

that you bring, it will build your relationship with your offspring and pass on your traditions to future generations. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

The Gift of Selflessness

“Once an ant touches a crumb no other ant will touch it. Even if the first ant drops the crumb and goes elsewhere, no other ant will pick it up. How other ants sense that the crumb has an owner, is by the scent of a chemical substance called a pheromone, which the ant leaves on each crumb it touches. This behavior demonstrates respect for other people’s property is a principle in nature.”

One’s character traits are refined by observing the respect tiny ants have for one another. One can learn the art of Altruism as opposed to selfishness. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller Duties of the Mind)

Torn and Tattered

In the town of Lomza hundreds of outsiders came to participate in the meaningful and heartfelt Yom Kippur prayers for which the yeshivah was famous. At the time, David, who was a young man, was uninterested and uninvolved in religious life. One *Ereb* Yom Kippur David happened to be walking down the street and encountered hundreds of people hurrying toward the yeshivah. They were already wearing their Yom Kippur shoes as it was nearly time for *Kal Nidrei*.

This was the last place David wanted to be. He had serious questions and doubts about religion and G-d and had made up his mind to stay far away from the yeshivah that Yom Kippur. But something inexplicable, inside of him, pulled him in that direction. He felt an intense internal struggle.

As he stood a short distance away from the yeshivah he noticed a very bizarre sight. Walking in and out of some small public bathrooms was an angelic-looking figure. Dressed in his white *kittel* the man was walking into each of the outdoor bathrooms for a few moments and then emerging. Puzzled, David approached the man and was shocked to see that it was Rav Eliyahu Dushnitzer, the *mashgiah* of the yeshivah. “I’m sorry to be so nosy, but why are you walking in and out of the bathrooms?”

Rav Eliyahu looked at the young man and explained quite simply, “For the next twenty-six hours there will be an overflow of people here for the Yom Kippur prayers. I want to make sure that the facilities are adequate and that there will be enough paper.” And with that he slipped into the next stall to continue with his pre-Yom Kippur ritual.

David was deeply affected by this simple act of a great man. He smiled to himself, feeling that he had received an answer to the questions that had been tormenting him. Instead of walking away from the yeshivah, he walked toward it. Fifty years later David marvels, “What had Rav Eliyahu done? Checked on the condition of the bathrooms? And yet he had done much more. He had pierced my heart and helped me find my way back home.” (Touched by a Story 3)

The Lorraine Gammal A "H Edition

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SHABBAT

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Haftarah: Melachim I 5:26-6:13

FEBRUARY 16-17, 2018 2 ADAR 5778

Friday Minhah: **5:14 pm**

Candlelighting: **5:14 pm**

Evening Shema after: **6:12 pm**

Shaharit: **5:48, 6:40, 8:30, 9:15 am**

Morning Shema by: **8:50 am**

Shabbat Class: **3:45 pm**

Shabbat Minhah: **4:55 pm**

Shabbat Ends: **6:14 pm (R"Y 6:46 pm)**

Sunday Minhah: **5:20 pm**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Mabrook to Rabbi & Mrs. Yosef Semah on the marriage of their son, Reuven, to Frumie Churba. Mabrook to the grandparents, Rabbi & Mrs. Reuven Semah.

Mabrook to Rabbi Yeshaya and Stefanie Harari on the birth of a baby girl. Mabrook to the grandparents, AJ and Joy Gindi.

Mabrook to Rabbi Eliyahu and Chanie Soleimani on the birth of a baby boy. Mabrook to the grandparents, Rabbi & Mrs. Reuven Semah.

A Message from Our Rabbi

וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב

“You shall make two cherubs of gold.” (*Shemot* 25:18)

Hashem commanded Moshe to take a large piece of gold and make from it the *kaporet* (the lid on top of the *Aron* of the *Luhot*), and the *kerubim* which were upon it. The *kerubim* were not hewn as separate entities and then attached to the *kaporet*, but emerged from the *kaporet* itself. They faced each other, spreading their wings over the *Aron*.

All the components of the *Mishkan* and the *Bet Hamikdash* could be made from any type of metal when no gold was available. Only the *kerubim* must be made out of gold. What’s the reason for this? Rav Meir Shapiro zt”l explains that the *kerubim* represent young children. Therefore they were placed on top of the *Aron* of the *luhot*, to teach us the obligation to train and teach them the Torah.

Since the *kerubim* represent the teaching of Torah to the youth, which includes the opening of Torah institutions of yeshivahs, one cannot fulfill the obligation with

anything but gold. The use of a second rate metal, like copper, is prohibited. When it comes to teaching our kids, nothing but the best.

Last year, two young men returning home from kollel in Montreal were attacked by knife-wielding hooligans, who stabbed one of them and stole his wallet. Police launched an investigation, seeking information in an attempt to track down the two perpetrators, and to determine if there was any connection to a separate robbery in the area several nights prior. With the help of surveillance footage from a nearby home, police successfully arrested the suspects.

Among those who the police spoke to during the investigation were local yeshiva boys, Yitzhak and Eli, who before the stabbing, encountered the two suspects. The thugs had passed the boys, but not before hurling curses in their direction.

The detectives asked the boys to describe the men's appearances. They then directed the boys to recount what the ruffians had yelled at them. Yitzhak blushed and Eli stammered. The police officers were confused. What was the matter?

Again they questioned, "What did they say to you?" The boys looked down, their faces crimson. The police explained that it was important for them to know precisely what was said, because if something anti-Semitic was uttered, the incident could be labeled a hate crime. Finally the boys said, "They cursed."

"What do you mean they cursed?" asked a detective. The yeshiva boys repeated that they had been cursed at, but could not repeat the words that they had heard.

The police officers were dumbfounded. It was their first exposure to youth blessed with an unadulterated upbringing in a community that is free of the vulgarity and crudity that are so much a part of the surrounding culture.

The officers might have had trouble getting the exact information they sought, but what they learned was so much more powerful and consequential. The boy's silence was worth a thousand words. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

Standing Tall

וְנִשְׁעִיתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁים לְמִשְׁכַּן עֲצֵי שֹׁטִים עֹמְדִים

"And you shall make the planks for the *Mishkan* of *shittim* wood standing up." (*Shemot* 26:15)

Hazal state that *shittim* (acacia) wood does not bear fruit. It is a strong and tough wood which has limited practical application. What is the significance of this wood in regard to the *Mishkan*? It would seem that the wood selected to serve as the walls of the *Mishkan*, the mainstays of the edifice wherein the *Shechinah* would "repose," would be one which had many practical uses. We suggest that this choice imparts an important message. The planks of the *Mishkan* may be viewed metaphorically as the Torah scholars in a community. To the "simple" citizen they might not seem to contribute much of themselves to the practical welfare of the community. Indeed, in the *Talmud Sanhedrin* 99b, *Hazal* refer to one who claims, "What do the Rabbis do for us" as an *apikores*, free thinker or apostate. Apparently this attitude was not uncommon, even in the times of the *Talmud*. In the eyes of a shallow-minded person, the *ben Torah* does not seem to "pull his own weight." The uneducated individual does not perceive that the *ben Torah* contributes to the development and sustenance of a community.

As *Hazal* teach us, however, this is not a Torah orientation. Rav Aharon Kotler zt"l states that the Torah scholars are the "eyes" and "heart" of *Klal Yisrael*. They sustain the "body" of our people in two ways. First, they present us with a scholarly adjudication of Torah law, teaching us what is permitted and what is not, which

approach to life's endeavor we may or may not take. In addition, their actual existence is the source of "hiyut," the lifeblood of *Klal Yisrael*. The planks were made of a wood which was *omdim*, standing. This alludes to the notion that this wood seemed to be going nowhere, since it had no practical use. It was specifically this notion which Hashem chose to dispel. That which seems to be stagnant in our human eyes may actually be quite vital. What is important is the perspective in which Hashem views it. (*Peninim on the Torah*)

Feeding the Fire

וְנִשְׁעִיתָ מְנֹרֶת זָהָב טָהוֹר מִקָּשָׁה תִּיַעֲשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה יְרָכָה וְקִנְיָהּ
"You shall make a *Menorah* out of pure gold. The *Menorah* must be made by hammering [its form out of a solid piece of gold] – its base, its shaft..." (*Shemot* 25:31)

Rashi quotes the *Midrash*: "The *Menorah* shall be made on its own. Because Moshe was perplexed by the way in which it was supposed to be made, the Holy One Blessed Be He told him, 'Throw the block of gold into the fire, and it will be made by itself.'"

The *Menorah*, with its seven branches emanating from a single stem, formed in its entirety by a single block of gold, is symbolic of the wisdom of the Torah, as well as the seven wisdoms of the world, which all emanate from one single Divine source. Everything emerges from the Torah, for the sake of the Torah. And this, in essence, was Moshe's problem: How can a mortal human being possibly grasp the profundity and complexity of incorporating all the wisdom of the world into one physical object – the *Menorah*? Thus, Hashem told him to throw the block of gold into the fire, and it would be made by itself. But how did this resolve Moshe's concern?

R' Nisan Alpert zt"l provides a wonderful understanding. The *pasuk* states, "*Halo koh debarai ke'esh* – behold, My word is like fire" (*Yirmiyahu* 23:29). The Torah is compared to fire. A unique property of fire is that it destroys physical substances while also incorporating them into its flame. The more physical material that is added to the fire, the larger the flame becomes. So, too, is a man's relationship with the Torah. When a person delves into the Torah and becomes one with it, the Torah becomes akin to a flame that engulfs him entirely, purifying him, and, in a sense, making him into a torch which rises to Hashem. In the process, the person grows, just as a fire grows when it is fed with fuel. This lesson was implicit in Hashem's command to Moshe to throw the block of gold into the fire. (*Torah Tavlin*)

What Did You Bring Me?

Many grandparents feel that toys, candies, or other treats must accompany them on visits to their grandchildren. After all, it pays to be prepared for the chorus of "What did you bring me?" that rings out from the mouths of the precious little ones. However, the grandparents don't consider that the toys or trinkets they bestow so lovingly have a life span shorter than that of a fruit fly, and will soon pass into oblivion.

It is very important to bond with children and to forge connections between the generations. A toy or candy is a useful icebreaker, but once the novelty is gone – and how quickly that happens! – adults should give of *themselves* to the little ones. Sharing a personal story, reading a book aloud, or taking a walk together are joint activities that give children a feeling of special importance. They also give Grandma or Grandpa the chance to teach and share experiences with a beloved youngster while enjoying the grandchild's company and unique personality.

Next time you get ready to visit the kids, think hard about what to bring along. Be sure to bring *yourself* along with your purchase. If you inject yourself into the things