of them bear fruit (the *lulav* and *esrog*) and two do not (the *hadass* and the *aravah*).

The two which bear fruit are dependent on the two which do not, and vice versa. A man cannot fulfill his obligation until he takes all

1. Toward which direction did the wicks of the *Menorah* burn, and why?
2. From what material was the *Menorah* made?
3. Moshe was commanded to cleanse the *Levi'im* by sprinkling on them “*mei Chatass*”. What is “*mei Chatass*”?
4. What was unique about the “*Chatass*” offered by the *Levi'im*?
5. Which three “*tufos*” (wave offerings) are in the *Parsha*?
6. For which two functions were the *Levi'im* dedicated?
7. Why did Hashem claim the firstborn of the Jewish People as His possession?
8. Why does the Torah repeat the words “*Bnei Yisrael*” five times in verse 8:19?
9. When a *Levi* reaches the age of fifty, which functions may he still perform?
10. How many times did the Jewish People offer the *Korban Pesach* in the *midbar*?

11. Why was the mitzvah of *Pesach Sheini* not commanded to Moshe earlier?
12. When were the trumpets used?
13. How long were the Jewish People encamped near *Har Sinai*?
14. When the Jewish People entered the Land, who took temporary possession of Jericho?
15. Which *Aron* is referred to in verse 10:33?
16. Which tastes did the Manna not offer, and why?
17. Moshe was commanded to choose seventy elders to help him lead the Jewish People. What happened to the elders that led the Jewish People in Egypt?
18. Who did Moshe choose as the seventy elders?
19. What was the prophesy of Eldad and Medad?
20. Why did Miriam deserve to have the Jewish People wait one week for her to recover?



I Didn't Know That!

The parts of the *Menorah* included seven stems, nine flowers, eleven pomegranates, and twenty-two cups. Some say its height was seventeen *tefachim*. These numbers correspond to the number of words in the first verses of each of the Books of the Torah: Seven words in *Bereishis*, eleven words in *Shemos*, nine words in *Vayikra*, seventeen words in *Bamidbar*, and twenty-two words in *Devarim*.

• Divrei Noam

Bonus Question ?

Moshe asked *Chovav*, his father-in-law Yisro, to join the Jewish People in their travels, and enter *Eretz Yisrael* with them. But *Chovav* replied, “I won't go, rather I'll go to my land and my birthplace I'll go.” (*Bamidbar* 10:29,30) This appears to be a quite unexpected response from someone who had converted and played an important role in the leadership of the Jewish People until now. How can we understand this?

Answers on back page

Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated.

- 8:2 - They leaned toward the middle wick so that people would not say that Hashem wanted the *Menorah* for its light.
- 8:4 - From solid gold.
- 8:7 - Water containing ashes of the *Parah Adumah*.
- 8:8 - It was not eaten by the *Kohanim*.
- 8:11 - The wave offerings of the families of Kehas, Gershon and Merari.
- 8:16 - For carrying the sacred articles of the *Mishkan* and for singing in the chorus in the *Mishkan*.
- 8:17 - Because in Egypt He spared them during *Makas Bechoros*.
- 8:19 - To show Hashem's love for them their name was repeated five times corresponding to the five *chumashim* of the Torah.
- 8:25 - He may close the gates of the court-

yard of the *Mishkan* and *Beis Hamikdash*, may sing during the *avoda*, and may load the wagons when the *Mishkan* is to be transported.

- 9:1 - Only once.



- 9:7 - To reward those who asked about it. Hashem wanted them to be the catalyst for the teaching of this *mitzvah*.
- 10:2-7 - They were used to gather the Jewish People, to gather the *Nesi'im*, to signal the beginning of a move of the camp,

and to accompany the offering of certain communal *Korbanos*.

- 10:11 - One year minus ten days.
- 10:32 - The children of Yisro.
- The *Aron* which held the broken pieces of the first Tablets. This same *Aron* traveled with the army in times of war.
- 11:5 - Cucumbers, melons, leeks, onion and garlic-these are harmful to nursing women.
- 11:16 - They were consumed in the fire at *Taverah* (11:3).
- 11:16 - People who were supervisors in Egypt and, at personal risk, had shown compassion for their brethren.
- 11:28 - "Moshe will die and Yehoshua will lead the Jewish People to the Land."
- 12:15 - Because when Moshe was placed into the river, she waited one hour to see what would happen to him.

Recommended Reading List

RAMBAN

- 8:2 Preview of Chanukah
- 9:1 *Korban Pesach* in the *Midbar*
- 9:10 *Pesach Sheini*
- 9:14 *Pesach* of the *Ger*
- 10:29 Yisro's Choice
- 10:35 Flight from Sinai
- 11:1 Sin of Complainers
- 11:5 Fish and Vegetables in Egypt

- 11:6 Complaints about Manna
- 11:16 Significance of Number 70
- SEFER HACHINUCH**
- 380 *Pesach Sheini*
- 384 Significance of Trumpets
- SFORNO**
- 9:1 The Four Merits
- 11:22 Never Satisfied

Bonus Answer!

Chovav was saying that he needed to return to his land-properties and to his family (Rashi from the *Sifri*). This means that he intended to return to Midian to sell off his land-properties before entering Eretz Yisrael and receiving a portion thereof, and also wanted to make an effort to encourage the rest of his family to join him - and possibly convert - 'in his footsteps.'

• *Ramban and Sifsei Chachamim*

HAFTORAH: Zecharia 2:14-4:17

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. At the appropriate moment, the *Mashiach* will appear, like a

majestic tree flourishing from barren ground, laden with fruit, revealed to all.

• *Malbim*

INSIGHTS...continued from page one

And in reality, it wasn't 'so,' because that special light — the *Ohr Haganuz* — that shone in the six days of Creation had to be hidden away so evil-doers would have no benefit from it. Thus, its creation was not 'so' — it lacked a completeness.

However, during the long darkness between the Creation and the final denouement

of history, there was one moment when that Hidden Light shone in the world: When Aaron kindled the Menorah, he did it with certain *kavanos* (spiritual intentions) that drew down the Hidden Light into the *Beis Hamikdash*. The *Ohr Haganuz* — the hidden light shone for a brief moment in time in the *Beis Hamikdash* through Aaron lighting the lamps.

When Aaron "did so" it means that he fulfilled the purpose of the creation of light itself. As Rashi says, 'he didn't change,' meaning the light was the unchanged light of the Creation, not the substitute we see today. When Aaron did 'so' he gave the light the quality of 'And it was so.' It was as complete and radiant as it was in the beginning.

• *Adapted from Chanukas Hatorah*

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