

Sewing up the Tear: Reinforcing the Hole. In *halacha* (6), there seems to be some reservation about sewing the garment in that area, with a thread made of a material which *Tzitzis* threads of that material would be valid for this garment. This is because a loose thread might be left hanging and the person might mistakenly use it for one of the *Tzitzis* strings. That would make it *posul* since that thread was not spun or hung “*Lishma*” - for the sake of *Tzitzis*. If so, one could not sew or reinforce the hole of a cotton garment with cotton thread, since cotton *Tzitzis* threads can exempt a cotton garment. Yet, it is customary by the *Tzitzis* manufacturers to be lenient and reinforce the holes of a cotton garment with cotton thread, and this requires explanation. The **Aruch Hashulchan** (7) writes that since nowadays *Tzitzis* (in our circles) are always made of wool and nobody uses cotton strings, no one will come to use a loose cotton thread as a *Tzitzis* string.

מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

וירא משה את כל המלאכה והנה עשו אותה כאשר צוה ה' בן עשר ויברך אתם משה וגו' (לש-מג)

The *Medrash* comments that after the Jewish people did everything they were commanded to do - "ככל אשר צוה ה'" - with regard to the construction of the *Mishkan*, *Moshe Rabbeinu* stood up, blessed them, and told them “*Yasher Koach*” - he gave them a public “Thank you.” The **Reisha Rav, R’ Aharon Levine ZT”L** explains that we learn from here a fundamental principle of “*Hakaras HaTov*” - showing gratitude. Although *Klal Yisroel* were commanded to build the sanctuary that was to house the Divine Presence of *Hashem*, nevertheless, they were deserving of thanks after they completed the work. Just as a person has an obligation to say thank you when he receives something, the fact that the person who did it for him had no choice in the matter and was merely doing his duty is irrelevant. A person must give thanks no matter what. The circumstances which caused the giver to give does not diminish the obligation to thank him one iota. Saying “Thank you” has nothing to do with what one gives - it has to do with what one receives.

The following story is remarkable for its basic simplicity and how far a simple “Thank you” can go. A number of the Chassidic *Yeshivos* in New York maintain their own private buses and employ their own religious bus drivers. Aside from the daily transportation to and from *yeshivah*, the buses are used for summer camps and trips. Most of the drivers are Chassidic but a few are not. A number of years ago, the *Belzer Cheder* in Monsey took their fifth, sixth and seventh grade classes to an indoor water park, and one of the non-Chassidic drivers who drove that day was a warm and friendly man by the name of Reb Nissen. The children were excited to go on the trip and the entire bus ride was filled with noisy conversation.

Upon arrival at the water park, Reb Nissen swung open the doors to his bus and watched as the kids hopped off one by one. His ever-present smile widened when over 95% of the boys jumping off the bus said “Skoach” or “Thank you.” In his own words, “That level of thanks is, frankly, unprecedented in my over fifteen years of driving a bus!”

Reb Nissen was so impressed that he felt that something more needed to be done. Quite the unconventional type, Reb Nissen went home and took out a pen and paper. He wrote a beautiful letter in English detailing how the children in the *Belzer Cheder* behaved and how impressed he was with their *mentchlichkeit* and *derech eretz*. Then, he addressed it to none other than the **Belzer Rebbe Shlit’a** in Jerusalem! He wasn’t sure how he was going to get the letter to Israel, but he finally managed to send it to a friend of his living in Telz Stone, and asked if he could somehow bring it to the *Belzer Rebbe*. This, too, was no easy task and it took his friend close to four weeks before figuring out who to give the letter to so that it would reach the *Rebbe* himself. It was almost six weeks later before the friend in Telz Stone called Reb Nissen to say, “Mission Accomplished” - the letter made it to the *Belzer Rebbe*.

Well, thought, Reb Nissen, that was that! He had almost forgotten about the entire incident when one Friday, a number of weeks later, as he was waiting to pick up the children and drive them home, the principal of the *Belzer Cheder*, walked over to his idling bus and with great deference said. “Reb Nissen, can I talk to you?”

Reb Nissen alighted from the bus and the man said to him, “I am the *Menahel* of the *cheder*. I must show you what I just received.” He took Reb Nissen into his office where he showed him a copy of the English letter that he had sent to Israel, with an attached paper containing the *Yiddish* translation. Next to it, was another smaller letter from the personal *Gabbai* of the *Belzer Rebbe*, who wrote that he showed the letter to the *Rebbe* who was greatly pleased and had a tremendous amount of satisfaction (הנאה) from it. “Thank you so much,” wrote the *Gabbai*.

Another *Rebbe* in the *Belzer Cheder* told Reb Nissen that the day the letter was received, the entire *cheder* was assembled and the day was treated like a *Yom Tov*. The *Menahel* and others spoke of the great *Kiddush Hashem* that was exemplified by the children, and many others provided positive reinforcement. Reb Nissen’s name became a legend among the children and their parents, and the “letter story” was told over with awe and amazement in all the local circles. *Ashreicheim!*

משל למת הדבר דומה

אלה פקודי המשכן משכן העדת אשר פקד על פי משה עבודת הלוים ביד איתמר בן אהרן הכהן וגו' (לח-כא)
משל: Back in the 1960’s, Lyndon Johnson was well known as an effective president when it came to passing all forms of legislation. He knew how to get bills through Congress!

He used to have elaborate bill signings in the White House. In front of him would be a whole bunch of pens and he would sign his name slowly using a different pen for every curve of every letter in the name Lyndon Baines Johnson. Any person who was invited to the ceremony received as a gift one of the pens used by the president for signing the legislation into law. The pen itself might cost

Likewise, anyone who flies on Air Force One (the President’s private airplane) is given cufflinks with the insignia of the President of the United States. The cufflinks are worth at most \$50. However, the fact that it came from the President makes it an extremely valuable present. There are the two types of presents: those that are intrinsically valuable, and valuable by virtue of the person who gave it.

צמשל: The *Torah* clearly spells out the role Moshe played in

ויעש את האפר והב תכלת וארנמן ותולעת שני ... כתפות עשו לו חבורות על שני קצוותיו חבר (לש-ג-ד)

Among the *Bigdei Kehunah* (priestly vestments) that were worn by the *Kohanim* in the *Mishkan*, were two articles of clothing that had the names of the twelve *Shevatim* inscribed upon them: the stones of the חושן (Breast Plate) and the כתפות (shoulder straps of the *Ephod*). However, it is noteworthy that while each of the names on the *Choshen* were separate and distinct from one another, the names on the straps were placed all together - six on one side and six on the other. What is the significance of this distinction?

R’ Yeshaya Levy Shlit’a explains that placement on the shoulders signifies the responsibility of carrying the burden of the public. Indeed, there must be community standards, for otherwise anarchy will reign. We cannot, and must not, be a community comprised of “כל הישר בעיני תעשה” - in other words, every man for himself, as he sees fit. And that is why the names of the *Shevatim* were inscribed together; to teach us that *Klal Yisroel* must have community-wide standards. We must collectively be taught by our *Gedolim* and leaders, the proper and correct way to attain - and maintain - our special status of ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש - a holy nation.

However, the *Torah* also teaches us the importance of the individual and how to deal with one who perhaps is having difficulty living up to a higher standard. He must not be automatically shunned or ostracized, for this is counterproductive. He must be treated according to what he or she is: a real and unique individual. This is symbolized by the stones of the *Choshen* which contained the inscribed names of the individual *Shevatim*. Not only that, but these very names were kept in a very important place: “ונשא אהרן ... על לבו” - the name of each *Shevet* was placed directly on the heart of the *Kohen Gadol*. No matter what the community standards are, and indeed must be, this is how a true *Torah* leader deals and interacts with the individual Jew: with his heart. A heart filled with love and *ahavas yisroel* for each and every Jew.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ... תחזוקות

“*May it be Your Will that the Shechina should rest upon the work of your hands.*” This is the blessing Moshe gave to *Bnei Yisroel* upon their completion of the *Mishkan*. Wouldn’t this have been a great blessing BEFORE the work was done? Wouldn’t this *beracha* have helped them move forward successfully in this giant task of building the sanctuary for *Hashem*?

R’ Simcha Sheps ZT”L explains that very often in life a person works hard to reach his goals but after he finally gets there, he slacks off and cannot retain the spiritual stature that he worked so hard to achieve. *Dovid HaMelech* wrote in *Tehillim* (כד-ג) “*Who will raise himself up to the mountain of Hashem; who will remain steadfast in this place of holiness?*” It is one thing to get there, but it is much more daunting to STAY there! This applies to all aspects and achievements in life. For example, marriage. People go to *shadchanim*, make sure they are in the right place at the right time, rub elbows with all the right people. They daven for hours and and employ every possible *segula* to merit their *basherter*. Soon, the right one comes along and then ... wedded bliss! The wedding is over in a blink and only then does the real work begin! But people don’t realize this. They think the hard work is over. The truth is ... it is a lot harder to STAY married then to get married!

Moshe Rabbeinu blessed the people when the *Mishkan* was completed. The people worked hard to create a place worthy of having the *Shechina* so close to them. But now - when they think their work is done - does it first begins! Now, more than ever do they need Moshe’s *beracha* that they truly REMAIN worthy “*that the Shechina rest upon the FUTURE work of your hands.*”

TORAH GEMS

את המנורה המחורה את נרתיה גרות המערכה ואת כל כליה ואת שמן המאור וגו' (לש-ל)

It is interesting to note that out of all the vessels that were built and put to use in the *Mishkan*, only two were given the added appellation of “טהור” - “pure.” One is the *Menorah* which is referred to as “המנורה הטהורה” - the pure *Menorah*, and the other is the *Shulchan* - the table upon which the twelve loaves of bread were placed from week to week. In *Parshas Emor* (ויקרא כד-ו), the *Torah* describes it thusly: “*You shall set them down on the pure table before Hashem.*”

The **Chizkuni, Rabbeinu Chizkiah ben Manoach ZT”L**, illuminates our eyes in a very succinct fashion. He writes: “(*It is*) *because there was never any blood put on them.*” In other words, the *Menorah* and the *Shulchan* were singled out and deemed “pure” over all the other vessels in the *Mishkan* because the kindling of the lights and the setting of the bread loaves had nothing to do with blood of any kind. Obviously, the *Mizbeach* (altar) could not be considered among these as the blood of the offerings was constantly spilled on the *Mizbeach*. Even the holy *Aron* (ark) was not referred to as “pure” because on *Yom Kippur*, the *Kohen Gadol* would enter into the Holy of Holies and spray blood on the *Aron*. Indeed, *Medrash Tanchuma* quotes the words of Rabbi Elazar ben Rabbi Yosi who said that when he was in Rome, he saw blood stains on the *Kapores*, the covering on top of the *Aron*. As for the *Kiyor* - the vessel which was used to wash the hands and feet of the *Kohanim* - although none of the *Avodah* or the offerings pertaining to the application of blood involved the *Kiyor*, nevertheless it was used to wash off blood after the sacrifices were offered and thus, it too, could not be deemed “pure” due to this affiliation.

Just as *Dovid Hamelech* was disqualified from being the “builder” of the *Bais HaMikdash*, because he fought the holy wars and “*much blood was spilled at his hand,*” (ד,ה כב-ח), so too, vessels involving blood were not “pure.” (אוצר פלאות)

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

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