



Non-Profit Prophet

By Eli Stahler, 12th Grade

When the construction of the Mishkan was completed, Moshe gave an accounting of all of the materials which were collected for it, and where they were used in the project. The midrash states that Moshe heard people expressing suspicion about his appropriation of the money, in terms of whether he kept any for himself. As a result, he did a public audit of the funds collected and used in order to prove that he did not keep any.

How is it possible that the greatest of prophets became suspect? Wasn't he the man whom G-d chose to bring the Children of Israel out of Egypt, split open the Sea of Reeds, and lead the nation to Sinai to receive the Torah? Doesn't G-d Himself testify about Moshe that he is completely trustworthy in all of His "house" (Numbers 12:7)?

Another case in point. When Moshe began to erect the Mishkan, it didn't go up easily at first. People began to say, "Maybe this is not what G-d told Moshe to do. Maybe this is much more complicated than what G-d said, and that's why it's not standing." As a result we find in the Torah the repetition of the words "just as G-d commanded Moshe." G-d wanted this written

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Putting in the Effort

By Shalom Gelbtuch, 12th Grade

"VaYaviu Ess haMishkan El Moshe"

Rashi explains (based on the Midrash Tanchuma): The Mishkan contractors (Chachmei and Nosei Lev) were unable to erect it, for the Kerashim (planks) were too heavy and unwieldy. No human (or group) was strong enough to handle the Kerashim. Thus, they turned to Moshe for guidance.

Since Moshe Rabbeinu, until now, had no "hands on" role in the Mishkan's construction, Hakadosh Boruch Hu left the final task of its erection to Moshe. Moshe Rabbeinu, however asked Hashem, "How can I erect the Mishkan if no human can handle the Kerashim?"

Hashem replied, "Asok," i.e. go and make the effort, which Moshe did, and subsequently the Mishkan arose by itself. We can see this from the Posuk (40:17) later in the Parsha, which says, "Hukam HaMishkan" – the Mishkan was erected (i.e. by itself).

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Torah Teasers

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe

Parshas Pekudei Questions

1. What type of coin, mentioned in this parsha, is mentioned only one other time in the Torah (and where)?
2. Of all the precious metals collected for the Mishkan, which had the largest amount?
3. Which two of the 12 stones found on the breastplate (*choshen*) are mentioned elsewhere in the Torah - not in relation to the Mishkan?
4. In what context is fire mentioned, in both parshas Vayekhel and parshas Pekudei?
5. What precious stone appears three times on the clothing of the High Priest?

Answers

1. Each person was expected to donate to the Mishkan a *beka* of silver, the value of half a *shekel* (Exodus 38:26 with Rashi). In parshas Chayah Sarah, when Eliezer gives gifts to Rivkah, the earring has the weight of a *beka* (Genesis 24:22 with Rashi).
2. Silver, with a tally of 100 (*kikar*) talents and 1,775 shekels, is collected in the greatest amount (Exodus 38:25).
3. The *shoham* stone is twice on the shoulder straps of the *ephod* (39:8), and also appears on the fourth row of the breastplate (*choshen*) (Exodus 39:13).
4. Fire is mentioned at the beginning of Vayekhel with regards to keeping Shabbat (Exodus 35:3), and in the last verse of Pekudei regarding the pillar of fire that led the Jewish people through the desert at night (Exodus 40:38).
5. The *shoham* stone is twice on the shoulder straps of the *ephod* (39:8), and also appears on the fourth row of the breastplate (*choshen*) (Exodus 39:13).

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so as to make it clear that it was all done according to His specifications. Again, how could people suspect Moshe of adding his own two cents to G-d's commandments?

The answer is, says the Yalkut Lekach Tov, that this is the far reaching effect of "laitzonus." Laitzonus is the act of making light of important things, or conversely, taking unimportant things seriously.

How is it possible that someone with the track record of Moshe Rabbainu should be so challenged? This is the strength of laitzonus. It has the ability to make little of anything.

What is the mechanism of laitzonus? It bases itself on superficiality. One gets an idea in his mind, and without questioning or substantiating it is accepted as true. Once the idea finds acceptance, no matter how ridiculous, it takes nothing less than clear and convincing testimony with evidence to

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Rav Dov Meir Rubman *zt"l* (a Talmid of Slabodka, who was the founder and Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Tiferes Yisroel in Chaifa), in his Sefer Zichron Meir, explains that we see from this Midrash that when it comes to Ruchniyus endeavors, the "toiling" (*Ameilus*) component is far more significant than the end result (and is perhaps the only item of importance).

We see this from the Posuk in Iyov, "Adam LaAmal Yulad" – man is brought into this world to toil, while the Zechus of one's *Ameilus* enables one to accomplish extraordinary (and seemingly super-human) feats, well beyond the stated "pay grade".

Hard work and assiduous toiling, regarding all-things Ruchani (spiritual endeavors), is not a means to an end ... but is an/the end itself.

We see this concept from Limud Torah specifically, which seemingly is a pragmatic means to an end (i.e. one must study the Torah in order to properly perform Mitzvos), yet is also considered to be the end itself. Thus, the Gemorah in Berachos (17a) quotes Chazal who said, "Ashrei Mi SheAmolo B'Torah" – praised is he who toils in Limud Torah. The

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Given by Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz
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Transcribed by
Uri Himelstein

Shul Kiddush Part II - Schnopps

This week, we will be continuing the 3 part series that we started last week. Rebbe also wanted to point out that the whole topic should only get off the ground for those above the age of 21.

- Uri

I. Introduction

- a. The Shulchan Aruch paskens that if one doesn't have any wine then he may use beer. The Mishna Brurah says that the same would apply to any beverage, granted that it is the "Chamar Medinah", in the absence of wine.

II. What is Chamar Medinah?

- a. The Shulchan Aruch Harav writes that there are two main criteria to determine if a beverage is the "Chamar Medinah": It must be a beverage commonly served during a meal, and it must be something which isn't cheap and has some Chashivus. R' Moshe defines it as a drink that one might serve to a guest as a sign of respect, not just to quench a thirst. Practically, almost all poskim assume beer or whiskey to be Chamar Medinah.

III. When can one use "Chamar Medinah"?

- a. The Shulchan Aruch says that by the night, if one has no wine, he should make Kiddush on the Pas and not on Chamar Medinah. However, by day, one may make Kiddush on Chamar Medinah instead of making it on the Pas. He explains this difference in reasoning through explaining the difference in the Kiddushes: Nighttime Kid-

dush is a very specific text, whereas the entire text of Kiddushah Rabbah is essentially just Hagafen (and we add on a formula); therefore, if one made Kiddush on Pas during the day it would simply be saying Hamotzi, which doesn't even look like he is saying Kiddush at all.

- b. The whole heiter of Chamar Medinah is based on the fact that there is no wine available. This leads to the question: what would be considered to be a case where no wine is available? What would be the din if there is a Kiddush at shul with no wine, but one could just go straight home for wine? Pashut Pshat would be that one wouldn't be able to rely on Chamar Medinah, however the Mishna Brurah records many gedolim who would use Chamar Medinah even when wine was available. A few factors led them to be meikel. The Mishna Brurah records that wine was very expensive, and therefore since the whole Chiyuv of daytime Kiddush was Derabanan, one could be meikel. R' Wosner said that since in the times of the Gemara wine was a very commonly drunk beverage, then it was clearly superior to the Chamar Medinah. However, nowadays, where wine isn't so commonly drunk, then it wouldn't be so much superior to Chamar Medinah.

IV. The shiur for one using Schnopps?

- a. Based on the above shitos, which are meikel for using Chamar Medinah,

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A BLESSING

BY CHAIM LEIB ALPER, 9TH GRADE

This week's Parsha begins with a continuation of the description of the parts and utensils used in and around the Mishkan.

After the lengthy account that takes up over half of the Parsha, the Bnei Yisroel present all that they have made to Moshe before setting it up for usage:

"Like everything Hashem had commanded Moshe, so did the Children of Yisroel perform all the labor. Moshe saw the entire work and behold! They had done it as Hashem had commanded, so they had done! And Moshe blessed them." [42-43; 39 Shmos]

These Pesukim seem to be repetitive. Also, why is it only now, at this specific point in time, that Moshe decided to bless the Jews? He didn't offer blessings when they did all he said regarding the Korban Pesach, or when they would faithfully follow him on a 38 year journey all over the desert. Why did Moshe give them his blessing at this moment?

To find the answer, let us look at the something that had happened before this in Parshas Ki Sisa: Moshe advocating for the Jews after the Chet HaEgel.

Perhaps the reason for the repetitiveness of saying that the people had done what they were told to do was that after the sin of the Golden Calf, Moshe had lost some of his trust in the sincerity of the Bnei Yisroel. Maybe he was almost shocked that the Jews had flawlessly done all that Hashem had commanded them to do.

So the repetition of *"so they had done!"* is the Torah's way of telling us that Moshe kind of did a double take at the Jew's perfect work.

Then, in his happiness and heart full of *nachas*, Moshe gave a blessing to all the people that had helped in building the Mishkan, because up until now, the Jews had been more than a disappointment. However, now, as the Jews presented their own handiwork, Moshe knew that these people really did have the potential to be the Am Hashem and that his work might really be the kick-off of the beginning of a great nation.

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contradict and live down the allegations.

The Torah is teaching us how off-base one can be in his assumptions - even to the point of the absurd. The only way to fight it is through thorough and careful thought and courage and to debunk baseless talk before it finds a place in one's heart.

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Hachana and research about how to properly perform Mitzvos (via Limud Torah) is inherently a coveted, significant, and duly-rewarded act.

The Chofetz Chaim applies this concept to explain the Gemorah in Berachos 28b, which we famously repeat (hopefully often) in our Hadrans: “Modim Anachnu Loch – Shelo Samta Chelkeinu MiYoshvei Keranos ... SheHaim Ameilim V'Eino Mikablim Sachar, V'Anu Ameilim U'Mekablim Sachar”. We thank Hashem for our Chelek and reward system, which is totally different than that of the “Yoshvei Keranos” i.e. loafers who are not engaged in Torah and Mitzvos. Both groups work and toil – yet they (Yoshvei Keranos) are not rewarded, while we are.

The Chofetz Chaim asked the obvious question: this is not entirely true... for in global/secular society, almost all the Yoshvei Keranos are duly compensated for their non-Ruchani work.

However, the Chofetz Chaim points out that while secular society compensates for “results”, there is no pecuniary reward for effort alone, independent of the end result/product.

For example, if one brings a busted shoe to a cobbler, who valiantly spends hours trying to fix it to no avail, the cobbler receives absolutely no compensation. However, we (Yidden) have the best reward system, where we are rewarded with eternal Zechuyos (priceless) for mere Ameilus (toil), regardless of the end result. If one spends 3 hours trying to digest a tough Sugyah, but cannot Chap it, or if one walks an hour to be Mevaker an unavailable Choleh, they receive S'Char for the mere effort, even without the desired result.

This is why Hashem said to Moshe Rabbeinu, “Asok”... just make the effort, and I (Hashem) will deliver the desired result.

We unfortunately live in a non-Ruchani, result-oriented society/Galus, where Ameilus (hard work) is valueless, while the entire focus is only on the results and how we can cut corners to achieve them. Thus, we have to refresh our focus and constantly remind ourselves that “Adam LaAmal Yulad”, while Hashem only want us to “Asok.”

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The greatest antidote and prevention for litzonus is serious Torah learning. The more Torah we absorb in our blood, the closer we are to truth, and the less prone we will be to follow litzonus.

Taken from torah.org



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Moshe's Zealousness

By Avi Bulka

In Parshas Pekudei (40:15), the Pasuk says, "And you shall anoint them as you did anoint their father." This is referring to Moshe anointing Aharon's children. Why couldn't the Pasuk have just said, "And you shall anoint them?" Why was Moshe commanded to anoint them like their father? Isn't it the same thing? To answer this question, one must understand some background. Moshe was originally supposed to receive the Kehuna, but in the end, his brother got it. Moshe could have been jealous and not been happy for his brother, but he was just the opposite. He was extremely excited for his brother and anointed him with a lot of eagerness and joy. Moshe could have been jealous and upset that Aharon's children were going to be anointed and not his sons. The Pasuk is telling us that Moshe should not be jealous, and that he should be joyful, just like he was for his brother.

Taken from the *Meshech Chochmah*

(10-Minute Halacha — Continued from page 3)

what would be the required shiur to make Kiddush on? The Shulchan Aruch paskened that a person has to say Kiddush over a cup that holds a Revi'is of wine and drink a Rov Revi'is. The Gemara in Pesachim (109) gives various methods of measuring a Revi'is, and therefore there is major debate on how to measure a Revi'is, with the range being from 3 oz to 5.36 oz (with R' Moshe holding that for the purposes of the morning Kiddush 3.3 is fine, and R' Chaim Naeh even being meikel for the morning Kiddush to 2.9 oz.). However, a plastic shot glass only measures 1 ounce. Therefore, Pashut Pshat is that one would not be able to use a shot glass. The kula would be based on the following two possibilities. The Taz writes that although one must normally drink a Revi'is to make a Bracha Acharona, by liquor less would suffice, because that it considered a Chashuv amount (and the Raayah is the advent of the one ounce shot glasses) for this type of beverage. R' Tzvi Pesach Frank says that this would also apply for Kiddush as well. However, it should be noted that the Magen Avraham rejects this Taz, and the Mishna Brurah paskens like the Magen Avraham. The other reason to be meikel is noted by R' Schechter, who quotes the Teshuvos Eretz Tzvi, who has a unique shitah in this issue. He holds that the liquor isn't considered a drink, since it isn't drunk to quench one's thirst, rather it would have the same Halacha as a food, whose shiur is a kazayis. R' Schechter points out that this argument is flawed, since R' Chaim Volozhiner used this same argument to prove that one may not use it for Kiddush in the first place, since in order for a beverage to attain "Chamar Medinah" status it has to actually be a beverage.

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(Stories of Greatness — Continued from page 8)

25 Napoleons, a sum that would support a family for two years. Surely, no one would be so foolhardy as to make an offer like that! Reb Yehoshua, however, underestimated the tenacity of his would-be buyers. One merchant actually came up with the sum, and a deal was struck.

The night before the sale was to be finalized, Reb Yehoshua couldn't sleep. He tossed and turned in his bed until, finally, in the middle of the night, he dressed and left the house, telling his family he would soon return.

His employees were shocked to see the owner, Reb Yehoshua, arrive at the mill. As he never visited the mill during the day, what was he doing there in the middle of the night? Reb Yehoshua walked straight up to the horse as all of the employees looked on. He stopped at the horse's side and whispered a few words in the mighty animal's ear. Immediately, the horse fell dead on the spot. Reb Yehoshua said nothing and returned to his home.

The next day news quickly spread that "the wonder horse" had died the previous night, for no apparent reason. "A perfectly healthy horse!" everyone exclaimed, and a horse worth 25 Napoleons! Who had ever heard of such a thing!

Reb Yehoshua called his family and friends and related the amazing story of the previous evening. "Last night I couldn't sleep. I tossed and turned for hours, and when I fell asleep at last, I had a very strange dream. In the dream my former employee, Shmuel, appeared to me and said, 'I must confess to you. I wasn't the wonderful manager you thought me to be. I stole from you throughout all the years I worked at the mill. When I died and appeared before the Heavenly Court, I was informed that the only way I could expiate my terrible sin against man and G-d was to return to earth in the form of your mill horse so that I could repay my debt to you. I was given an especially strong body so that I could work extra hard. For months I toiled tirelessly, making up for what I stole from you through the years.

"But it seems I did my job too well, for I became renowned for my strength and stamina. When I heard that you were planning to sell me, I was horrified. I would not be able to expiate my sins unless I was working for you in your mill. If you would sell me, I would have to return to earth once more, perhaps in an even lesser form, to atone for my misdeeds. I cannot bear the idea of returning again, so I beg you, please forgive me for what I did to you.'

"When I heard his plea, I jumped up out of bed and ran immediately to the mill. I went up to the horse and told him that I forgave him with all my heart, and that he no longer owed me a single penny. When he heard my words, he expired, for he had fulfilled his purpose here on earth. Now, poor Shmuel will find his peace in the next world..."

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V. Conclusion

- a. There are many who have a minhag to specifically make Kiddush on schnopps. For those that have this minhag and are already following a number of kulas, they should at least try to use at least a 3 oz cup and drink half of it. However, it would be lechatchila to never put oneself in this situation and to make Kiddush on wine or grape juice.

STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: NOAM LEVY

This week's story shows us that things may not be as they seem on the surface. Although an extreme case, this story is a good example that people sometimes do things that we may not agree with or see the reason for, but we have to always look beyond the "cover" of the book and always judge people favorably. Hopefully, we can all achieve this level and will be zoche to see the coming of the Beis Hamikdash in our days. Adapted from chabad.org. Have a great Shabbos!!

- Noam

Reb Yehoshua Milner made a good living from the mill that he owned on the outskirts of 19th century Jerusalem. The huge millstone was turned by the steady and patient treading of a horse who spent its days pacing round and round in an endless circle. Reb Yehoshua, however, was almost never to be seen at the mill. A devout and scholarly man, he allowed all the work of the mill to be supervised by his manager, Reb Shmuel. This enabled him to be free to devote all his time to Torah study in the beis medrash.

When Reb Shmuel the manager passed away, another man was hired to oversee the running of the mill. This new

manager decided to improve the operation of the mill by replacing the slow, old horse with a new massive one, stronger by far than the other horses that had worked there before. The new horse accomplished work so much more quickly than the previous ones, that it became known as "the wonder horse."

Soon, word of this magnificent horse spread through the countryside, and bidders came from near and far to try to buy the fabulous animal. Much more money was waiting to be made through the horse if it would be used for other, more demanding tasks than turning a millstone, such as pulling huge loads, or transporting the wealthy from place to place.

Reb Yehoshua, however, was unwilling to sell the horse, and refused all bids that were presented to him. But no matter how many times he said "no," and how many people he rebuffed, offers continued to come his way from people who wished to purchase the horse.

Finally, Reb Yehoshua tired of the continual interruptions to his Torah study. So he set a price for "the wonder horse" of

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