



Parshas Ki Sisa

March 2, 2018

A Taste of Torah

Make Two Tablets

by Rabbi Shmuel Halpern

Some of the most pivotal moments in Jewish history occur in this week's parsha. After the Jews experienced the revelation at Sinai, Moshe ascended the mountain to receive the *Luchos* (Tablets). These *Luchos* would contain the entirety of Torah, miraculously incorporated within the words of the Ten Commandments. As the Sages explain, a mere glance at the words of the *Luchos* would answer any question one had on the entire Torah. This was a representation of the lofty level the Jews had reached at Sinai. Unfortunately, these *Luchos* never came to the hands of the Jews. As Moshe descended Mt. Sinai and encountered the Jews engaged in the sin of the Golden Calf, he allowed the *Luchos* to fall from his hands and shatter. After many prayers by Moshe, Hashem agreed to grant the Jews forgiveness, and invited Moshe to receive a second set of *Luchos*. While the first *Luchos* are described as "the handiwork and script of Hashem," the Torah tells us that the second set of *Luchos* was fashioned by Moshe. How are we to understand the difference between the first set of *Luchos* and the second? And specifically, what is the meaning of Moshe's involvement in the creation of the second *Luchos*?

The Netziv (Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin; 1816-1893), in his commentary to the Torah, explains that the second *Luchos* represented a dramatic change in the Jewish people, their relationship with Hashem and His Torah. Had the Jews merited receiving the first set of *Luchos*, true Torah scholarship would've been more easily accessible. With the

second *Luchos*, it would require a tremendous amount of toil and self-sacrifice. One would expend time and effort in the understanding of a given topic only to forget it afterward. The only solution: constant review. Why the need for this great change? The Netziv explains that after the sin of the Golden Calf, Hashem decreed that if the Jews were to sin again, they'd eventually have to descend into a long and difficult exile. It was this future exile that necessitated this drastic change in the relationship between the Jews and the Torah. In exile, the Jews would experience great darkness, and the hand of Hashem would be hidden from their eyes. How would they survive the exile? It would be the Torah of the second *Luchos* that would carry the Jews through the exile. This form of Torah teaches us that the road to light is reached by traveling on the road of darkness. It is only by fighting darkness that we create light.

We now have an idea of the significance of the new process of Torah study as represented by the second set of *Luchos*. Still unexplained is the significance of the joint effort in creating the second *Luchos*. The first were the handiwork of Hashem, so why were the second created jointly by Hashem and Moshe? The Netziv explains that Moshe's involvement represents the involvement of the human intellect in the process of Torah study. Hashem's involvement represents the Divine assistance that aids those who toil in Torah. When we fight darkness, we don't do it alone. Hashem himself helps us

Stories for the Soul

For Whom the Music Plays

Based on a story in Wellsprings of Torah

In the city where the Noda b'Yehudah (Rabbi Yechezkel Landau; 1713-1793) lived, there were two wealthy neighbors who were always jealous of one another. Once, a musician played beautiful music in the courtyard between their two houses. After the musician left, one of the wealthy neighbors said, "Did you see how respected I am? The musician came to honor me with his music."

"He didn't come for you," the other neighbor countered. "He came to honor me."

Each of these individuals brought evidence to prove that the musician came for him. Since they couldn't reach an agreement, they went to the Noda b'Yehudah to settle their debate. Each man paid Rabbi Landau ten gold coins to adjudicate the dispute.

After hearing the arguments from each side of the debate, Rabbi Landau rendered his decision. "In my opinion, the musician didn't come for either of you. He came for me, so I could earn twenty gold coins!"

Hashem commands Moshe that every Jew, regardless of his wealth and status, must give a half-shekel annually - no more, no less. While Judaism recognizes that people have different stations in this world, the half-shekel is a great equalizer that reminds us that all of us shoulder equal responsibility to serve G-d to the best of our abilities, and we should not get too absorbed with our rank.

Kollel Happenings

DENVER COMMUNITY KOLLEL 20TH 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 6th at 6:30 pm. For more info and to make reservations, visit denverkollel.org, email journal@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855.

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 7th, at 12-1:15 p.m. at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$25. RSVP info@denverkollel.org.

A DEEPER LOOK AT THE PARSHA WITH RABBI SOMMERS

Join Rabbi Shachne Sommers as he discusses a number of difficulties encountered in the weekly Torah portion and develops a comprehensive approach to resolve the issue, simultaneously conveying a deeper understanding of the material being discussed. Tuesday nights at Aish Denver (lounge area), 8:15-9 pm, for men and women.

Increase Your Jewish IQ

By Rabbi Yaakov Zions

Last week we asked: Did all the daily psalms of song recited in the Temple comprise of a complete chapter of Sefer Tehillim (Book of Psalms)?

A: No. The Gemara (Sukka 55a) relates the psalms recited on Chol Hamoed Sukkos. On the third day of Chol Hamoed, the second half of Psalm 94 (the psalm generally recited on Wednesdays) was recited, and the first half, the following day. Rashi explains that the second half precedes the first half due to its content. It is descriptive of the Jewish

people subservient to other nations and a prayer for their salvation. Many Ashkenazi communities in Eretz Yisroel, based on Vilna Gaon, substitutes the psalms which were recited by the Levi'im in the temple on Holidays, including the two half-psalms on the abovementioned days.

This week's question: When is something permitted provided that the item was made with a non-kosher ingredient?

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

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Yonasan Eybeschütz - Part IX

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.

Now, however, Rabbi Emden concluded that Rabbi Eybeschütz was indeed a secret Sabbatean, and he announced his findings to the public. The attack on Rabbi Eybeschütz, the chief rabbi of three major Jewish communities, brought immediate reaction from those communities, and they rushed to defend their leader.

In 1751, those defending Rabbi Eybeschütz in Altona became so

aggressive against Rabbi Emden that he fled Altona for Amsterdam. The controversy had become so great that it ended up in the Danish courts in Danish courts. (Altona was then under Danish rule.) The courts issued an order that the Altona Jewish community halt all aggression toward Rabbi Emden.

The dispute spread through the German states and Poland, and people took sides, including many leaders and Torah scholars. In Hamburg, the dispute reached such proportions that in 1752, the Hamburg Senate (the governing body of Hamburg) demanded that the fighting halt, as it was disturbing the public peace.

A Taste of Torah

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arrive at the truth, so long as we are willing to put in the required effort. This is the Torah that has carried us through this long and bitter exile. Let

us cling to its truths with ever-greater determination, and, as a result, Hashem will bring us the ultimate light: the light of Mashiach.