

THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



LONDON'S LEADING PLATFORM FOR STUDENTS AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

This weeks Parasha sheet is sponsored by Antoine & Jessica Arama on the joyous occasion of the birth of their baby girl Naomi Hadassa. Lirfuat Eliyahu Chaim Ben Rivka Betch Shaar Cholei Yisrael

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

**DIRECTOR
TAL**



G-D'S GIFT!

As the curtain rises on Parshat Vayakhel, Moshe assembles the nation in order to convey G-d's commandments concerning the construction of the Mishkan (the Sanctuary).

Suddenly, however, he opens his remarks with the following directives concerning Shabbat:

"Six days work may be done and the seventh day shall be holy for you, a Shabbat, a day of complete rest for G-d; whoever does work (melacha) on that day shall be put to death. You shall kindle no fire in any of your dwellings on the Shabbat day."

Moshe's clear purpose in assembling the nation at the beginning of the Parsha is to launch the construction of the Mishkan. Why, then, does Moshe abruptly insert the subject of Shabbat?

Rashi verbalizes the most immediate halachic lesson learned from the encounter between Shabbat and the Sanctuary: "[Moshe] prefaced the commandments concerning the work of the Mishkan with a warning concerning Shabbat - to convey [that work within the Mishkan] does not supersede Shabbat."

But there seems to be another distinct reason for the interruption of this important Mitzvah.

Shabbat and the Sanctuary represent two different realms of potential sanctification within Jewish tradition: the sanctification of time (e.g., Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh

and the festivals) and the sanctification of space (e.g., the Mishkan, the Temple, the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem). Through the observance of G-d's laws, man is challenged with the investiture of holiness into each of these central domains.

Both of these realms are significant, but what happens when a choice between them must be made?

The Torah teaches us that the sanctification of time reigns supreme.

That is why the observance of Shabbat supersedes the construction of the Sanctuary.

Man is convinced that to extend his power over the world he must occupy more and more space through his constructions and creations. Hashem, however, is more concerned with time than space. The first time the Torah uses the word Kadosh is not to describe something physical, as would be expected, but to describe the non-physical, namely time. Hashem uses the word Kadosh to describe the seventh day, His day of rest. In fact, no physical being is described as Kadosh until Bnei Yisrael are told that they will be to Hashem an Am Kadosh at Har Sinai. Only after the downfall with the sin of the Golden Calf is an object - the Mishkan - referred to as Kadosh. But that object was used for the sole purpose of housing the Shechina. Thus, even the Mishkan was not holy in and of itself. It was holy because it provided a place for the Shechina to occupy.

The single most precious and tenuous commodity we possess in life is time. Our moments are limited; each moment exists...and before we know it, that moment is gone.

There could be no greater expression of our belief in and our loyalty to G-d than the dedication of some of our limited moments specifically to His service. The sanctification of time - the dedication of time solely to our relationship with G-d - is one of the highest religious acts possible, transcending other acts of sanctification. ▶

24th ADAR I 5779

SHABBAT BEGINS: 5:22 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 6:31 PM

**SOMETHING
BIG!
IS HAPPENING**

17-18 MARCH

SAVE THE DATE



DVAR TORAH

G-D's Gift

RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

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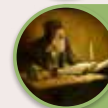


DVAR TORAH

Out of order

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Therefore, when Moshe underscores the laws of Shabbat immediately before the launching of the construction of the Mishkan, he reminds the people to remember their priorities. As monumentally historic as the launching of the Mishkan may be, as overwhelmingly important as the Mishkan and all of its symbolism will be across the face of history, even more precious to G-d is the dedication of our own moments of time to His service.

The Gemara (Shabbat 10a) teaches: "One who gives a gift to another must tell him." Thus, Hashem said to Moshe, "I have a good present in My storehouse, and its name is 'Shabbat.' I want to give it to the Jewish people; go and inform them (Lech Lehadom)!"

This last part is very interesting as we don't seem to find by any other mitzvah this idea that G-d tells Moshe that he must go and inform them.

What is the deeper meaning?

Once, a poor man came begging to the house of Rabbi Shmelke of Nikolsburg (1726-1778). The Rebbe was

used to giving charity, but this time he could not seem to find any cash at home.

After searching for a while and realising the plight of this poor man, the Rebbe looked through his wife's drawer and found a beautiful ring. He promptly gave it to the beggar and wished him well. When his wife came home, she asked how his day was and soon after realised that her ring was missing. He explained that he had donated it to feed this poor man. She screamed, "How dare you give that ring, it was worth so much money!"

Upon hearing this, the Rebbe ran out after the poor man. As he approached, the poor man looked back and, seeing the Rebbe coming close, decided to run for it.

The Rebbe ran faster and eventually, although out of breath, managed to catch up with the poor man.

"Please don't take away the ring," begged the poor man.

Reb Shmelke lifted his hands and, still panting, replied: "I have just learned that the ring I gave you is worth a lot of money. Make sure you don't sell it for cheap!"

The same is true about Shabbat. It's a very special time, but if we are not aware of its beauty and

power, we will miss the opportunity. We will end up selling it for cheap.

Shabbat is the sanctification of time. It is a time when we are able to stop and be and enjoy the moment. A time out from our busy schedule. A gift from G-d.

If one takes the letters in the word "Rosh"- head- and replaces each letter with the letter that follows immediately after it in the Hebrew alphabet, the result is the word "Shabbat." The head (Rosh) of our faith and week is Shabbat. Keep it and it will keep you!

■ Shabbat Shalom

RABBI DANIEL FINE - COMMUNITY RABBI, IN STANMORE AND TEACHES IN THE HASMONEAN BEIS



OUT OF ORDER

The Gemara (Pesachim 6b) proves that on occasion the events in the Torah do not follow chronological order. This principle takes centre stage in a debate amongst the commentaries as to the order of the latter half of Chumash Shemot.

The first half of Chumash Shemot poses no chronological quandaries: parashiyot Shemot until Mishpatim are basically[1] in order: slavery, the plagues, the Exodus, and the Giving of the Torah. However, the next few parashiyot are not so simple. Terumah and Tetzaveh contain the instructions to build the Mishkan and its vessels, as does the first half of Ki Tissa. However, the second part of Ki Tissa speaks about the sin of the golden calf, before Vayakhel and Pekudei return to the building of the Mishkan. What is the correct chronological order of these parashiyot - did the Mishkan come before the sin of the calf or not?

The Ramban[2] writes that these parashiyot are to be ordered exactly as they are written. Hashem gave the order to build the Mishkan in Terumah and Tetzaveh, then the Jewish People sinned with the calf in Ki Tissa. After gaining atonement for this, the construction of the Mishkan was completed in

Vayakhel and Pekudei. However, Rashi disagrees. Rashi[3] writes that the command to build the Mishkan was not given until after the sin of the golden calf, which radically alters the sequence of the parashiyot. Indeed, Rashi's comments on Shir Hashirim (1:11) imply that the Mishkan atoned for the golden calf.

This is part of a broader general debate between Rashi and the Ramban. The Ramban (Vayikra 16:1) writes that unless there is explicit textual proof otherwise (which only occurs once), we assume that the Torah follows chronological order. Rashi disagrees with this, often changing the order when logic dictates so. Perhaps we can deepen our understanding of this debate.

Why did Hashem not write the Torah in chronological order? There are two early approaches to this question.

Rav Yosef Engel (d. 1920) cites a fascinating Midrash[4]. Had Hashem written the Torah in chronological order then potential altercations might have occurred in Shul, because the fellow who was called up for chamishi (the 5th portion) might become jealous of the fellow who got revii (the 4th). Therefore, Hashem deliberately made the order of the Torah hazy; now nobody will be able to claim that another's call-up was less important as it occurred earlier - since perhaps it was detailing an event that actually occurred later, chronologically speaking. Whilst this reason may fit with Rashi's view, it certainly does not

fit with the Ramban's view, since the Ramban's necessary textual proof to change chronological order would not make the order hazy enough to assuage arguments.

A differing Midrash suggests kabbalistically that had the Torah been written in chronological order then anyone would have been able to manipulate the mystical secrets of the letters of the Torah (which were used in the creation of the world) to fashion new creations. Therefore, Hashem concealed the Torah's order to prevent such tyranny. This would seem to fit the Ramban's view.

A take-home message? Preservation of peace is critical, especially in our Shuls.

■ Shabbat shalom

[1] Note that Rashi has the end of Mishpatim occur before Matan Torah

[2] Ramban, Shemot 33:7

[3] Rashi, start of parashat Terumah and 33:7

[4] Quoted in Tosafos Rabbeinu Peretz Pesachim 6b. It is Midrash Tanchuma Terumah 8. The Nefesh Hachaim 4:28 cites a similar midrash Tehillim (Shocher Tov) 3, and explains this concept somewhat.

[5] Pesachim 6b

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI DAVID HALEVI DRAA ZATZAL

The gravesite of Rabbi David Halevi Draa, one of the most venerated saints among the Jews of Morocco, can be found in the village of Draa, not far from Dimneth. The tomb of Rabbi David is covered with immense palm tree branches, and for that reason this Tzaddik is also popularly known by the name Mul Nachla Lechadra, which translated means, "the Saint of the green palm tree."

All throughout the year, numerous Jews come to make a pilgrimage at his gravesite, and the miracles that occur there astound everyone.

Once there was a Jew who was blind and crippled, and so he went to make a pilgrimage to the gravesite of Rabbi David Halevi Draa on the day of his Hilloula. After a short time, he suddenly realized that he could see and that his crippled limbs could move. The crowd about the man was staggered when this miracle occurred, and they began to sing and dance in a frenzy.

The man never left the place since that day. He built his house near the Tzaddik's tomb, got married, and when his first son was born, he named him David after the Tzaddik.

Everyday one could witness a new miracle near the tomb of Rabbi David Halevi. Once, a child fell gravely ill and from day to day his sickness got worse, to the point that the

doctors lost all hope of saving him. His father therefore made a vow that if his son would be healed, he would travel with his entire family to the tomb of Rabbi David Halevi to slaughter a sheep and distribute the meat to the poor. The child got better and the father traveled with his entire family to the tomb of Rabbi David in order to fulfill his vow.

On the way, his second son, a baby at the time, fell ill. His wife begged him to return home and to put the pilgrimage back until later. The husband stubbornly refused and affirmed that he had to fulfill his vow whatever the cost. When they arrived in Draa, the baby was even worse. The father prostrated himself on the tomb of the Tzaddik and prayed that his son also be healed.

For a long time the baby lay unconscious, not even crying. It then began to move its feet and hands, then burst into tears. The happy mother couldn't believe her eyes. She gave the baby to eat and all trace of illness disappeared.

Up until our days, the Jews of Morocco pronounce the name of the Tzaddik Rabbi David Halevi with love and veneration, and from generation to generation people continue to recount the miracles that he performed during his lifetime and after his death. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

MAY THE KOHEN RETURN THE MONEY RECEIVED FOR A PIDYON HA'BEN?

The Gemara tells that there were two Kohanim – Rabbi Tarfon and Rav Hisda – who had the practice of returning the money they received for Pidyon Ha'ben. This means that after the father gave them the money to fulfill the Misva, they would give the money back to the father. The Gemara adds that these sages were praised for following this practice.

On the basis of this discussion, the Shulhan Aruch rules (Yoreh De'a 305:8) that it is perfectly acceptable for a Kohen to return the money received for Pidyon Ha'ben to the father. However, the Shulhan Aruch adds that this may be done occasionally, but not all the time. If it becomes known that a certain Kohen always returns the money to the father, all fathers will choose that Kohen for Pidyon Ha'ben, thus depriving all other Kohanim the opportunity to receive the Pidyon Ha'ben payment. Therefore, a Kohen may return the money on occasion, but not every time he receives money for a Pidyon Ha'ben. An exception, though, is made in the case of a needy individual who performs a Pidyon Ha'ben. Whenever a Kohen receives Pidyon Ha'ben money from a poor person, he may return it, and he does not have to be concerned about creating a "monopoly" in his community. Since this is done for the benefit of the poor, it may be done whenever such a situation arises. The Aruch Ha'shulhan (Rav Yechiel Michel Epstein of Nevarduk, 1829-1908) adds that this must have been Rabbi Tarfon and Rav Hisda's practice – to return the money if the father was poor. If the father was financially secure, then seemingly, there was no reason why these sages should be deserving of praise for returning the money. Undoubtedly, then, they returned the money specifically if the father was in a situation of need.

Therefore, although a Kohen should ensure not to always return the money received for Pidyon Ha'ben, he may return the money every time he receives it from a father who is poor.

A father may give the Kohen the coins for Pidyon Ha'ben as a "Matana Al Menat Le'hahazir" – a gift given on condition that it is returned. The Gemara in several contexts establishes that if a person gives something to somebody as a gift on condition that it is returned, the object is considered owned by the recipient until he returns it. Therefore, this may be done for Pidyon Ha'ben, since the Kohen is considered to have actually received the money until he returns out. However, the Shulhan Aruch notes that this, too, should not be done on a regular basis, in order not to "monopolize" Pidyon Ha'ben to the detriment of other Kohanim. Moreover, the Pit'heh Teshuba adds that a "Matana Al Menat Le'hahazir" is acceptable for Pidyon Ha'ben only if the condition is that the Kohen must return the exact same coins. If the arrangement allows the Kohen to pay the father other coins, then this transaction becomes a loan, not a gift given on condition of return. A loan does not suffice for the Misva of Pidyon Ha'ben, and therefore such an arrangement is not allowed.

Summary: A Kohen may return the money he receives for Pidyon Ha'ben, as long as this is done on occasion, and not every time he receives Pidyon Ha'ben money. However, whenever he is the Kohen for the Pidyon Ha'ben of a child from a needy family, he may return the money, and this is an admirable practice. ■

What is



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