



**ALEPH
INSTITUTE**

No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

TORAH WEEKLY

T"01

8 - 14 April, 2018
23 - 29 Nissan, 5778

Omer: 8 - 14

Torah :
Leviticus 9:1 - 11:47

Haftorah:
Samuel I 20:18-42

■ 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

DISPROPOR- TIONATE RESPONSE

In this week's Torah Portion we discuss the conclusion of "the Seven Days of Inauguration" of the Mishkan, the Tabernacle. During each of the seven days, part of the ritual was that Moses himself, with the help of no other person, erected and disassembled the Mishkan. Every day he assembled it, and every day he took it back down, before finally assembling it for the last inaugural time and the nation witnessed as God's Glory rested upon it.

However, if you study the dimensions and the structure of the Mishkan, the shapes and sizes of its parts, you would clearly see that it was humanly impossible for any man to assemble such a giant structure alone, single-handedly.

How then did Moses achieve such an impossible feat? Obviously, it was a miraculous occurrence. But why? Why did God find it necessary to perform this particular miracle? What did He want ya to learn from it?

The answer is simple, yet infinitely valuable. For God's presence to dwell in our world, in our lives, we must create a vessel in which for him to dwell. This applies to our religious lives, our family lives, our business lives etc.

God doesn't want to give out freebies. He wants effort. He

wants us to earn our blessings. But can man really achieve levels of accomplishment which would befit the Almighty, Omnipotent God? Of course not, not without His help. But help He does.

God says, "create an opening for me the size of the eye of a needle, and I shall increase the opening to the size of a grand hall!" God urged us, through Moses' example, to put in the human effort which we can muster, contribute our little finger, and He will carry us from that point on.

The priests who carried the vessels of the Mishkan experienced this literally. For example, the Holy Ark of the Covenant was far too heavy for four average men to carry long distances, consisting of solid wood and pure gold. The Talmud tells us that the priests simply did their part in lifting the Ark, and it in turn carried them for the remainder of each journey.

God encourages each and every one of us even today to do our part, apply the human contribution of which we are capable, and He in His infinite kindness and love for us will carry us through the rest.

MATZAH & MAROR: A COUPLE'S ARGUMENT

The story is told of a wealthy man who lived many years ago. He had everything

Parshat Shemini

from a financial standpoint. He was rich, famous, owned lots of property, yet he was unhappy. He felt incomplete.

The reason for his feelings of incompleteness was that he had never gotten married. This was simply because he was naturally suspicious of any woman who showed an interest in marrying him. He couldn't help but suspect that what they were really interested in was his wealth, and not him.

The years passed and he was getting older, and in the process, increasingly alone. One day confided in the owner of the local eatery which he had frequented over the years. When the fellow heard his suspicions he had a wonderful solution. He said, "there is a girl working in my kitchen who is kind and soft spoken, a real gem. She was born to a poor couple and orphaned at a very young age. She's worked for me ever since - she has no concept of money or wealth at all! Why don't you look into marrying her?"

The idea seemed sensible enough, and our rich friend thought it was worth a shot. They met over some drinks, and the man immediately knew she was the one. He was infatuated.

After meeting for only the third time, he informed her that they were going to get married. Before the news could even sink in, he urged her to get back into the kitchen and begin preparing a wedding feast. They would be

married the very next night! Obediently, she complied. Meanwhile, he ran to get a suit tailored for the event and a dress sewn up for her. He pressed everyone involved to make it happen as soon as possible. So anxious was he that at one point while she was out, he entered the kitchen and turned up the flames under the wedding food. Much of it was burned in his crazed excitement.

While in the kitchen, he took a moment and cut off a corner of his future wife's kitchen apron and put it in a safe place. "Just in case."

When his bride re-entered the kitchen and noticed the burnt food and the missing piece of apron, she understood his intentions and put aside a little memento of her own - a piece of the burnt cake. "Just in case."

Well, weeks passed and they were a happy couple. Then came the holiday season and the young woman said to her new husband, "Dear, all of my friends received beautiful gifts in honor of the holiday. I too would like a nice gift from my husband."

The wealthy man's suppressed suspicions rushed to the surface again. "Aha!" he exclaimed, "I knew this was coming. You just wait right here." And he rushed off to bring her the little slice of kitchen apron which he had put away. "You see this?" he chided, "take a good look, and remember where you come from! You were a kitchen girl, an insignificant nobody. I took you out of there and I am turning you into a somebody. Don't press your luck, be happy with what you have."

"Aha," she called out, "I knew this would happen!" And with that, she rushed off to get her little trophy. "Do you see this? Do you remember why these cakes burnt and the other foods became overdone? Who was in such a rush to get married that he turned up all the fires? Not me! Don't pretend that you were only doing me a favor, for you wanted this more than I did. Remember that, and take better care of me when I ask for it."

The saintly Magid of Dubno, Rabbi Yaakov Krantz, shared this story and explained that this is the story of the Passover Seder. The piece of apron, the reminder of days less glorious, represents the Maror, the bitter herbs. We ask God for a better life, for health and wealth and for the coming of the Mashiach, and God says to us, "Get a whiff of that horseradish. Remember the bitter days of slavery. You were nobodies, and I took you out of there and turned you into the most famous of nations. Be satisfied with that." And we, with the utmost humility and respect, turn the claim right back on God with the traditional flat, round, hand-baked Matzah and say, "Do You see these? Remember what happened that fateful night? Who was it that was in such a rush to get us out of there that we had no time to bake our bread? Who was so eager to get this relationship started that we were given no time to pack a lunch? It was You, dear God! You wished this perhaps even more than did we. So, let's not pretend that we are the only ones benefiting from this eternal Godly bond, give us what we need when

we turn to You for it."

SECOND PASSOVER

May 22nd, 2016 is Pesach Sheini, it is customary to eat a little matzoh on that day.

In this week's Parshah Moshe told his brother To come and do	Why did that sentence Convince him to go
The service of the altar	When we have a phobia A very big fear
This convinced Aron Who at first was scared To come do the service And he finally neared	The best way to combat it Is to come near
Aron did the service But we still want to know	To step right in And face what you're afraid of Aron did this And his fears did dissolve

In Jewish History

Friday, 28 Nissan, 5778 - April 13, 2018 Jericho's Wall Collapses (1273 BCE)

On the seventh day of the encirclement of Jericho, the Jews, accompanied by the Holy Ark, circled the city seven times. After the blowing of the shofar, the walls miraculously crashed and sank, leaving the city open and unprotected. Jericho was easily conquered, becoming the first fortified Canaanite city to fall to the Children of Israel in their conquest of the Promised Land.

Buchenwald Liberated (1945)

The Buchenwald concentration camp was founded in 1937 near the town of Weimar, Germany. Approximately 250,000 prisoners were incarcerated in this camp until its liberation in 1945.

Weimar is a German city known for its highly cultured citizenry. It was the home of many of the upper class intellectual members of Europe's society. Among others, Goethe, Schiller, Franz Liszt, and Bach lived in Weimar.

Though technically not an extermination camp, approximately 56,000 prisoners were murdered in Buchenwald (not including many others who died after being transferred to other extermination camps). They died from vicious medical experiments, summary executions, torture, beatings, starvation, and inhuman work conditions. The camp was also known for its brutality. German officers would force inmates to eat their meager soup ration off the mud on the ground; would keep them standing in the cold until they froze to death; and they would even use skin of dead inmates to make lamp shades.

On the 29th of Nissan 1945 the Sixth Armored Division of the United States Third Army liberated the camp.

Among the more famous inmates who spent time in Buchenwald are Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, former Chief Rabbi of Israel, and Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel.