

PARSHA PERSPECTIVES

RABBI YAAKOV SILVERMAN



Following the disastrous aftereffects of the fight between Korach and Moshe, the Torah describes another proof Hashem wanted the Jews to experience to concretize and solidify that Aharon was to be the leader of the tribe of Levi. Each shevet was to provide a staff with their tribe's name engraved into it and they stored it overnight in the Mishkan. Aharon was the representative of his shevet, Levi, and Hashem guaranteed that the staff of the shevet that He chose, would blossom. The result of this would be a clear cut and indisputable sign that Aharon, Moshe's appointee, should be the leader and not Korach or anyone else.

The Torah describes that the next day Moshe entered the Mishkan and Aharon's staff had blossomed, sprouted buds, and even gave forth ripe almonds. There is an interesting observation to be made in the way the staff is depicted. The implication is that when Moshe retrieved the staff, it still had all three stages of development represented on it. Blossoms, buds and almonds all were present simultaneously. Some of the commentators question the necessity of this deviation from the natural world. Why would Hashem specifically want the blossoms and buds to remain at the end of the process instead of giving way to the fruit and falling of the staff as would happen on a regular *mandelbaum* (almond tree in yiddish)?

They answer that there is a reference in this sign, hinting to the reason Hashem chose Aharon over any of the other options. In parshas Be'ha'aloscha, when

Aharon is commanded to light the menorah, the Torah tells us, "*vayas kein Aharon*", and Aharon did as he was told. Rashi comments that this teaches us that he did not change anything from the commandment of Hashem and he did exactly as he was commanded. The Sefas Emes explains that the first time we engage in an activity, be it a mitzvah or a mundane act, there is a natural excitement that we experience due to the freshness and newness of the activity. Aharon lit the menorah without changing, meaning he had that same excitement with him throughout and he never lost that initial feeling of adrenaline. That is what set him apart from the others and that is what Hashem was hinting to by leaving the buds and blossoms on the staff. Aharon's strength was in the fact that he held tight to the emotion and exhilaration that naturally exist at the start of a new endeavor. The blossoms and buds never left, allowing for a more meaningful performance and experience and a better, more complete connection to Hashem.

We may struggle with maintaining the fire and passion we had as we continue to perform the mitzvos we have been doing for years, but there is a unique opportunity these days due to COVID-19. There were mitzvos we did not have the chance to do the way we usually do them, davening with a minyan, interacting with other people properly, chessed and more. We can tap into the natural freshness of the mitzvos as we restart and begin returning to normal and become more dedicated and connected Jews following in Aharon Hakohen's footsteps.



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MIXED EMOTIONS

It is with mixed emotions that we inform our community that two of our dear Kollel families have found prestigious positions for the coming year and will be moving from St. Louis. We are sad to see them go, but happy for them that they have found wonderful opportunities for themselves and their families to further their goals of serving the Jewish people and helping them come closer to Hashem.

Rabbi Yaakov & Malka (Greenblatt) Silverman joined the St. Louis Kollel five years ago where Rabbi Silverman was a rock star in the Beis Medrash and on the field with Torah & Turf™. His relaxed personality and easy smile endeared him to so many in the community and he will be sorely missed. Mrs. Silverman was a beloved teacher at Epstein Hebrew Academy and will be greatly missed by students and faculty alike. We wish them much hatzlacha in Chicago where Rabbi Silverman will be a rebbi at the Skokie Yeshiva.

Rabbi Shlomo & Liba Eisenberg joined the St. Louis Kollel three years ago. Rabbi Eisenberg learned with many members throughout the community, and, with the help of Mrs. Eisenberg's delectable desserts, built up the Kollel's weekly Parsha class (Wednesdays at 7:45pm) to a standing-room only crowd. He initiated many quality Kollel learning programs throughout his tenure and has demonstrated a unique ability to connect with so many from the broader community. He, too, will be dearly missed. Equally missed will be



Presentations to Rabbi Eisenberg and Rabbi Silverman at a socially-distanced goodbye party with the Kollel Rabbis

Mrs. Eisenberg who joined the faculty of Esther Miller Bais Yaakov, eventually becoming the Special Education Coordinator, making a tremendous impact on all of the students under her tutelage. We wish them much hatzlacha in Columbus, where Rabbi Eisenberg will be the Assistant Rabbi at Beth Jacob and Mrs. Eisenberg will be an instructor at the Columbus Torah Academy. We send them heartfelt wishes for bracha and hatzlacha!

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

RABBI SHLOMO EISENBERG



Q. *Due to covid, my family will not be going on a normal vacation this year. Normally, we stay at hotels or an airbnb. This year, we will be renting an RV for two months and will be touring the national parks. Does the RV need a Mezuzah?*

A. The custom is to put a mezuzah on an RV if one is planning on renting it for more than thirty days. The mezuzah is affixed without a bracha. If you are renting it for less than thirty days no mezuzah is required (Be'er Moshe 2:29).

Q. *My air conditioning works really well, but sometimes too well. Last Shabbos, the house was so cold I needed to put on a sweater and cover myself with a blanket. Am I allowed to tell a gentile to turn off the air conditioning in that situation?*

A. One is allowed to ask a gentile to turn off the air conditioning (hinting to him), if there is a chance that someone may become ill because of the cold. This would be permissible both in a shul or any private house. Having him turn on the air conditioning is not as simple and debated amongst the Poskim (Igros Moshe OC 3:42 and 3:47).

Please contact your Rav for final ruling.

To contact Rabbi Eisenberg email seisenberg@stlkollel.com.

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**Monday June 22 | 1PM CDT***Rabbi Mordechai Becher***FROM CAIRO TO CAMBRIDGE**
Treasures of the Jews of Egypt

An audio-visual tour of the famous Cairo Genizah
Explore a treasure-trove of Jewish texts and artifacts
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*Rabbi Mordechai Becher, originally from Australia, is an
Instructor at Yeshiva University, Rabbi of the alumni of Neve
Yerushalayim College, and senior lecturer for Gateways.
Rabbi Becher's latest book, Gateway to Judaism, is in its
tenth printing.*

**Monday June 29 | 1PM CDT***Rabbi Moshe Taub***RABBIS, TORAH & THE NEW WORLD:**
The surprising Jewish History of the Americas

Rabbi Taub is Rav at Young Israel of Holliswood; Principal
at Yeshiva of Telshe Alumni, Riverdale; and Rabbinic
Editor at Ami Magazine.

**Monday July 6 | 1PM CDT***Rabbi Menachem Nissel***MASHIACH: WHAT'S IT LIKE?**

*Rabbi Menachem Nissel is a renowned speaker and a widely
published author including the highly acclaimed Rigshei Lev -
Women and Tefillah . He is a senior lecturer for Ner LeElef and
teaches in yeshivas and seminaries in Jerusalem.*

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