



In memory of our Beloved Father and Grandfather – Benjamin Steinig z"l

Send it Down

"Would you like something more to eat?"
 "Thank you but I am so full."
 "Please. How about another piece of pie?"
 "It really was delicious."
 "Settled. Here is your pie."
 "Mr. Gibber, you are so generous. How can I ever repay you?"
 "There is something that you can do for me."
 "What is it? My pleasure. Anything that you ask."
 "You can come back and eat with me again tomorrow."
 "What?!? That is not repayment. That is just taking more food from you."
 "Please Mr. Evyon. I will not take no for an answer."
 "Well, if you insist."
 "I do."
 "Okay."

With that, Mr. Evyon leaves Mr. Gibber's home. His young son is a bit puzzled.

"Abba, we have many poor people eat at our table. You always feed them well and treat them like kings. Then, when they ask if they can repay you, you always invite them back. Why?"
 "I am glad that you put that question on the table, Avi. Because the answer really has to do with the table."
 "Sounds mysterious, Abba."
 "It isn't Avi. I'll explain."

"In the beginning, Hashem created this physical world yesh may'ayin (something from nothing). That was a one-time event in history. Since then, when Hashem wants to send blessing to this world in the form of gashmius (physical prosperity) it must be yesh may'yesh (something from something)."
 "The blessings must have something to carry them?"
 "Very good, Avi. In the times of the Mishkan, that vehicle was the shulchan (table)."
 "The Torah speaks about the shulchanin this week's parasha."

"Yes, Avi. Rabbeinu Bechaye zt"l points out that the root of the word shulchan is the same as the word shaliach (a messenger). The Shulchan was Hashem's messenger to send His blessings down to this world. He blessed the Lechem HaPanim that rested on the Shulchan. The Kohanim would eat from it, be satisfied, and the blessing would spread to all the food of the world. In this way everyone would be satisfied with the food they ate."

"That is very interesting, Abba, but how is it related to the poor people who eat at our table?"

"Our shulchan serves a different function. In the times of the Mishkan, Avi, the Mizbeach (Altar) atoned for the sins of a

person. A sinner would bring a korbán (sacrifice) on the Mizbeach and receive a kapora (atonement). Nowadays, we have no Mizbeach, so a man's table provides atonement. When he generously serves poor people, the food is like a korbán."
 "That is why you always invite the guests back."

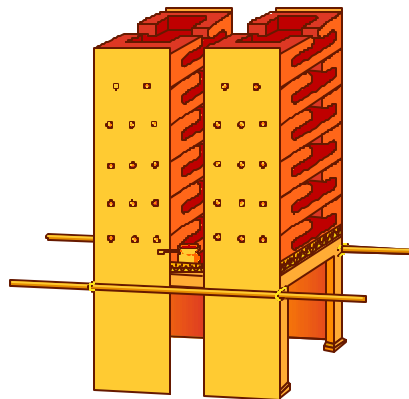
"Yes, Avi. Rabbeinu Bechaye relates a minhag (custom) in Old France. People would make their aron (coffin) from the wood of their table. This was to demonstrate that a man takes nothing with him from this world except the tzedaka that he gave and the food he served to others on his table."

"Wow. When I put that question on the table, I got much more of an answer than I bargained for. Our table is an important piece of furniture."

"May it always be filled with blessing."

Kinderlach . . .

Someday you will get married and move into your own home. Make sure you have a nice, big table. One with plenty of room for guests. The Gemora (Berachos 54b) states that one who lengthens his table (and serves many guests) lengthens his days and years. The Shulchan in the Mishkan was the vehicle of blessing for the world. Our shulchan is the source of atonement and long life. Treat it with the respect that it deserves. It is much more than a piece of furniture. It is a holy place of mitzvos, atonement, and long life.



Baby Face

"Oh, no. It's that time of year again, Avi."

"What time, Chaim?"

"The time when the parashas ha'shavuah speaks about the Mishkan"

"What's wrong with that, Chaim?"

"Nothing. It's just all so boring to me. Ark, table, curtains, gold, silver, wool; what's the point? We have no Mishkan nowadays."

"True. However, there are worlds of important and relevant things that we learn from these parshios. The Mishkan is today's news."

"Can you give me an example?"

"Look at this verse. 'You shall make two Kruvim of gold' (Shemos 25:18). Let me ask you, 'What is a Kruv?'"

"It was an angelic figure with the face of a baby."

"Right. Do you know why it had a baby face, Chaim?"

"No. Please enlighten me, Avi."

"Rav Yisrael Salanter, the founder of the Mussar movement, has a beautiful explanation. He begins with the verse, 'When Israel was a lad I loved him' (Hoshea 11:1). Which member of Klal Yisrael does Hashem love? One who manages to hold on to his youth."

"What does that mean? Aren't we always told to act maturely; beyond our years?"

"You are right, Chaim. However, Rav Yisrael is referring to that special quality of youth called flexibility. A young person is like a smooth paper which is easy to shape and mold into the desired form. Why? Because he listens to correction and acts upon it. Therefore, Hashem commanded Moshe to place the face of a child above the Aron Kodesh (Holy Ark). So that Klal Yisrael, both young and old, will learn to always see themselves as youths; to maintain that willingness and flexibility to change bad habits into good ones. To be soft as a reed, and always grow to higher and higher levels in Torah."

"That is beautiful."

"A striking example of this is found in parashas Ki Sisa. The verse (Shemos 33:11) refers to Yehoshua Bin Nun as a na'ar (youth)."

"How old was he at the time?"

"The Ramban zt"l calculates that he was 56 years old."

"That's not very young."

"Right. Rav Mordechai Shakovitzky zt"l once explained that Yehoshua was always willing to listen to his teacher, Moshe Rabbeinu. Thus he was always a na'ar; a person with the flexibility of youth."

"Avi, may we always stay eternally young."

"Amen."

Kinderlach . . .

You have a special maaleh. It is easy for you to listen and grow. Use it to go up and up. Never stop listening to those who are able to help you. Never stop trying to improve yourself. Always stay soft and pliable, like a young baby's skin. The secret of eternal youth is yours.

Parasha Questions

- How many threads were woven into the yerios? (Rashi 26:1)
- How long did the middle pole of the western wall of the Mishkan have to be in order to reach from end to end? (26:16,22,28)
- What was the distance between each pole on the southern side of the Chotzer? (27:9,10)