

opportunity to host the *Siyum* event..

When we were first approached in July by the committee we had absolutely no idea what type of event this was nor what to expect in terms of the programming or what was actually going to happen.

6748 tickets were scanned at the door, aside from the top table Rabbis who entered via the VIP entrance and of course all your volunteers and crew. There are a number of points that have blown us away:

1. We have a security cupboard in which we allow guests to deposit anything deemed dangerous or inappropriate. At an event this size we would normally hold anything between 700-1000 items. Tonight we held nothing.

2. There was not a single incident of drunkenness, boisterous or rowdy behavior. Not a single one. I have been at the Arena for 28 months and accommodated over 300 events in that time. Never have we had no incidents.

3. All the team were blown away by the amount of thank you's that we received at the end of the evening. I actually thought everyone had been instructed to do this!

I am devastated that *Siyum* only takes place once every seven years. This event was a delight for all of us.

Becky Syrett, Operations Manager

Technical Support

In the summer of 1997 we traveled to the United States from *Eress Yisrael* to participate in a family *simchah*. As new immigrants we were entitled to import a small container of personal belongings on our return, including new appliances, and we planned to take advantage of our visit to do some urgent shopping. As a technical writer, one of the things I needed was some updated computer software, namely Microsoft Office 97. When buying software of this type you have two options. Either you can buy the "full install" version, which cost \$460 at the time and is intended for users who do not own an earlier version of the software, or you can buy an upgraded version at a cost of only \$180. The latter is, obviously, useful only for those who have an older version of the software on their computer already.

It occurred to me that I could save a lot of money by buying the upgraded version, but I did not own the earlier version. *Don't worry, you can easily copy the Microsoft Windows 6 from a friend, my yeser hara* kicked in. *After all, it urged, Bill Gates doesn't really need your \$280.* Well, I must confess that I actually went to a computer supply store in Baltimore and bought the upgraded version.

That same night I visited a friend in Baltimore and happened to pick up his copy of the latest issue of *The Jewish Observer*. The article I opened up discussed the fact that people today unthinkingly do things both in their personal and business lives that are in reality pure robbery. My conscience gave me a sharp jab. I thought, *Copying the software would be stealing, and it's irrelevant how much money I would have "saved."* And thinking about my *parnasah* led me to consider Who, after all, is in charge when it comes to earning a living.

The next day I went back to the computer store and told the clerk that I had made a mistake. What I needed was the "full-install" version of Microsoft Office 97.

Ten days after I returned to *Eress Yisrael* my brother-in-law, who had made some investments for me, called to tell me that my wife and I had received an unexpected dividend on a certain stock we owned. The windfall totaled \$962.15. Out of curiosity, I then made an account of all the business-related computer supplies, both hardware and software, I had purchased in the United States on our trip. Including the full version of Microsoft Office 97 the total was \$965.23! (When the Time is Right)

The Lorraine Gammal A"H Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נִשְׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

Congregation Magen Abraham

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שַׁבַּת טְרַמָּה ✪ תְּרוּמָה

Haftarah: Melachim I 5:26-6:13

FEBRUARY 28-29, 2020 4 ADAR 5780

Friday Minhah: 5:28 pm

Candlelighting: 5:28 pm

Evening Shema after: 6:26 pm

Shaharit: 5:32, 6:40, 8:10, 9:10 am

Morning Shema by: 8:38 am

Shabbat Class: 4:05 pm

Shabbat Minhah: 5:05 pm

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Shabbat Ends: 6:27 pm (R"Y 6:59 pm)

Sunday Minhah: 5:30 pm

Condolences to Sheryl Levy on the passing of her father, Isaac Saada.

A Message from our Rabbi

(Shemot 25:10-11) "וַיֵּשׂוּ אֲרוֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים...וַיְכַפֵּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר"

"They shall make an *Aron* of *shittim* wood...you shall cover it with pure gold."

The *Aron* which holds the Ten Commandments must be covered with a layer of gold on the inside and outside. *Rashi* explains that the practical way of doing this is to make three boxes, the largest one of gold, a smaller one of wood, and the smallest one of gold. The three are then placed one inside the other, so that the Biblical commandment is fulfilled. The *Talmud* (*Yoma* 72) derives from this that any *Talmid Hacham* (Torah Scholar) whose inside does not match his outside is not really a *Talmid Hacham*, since it is written, "Cover it with gold on the inside and on the outside." The level of spirituality that we display on the outside should match our true level of spirituality, that which is found on the inside.

But now we can ask a question. If the Ark is supposed to represent a *Talmid Hacham*, why is it not made of solid gold? What is the wood doing there altogether? Should not the Torah Scholar be pure, rather than veneered with spiritual beauty?

The symbolism of the wood is that we must understand that as holy as one can become on the outside and on the inside, one nevertheless remains and should remain a human being. If we become so holy as to become totally spiritual, then we no longer have a place in this world, but only in the World-to-Come.

It is undeniable that stories have an extraordinary power. If we wish to convey a concept to others there is no better way than expressing it through a story. For example, it's one thing to learn about the *misvah* to study Torah day and night. It's an

entirely different thing to hear a story of the phenomenal diligence of *Hacham* Ovadia Yosef or Rav Elyashiv. The concept and the ideal becomes alive and real.

But there is a downside to stories of great *Gedolim*. They generally place the *Gedolim* on such a level that their accomplishments become completely removed from something to which the average person can relate. When we tell stories of the Torah giants, we skip over the struggles that raged within them and instead speak only of the final and perfected end-result.

For example, everyone speaks about the *Hafess Hayim's* pure speech. Do we know anything about his struggles along the way? When we struggle with the *Yeser Hara* inside of us, we should realize that at that moment you are very similar to the great *sadik* who also struggled. That's the wood inside and it's the struggle that made him a *sadik* and so it is for us. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

From the Heart

(*Shemot* 25:20) "וְהָיוּ הַכְּרֻבִים פְּרָשֵׁי כְנָפַיִם לְמַעַלָּה...וּפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ אֶל-אָחִיו"
"The *Kerubim* shall spread their wings upward...and face one another."

The *Gemara* (*Yoma* 54b) teaches: "When the heathens entered the Temple to destroy it, they saw the *Kerubim* (the cherubs which were placed on the Ark) in embrace." This seems perplexing. The "embrace of the *Kerubim*" is an expression of Hashem's closeness and love for *Klal Yisrael*. How is it possible that at the very moment of severe punishment and destruction, the *Kerubim* would be in embrace?

The *Maharsha* suggests that it is because *B'nei Yisrael* were being so severely punished that there had to be this manifestation of utter closeness and love. It is a testament to the pure and total righteousness of the *Ribono shel Olam* that when He metes out Divine justice through punishment, He is first and foremost filled with compassion and love. Therefore, only at the moment when the *Kerubim* were locked in an embrace of love, could the Almighty decree the destruction of the *Bet Hamikdash* and *Bnei Yisrael's* subsequent exile.

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz zt"l adds his own revealing comments to the words of the *Maharsha*: *Hazal* tell us: "Just as He is compassionate, so too you must be compassionate" (*Shabbat* 133b). The Jewish People are enjoined to follow in the ways of the Almighty and attempt to treat our brethren the way Hashem treats us. We should therefore bear in mind that even in instances where we must punish someone, we should not do so out of hate or spite, but rather out of love and closeness that resembles the embrace of the *Kerubim*. When we have reached the level where another Jew is as close to us as an only child, only then are we permitted to mete out punishment for any misdeeds on his part. (*Torah Tavlin* II)

Foundation for the Future

(*Shemot* 26:15) "וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת-הַקְּרָשִׁים לְמִשְׁכַּן עֲצֵי שֵׁטִים"
"You shall make the planks of the *Mishkan* of *shittim* (acacia) wood."

The *Midrash Tanchuma* tells us that these wooden planks are actually attributed to Ya'akov *Abinu's* foresight. He anticipated that his descendants would one day erect a *Mishkan*. Aware that such lumber did not exist in the wilderness, he brought these trees with him to replant in Egypt. He instructed his children that when they would be liberated from Egypt, they should take these trees with them. Thereby, Ya'akov taught his children that the future edifices of *Klal Yisrael* must be built upon the foundations of the past. We must keep in mind the *mesirut nefesh*, devotion to the point of self-sacrifice, of our ancestors as we build for our children. The dedication of those who

lived before us should serve as a beacon of light to guide and inspire us.

We suggest another reason for Ya'akov's decision to bring along the *shittim* trees. Ya'akov sought to underscore the importance of *hakarat hatob*, appreciation/gratitude, for what others have done for us. All too often we conveniently forget who has helped us when we needed it most. We must always remember the origin of the *atzei shittim*, as well as the *mesirut nefesh* involved in transporting and caring for them. With this in mind, we will view every aspect of the *Mishkan*, which is a microcosm of the world, as a source of Hashem's beneficence. We will then be imbued with a sense of *hakarat hatob* to Hashem for all that we receive from Him. What better foundation blocks could there be for any edifice than the attribute of *hakarat hatob*? (*Peninim* on the Torah)

Key to the Safe

Joseph had been dreaming of his daughter's wedding day for many years. But along with the anticipation came concern. Joseph was not a wealthy man. In fact, he could hardly make ends meet. He wondered if the pressure of financing a wedding and helping a young couple survive financially would be within his power to accomplish.

Joseph's father, Jacob, was a man of comfortable means, but, like his son, far from wealthy. His concerns prompted action in the form of a monthly savings plan on behalf of his son. Every month he took some of his earnings and put the money into a safety deposit box at the neighborhood bank. He told no one of his plan to gift the money to Joseph as soon as he asked for help.

The happy day came when Dena got engaged, and the family got together to share the joyous moment. Joseph acted as if he hadn't a care in the world as he thanked all the well-wishers who came to congratulate him. Of course Jacob attended, and at the end of the evening asked Joseph is there was anything that he needed.

"No, Dad," he responded. "This is a day I have anticipated for so long, and now I just want to enjoy it."

Thinking that the request for help would be forthcoming soon, Jacob left without revealing his secret.

As the wedding day approached, Joseph became more and more tense and anxious. His ability to cope and perform at work was hampered by the daily demands for money. If it wasn't for one thing, it was for another. In the meantime, Jacob waited patiently for Joseph to come and ask for help. Joseph's pride prevented him from seeking assistance, and the box remained locked in the bank. The key was not passed to Joseph.

Prayer is our way of asking our Father for all of our needs. The Torah (*Shemot* 23:28) tells us to pray: And you will worship (through prayer) Hashem, Your Hashem, and He will bless your bread and your water.

It should be noted that the very act of asking is beneficial to us. We grow in humility and strengthen our faith whenever we turn to Him for our needs.

If we do not pray, however, even rewards destined for us may not be delivered.

In giving us the ability to pray, Hashem has offered us the key to his treasure chest. When we are humble enough to acknowledge that we are not self-sufficient, we will be able to ask for – and to receive – all the blessings that have been deposited in our name. (*One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda*)

The following letter was written by the Operations Manager of a soccer stadium in Wembley, England (near London). A *Siyum Hashas* had been held in the stadium, and this letter was written to the *Siyum* committee immediately following the event.

Dear *Siyum* Team,

It is 2 am as I write this to you having just got home after the *Siyum*. On behalf of all the team I must express our deepest pride and pleasure at being given the