



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

TORAH WEEKLY

ת"ש

8 - 14 July, 2018
25 Tammuz - 2 Av, 5778

Torah :
Numbers 30:2 - 36:13

Haftorah:
Jeremiah 2:4 - 28; 4:1-2

■ THREE WEEKS STUDY MATERIAL

Please us or ask your Rabbi or Chaplain to contact us for study material relating to the building of the Holy Temple, studied in the three weeks (July 1 – 21).

■ 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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PROHIBITED VS. UNNECESSARY

Rabbi Shmuel Mun-
kis, a well known follower
of the first Rebbe of Chabad,
was a Torah scholar and
chassidic giant, and was well
respected in the community.
At the same time he had a
very playful and witty side to
him that made him even more
beloved to those who knew
him.

At one particular
event, attended by many great
and scholarly people, each
pious and wise in his own
right, several of the attendees
shared words of Torah and
words of inspiration with the
assembled.

Then all eyes turned
toward a server who carried
in a large pot of meat stew.
The aroma was mouthwater-
ing.

Jumping up from his
seat, Rabbi Shmuel starting
to sing and dance loudly. He
danced from his place and
snatched the stew from the
hands of the server.

Still singing, he
danced around and around the
room. "Nu? Nu??" the others
shouted, "what is the meaning
of this!?"

Without paying them
any attention, Rabbi Shmuel
danced over to the open win-
dow and, to everyone's shock,
tossed the stew right out.
Stunned silence filled the
room. The people scratched
their heads in bewilderment.
What was he thinking?

Suddenly the silence was
broken. The kitchen door flew
open and a panic stricken chef
ran into the room shouting,
"Stop! Stop! Don't eat the
stew!" Pausing for a second
to catch his breath he explai-
ned, "There's been a terrible
mixup and it's non-kosher
meat!"

Bursting into tears,
he buried his face in his
hands and cried out, "oh, how
will I ever be able to repent
for causing others to eat
non-kosher meat?!"
And then they told him the
good news.

Later on, one of
Rabbi Shmuel's colleagues
approached him with the que-
stion to which everyone was
itching to know the answer.
How did he know? What did
Reb Shmuel see that nobo-
dy else picked up on, that
enabled him to save everyone
from inadvertently sinning?
Reb Shmuel explained that
when he felt a strong craving
for that particular dish, he
knew something was wrong.
He had trained himself over
many years not to get excited
over petty, mundane things
such as food.

When he noticed that
the rest of the room was expe-
riencing the same cravings all
doubts were erased. That food
was no good. "It was only
logical that the evil inclina-
tion inside each one of us
would work that hard to make
us excited over this is if there
was something halachically
wrong with it." And indeed
there was.

Our Torah reading

Parshat Matot-Massei

begins with relating how a
person will take a vow forbid-
ding himself from indulging
in a particular activity or
partaking of a specific food or
beverage.

When a person feels
he needs a safeguard, he
senses that his involvement in
a given activity is becoming
too difficult to control, he
puts up a system of checks
and balances that encourage
restraint. By declaring a parti-
cular food or activity forbid-
den, he all but ensures that he
will not indulge in it.

Anyone who has ever
developed a negative habit
knows that, "once you pop,
you can't stop." Ask an ex-al-
coholic if he can have just one
drink, or ask a person who
quit smoking if he can have
just one cigarette. They'll tell
you that it's virtually impos-
sible. The only way, is to stay
away.

Theoretically, a per-
son can have always control
himself, but practically spea-
king, safeguards help.

But simply avoiding
is not a solution. Why does
a person become obsessed
with a particular activity
to the extent that he cannot
control himself? Because he
feels a need for happiness and
satisfaction that he hopes that
the particular activity will
provide. He continues perfor-
ming that activity in the hope
of receiving that satisfaction.
Eventually, it becomes a
habit. Once he has developed
the habit, it is hard to overco-
me it.

The true solution is

to have an alternate source of satisfaction. Indeed, Torah tradition provides such a resource. By truly understand and taking to heart the relationship which every Jew has with God, he derives satisfaction and pleasure from his spiritual activities. Truly feeling needed and necessary in God's world will give him that "high," that feeling of satisfaction. When his spiritual activity fills him with energy and vitality, that will become his focus and then he will be able to regard material things from an elevated perspective. He need not reject the material, nor will he be over-excited about it. He will be able to see it with the proper perspective and use it for G-d's purposes and not his own indulgence.

LOST IN FIRST CLASS

A well known Torah scholar had a childhood friend who strayed from the path of Torah and Mitzvot. He attended college, earned his degree and went on to live a very comfortable life.

Once, while visiting his friend, the businessman quipped with a sigh, "you really should have joined me in college. With your intelligence, you'd be a master by now and living a much fancier life..."

The wise scholar smiled silently. At the end of the visit, he accompanied his guest to the train station. As the man was about to board his train home, the rabbi said, "Wait a minute, why don't you take that other train across the platform? It's much nicer..."

His friend explained patiently that the other train was traveling in the wrong direction.

"Yes," replied that rabbi, "but it's much nicer." All at once, the man understood what his friend was insinuating. The message penetrated his heart and soul, and he slowly began rediscovering his eternal bond with God and His Torah.

The opening verse of this week's Torah Portion reads, "these are the journeys of the Children of Israel, which they journeyed out of Egypt..." Now, if the forty nine stops which the Jewish people made in the desert are to be considered forty nine separate journeys, only one of them would really be the one with which they left Egypt - the first one! Why are all of the journeys called "leaving Egypt?" Our sages draw a wonderful lesson from this. The Hebrew word for Egypt, Mitzrayim, stems from the same root word as the word for constraints, Maytzarim. Whenever Torah discusses the exodus from Egypt, metaphorically it also refers to an exodus from our personal limitations and shortcomings.

The journey of life is one of continuous hurdles, bumps in the road and often pitfalls. But one thing must remain constant - it is a life long journey away from our own constraints and self-proclaimed boundaries. We are always working towards bettering ourselves, moving beyond our comfort zones and doing just a little more each day in our service of God.

Perhaps each day brings something new, a new hurdle, a new challenge, but ultimately we should always stay focused on the goal. We should always keep our eyes on what we are trying to achieve, without allowing our surroundings and the influences of societal norms to move us in the wrong direction.

This life is a long journey out of our own personal "Egypt." Let us remain steadfast until we reach the promised Land, with the coming of our righteous redeemer. May he arrive speedily in our days.

By Rabbi Nissan Aizek

In Jewish History

Wednesday, 28 Tammuz, 5778 - July 11, 2018
Passing of "Yismach Moshe" (1841)

Tammuz 28 is the yahrzeit of Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum (1759-1841) of Uhely, Hungary, author of Yismach Moshe and patriarch of the Hungarian Chassidic dynasties.

Passing of Rabbi Shlomo Ganzfried (1886)

Rabbi Shlomo Ganzfried (1804-1886) was born in Uzhhorod (Ungvar) in the Carpathian region of the Habsburg Empire (now Ukraine). When he was eight years old, Shlomo's father, Rabbi Yosef, passed away, and Ungvar's chief rabbi, Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Heller, assumed legal guardianship of Shlomo. In 1830, he abandoned his work as a wine merchant and accepted the position of Rabbi of Brezovica (Brezevitz). In 1849, he returned to Ungvar to serve as a rabbinical judge. Realizing that the average Jew required a basic knowledge of practical halachah, Rabbi Ganzfried compiled the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, an abbreviated digest of Jewish law. To this day, the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch remains a classic halachic work, and it has been translated into many languages.

In addition to the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, he authored many works including Kesset HaSofer, a halachic primer for scribes, and Pnei Shlomo, a commentary on the Talmud.

Thursday, 29 Tammuz, 5778 - July 12, 2018
Passing of Rashi (1105)

Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki, known as "Rashi", passed away on the 29th of Tammuz of the year 4865 from creation (1105 CE).

Rashi was born in Troyes, France, in 1040. His commentaries on the Torah, Prophets and Talmud are universally accepted as the most basic tool for the understanding of these texts for schoolchild and scholar alike. Numerous commentaries have been authored on his commentary. In his famed "Rashi talks", the Lubavitcher Rebbe repeatedly demonstrated how Rashi's "simple meaning of the text" style enfolds many layers of meaning, often resolving profound difficulties in the text and presenting new, innovative interpretations with a simple word choice or rephrasing of a Midrashic passage.