

The Jewish Weekly

Necessary Pilgrimages

By Avrohom Barash

A young man named Velvel was once traveling home from the house of his father-in-law Reb Baruch, who lived near Chernobyl. Having heard so much about Rabbi Menachem Nachum, known as the Maggid of Chernobyl, Velvel decided to stop off there and see for himself the wonders which had earned the Maggid ("preacher") such a reputation.

Although he had arrived as a skeptic, it did not take long for Velvel to be enchanted by the intense holiness that permeated Rabbi Nachum's beit midrash (study hall). It was the most exhilarating experience of his life. He found it difficult to tear himself away from the Maggid; his only consolation was that he could return upon his next visit to his father-in-law.

In a short time Velvel was back, and again was captivated. He was inspired by the prayers, stimulated by the Torah thoughts he heard ... in short, Velvel became an ardent chassid of the Maggid of Chernobyl.

His father-in-law, however, was less than enthusiastic about Velvel's new-found mentor. "What is going on with you? Why are you becoming so involved with Rabbi Nachum?" he demanded. "I'm supporting you so that you should be able to use your days for studying Torah, and instead you are spending your time with the Maggid!"

Confidently, Velvel answered, "My dear father-in-law, there is only one answer I can give you. Come along with me the next time I go and experience for yourself a Shabbat with the Maggid."

They arrived in Chernobyl right before Shabbat. After the Kabbalat Shabbat prayers, Velvel looked at his father-in-law expectantly for his reaction. Reb Baruch said, "I'm not impressed - I've heard similar praying before." Velvel was disappointed, but was sure his father-in-law would be persuaded after he heard the Maggid recite Kiddush over the wine before the Shabbat Evening Meal.

Much to Velvel's dismay, Reb Baruch remained unimpressed, even after Kiddush. And neither the entrancing Shabbat songs nor the inspiring Torah words of the Rebbe which followed helped sway his opinion.

After Shabbat, Reb Baruch turned to his son-in-law and told him, "I am still unconvinced. I see no reason why I should be supporting you to learn when instead you spend your time here with the Maggid.

In fact, I am going to the Maggid to tell him directly what I think!"

"I promised to support my son-in-law while he learns," Reb Baruch informed the Maggid, "but while I have kept my part of the deal, he has let me down. Instead of learning, he comes here to Chernobyl. I refuse to support him any longer if he continues in this way. Tell me," he asked Rabbi Nachum, "do you think it is right that so many young men whose parents are supporting them should spend their time here?"

Rabbi Nachum smiled at the father-in-law and said to him in response, "Let me tell you a story:

During the time of the Beit HaMikdash, The Holy Temple, there lived a man who had never in his life been to Jerusalem! He had always found some excuse not to go. He convinced himself that he could remain at home and still be a good Jew; it was unnecessary, he maintained, to go there, not even to fulfill the mitzvah to appear there on the Three Festivals: Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot.

Once, when he was already an elderly man, he inadvertently desecrated the Shabbat, for which one is required to offer a "sin-offering." Now he had no choice but to go up to Jerusalem to present his sacrifice. It was quite an experience for him: Since he had never been there, he did not know the way, and had to constantly inquire for directions. The people he asked were incredulous. "Do you mean you've never been to Yerushalayim? How could it be that a man your age has never been there?"

Finally he reached the city. His excitement grew as the moment approached when he would finally arrive at the Temple Mount and see the Holy Temple. But, again, he had no idea how to get there, and had to ask people how to proceed. Again he had to endure the astonishment of those from whom he asked directions, who exclaimed, "You've never been to the Holy Temple? At your age!"

He arrived at the Holy Temple, and entered the courtyard where the Kohanim were preparing the sacrifices. He was taken aback by the sight. Was this the beautiful Holy Temple he had heard so much about? It looked more like a kitchen! The Kohanim were hurrying about, there was blood dripping everywhere ... He had no idea what to do in order to bring a sacrifice, and he was ashamed of his ignorance.

He asked to speak with the Kohen Gadol, and was led to a man dressed in beautiful, majestic clothing. He had expected to see a saintly old man, and was unimpressed by his youth standing before him. He still could not understand what was so special about the Holy

It Once Happened...

Temple, and so he asked the Kohen Gadol, "What makes this place unique? And what makes you more special than anyone else? Why do people flock to the Holy Temple three times a year?"

The High Priest turned to the old man and asked him, "Why have you come?" He replied, "I sinned unintentionally." The Kohen Gadol asked, "Is this the only time you sinned in all these years?" "Yes, replied the man confidently.

Looking down at stones of his Choshen [One of the priestly garments worn by the Kohen Gadol was a Breastplate with twelve precious stones upon which were engraved the names of the Twelve tribes. Inserted in the Breastplate was the Urim VeTumim, a parchment upon which was written the Ineffable Name of G-d. It was this Name which caused letters on the stones to light up, which when arranged through Divine Inspiration, provided the answer to a question posed to the Kohen Gadol.] whose engraved letters were now illuminated, the Kohen Gadol said, "What about the time last year when you made a business deal and swore falsely?" "Oh, yes," admitted the man, "I forgot about that."


Again examining the holy Breastplate, the Kohen Gadol said, "What about that time when you were alone and succumbed to temptation?"

The man now realized that the Kohen Gadol had the ability to recount all the sins he had committed in his lifetime. "Please, enough!" he begged. "Say no more! Now I understand why one has to come to the Holy Temple three times a year! The holiness of the place elevates a person - had I come here all these years I would not have committed so many sins!"


When the Maggid completed his story, Reb Baruch was standing in openmouthed shock. The sins at the times that the Maggid had related were, in fact, transgressions that he himself had committed! When he found his voice, he cried out, "Rebbe, Rebbe, don't say anymore! I understand now why my son-in-law and your other followers feel a need to come here!"

Reb Baruch became a loyal chassid of the Maggid, and accompanied Velvel every time he went to Chernobyl.

*Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from Gut Voch
Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.*



Shabbat Times - Parshat Tetzaveh

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
 Jerusalem	4:46	6:00	6:40
Tel Aviv	5:01	6:02	
Haifa	4:51	6:00	
Be'er Sheva	5:05	6:03	

The Chazon Ish and the Two Convicted Killers

By Rabbi Dovid Hoffman

During his over thirty years of political activity in the Israeli Knesset, Rabbi Shlomo Lorincz z"l served as a member of the Knesset's Defense and Foreign Affairs and other committees, and worked to help Torah institutions and the religious community in general. He garnered tremendous respect from fellow MKs, religious and non-religious alike, for his honesty, integrity, conviction and acumen.

At the same time, he was respected by the religious leaders of the generation for his practical intelligence, his dedication, and ability to sanctify Hashem's name in every setting. Prime Minister David Ben Gurion used to enjoy talking with him, and once asked to show him where in the Torah there is any hint to an exemption from army service for yeshivah students. Rabbi Lorincz promptly showed him the Rambam's description of the tribe of Levi and the Prime Minister was mightily impressed.

He was the only person able to report the impressions of the famous meeting between the Chazon Ish, R' Avraham Yeshaya Karelitz z"l and Ben Gurion from the perspective of both individuals. In the early 1950's, there was an incident that took place which landed two Israeli brothers in jail. The two brothers lived out in a farming community and shared a large ranch house. They had a barn and a chicken coop and they lived a simple life, albeit not a very religious one.

One night, a man broke into their chicken coop with the intention of stealing their property and causing damage. The brothers were alerted to the break-in and accosted the man, who put up quite a struggle. Together, the two brothers fought back and struck the man a terrible blow that killed him.

The authorities arrived and did not believe the brothers' account of how the story went down, and the two brothers were arrested and thrown into an Israeli jail. After a long and showy trial, they were found guilty and sentenced to multiple years in prison for murder.

One day, Rabbi Lorincz received a message in his office from none other than the Chazon Ish. It was not long before the Tzaddik passed away, and he asked Rabbi Lorincz to please implore the President of Israel at the time, Yitzchak Ben Tzvi, to wave the remaining years on the sentence of these two brothers, and allow them to go free.

Rabbi Lorincz was surprised. He, like most other people, had forgotten about this trial, which was sensationalized over eight months prior in the Israeli press, but had now shifted out of the public's consciousness. He went to the home of the Chazon Ish and found him lying on his bed in a weakened state. He asked the Tzaddik why he felt he should go to President Ben Tzvi at this time on behalf of 2 convicted murderers?

The Chazon Ish replied, "According to rabbinic law, these two brothers should not have been found guilty of murder and sentenced to such a long imprisonment. It would seem that this appears to be a case of which the Gemara rules: - 'If someone comes to kill you, kill him first.' (Sanhedrin 72b) They found someone breaking into their property and did not know what his intentions were, so in order to protect themselves and their possessions, they fought back and he was killed. For this, they should not have to serve such a long sentence."

The Chazon Ish added that he should tell the president in his name that eight months in prison is long enough, but that they do not need to serve any longer than this. Rabbi Lorincz wasn't sure why the president would listen to him but at the behest of the Chazon Ish, he pledged to do all he could to set these men free.

Rabbi Lorincz made an appointment and brought the case to President Ben Tzvi. He explained that the Chazon Ish feels eight months is enough and they should be set free.

The president's face took on an expression of surprise. "I have heard all about the greatness of the Chazon Ish, but I never realized to what extent. For him to be so concerned about two brothers whom he does not even know personally, and to even calculate how much of a jail sentence they should serve, that is beyond my comprehension. I will see what I can do on their behalf."

Indeed, not long after, the brothers were released from jail. The two brothers returned to their farm, but now they were changed men. After recognizing the kindness that was shown to them by the Chazon Ish, they became serious G-d fearing Jewish and Torah Scholars, and spent much of their days learning.

Reprinted from an email of Rabbi Dovid Hoffman's Torah Tavline.

This week, in Parshat Tetzaveh, Moshe Rabbeinu is the central figure of the building and the furnishing of the משכן – the Sanctuary in the wilderness. Yet remarkably, his name does not appear in the entire Parsha. Usually, paragraphs begin, "וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר" – "Hashem spoke to Moshe saying" etc... But in this week's Parsha, pesukim commence, "וואתה" – and you – "וואתה תצוה" – you must command – and so on. Clearly Hashem goes out of His way to omit the name of Moshe. Parshat Tetzaveh is always read close to the yearzeit, the anniversary of the death of Moshe, on the 7th of Adar, which took place a few days ago. So at the time when we mourn the loss of Moshe, his name is absent.

Rabbi Mirvis said, that there is a profound message for us, relating to the centrality of names. You see, when it comes to legacy, there are some who presume, that all depends on the preservation of their name on the lips of others. For as long as people are mentioning and quoting that name, then the legacy remains alive. But that is a mistake. Legacy has nothing to do with names. It has everything to do with impact. Through the seeds that we sow during our lifetime, the harvest can be reaped for all time. That is true legacy, and we learn it from Noach.

At the beginning of Parshat Noach. The Torah says, "אלה נח תולדות נח" – these are the generations of Noach. "נח איש נח צדיק תמים היה בדורותיו את האלוקים התהלך נח" – Noach was a righteous person, he was perfect in his generations. Noach walked with Hashem.

Where are his generations? Only his good deeds are mentioned. Rashi says, "ללמדך שעיקר תולדותיהם של צדיקים" – to teach you that the primary descendants of good people, are their deeds. Those good deeds of Noach, sustained the world, and are with us to inspire us today.

We may not mention Noach by name, but that's not what matters – it is his impact upon our lives, that is with us.

And that is exactly the case, with regard to Moshe Rabbeinu and this week's Parsha of Tetzaveh. The name of Moshe may be absent, but the Torah that he taught, the values that he imparted, they are with us to this day, and that is the essence of his legacy.

Let us all therefore guarantee, that our legacy will remain in this world forever – by living a life of good deeds, and setting a fine example to one and all, and with that, let's pray with all our hearts, for the recovery of all the sick from this crazy pandemic, as well as praying for our soldiers and healthcare professionals, and Chevra Kadisha members worldwide, for peace and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual and sweet Shabbat.

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 7
MITZVOT ASEH: 4
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 3

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 101
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1412
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 5430

HAFTORA:
Yechezkel 43:10-27

Purim Katan begins sundown Monday, Feb. 14, 2022, and goes thru Tuesday evening, Feb. 15, 2022
Wednesday is Shushan Purim Katan.

תצוה
פרשת

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