



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

# TORAH WEEKLY

T"01

18 - 24 March, 2018  
2 - 8 Nissan, 5778

**Torah:**  
Leviticus 6:1 - 8:36

**Haftorah:**  
Jeremiah 7:21 - 28  
Jeremiah 9:22 - 23

## ■ 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.

## ALEPH INSTITUTE

Hyman & Martha Rogal  
Center  
5804 Beacon Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15217  
412-421-0111  
Fax: 412-521-5948  
www.alephne.org  
info@alephne.org

## SOUL FIRE

The Baal Shem Tov often repeated to his disciples the importance of finding a lesson in the service of God in every event which they witness or experience.

Once, he took them out to long stroll along the riverbanks in the dead of winter. As they strolled the students kept a keen eye, waiting for a clue that would tell them what it was that brought them out on this particular occasion.

Then they came across a group of people who were carving heretical and blasphemous words and images into the ice on the surface of the frozen river. The students wracked their heads, trying to come up with some kind of lesson from what they were seeing, but came up empty.

After all their attempts and suggestions had failed, the Baal Shem Tov himself explained to them, "from this we must take to heart that between coldness (apathy) and heresy there is but a fine line."

\*\*\*

In this week's Torah Portion, the Parsha of Tzav, the Torah tells us the commandment to keep an everlasting flame burning on the alter in the Tabernacle and Temples.

The verse says, "a constant fire shall burn upon the alter, 'lo tichbeh,' it shall not be extinguished."

Every Jew is deemed a "mi-

niature Holy Temple" and in turn must incorporate each and every detail of the Temple's laws and rituals into his or her own life. An essential part of maintaining our Holy Temple status is the eternal flame. One of the foremost keys to a healthy relationship with God is a constant fire, a passion for Godliness and Holiness.

We ought to remind ourselves daily that "between apathy and heresy there is but a fine line." We cannot let ourselves become apathetic or cold toward the things which are truly important in this world. That everlasting flame must be nurtured and maintained so that it may burn brightly and keep up our passion for that which is Holy, true and just.

There is a Chassidic interpretation of this verse as well. "Lo Tichbeh, it shall not be extinguished," can also be explained as "Lo," the not, or the negative will be "Tichbeh," extinguished. When we do our part to ensure a healthy passion, a healthy flame for Godliness, God guarantees us that all the naught and negativity in our lives will be extinguished. All the negative forces which may bog us down in life will be removed from our plates so that we may focus even more time and more positive energy on maintaining and improving our relationship with the Holy One, blesses be He, and His Torah and Mitzvot.

*By Nissan Aizek*

## Parshat Tzav ASK. ANSWER. ADVANCE.

When our patriarch, Abraham, was one hundred years old a team of angels visited him and informed him that he would soon bear a son, whom he subsequently named Isaac. God promised Abraham that "through Isaac your seed shall be realized." Abraham received God's promise with great joy. The idea that he would produce generation of descendants through Isaac made his life long dreams begin to come to fruition.

But when Isaac was yet young and had not yet married, let alone born any children, God commanded Abraham to offer his son up as a sacrifice on a distant mountain in the wilderness. Many different things are said in regard to this episode. Discussed is the greatness of Isaac in that he was ready and willing to give up his life if God willed it. Discussed is the greatness of Abraham for his willingness to sacrifice his dear son for the sake of God. After all, in many ways it is easier to die for God than to live for Him.

What is discussed somewhat less frequently is the attitude with which Abraham proceeded to carry out this command.

The average person would probably have lots of questions, and would probably hesitate at the very least. Hadn't God promised him descendants through Isa-

ac? Wouldn't this mean the end of that promise? Had God given him a miraculous birth in his old age just so that he could be sacrificed before achieving any permanent influence on the world?

All of these logical queries were valid questions and concerns, but to Abraham they meant nothing. So absolute was his faith and trust in God, that had someone stopped him in his tracks and asked him where he was going, he would have replied matter-of-factly that, "yes, I am going to sacrifice my son, and yes I am going to have descendants through him." Because regardless of what logic dictated, his faith in God's abilities was absolute. So, were there valid questions? Absolutely. Did that stop Abraham from continuing to carry out his mission? Not at all. Because discrepancies didn't deter him from what he knew needed to get done.

In this week's Torah Portion we learn about the method with which Moses inaugurated the various vessels of the Tabernacle. We learn that he took the anointing oil which was used to anoint Aaron and his sons and sprinkled some upon the alter as well as on all of the other vessels.

Rashi, the foremost commentary on the Torah, makes an interesting comment on this verse. He says, "I don't know where Moses was commanded to do this sprinkling"

It's a curious statement because Rashi is a commentator whose primary focus is to give us a basic understanding of the scripture. Why does he volunteer the information that he simply does not know the source for a certain act that Moses did? What do we stand to gain from that knowledge?

But Rashi was in fact capitalizing on an opportunity to bring to the table a much greater issue. He was speaking to the heart of the simple student who would use his teachings to gain a greater understanding of the Torah. He was reassuring and encouraging our ability to question, and move on.

Rashi's point is, it's good to question, it's healthy to seek answers and to seek better understanding. But it is harmful to get hung up on the things which we do not understand. It's counterproductive to get stuck on an issue simply because we cannot find a satisfactory explanation. He says, "Ask. Question. Try to find the answer and explanation. But keep moving."

We stand to gain so much more by continuing to pursue Torah knowledge. We can always come back for further insight. We can always review and try understanding more the second time around. But we must always continue to move forward as well. The answers will come. We mustn't let the questions obstruct our pursuit of knowledge.

Rashi simply states, "I don't know the answer to this particular question. Now let's continue learning God's Torah." We should learn from him in this area as well.

In this weeks parshah	tial
The kohanim were told	Than did yesterday
To remove every day	
Some ashes that were old	What we did yesterday
	Was good and it was special
That they should scoop up	But today we have
some ashes	So much more potential
And put them near the altar	
The rest should be put	We could never achieve as
In a pile in the center	much
	As we can today
The lesson for us	Today has more opportunities
To live this way	Than did any day
Is that today has more poten-	

*Everyone is required to sell their Chometz before Passover, if you have not done that, please have your Rabbi/Chaplain contact our office for the form. There is no charge.*

## *In Jewish History*

***Sunday, 2 Nissan, 5778 - March 18, 2018***  
**First Red Heifer Prepared (1312 BCE)**

On the 2nd of Nissan, one day after the inauguration of the Tabernacle, Moses prepared the very first Red Heifer, in order to ritually purify the Jewish nation in preparation for the bringing of the Paschal Lamb in the newly erected Sanctuary.

### **Passing of Rashab (1920)**

The fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Sholom DovBer Schneersohn ("Rashab"), was born in the White Russian town of Lubavitch in 1860. After the passing of his father, Rabbi Shmuel (in 1882), he assumed the leadership of Chabad-Lubavitch.

Famed for his phenomenal mind and analytical treatment of Chabad Chassidism, Rabbi Sholom DovBer wrote and delivered some 2,000 maamarim (discourses of Chassidic teaching) over the 38 years of his leadership. In 1897, he established the Tomchei Temimim yeshivah, the first institution of Jewish learning to combine the study of the "body" of Torah (Talmudic and legal studies) with its mystical "soul" (the teachings of Chassidism); it was this unique yeshivah that produced the army of learned, inspired and devoted Chassidim who, in the decades to come, would literally give their lives to keep Judaism alive under Soviet rule.

In 1915, Rabbi Sholom DovBer was forced to flee Lubavitch from the advancing WWI front and relocated to the Russian city of Rostov-on-Don. In his final years, he began the heroic battle against the new Communist regime's efforts to destroy the Jewish faith throughout the Soviet Union.

Rabbi Sholom DovBer passed away in Rostov on the 2nd of Nissan, 1920. His last words were: "I'm going to heaven; I leave you the writings."