

With this week's *Parashah*, we conclude the building of the *Mishkan* / Tabernacle. In next week's *Parashah*, we will begin to read about the various sacrifices that were offered in the *Mishkan* and, later, in the *Bet Hamikdash*.

R' Nachman of Breslov z"l (1772-1810; Ukraine) teaches: The *Bet Hamikdash* is like a spinning sphere, where top is bottom and bottom is top. How so? On the one hand, top is bottom: through the *Bet Hamikdash*, *Hashem*, who is so elevated, descends to dwell in our world. On the other hand, bottom is top: in the *Bet Hamikdash*, lowly animals are elevated to become offerings to *Hashem*. This, explains R' Nachman, is the symbolism of the spinning *Dreidel*, connected to *Chanukah*--the holiday that commemorates the (re)dedication of the *Bet Hamikdash*.

R' Nachman continues: This is a lesson for those who think that spiritual truths can be arrived at through philosophical speculation. No amount of logic, says R' Nachman, could ever lead to the conclusion that *Hashem* can exist in our lowly world, while lowly animals can be sacrifices to *Hashem*.

R' Nachman concludes: The process of *Ge'ulah* / redemption is similarly "upside down." [*Hashem* descends to this lowly world to lift us from the depths to the loftiest spiritual heights.] This explains why *Bnei Yisrael* sang about the *Bet Hamikdash* immediately after their redemption (*Shmot* 15:17): "You will bring them and implant them on the mountain of Your heritage, the foundation of Your dwelling-place that You, *Hashem*, made--the Sanctuary, my Master, that Your hands established." (*Sichot Ha'Ran* 40)

Thirty Days Before Pesach . . .

R' Yaakov Moshe Charlap z"l (1882-1951; rabbi of Yerushalayim's Sha'arei Chessed neighborhood and *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshivat Mercaz Harav) writes: Unlike the body, which can only adapt to gradual change, the soul is capable of rising to the loftiest heights "as quick as lightning." In particular, on the night of the *Seder* and all day long on the first day of *Pesach*, a Jew who prepared himself even somewhat can experience the feeling of sitting in *Hashem's* presence--well beyond the level that the person merits based on his own preparations and good deeds.

But, continues R' Charlap, just as there is no limit to the fabulous spiritual wealth that a person can amass on this day, so, too, one's fear should be great lest he squander the opportunity by not preparing himself. The *Gemara* (*Sanhedrin* 108b) relates that *Hashem* gave the Generation of the Flood a taste of *Olam Ha'ba*. This had two purposes, R' Charlap explains. On the one hand, tempting that generation with immense reward was a last ditch effort to induce it to repent. On the other hand, giving them a taste of *Olam Ha'ba* was meant to increase their punishment if they did not repent, for without that taste, they would never know what they had forfeited.

The same is true of *Pesach* night, R' Charlap writes. If one prepares to the extent of his ability, it can be a taste of the *Olam Ha'ba* that is to come. If one does not prepare, it will be a taste of the opportunity he has squandered. (Indeed, R' Charlap adds parenthetically, Kabbalists say that the days of *Sefirat Ha'omer* are days of judgment--a time to repent for not making the most of *Pesach*. Of course, it would be preferable not to be among those who need to repent.) (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Mei Marom* p.5)

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“The hundred talents of silver were to cast the sockets of the Sanctuary and the sockets of the Partition; a hundred sockets for a hundred talents, a talent per socket.” (38:27)

The *Gemara* (*Menachot* 43b) teaches that one is obligated to recite 100 *Berachot* every day. R' Michel Zilber *shlita* (*Rosh Yeshiva* of the *Zvhilyeshiva* in Yerushalayim) quotes R' Menachem Recanati *z"l* (1223-1290; Italian *Kabbalist*), who writes that the “secret” of the 100 *Berachot* is connected with the 100 *Adanim* / sockets that held the posts that made up the walls of the *Mishkan*. Thus, if one recites 100 *Berachot*, it is as if he assembled the *Mishkan*. [Until here from R' Recanati]

R' Zilber explains: We read (*Devarim* 10:12), “Now, *Yisrael*, *Mah* / what does *Hashem*, your *Elokim*, ask of you? Only *Le'yir'ah* / to fear *Hashem* . . .” The *Gemara* cited above states that “*Mah*” can be read as “*Me'ah*” / “one hundred” -- a hint that one should recite 100 *Berachot* a day. Further, notes R' Zilber, since the subject of the verse is having *Yir'ah* / fear or awe of *Hashem*, we can infer that reciting 100 *Berachot* a day is a means to develop that trait. This, he notes further, may answer the question that the *Gemara* asks elsewhere (*Berachot* 33b), “How can the verse say, ‘What does *Hashem*, your *Elokim*, ask of you? Only to fear *Hashem*? Is that a small request?’ The answer is: Yes! If one recites 100 *Berachot* a day, *Yir'ah* of *Hashem* will come easily.

R' Zilber continues: In this light, we see a connection between 100 *Berachot* and the 100 *Adanim*. The word “*Adanim*” (sockets) hints to the Divine Name *Aleph-Dalet-Nun-Yud*, which is associated with the Divine Attribute of Justice; hence, with *Yir'ah*. We read, for example (*Malachi* 1:6), “If I [G-d] am a Father, where is My honor, and if I am *Adonim* / a Master, where is *Yir'ah* of Me?”

R' Yaakov ben Asher *z"l* (the “*Ba'al HaTurim*”; 14th century) writes that King David established the recitation of 100 *Berachot* daily in response to a plague that was killing 100 of his subjects each day. It follows, writes R' Zilber, that reciting 100 *Berachot* a day has a life-giving force. This, again, connects the 100 *Berachot* with the 100 *Adanim*, for our Sages teach that during the entire time that the *Mishkan* was under construction, not one of *Bnei Yisrael* passed away. This was, in particular, in the merit of the *Adanim*, which, say our Sages, were made from the half-*Shekel* coins that *Bnei Yisrael* donated. [The Torah says about the half-*Shekel* donations (*Shmot* 30:12), “So that there will not be a plague among them.”] The *Mishkan* was given as an atonement for the sin of the Golden Calf, which brought death back to the world (after it briefly was abolished when the Torah was given). When one recites 100 *Berachot* daily, it is as if he lays down the 100 *Adanim* and stands up the posts of the *Mishkan*, thus bringing life to the world. (*Ba'yam Darech: Ma'amarei Ha'mishkan* No. 36)

“Moshe summoned Betzalel, Ohaliav, and every wise-hearted man whose heart *Hashem* endowed with wisdom, everyone whose heart inspired (literally, ‘uplifted’) him, to approach the work, to do it.” (36:2)

R' Moshe Alsheich *z"l* (1508–1593; Tzefat, *Eretz Yisrael*) explains: The volunteers who built the *Mishkan* did not need to possess particular skills. Their yearning to be involved uplifted them to start the work, and then the work miraculously completed itself. (*Torat Moshe*)

“Moshe commanded that they proclaim throughout the camp, saying, ‘Man and woman shall not do more work toward the gift for the Sanctuary.’” (36:6)

From this verse, the *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 96b) derives the prohibition of transferring an object on *Shabbat* from a *Reshut Ha'yachid* / private domain to a *Reshut Ha'rabim* / public domain. *Bnei Yisrael*'s tents were private domains, whereas Moshe sat in the centrally-located *Machaneh Leviyah* / Camp of the *Levi'im*, which had the status of a public domain. (The *Machaneh Leviyah* was where everyone would gather to hear Moshe speak.) Moshe's proclamation, which the *Gemara* proves was made on *Shabbat*, said: “Do not bring items from your private domains to the public domain.” [Until here from the *Gemara*, as explained by *Rashi z"l*]

R' Yaakov Kamenetsky *z"l* (1891-1986; rabbi in Lithuania, Seattle, and Toronto; *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshiva Torah Vodaath* in Brooklyn, N.Y.) asks: Why was this *Shabbat* prohibition, unlike all other laws of *Shabbat*, taught specifically in the context of bringing donations for the *Mishkan*?

He answers: Our Sages teach that the *Mitzvah* of *Shabbat* was given originally--before *Bnei Yisrael* came to Har Sinai--at a place called “*Marah*.” There, *Bnei Yisrael* encountered a spring of bitter (“*Mar*”) water, and *Hashem* miraculously sweetened it (see *Shmot* 15:23-25). Borrowing from the Talmud (*Ta'anit* 25a--describing the reaction of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa when his daughter mistakenly lit *Shabbat* candles using vinegar), we can say about this miracle: “The One who told oil to burn can also tell vinegar to burn.” *Hashem*'s ability to alter nature and change the water's taste demonstrated that He is the Creator and Master of the world; therefore, it was an appropriate time to instruct *Bnei Yisrael* not to perform “creative” labors--reminiscent of Creation--on *Shabbat*.

R' Kamenetsky continues: Of all the *Melachot* / labors prohibited on *Shabbat*, only one is not creative in nature. That is the *Melachah* of *Hotza'ah* / transferring an object from one *Reshut* / domain to another. When an object is moved, it remains the same object, and its form does not change; only its location changes. Thus, *Marah*, reminiscent of Creation, was not the appropriate place to teach about that *Melachah*. Rather, in the context of the *Mishkan*, which teaches us that there are sanctified places, it was appropriate also to speak about the prohibition of transferring an object from one place to another place. (*Emet L'Yaakov*)