LESSONS FROM THE TREES
RABBI SHMUEL SILBER

“And this is the offering that you shall take from them: gold, silver, and copper; blue, purple, and crimson wool; linen and goat hair; ram skins dyed red, tachash skins, and acacia wood.” (Exodus 25:3-5)

Wealth is an incredible blessing from God. But like all blessings, one must know how to use it. What is the proper balance between personal benefit and enjoyment and communal responsibility? It is in this week’s Parsha that God asks the Jewish nation to use their newfound wealth to build a spiritual home and epicenter. The Mishkan would require complete financial participation of the nation. There would be some who would donate precious materials and stones and others who would contribute the necessary fabrics and materials. Rashi raises an interesting question, “from where did they have acacia wood in the desert?” The gold, silver, copper and even fine fabrics were taken from Egypt but where was the wood from? Rashi answers, “Yaakov Avinu prophetically saw that his children would build a mishkan (tabernacle) in the desert. Therefore, when he came down to Egypt, he brought with him acacia trees from the Land of Israel and planted them in Egypt. He commanded his children to take the wood with them when they left Egypt.”

The Lubavitcher Rebbe (Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, 1902-1994) asks, “Why did Yaakov have to do this? Why all of the effort? The people could have bought wood when they needed it. They could have bartered with neighboring tribes and nations.” The Rebbe advances a beautiful insight. When Yaakov came down to Egypt with his acacia saplings and planted them, people asked, “Why are you doing this?” To which Yaakov responded, “One day God will lead us out of this land, and we will travel to our home and destiny, but along that journey God will reside in our midst, in the home we will build for Him.” As Egyptian persecution intensified the Jews were able to look to the acacia trees and be reminded that one day this servitude would come to an end. And as they felt the sharp whips on their backs, the loads weighing down on their shoulders, their sons being thrown into the Nile, they looked at the acacia trees and reminded themselves, we will get out of this, we will overcome, we will be free. Our ancestors knew of the promise of slavery and redemption but having a physical reminder of salvation is what kept them from drowning in the abyss of darkness. The trees of Yaakov Avinu were the beacon of promised freedom and salvation. They were the physical “light at the end of the tunnel.”

We all experience difficult times; this is part of the human condition. The only variable is the intensity of adversity. In those times of hardship, it is easy to lose hope, optimism and positive disposition. We must find our acacia tree, the thing we can focus on to remind us that everything will be alright. For some it may be the presence of a loving spouse, for others it may be children, and yet, for many it may simply be the belief that God is my rock and He will never leave my side. We made it through 210 years of spirit-breaking servitude because when things looked dark and hope was almost lost, we looked up at the trees of Yaakov Avinu and were reminded, we will emerge from this, there will be light and happiness. The trees we saw every day of our enslavement became the walls of the home of God which inspired us throughout our days of freedom and destiny. May we each merit to plant our acacia trees and may they inspire us with the necessary hope, strength and resolve to make it through even the darkest of days.
MEMBER NEWS

THANK YOU
Kiddush set up: Tania Shichtman, Abby Appelbaum
Thank you to Jeremy Lasson and Shalom Kovacs for their IT support.

MAZAL TOV
Jeff & Debbie Schwartz on the birth of a new grandson, born to David & Maya
Moishy & Yardena Gardyn on birth of baby boy Ethan Kaplan on making a siyum in honor of his grandfather’s first yahrzeit, Rodney Kaplan z’l

BIRTHDAYS
Elad Barnoy, David Shimon Bierer, Eileen Creeger, Rikki Ehrenfeld, Bella Naomi Friedman, Doris Goldstein, Elizabeth Hammond, Charles Leve, Yisrael Markowitz, Shimmy Messing, Ruth Miller, Phil Miller, Daniel Joseph Miller, Judith Nudelman, Bonnie Pesacov, Sholom DovBer Schechter, Aviva Silber, Elie Tuchman, Rachel Turniansky, Vered Wildman

YAHREZITS
Harold Brown, Miriam Barouh, Adele Elbaum, Bernice Rubin, Gladys Eskenazi, Charles Rosen, Rodney Kaplan, Martha Lavine, Samuel Pollack, Zina Rosen, Serena Klein, Esther Prager, Melanie Wiesenberg

SHUL HAPPENINGS
Siyum Maseches Berachos
Sun 3/8 at 7:30p | Warschawski
Daf Yomi participants, spouses, and those joining for Maseches Shabbos are invited to celebrate suburbanorthodox.org/event/berachos

SOTC Book Club
Tues 3/31 at 2:00p | Suburban
When the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS
Baltimore Shalom Singles Shabbaton (ages 45+)
March 20
Featuring Baila Sebrow, internationally acclaimed motivational speaker, author, event producer, matchmaker and dating coach.
Shabbos meals, home hospitality near Ner Tamid
Learn More: nertamid.net

SPONSORSHIPS
TALMUD TORAH
All learning in the month of Adar has been generously sponsored by the Lerner Family in memory of Dena Lerner Gerber z’l and in the merit of an aliyas neshama

KEHILLA KIDDUSH
Alan Wiseman, annual kiddush sponsor

WEEK OF LEARNING
Paul & Kathy Pollack in memory of Paul’s grandparents, Zechariah ben Zechariah z’l and Dina bas Pesach z’l, who were both nifter in Adar

DAY OF LEARNING
Gobbi & Shayna Cohn in memory of Shayna’s father, Avi Strimber, Avraham ben Kalman Eliezer haLevi z’l
Pomerantz Family in honor of Zayde Joel’s birthday. May he be blessed with good health and continued nachas from his children and grandchildren.

MEET ALAN WISEMAN
Born and bred in Baltimore, Maryland, Alan grew up in the Forest Park in the Northwest. He’s a product of the Baltimore public school system and graduated for the Baltimore Polytechnic High School and University of MD College Park. Alan studied Business and started his career in sales as a “road warrior” traveling a lot. Alan was introduced to his wife, Reda Ruth Neuman z’l, also a Baltimore native. She was an educator and taught in the Jewish schools for over 30 years. Reda passed away eight years ago.
Together, they had three children. Their oldest, Shari, lives in St. Louis with her husband and two kids who are both married with children, making Alan a great-grandfather five times over. David is in NY, married with five kids. He’s a dentist. And the baby, Yitzhak aka Josh, lives in Bnai Brak with his wife and ten children. Josh learns full time in Kollel at Slobodka.
Alan visits each of the kids several times a year. He very much looks forward to his trips and loves sharing his woodwork, playing and learning with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
Reda had said Alan needed a hobby. He saw a scroll saw at the Home Depot and “the rest is history.” Alan creates wall-art, wooden puzzles, bowls, vases and other wooden art. He’s been a tremendous help for the Shul in caring for our wood furnishings. He built several of the shtenders and the tzedakah boxes at Suburban and is famous for his Daf lyric pieces. His last one says “Come Ride the Train for the Ride of Your Life”, the cars of the train feature the first four masechtas of the Daf.
“Come Ride the Train for the Ride of Your Life”, the cars of the train feature the first four masechtas of the Daf. “For many years we lived near TA and would go there for the Yomim Tovim. I was shul hopping in 2001 and the first time I came to Suburban I knew this was where I wanted to be. The ambiance, the davening, it was all so beautiful.”

SHALOSH SEUDOS
Jon & Jen Kaplan in honor of Jon’s father, Rodney Kaplan, Yoel ben Yitzchak z’l, on his first yahrzeit
Gregg and Rachel Levitan in commemoration of the yahrzeits of Gregg’s father, Bernard Levitan, Yisrael Dow ben Gershon haLevi, z’l, and Gregg’s cousin, Marcy Sachs, Mashi bas Shaul z’l

MOTZEI SHABBOS LEARNING
Quarry Orthodontics (final week of learning)

DAF YOMI
Michael & Rachel Turniansky in memory of Michael’s brother, Alan, Avraham Yitzchak ben Shimon Yaakov z’l
Alan Wiseman in memory of his father-in-law, Charles Neuman, Zechariah ben Yisroel Tzvi z’l

SPECIAL PURIM SHIUR
SEEN IN THE MASK
WEDS 3/4
8:00PM
FOR MEN & WOMEN