

# THE HARRY H. BEREN TORAH WEEKLY

A project of the Denver Community Kollel

Parshas Tetzaveh

February 23, 2018

## A Taste of Torah

### The Light of the World

by Rabbi Yosef Melamed

If something appears out of place in the Torah, there's a reason for it. That being the case, let us examine the opening of this week's parsha, which begins with G-d's commandment to Moshe to take pure olive oil for the lighting of the Menorah. The Netziv (Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin; 1816-1893) notes that this commandment seems to be out of place. The previous parsha, Terumah, deals with the construction of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) and most of its vessels, and concludes with the Outer Altar and courtyard structures. The rest of this week's parsha deals with the special holy garments the *Kohanim* (priests) wore during their service in the *Mishkan*. Why does the Torah interrupt with a discussion about the olive oil needed to kindle the Menorah? At the very least, it could have been discussed in the context of the Menorah in Parshas Terumah!

The Netziv offers the following amazing answer. The Medrash (Shemos Rabba 37:4) tells us that when G-d appointed Aharon as *Kohein Gadol* (High Priest), it was difficult for Moshe. Moshe felt bad that he would not be the *Kohein Gadol* and father of all future *Kohanim*. G-d appeared him with the verse (Psalms 119:92), "If not for your Torah as my delight, I would have been lost in my affliction." The verse is homiletically understood to say that G-d is telling Moshe that if not for Moshe's Torah as G-d's delight, the world would have been lost.

The implication of the Medrash is that Moshe felt bad that he would not be the source of the priesthood. G-d appeared Moshe by informing him that he had something even better, for he is the one through whom the Torah was given.

Firstly, asks the Netziv, where did the Sages see such a dialogue in the verses of the Torah? Secondly, what was the nature of the appeasement for Moshe? Torah is for all Jews, as is clear from many places. Although Moshe accepted the Torah at Sinai, he was just a messenger on behalf of the Jewish Nation. Priesthood would be something special for Aharon and his children. Anyone foreign to Aharon's lineage would not be able to perform the Temple services.

The Netziv explains that the questions discussed answer each other. The Sages were bothered by the problem posed above: Why was the commandment to take olive oil for the Menorah juxtaposed specifically with the appointment of Aharon as *Kohein Gadol*? The answer lies in the essence of the Menorah and its light. The purpose of the *Mishkan* was to cause G-d's presence to dwell on this earth. The true channel for this dwelling is through the Torah. The purpose of the *Mishkan* was to bring about the bounty of Torah through its special vessels, the Ark and the Menorah.

However, continues the Netziv, there was a fundamental difference between the two. The Ark was the repository of the power of the Written Torah. This was symbolized and effected through the Tablets containing the Ten Commandments, which were situated in the Ark. The Menorah, however, was to function as the conduit of the Oral Law. This was the essence of the light of the Menorah. The special sweetness of plumbing the depths of Torah understanding, together with the ability to think of new and novel insights, was to be brought about and channeled through the power of the



Because Torah Is for Every Jew

## Stories for the Soul

### Dressing the Part

Based on a story on [revach.net](http://revach.net)

Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky of Vilna (1863-1940) was once visiting the city of Krakow on Chanukah and tore his suit. Needing to repair the damage, he located a local Jewish tailor and requested that he fix the garment.

The tailor answered, "Forgive me, esteemed rav, but I have not yet kindled the Chanukah lights. If you wish, you can wait until I light, and after a half an hour, I'll make the necessary repairs."

While Rabbi Chaim Ozer waited, he noticed how this simple tailor prepared himself for the mitzvah of kindling the Chanukah lights. He removed his weekday garments and donned Shabbos clothing. He washed his hands and joyously prepared to light the wicks.

Rabbi Chaim Ozer was astounded by the simple piety of this man. He later commented, "I now understand how the city of Krakow produces such great Torah scholars and giants of the spirit. If this is how simple tailors behave, it is no wonder that great people emerge from this environment!"

The Torah gives very detailed specifications for the garments to be worn by the *Kohanim* (priests) when they perform the service in the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) and, later, in the *Bais Hamikdash* (Temple). Dressing and preparing appropriately for mitzvos reflects how we approach serving Hashem and how we want to relate to Him and His mitzvos.

## Kollel Happenings

### POOR DEFENSE: THE ETHICS OF REPRESENTING A GUILTY CLIENT

Join Richard Kornfeld, Shareholder at RechtKornfeld PC, and Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher, Senior Educator for the Denver Community Kollel, as they investigate the proper balance a defense lawyer must maintain in his work. Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, at 12-1:15 p.m. at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$25. RSVP [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org).

### DENVER COMMUNITY KOLLEL 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AND GROUNDBREAKING

20 years is a special milestone, and the Kollel will celebrate two decades of bringing Torah to Denver with a groundbreaking for its future home, the Kollel West Denver Torah Center, on March 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. For more info, to place ads and make reservations, visit [denverkollel.org](http://denverkollel.org), email [journal@denverkollel.org](mailto:journal@denverkollel.org) or call 303-820-2855

### KOLLEL PURIM CELEBRATION

The Kollel invites the community to join its annual Purim Seudah to be held on Purim, Thursday, March 1, 5:15 pm at the Ethel A. Beren Auditorium, 1261 Zenobia. Cost: \$18 per person/\$60 family max. The entire community is invited to join in Simchas Purim (no charge!) following the seudah at approximately 6:30 pm until... To reserve and for more info, email [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org) or call 303-820-2855.

## Increase Your Jewish IQ

By Rabbi Yaakov Zions

Last week we asked: Why is Psalm 104 (*Barchi Nafshi*) recited on Rosh Chodesh?

**A:** Many assume this psalm was recited in the Temple on Rosh Chodesh, but this seems far from clear. The Gemara (Sukkah 54b) indicates that there was a special psalm for Rosh Chodesh, but we are not told which psalm it was. It is also unclear whether the Rosh Chodesh psalm replaced the regular psalm of song of that day or if it was recited for *mussaf* only. The Tur (Orach Chaim 133 and 423) quotes *minhag Sefard* (custom of communities of Spain) who would recite Psalm 104 on Rosh Chodesh. This was not done to commemorate the Temple psalm; rather, the *minhag Sefard* of that period was to recite a daily psalm unrelated to the psalms recited in the Temple. Psalm 86 was recited on weekdays, while various other psalms

were substituted on special occasions. This custom is currently practiced in Sephardic, Chabad and some Nusach Sefard communities, although they also add the daily Temple psalm. The *minhag* (custom) of reciting Psalm 104 on Rosh Chodesh eventually spread to most, but not all, Ashkenazic communities. Some sources suggest that this psalm may have been the special psalm recited in the Temple on Rosh Chodesh.

Sources: Tiferes Yisroel (introduction to Kodshim, Chapter 6), Minchas Chinuch 312:3, Mishnah Berurah 423:9 and Aruch Hashulchan Orach Chaim 424:3.

**This week's question:** Did all the daily psalms of song recited in the Temple comprise of a complete chapter of Sefer Tehillim (Book of Psalms)?

To submit an answer to Rabbi Zions, email [ryz@denverkollel.org](mailto:ryz@denverkollel.org).

## Lives of Our Torah Leaders

### Rabbi Yonasan Eybeschütz - Part VIII

Rabbi Eybeschütz had been previously accused of being a Sabbatean in 1725, while still in Prague. At that time, he had taken an oath on Yom Kippur that he was not a Sabbatean,

and had co-signed a ban against Sabbteanism. That controversy was likely stirred by his enemies in the community, and it had died down.

## A Taste of Torah

*continued from front*

Menorah and its lights.

When G-d instructed Moshe to have the Jews take olive oil, He said, "let them take to you;" this taking was to be on behalf of Moshe. Moshe, through his greatness, was to be the leader of the Jews in this special area of Oral Torah. Of the depths and novellae of the Torah. A fountain of light and knowledge which would shine throughout the world. This special gift would be passed along to Moshe's children, too. The Talmud teaches that initially, the Torah was given exclusively to Moshe, and he later shared it with the entire Jewish Nation.

Nonetheless, Moshe and his children maintain a unique connection with the study of the Oral Law. This was the appeasement for Moshe, because this was to be the greatest gift of all, to be enjoyed by Moshe and to be passed on to his generations.

The message for us is eternal. Throughout the ages, whether in the brightest time of day or in the darkest of nights, we can always count on the joys of plumbing the depths of the Torah, both Written and Oral, to raise our spirits and to inspire and enliven our souls.