



THE HARRY H. BEREN TORAH WEEKLY

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Because Torah Is for Every Jew

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A Taste of Torah The Mitzvah in the Details

By Rabbi Yaakov Zions

Howard, a veteran architect with expertise in designing high-rises, asked his apprentice, Tom, to enter a blueprint sketch of his into the computer. Tom, eager to please his boss, spent a considerable amount of time poring over the sketch. He was rather surprised when he presented the final draft to his boss. Howard began berating him for his incompetence. "What's the problem?" asked Tom. "Everything is exactly the way you drew it!" "Not quite," replied Howard, and pointed to a single small circle in the center of the main lobby which had been omitted from the final draft. That circle, explained Howard, represents a central beam in the structure, and without it, the entire structure would collapse.

The fictional tale presented here is based on a parable of the legendary Dubno Maggid (Rabbi Yaakov Kranz; 1740-1804). While the *nimshal* (lesson) he gave is slightly different, we can parallel lessons from this week's parsha with Tom's mistake. While the construction of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) is presented in great detail, the Torah goes into even greater detail describing the exact chronological steps of its inauguration. How many *korbanos* (sacrificial offerings) were to be brought, in what order they were to be offered, the different processes to be performed with each part and how to anoint the *kohanim* (priests) and holy vessels are some of the topics discussed. All these processes were conducted for seven days in a row, and, on the following day, a whole new list of procedures and *korbanos* were performed. Rashi

(in his commentary to Bamidbar 7:1) quotes a Medrash that during the seven inaugural days, Moshe assembled and disassembled the *Mishkan* every single day.

It is quite interesting to note that many of the mitzvos in the Torah are contained in a single verse, while the details of the *Mishkan* are written and repeated, detail after detail, and then some. The explanation for this may lie in understanding the importance of the *Mishkan* and its subsequent successor, the *Bais Hamikdash* (Temple). Rashi (Shemos 15:17) quotes a Medrash that the *Bais Hamikdash* parallels Hashem's Heavenly Throne. While I don't profess to comprehend the full understanding of this Medrash, it does provide an appreciation of the many fine details in its construction and inauguration. Just one small omission or mistake can mean a cosmic difference in the final version.

This concept can be applied to many areas of Torah and mitzvah performance. We generally don't fully comprehend the effect each mitzvah or moment of Torah study has, but we can only imagine the detrimental effect on the finished product if an important detail would be deleted or performed incorrectly. Less than thirty years ago, one frozen o-ring caused the Challenger space shuttle to explode, tragically killing all seven crew members and shocking the entire country. What lesson can we learn from our eternal Torah? To make sure all the components, down to the smallest details, are done in the best fashion possible.

Stories For The Soul

Don't Forget Your Jacket

Rabbi Shmuel Brudny (d. 1981) was a legendary *maggid shiur* (lecturer) and dean at the Mir Yeshiva in Brooklyn. The respect he accorded his students was remarkable; for example, whenever a student would approach to speak with him, he, the *rebbe*, would rise from his seat!

Rabbi Yaakov Bender, today the dean of Yeshiva Darchei Torah in Far Rockaway, NY, was orphaned of his father as a teenager. Although he was studying in the Philadelphia Yeshiva at the time of his father's passing, he returned to Brooklyn, where his mother lived, and enrolled in the Mir Yeshiva. The young man developed a bond with Rabbi Brudny, and he would regularly visit his *rebbe* at his home.

One day, Yaakov knocked on the door of Rabbi Brudny's apartment. Rabbi Brudny opened the door, and Yaakov glimpsed that he was not wearing the *kapoteh* (frock) that he normally wore when outside of his home. Rabbi Brudny saw that it was his student standing there and, without a word, immediately closed the door. A minute later, the door reopened, and Rabbi Brudny, now wearing his usual attire, warmly invited the teenager into his home.

Rabbi Bender reflects that he never saw Rabbi Brudny without his *kapoteh*; although he had a close relationship with his *rebbe*, Rabbi Brudny nonetheless felt that as a teacher, it was his responsibility, when in the presence of his students, to always be dressed in a fashion that reflected his position.

In this week's parsha, Hashem instructs Moshe regarding the clothing to be worn by the *kohanim* (priests) during their service in the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle). The Torah teaches us that one must dress the part of whatever position he occupies in life.

Kollel Happenings

KOLLEL'S 18TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION MARCH 15TH

The Denver Community Kollel will hold its 18th Anniversary Celebration on Tuesday, March 15th at 6:30 pm at Aish Denver. Kollel founders Rabbi Myer J. and Mrs. Bruria Schwab will be the guests of honor. The Kollel will recognize the 18 current and past Kollel families who reside in Denver. To reserve or place an ad, visit www.denverkollel.org, email journal@denverkollel.org, or call 303-820-2855.

FULL DISCLOSURE VS. BUYER BEWARE AT NEXT TORAH FOR TYCOONS

Join Brad Licht, Managing Broker, Licht Realty Company and Rabbi Aron Yehuda Schwab, Dean, Denver Community Kollel, as they reveal how much one must reveal in a deal. March 2, 12-1:15 p.m. at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$25. RSVP info@denverkollel.org.

RAV SCHWAB ON CHUMASH AVAILABLE FROM KOLLEL

The Denver Community Kollel is pleased to offer *Rav Schwab on Chumash*, a seminal collection of Rabbi Shimon Schwab's insights on the weekly parsha, for sale.

The book is available through the Kollel at a special discount rate of \$24.

To order, call 303-820-2855, email info@denverkollel.org, or go to www.denverkollel.org.

Increase Your Jewish IQ

By Rabbi Yaakov Zions

Last week we asked: Can you think of a custom that is universally accepted, but is based on another custom which is not universal?

A: On Rosh Chodesh, we remove our tefillin before the *mussaf* prayers. This custom, universally accepted, is based on the custom (practiced in Sefardic and Nusach Sefard communities) to begin the *kedusha* section of *mussaf* with "*keser yitnu*," where we "crown" the Almighty. While speaking of His crown, it would be inappropriate to

wear our crown, the tefillin. Even those who don't recite this version of *kedusha* nevertheless remove their tefillin. (Rema Orach Chaim 25:14 and Mishna Berurah *ibid.*; see however Mishna Berurah 423:10 who quotes Levush with another reason for their removal)

This week's question: What custom is unique to the weeks of the Torah reading of Terumah and Tetzaveh of a Jewish leap year?

To submit an answer to Rabbi Zions, email ryz@denverkollel.org.

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Asher ben Yechiel – the Rosh, Part I

One of the greatest medieval German scholars was Rabbi Asher ben Yechiel, known as Rabbeinu Asher ("our Rabbi Asher") or the acronym of that name, the Rosh, which also means "the head" in Hebrew. He is also sometimes referred to as Ashri.

The Rosh was born in either 1250 or 1259 in western Germany. His father, Rabbi Yechiel, was a prominent Torah scholar; one of his ancestors was the Ra'avan (Rabbi Eliezer ben Nasan; 1090-1170), an important Torah authority and one of the early *Ba'alei Tosafos* (Tosafists). The Rosh was a disciple of Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg (c. 1220-1293), also one of the *Ba'alei Tosafos* and an important leader of Ashkenazic Jewry.

The Rosh made a living as a money lender, a not-uncommon profession for Jews in medieval Europe, and he was independently wealthy.

The Rosh wrote a major work on the Talmud, wherein he extracts passages of the Talmud and discusses the halachic applications of the teachings. It can be found in the

back of most standard editions of the Talmud. It is one of the most influential works in determining the practical application of the Talmud's discussions of Jewish law; his opinions are often quoted by later halachic authorities, especially Rabbi Yosef Karo, author of the Shulchan Aruch (Code of Jewish Law).

The Rosh wrote numerous responsa, which are published and available today, and are quoted frequently in discussions of practical halacha.

The Rosh authored *Tosafos HaRosh*, his own compendium of the commentaries of the *Ba'alei Tosafos* on the Talmud.

In addition to his halachic and Talmudic works, the Rosh wrote an ethical work to his sons entitled *Orchos Chaim* (Ways of Life); today, it is widely studied and known as *Orchos Chaim L'haRosh* (Ways of Life of the Rosh). The book offers practical advice on personal conduct in daily living.

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