



**ALEPH  
INSTITUTE**

No One Alone,  
No One Forgotten.

# TORAH WEEKLY

T"01

15 - 21 April, 2018  
30 Nissan - 6 Iyar, 5778

**Omer:** 15 - 21

**Torah :**  
Leviticus 12:1 - 15:33

**Haftarah:**  
Kings II 7:3-20

## ■ 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

## CREATION PARTNERS

In a United States convention of neurologists from all over the world, one of the main topics was the phenomenon of people fainting upon getting up from bed in the morning. Many speakers got up and offered their opinions on the matter. One of the speakers was Professor Linda McMaron of Great Britain and she gave a lengthy speech regarding her study on this issue.

She explained that after many years of researching this subject, she came to the conclusion that the fainting is caused by the sharp transfer between being horizontal and standing up. Professor McMaron said that it takes 12 seconds for the blood to flow from the feet to the brain. But when a person quickly stands upon waking up, the blood gets "thrown" to the brain too quickly and the result is fainting. She suggested that each person, even one that does not have a tendency to faint, upon waking should sit on the bed, and count slowly to 12 to avoid dizziness, weakness and/or fainting. Her speech was rewarded with loud applause and enthusiastic feedback.

Another professor, a Jewish man, asked permission to speak. He said, "In our tradition, we recite a prayer of thanks to the Creator of the World for meriting us to wake up healthy and whole. The prayer is said immediately

upon waking up, while one is still on the bed and sitting down. There are 12 words in this prayer and if one with concentration, slowly and carefully, it takes exactly 12 seconds... 12 words in 12 seconds."

He said the prayer slowly in Hebrew: Modeh Ani Lefanecha Melech Chai Vekayam, Shehechezarta Bi Nishmati Bechemla Raba Emunatecha — "I thank You, O living and eternal King, because You have graciously restored my soul to me: great is Your faithfulness." The auditorium burst into a standing applause that roared throughout the auditorium. This time, it was for the Creator of the World.

The last words of this prayer, "great is your faithfulness," can also be explained as follows: God entrusts each and every one of us with a mission and a purpose. Every time we are fortunate enough to wake up in the morning, it's a sign from God that He has something great for us to accomplish that day, something which can be accomplished by no one else but us as individuals.

Each day that we wake up, we are again reminded that we are God's partners in His grand master plan. The very fact that we awoke to another day is God's way of saying, "I have something that needs to get done, and only you can do it." This thought should give us the drive and determination to arise with enthusiasm and

excitement to fulfill our part in the partnership, which is to bring about progress in the betterment of mankind and the world as a whole.

In this week's Torah reading we again read the commandment to perform the Brit Mila, the circumcision on each baby boy at the age of eight days. There are many things which are forbidden or restricted to a Jewish male who has not yet had his ritual circumcision and been entered into "the Covenant of our Forefather Abraham." For example, he may not partake in the Paschal sacrifice, a priest who is uncircumcised May not perform his service in the Holy Temple, etc.

The question has been asked, if the Brit Mila is such an integral aspect of spiritual completeness, why didn't God create newborn babies already circumcised?

The answer is an important factor in our part and our purposes earth.

In the beginning, God used the utterance of "let there be" for each step of creation, however, when it came to creation of mankind the terminology changed. God said, "let us make man." Our stages explain that "us" refers to all of mankind. God made us His partners in creation.

Just as a child is born physically undeveloped and must mature, so too, it is within in God's plans that we grow and develop ourselves in a spiritual sense as well. When we perform the Brit Mila, and advance the spiri-

tual wholeness of the newborn child, we are doing our part as God's hand-selected partners.

## ONLY WITH LOVE

The holiday of Passover was recently celebrated in communities across the globe. Wine, Marror, Matzah galore, it is certainly a family favorite to many.

Along with every holiday and its laws and customs come traditional changes and additions to daily prayer. In many communities, there is the custom of the communal priestly blessing. At one point during the prayers all of the priests, all those who are descendant from Aaron the High Priest, stand before the congregation and deliver the timeless blessing prescribed in the Torah.

This is a mitzvah which has been practiced for three and a half thousand years. The Talmud tells us that it is in the DNA of the priestly family to have a natural love and genuine concern for a fellow man. It is something they inherited from their great-grandfather, Aaron.

Indeed, the blessing which precedes the performance of this mitzvah reads, "...who has sanctified us with the sanctity of Aaron and commanded us to bless His nation, Israel, with love."

A blessing is only as potent as the love with which it is delivered.

In this week's Torah Portion, Metzora, we learn the laws of one who is afflicted with a condition called "Tzara'as." It was a supranational skin condition, often translated as leprosy, which miraculously appeared on one's skin as a result of some sort of spiritual deficiency.

An individual who was afflicted with Tzara'as was required to go through a long and tough purification process, including segregation, introspection, physical and spiritual cleansing and more. It was not a proud moment for anyone. Interestingly, the condition of Tzara'a could only be determined by a Kohen, by a priest. In fact, even if the most scholarly non-Kohen declared someone a "Metzora," the declaration was of no consequence at all until it was looked at and confirmed by even the most unlearned Kohen.

The reason for this is profound. When God imposes such a condition upon one of His children, His intention is to send a firm reminder, to get His precious child back on track.

The only way God would allow one of His children to declare another "spiritually deficient," is if the declaration is being made out of absolute love, not condescension. Only the Kohen, the man of Godly love, was entrusted to make such a painful declaration about a fellow man.

This can serve as a moral guide to every person, Kohen and non-Kohen alike. Any time we are in a position to notice, remind someone of, or point out any type of lacking in another person, it must come from a place of love. It must come from the heart.

And as the Torah itself assures us, "words which come from the heart, shall [surely] enter the heart."

In parshas Noach  
Noach is told to take the pure  
Of all the animals  
And instead of saying impure

Impure many times  
In parshas tazria  
This comes to teach us  
That when teaching a Halacha

The pasuk says the not pure  
Wasting 8 letters this way  
Just to use good speech  
But regarding Tzaras it does  
say

A Rav must be clear  
When he makes a din  
And not changing words  
About a non-kosher chicken  
say

## *In Jewish History*

### **Monday, 1 Iyar, 5778 - April 16, 2018**

#### ***Construction of 2nd Temple (370 BCE)***

Fifty three years following the destruction of the First Holy Temple (9th of Av), Zerubabel and Joshua the High Priest began construction of the Second Temple, with permission from King Cyrus of Persia.

The offering of sacrifices had actually commenced a few months earlier, on the vacant lot where the 1st Temple stood, however it was only after the construction started on the 1st of Iyar that the Levites began accompanying the service with song and music.

The construction was later halted after the hostile Samaritans supplied false slanderous information to Cyrus about the Jews' intentions. The construction was resumed many years later, and completed 21 years later under the reign of King Darius (3rd of Adar).

#### ***Passing of R. Menachem Mendel of Horodok (1788)***

Chassidic master Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok (1730?-1788), also known as Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk, was one of the leading disciples of the second leader of the Chassidic Movement, Rabbi DovBer of Mezeritch. Upon the latter's passing in 1772, R. Menachem Mendel was regarded by his colleagues as the leader of the Chassidic community in Russia, and Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi considered him his rebbe and mentor. In 1777, R. Menachem Mendel led a group of 300 Chassidim to the Holy Land and established Chassidic communities in Safed and Teberias. Rabbi Menachem Mendel passed away on the 1st of Iyar of 1788, and is buried in Tiberias.

### **Thursday, 4 Iyar, 5778 - April 19, 2018**

#### ***Maimonides Saved (1165)***

The 4th of Iyar was observed by Maimonides (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, 1135-1204) as a personal day of fasting and prayer. Maimonides recounts that when he and his family were fleeing Islamic persecution from Fez, Morocco to the Holy Land, their ship was caught in a fierce storm at sea. He cried out to G-d in prayer and vowed to fast each year on this date.