



**ALEPH
INSTITUTE**
No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

TORAH WEEKLY

T"01

11 - 17 February, 2018
26 Shevat - 2 Adar, 5778

Torah:

Exodus 25:1 - 27:19

Haftarah:

Kings I 5:26 - 6:13

■ CALENDARS

We have Jewish Calendars, if you would like one, please send us a letter and we will send you one, or ask the Rabbi / Chaplain to contact us.

■ FAMILY PROGRAMS

Do you have family on the outside who are struggling, please contact or have them contact our office to learn more about our family programs. You and they are not alone, we are here to help.

■ GRAPE JUICE & MATZAH

Aleph offers free Grape Juice and Matzoh for you to be able to make the blessings every Shabbos. Please have your chaplain / Rabbi contact us to enroll, it is available to all prisons.

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MULTIPLE HOMES

In this week's Torah reading, the portion of "Terumah," we read God's command and promise to the Jewish people: "You shall make for Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell within." The Temple was the centralized location for man's worship of God because it was a place where God's presence was manifest. Although the truth is that God is present in all of existence, however, for the most part God's presence is not tangibly felt. He permeates all space and matter but in a hidden way. In the Sanctuary, by contrast, there was no concealment; His presence was openly manifest within it.

The Hebrew term which the Torah uses for "within" is plural. Our Rabbis comment: The verse does not say: "within it," but "within them," within every individual person. Every person's heart is a sanctuary in microcosm.

When we compare the two sanctuaries, the portable tabernacle which accompanied the Jews in the desert, and the permanent Temple which was constructed in Jerusalem, we find an interesting contrast. The Tabernacle is discussed at great length, down to the most minute detail, more than once. The Temple, on the other hand, is discussed very little, although it was in fact the "final product."

From this we can derive a very significant lesson. The Tabernacle accompanied the Jewish people in their journey through the desert. Wherever they camped, God's presence was with them.

The same applies with regard to every person as he or she goes through the journeys of life and to our people as a whole as we journey throughout time. God's presence accompanies us. As we proceed from one life experience to another, His presence always journeys with us.

Our Rabbis explain that, although the typical construct of windows was always to allow the outside light to enter a house or building, the windows of the Temple were slanted in a way that allowed them to spread light outward rather than let light in. In God's dwelling place, it was not necessary for light from the outside to enter. Light came from the holy Menorah, the golden candelabrum. What was important was that this Godly light of the Temple radiated outward, influencing the world outside.

This concept is also true with regard to the Godly light present within every individual. This light should not be self-contained. God does not grant us a spiritual awareness for our own satisfaction. The intent in making a person "a miniature sanctuary" is not so that he or she will appreciate God and Godliness alone, but rather that each person should share

this awareness with others, and should spread that light outward to influence his or her environment and ultimately the world at large.

FAKE IT

There is a well-known tale of a wealthy businessman, well call him David, who comes to his Rabbi with a terrible problem. "It's my wife," he explains, "I can't stand her! She makes me crazy, she nags me, I never feel like I can satisfy her needs. I've had enough." When the Rabbi asks if they'd considered a civilized divorce, the man replies that his wife won't hear of it.

The Rabbi sits back in his chair deep in thought, stroking his curly white beard. Suddenly, he leans in close to David and whispers, "it says in the Talmud, that a man who pledges a large sum of money to charity and does not fulfill his pledge, will soon lose his wife..."

David could hardly believe what he was hearing! "Rabbi, are you suggesting...?" He couldn't bring himself to complete the sentence.

"I know of a certain congregation which is raising funds to build a new library, why don't you pay them a visit," suggested the Rabbi with a wink.

Against his better judgment, David attended the public appeal of the suggested congregation, and when the

moment was right he called out, “I pledge fifty thousand dollars!” There was stunned silence, followed by a rousing round of applause, and David left the synagogue barraged with hand shakes and back pats.

For the next few days, David kept a close watch on his wife’s health. When nothing seemed to be changing, he returned to the Rabbi with a complaint!

“Oh, I forgot to mention,” said the Rabbi, “this only applies if you love, or at least pretend to love your wife!” They then spent several minutes laying out a plan. David would spend the next few days treating his wife with as much love and affection as he could fake. He bought her flowers, treated her to hours at the spa, and made her breakfast in bed.

One morning, David woke up with a start. He quickly dressed and ran to the Rabbi’s house. “Rabbi! We’ve got a big problem! I know this whole thing was just a fake, but I love my wife now for real!” He began to shake at the thought. “Rabbi, I don’t want to lose my wife...”

The Rabbi sat back in his chair. “Then I guess there’s only one thing you can do...” he said with a twinkle in his eyes.

Charles Darwin first posed the idea that emotional expressions actually influence our feelings back in 1872.

“The free expression by outward signs of an emotion intensifies it,” he wrote. Even today, psychologists claim that there is evidence that emotions involve more than just the brain. Facial expression, in particular, appears to play a big role.

We’ve all heard the saying, “fake it till you make it,” but what truth is there to that, if any?

In this week’s Torah portion we learn about the Holy Ark of the Covenant. It was constructed of three layers. The innermost layer, which housed the Tablets was made of pure gold. The middle layer was made from wood, and the outer layer was, again, pure gold.

This represents our very nature, the nature of the Jew. In our innermost core, our souls which house the spark of God which is present in each of us, we are all completely pure. This is represented by the golden inner box of the Holy Ark. The middle box, made of wood, represents our conscious selves. There we are a bit less perfect. We have complicated emotions, feelings and habits.

Then comes the part of us which we put on display, that which we allow others to perceive. Here we are faced with a choice. Although we may feel “wooden” on the inside, the Torah reminds us that we are still free to express only the positive.

And this is not only for the sake of others, but even we ourselves benefit from projecting positive feelings.

When we smile more, we are happier. When we give more charity, we become more giving. When we do more acts of kindness, we become more kind.

Because in truth, we are not simply “acting.” Deep down, our true selves are pure gold.

Parshas Teruma the Torah speaks

About when building the Mishnah Moshe was told
The vessels of the Mishkan were made from either copper, silver, or gold

Why was the Mishkan built with copper
When gold they had very much wouldn’t gold instead of silver and copper
Have made a nicer finishing touch

Everyone in the world has their own challenges
That they must overcome
It doesn’t matter if they don’t say they are gold

or where they say they are from

Gold and silver stay shiny and doesn’t get tarnished
But copper is different than the two
It can get rusty and look very old
But it can be cleaned to look like new

That is why the mizbeach where the Jews ask forgiveness
Is made specifically of copper
To show that yidden can do teshuva
Even after doing something improper

In Jewish History

Monday, 27 Shevat, 5778 - February 12, 2018
The “Simlah Chadashah” (1737)

Rabbi Alexander Sender Schorr was a direct descendant of Rabbi Yosef Bechor Schorr of Orleans, one of the most famous of the French Tosafists. At a young age he was already appointed Chief Justice of the Rabbinic Court in the town of Hovniv which is directly outside of Lvov, Poland.

He authored the classic work on the laws of ritual slaughter called Simlah Chadashah, as well as a deeper commentary on those laws called Tevu’ot Shor.

The Simlah Chadashah has been reprinted more than one hundred times, and is the most widely used book to learn the laws of shechitah (ritual slaughter). Rabbi Alexander Sender Schorr passed away in the town of Zolkva on the 27th of Shevat in the year 5497 (1737).

Friday, 1 Adar, 5778 - February 16, 2018
Plague of Darkness (1313 BCE)

The 9th plague to strike the Egyptians for their refusal to release the Children of Israel from slavery - a thick darkness that blanketed the land so that “no man saw his fellow, and no man could move from his place” (Exodus 10:23) commenced on the 1st of Adar, six weeks before the Exodus.

Passing of Ibn Ezra (1164)

The highly regarded Biblical commentator, Rabbi Avraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra (1089?-1164CE), passed away on Adar 1, 4924.

Passing of Shach (circa 1663)

Adar 1 is also the yahrtzeit (anniversary of passing) of the great Halachist Rabbi Shabtai Hakohen Katz (1621-1663?), author of the Siftei Cohen commentary on Rabbi Yosef Caro’s Code of Jewish Law. He is known as “Shach” - an acronym of the name of his work, which serves to this day as a primary source of Halachah (Jewish law).