



TIFERET HASHABBAT

This Week in Tiferet

This week our students were privileged to hear from two very accomplished women, who opened up discussions with our students about their futures as women within the Jewish Community. On Tuesday, noted psychologist, **Dr. Sharon Slater**, came to Tiferet to speak to our students about developing themselves as independent, confident young women. On Wednesday, **Mrs. Leora Bednarsh**, yoetzet halacha, discussed her role as a halachic advisor to women in the Jewish community. We were pleased to enrich our students' education with these two important lectures.

תורת תפארת

Mundane Mirrors in the Mishkan

Mrs. Sarah Leah Haber
Parashat Vayakhel-Pekudei

One of the vessels for the mishkan, the kiyor - the fountain - stood out from the others, as it was not made from molten metal but rather from whole copper mirrors, the mirrors that the Jewish women in Mitzrayim used to beautify themselves for their husbands. Moshe initially was very reluctant to use them as they had been used for physical intimacy. After all, it would make sense that the sacred vessels which beautified the most spiritual place on earth, the dwelling place of Hashem, be created out of materials that were as spiritual as the objects they would become. Hashem told him, however, him that these mirrors were beloved to him because of the women's intentions in using them. When their husbands returned from slave labor, exhausted and worn out physically and emotionally, the women used the mirrors to enhance their beauty so that their husband would be interested in them and thus the Jewish nation would continue to grow and ultimately survive. The Egyptians' plans to exhaust the Jews through oppressive persecution and thus diminish their desires was foiled by the holy women.

The above idea connects with the actual service the kiyor provided which was to allow the kohanim to wash their hands and feet in the fountain several times throughout the day. This is puzzling: why did they have to do this if they already had gone to the mikveh in the morning? Their entire bodies were purified each day, why did they need to re-purify their hands and feet? Rav Nevensal explains that the mikveh each morning served to remove the tumaah, the impurity from their bodies, but the kiyor served to sanctify, to add kedusha to the avodah. By washing their hands and feet they were elevating the physical limbs of their bodies and thus adding more holiness to the service.

This is precisely what the women in Mitzrayim did. They raised the physical act of intimacy with their holy intentions and they elevated the mundane copper mirrors to such a high level that they were worthy of being used by the kohanim to elevate their own service. The reality is that if one takes a close look at the actual service of the kohanim in the Mishkan and later in the Bet Hamikdash, it seems very mundane. They swept the floors, wiped off the blood from the floors and from the mizbachot, washed the various bowls and utensils used for collecting the blood, and mopped the floor. This is what each kohen waited eagerly to do for one week in each year? Yes, because he was working in the house of Hashem, and that knowledge and attitude transformed the lowliest tasks into the most glorious job in the world.

Each one of us has this opportunity on a daily basis to transform our own physically-oriented activities into exalted ones. Whether one is a student plowing through pages of notes or a mother who is changing babies' diapers; whether one is an executive in a law firm or a doctor or a

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*Daad at
Mrs.
Stefansky's
House*



Mazal Tov!

Mazal Tov to Rabbi Ephy and Bracha Greene on the birth of a baby daughter, Esther Malka! May they be zochim to raise her l'Torah, l'chupa u'l'maasim tovim!

Mazal Tov to Dana Zion (5769) on her engagement to Yisrael Gabay! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Tzvi and Rachel (Hill, 5771, 5772) Goder on the birth of a baby daughter! May they be zochim to raise her l'Torah, l'chupa u'l'maasim tovim!

Mazal Tov to Sara Lerer (madricha) on her engagement to Daniel Tanen! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael together!

תורת תפארת (המשך)

fashion designer, we all have occasions where we could sanctify our actions. One can make a Kiddush Hashem in a non-Jewish environment by the way she talks or dresses, by letting someone go ahead in line in a cafeteria even though she herself is hungry, by patiently explaining an answer to a question on material, even though she herself wants to study. Or one can simply choose to view things differently. I will never forget the story I heard from Rav Moshe Weinberger of Aish Kodesh in Woodmere, NY. He was in his first year or two of marriage and he walked into his crying baby's room to see that the baby had dirtied everything - the crib, the walls, the carpet. Not knowing how to handle it, he told his wife and as he left the room he glanced back to see his wife softly saying to herself

"הריני מקיימת על עצמי מצוות ואהבת לרעך כמוך"
"I hereby accept upon myself the mitzvah of loving your neighbor as yourself." With these simple words, the Rebbetzin transformed a mundane, rather despicable task into one of the highest mitzvot of the Torah. She changed her attitude towards it and thereby changed the actual act itself.

May we all be zocheh to elevate every action in our lives so that each one of us actually becomes a small mishkan- a dwelling place for Hashem.

"Let's Give Credit Where Credit Is due" Zeeva Gross (5775)

In this week's parsha, Bnei Yisrael built the Mishkan and all of its vessels. The Pesukim say that when they finished building, Moshe gave them a powerful bracha. Rashi elaborates on the Pasuk and explains that Moshe blessed Bnei Yisroel saying that HaShem's Shechina should rest in the work of their hands.

However, it seems that Moshe's bracha to Bnei Yisrael was unnecessary. This is because before Bnei Yisrael started to build the Mishkan, HaShem already promised them that the blessing of His presence in the Mishkan will be a result of its construction.

The reason Moshe found it necessary to give them a bracha is understood by the way of human nature. It is natural for people to feel personal gratification after putting time and effort into a project. On the other hand, this sense of connection often distorts into a sense of ownership of the success. Oftentimes we give ourselves the credit after working hard towards something. To avoid this trap, we are advised to get a bracha to remind ourselves where the success is really coming from. Bnei Yisrael needed a bracha from Moshe to remind them that their project was only accomplished with the help from Hashem.

May the brachot we get remind us that HaShem is with us in everything we accomplish! Have an amazing Shabbos!