

One weekend, in Minneapolis, fifty non-observant Jews had gathered in a downtown hotel to hear lectures by the *Aish Hatorah* speakers. As they sat in a cozy dining room, R' Yaakov had the participants identify themselves. Sitting on R' Yaakov's left was a refined Russian fellow in his 60's, a former scientist from Leningrad. As he rose to introduce himself he announced with conviction, "My name is Michael and I am an atheist."

"Really," said R' Yaakov, undaunted. "If you don't have an open mind, why did you come to the seminar?"

"I came here because a friend of mine insisted that I come," said Michael. "He said I would find it interesting."

"I hope so," R' Yaakov said with a smile and guarded optimism.

Throughout the weekend lectures, the participants were encouraged to ask questions and seek clarifications and indeed many of them did. However, no one asked more pointed questions than Michael. His queries were sharp, his comments intelligent, and his participation exhibited a bright and perceptive mind. Numerous times, R' Yaakov and Michael fenced verbally as the others listened in fascination.

After the final lecture on Sunday afternoon, Discovery participants are customarily asked to compress their feelings about their weekend in one word.

"What word would you use to describe what you feel now that you have heard these lectures?" asked R' Yaakov.

One participant declared, "Informed," another said "Exhilarated," a third exclaimed, "Inspired." A fourth confessed that he was "perplexed." Every person had an answer. R' Yaakov noticed, however, that Michael had not responded.

"So, Michael," R' Yaakov said with a little smile, "we have heard from almost everyone. What about you, how do you feel about this weekend?"

All eyes turned to Michael. For the first time throughout the weekend he seemed unsure and hesitant. It wasn't like him to be silent, so everyone waited in quiet and respectful anticipation for his reply. After a few long seconds, Michael got up from his chair. He paused for yet another moment and then said softly, with reverence and appreciation, "G-d bless you."

In 36 hours the atheist had seen reality - *baruch Hashem*. (Reflections of the Maggid)

Who You Are

Every Monday morning people trudge back to work. It is really difficult to get up and running after the two-day weekend break, but each and every one of us does eventually get back into the race. The more motivated workers come in at high speed, and the laid-back ones can't get going until after they've had a second cup of coffee, but everyone does return to the "pursuit of happiness." For most, that means accumulating the "toys" with which adults like to play. Jewels, cars, homes, and vacations head the list...and, as we all know, the ones with the most "marbles" wins.

Well, this is true for those who are primarily concerned with what they can collect in order to represent who they are. But, actually, our real job is to work on who we *are* rather than what we *have*. Learning to control our speech or anger, to be more generous and kind, to be more caring and dedicated to the values of Torah – this is the real job we all face every day and every night of our lives. In this job there are no vacations and no weekends. We must be in the heat of the battle all of the time.

When you find yourself getting caught up in the game of collecting material "toys," switch gears and concentrate on your essence, not your possessions. (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאָה בֵּת בְּהֵיכָל

בס"ד

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SHABBAT TESAVEH ☆ תְּצַיְהַ שַׁבָּת

Haftarah: Yehezkel 43:10-27

FEBRUARY 26-27, 2021 15 ADAR 5781

Friday Minhah: **5:26 pm**

Shaharit: **5:34, 7:00, 8:00, 8:15, 9:00 am**

Shir Hashirim (midrash): **5:16 pm**

Morning Shema by: **8:40 am**

Minhah (midrash): **5:26 pm**

Shabbat Class: **4:05 pm**

Candlelighting: **5:26 pm**

Shabbat Minhah: **1:30 & 5:05 pm**

Evening Shema after: **6:24 pm**

Shabbat Ends: **6:25 pm (R)"T 6:57 pm)**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Sunday Minhah: **5:30 pm**

This bulletin is dedicated by Iky & Sabrina Sasson
in memory of his father, Maurice Sasson לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת מוֹשֶׁה בֶּן פְּרִיָדָה

Mabrook to Robby & Sheryl Levy on the marriage of their son, Michael to Clair Khaffif.

Condolences to Raymond Levy on the passing of his father, Moshe Levy.

Condolences to Shlomo Abecasis on the passing of his father, Moshe Meir Abecasis.

A Message from our Rabbi

"וּבְהַעֲלֹת אֶהָרֹן אֶת־הַנִּירֹת בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים יִקְטִינָהּ"

"And when Aharon kindles the lamps in the afternoon he shall bring [the *ketoret*] in smoke" (*Shemot* 30:8)

The end of our *perashah*, *Tesaveh*, speaks about the *ketoret*. The *ketoret* is offered twice a day, in the morning and in the afternoon. It is done at the same time the menorah is lit in the late afternoon, and in the morning when the menorah is cleaned.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein tz"l explains that there is an important connection between the *ketoret* and the menorah. The menorah gives light and the *ketoret* gives a beautiful smell. The Torah scholar who lights the world with his Torah must also possess a sense of smell. He must have a sense of smell to detect something that might be done which is not in line with the Torah even though there is nothing halachically wrong with it. He must realize that many times, actions that turn out to be wrong start off looking good due to the cunning of the perpetrators who try to entrap the people to follow them. Therefore he needs a sense of smell to detect this. Rav Moshe proves this from the *Gemara* (*Sanhedrin* 98b) that says that the *Mashiah*, who is the greatest Torah scholar,

“sniffs and judges.” Of course the *Mashiah* will have the strongest sense of smell, but every scholar must have it to some extent.

This teaches us to always consult the Torah scholar, who can smell a problem that we might not pick up. Shabbat Shalom Rabbi Reuven Semah

Easy Come Easy Go

In last week's *perashah* a list of all the materials needed for the building of the *Mishkan* is given. At the end of the list comes the precious stones which were placed in the clothing of the *Kohen Gadol* – The High Priest, which are discussed in this week's *perashah*. Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz asks why these stones which are highest in value are enumerated last. They should be first. He answers that they come last because a basic, important ingredient was missing. That is that since these stones came to the donors easily, without toil, there was no great act of good will in giving them. That is why they are enumerated last.

Rabbi Shmuelevitz bases this on the premise that it seems that human nature is that things which we toil over are the things most dear to us. Things which come easily don't require much of our effort, and since we put so little into them they don't take up a big place in our hearts. Hence the saying, “easy come, easy go.”

The central institution of “*abodah*,” service of G-d, must be founded on the highest level of good will – giving that which was toiled over, and is very dear to the donors.

This is an important point in many areas of life. What we invest time and effort into will turn out to be the things we hold dearest. The Sages say: One who wishes to love another person should get involved in doing good for them.

Conversely, there are so many things in life which we invest effort into, and in the last analysis really didn't deserve the place of prominence in our lives which we ascribed to it. A wise person tries to discern which things in life deserve his most strenuous efforts.

Haman required everyone to bow to him when he passed by. Mordechai refused to bow. Haman, a rich and extremely powerful person could not appreciate any of his “blessings” so long as Mordechai refused to bow. This attitude ultimately led to Haman's downfall.

Haman's efforts were only directed to self-aggrandizement. He invested every fiber of his being to going up the ladder toward further honor and recognition. His mistake is a lesson to all generations.

In our generation, which provides us with so many things to get involved in, we constantly must ask ourselves as follows. “Are we really dedicating our lives to things of substance?” Or, like Haman, are we chasing after empty dreams which vanish as soon as our eyes are opened? Let's learn from Haman. Let's consider what is truly important and deserving of our precious time. Let's make our toils and efforts something fit to give to the King of Kings. (Rabbi Dovid Green)

Knock Before You Enter

Few sights were more spectacular than the *Kohen Gadol*, the High Priest, resplendent in full golden regalia, his vestments formed from the finest fabrics, precious metals and rare jewels. They glowed with inner spiritual incandescence, each intricate detail laden with secret mystical significance, each element essential to the efficacy of the *Kohen Gadol* as the perfect conduit between the Jewish people and Hashem.

What was the purpose of all the individual features of the vestments mentioned in this week's portion? The Torah only spells out the purpose of one of them. The *Kohen Gadol* wore a four-cornered robe of blue wool whose hem was adorned with alternating

golden pomegranates and bells. Why bells? Because “its sound should be heard when he enters the Sanctuary before Hashem.” Apparently this is a very important feature of the robe, because the Torah metes out a severe punishment for the omission of the bells. Our Sages understood that the bells are meant to teach us basic decency and decorum, that we must not invade the privacy of others by injecting ourselves into their presence without warning. Proper etiquette is to knock on the door before entering. Just as the bells announced the *Kohen Gadol's* arrival in the Sanctuary so must we announce ourselves wherever we go and not barge in unexpectedly.

Nonetheless, the questions remain. Surely, Hashem knows perfectly well when the *Kohen Gadol* is approaching, regardless of whether or not he is preceded by the tinkling of bells. Why then does the Torah choose to teach us this lesson in this particular setting? Wouldn't it have been more appropriate to teach us this lesson in a more mundane setting involving ordinary people who can be caught unawares?

The commentators explain that the Torah is teaching us an additional lesson here of critical importance. We might think that in the pursuit of high spiritual goals it is acceptable to bend the rules of simple decency a little bit. Not so, says the Torah. Even at the supernal moment when the *Kohen Gadol* enters the Holy of Holies, the closest point of contact between a mortal and his Creator, he must still remember the rules of basic decency. He must wear bells upon the hem of his robe to announce his arrival.

A group of young scholars traveled to the distant academy of a great sage. They studied diligently before embarking on the journey and arrived with high hopes of being accepted as his disciples. The sage welcomed each of them individually and spoke with him at length on a wide variety of topics. On the last day, all the men were invited to join the sage at his table to share his bread and listen to his words of wisdom.

The young men entered the sage's house, hung up their coats and washed their hands before coming to the table. For several hours, they were transported to a world of transcendent wisdom and mysticism, and their hearts were set afire with the yearning to become part of this world.

The next day, the sage announced his decision. He accepted all the applicants, except for one. The rejected young man, who was quite brilliant, was devastated. With tears streaming down his face, he came to the sage and begged for an explanation.

“It is really quite simple,” said the sage. “When you washed your hands before coming to my table you looked around for a towel but couldn't find one. Instead, you wiped your hands on a coat that belonged to one of your friends. Being in a hurry to hear words of wisdom does not exempt you from the rules of simple decency. If you were a true scholar, you would have understood this yourself. I'm very sorry, young man, but you have no place in my academy.”

In our own lives, we often get caught up in our daily urgencies, and sometimes, this leads us to overlook the rules of simple decency and courtesy. If we are late for an appointment, we rationalize, then it is all right to elbow our way through a crowd or drive a little more aggressively than we normally would. Let us remember, therefore, that nothing was more important than the *Kohen Gadol* entering the Holy of Holies, and yet the rules of simple decency always took precedence. (Rabbi Naftali Reich)

Submission Accomplished

Rabbi Yaakov Salomon, a Brooklyn psychologist, is one of the noted lecturers for *Aish Hatorah's* Discovery Program. He frequently travels throughout the United States, conducting seminars for people who are curious about authentic Judaism, the veracity of Torah, the role of Hashem in our daily lives, and the significance of *misvot*. His warmth, sincerity and intelligence motivate audiences.