

lies in the attitude of human beings towards the physical wealth that all of us pursue during our lifetime. The Torah wished to teach us that wealth, material goods, human talents and artistic abilities are all only means to an end and not the end itself. One of the great pitfalls of life is elevating the means to be the end. Thus wealth for the sake of wealth, money for the sake of money, power and influence for the sake of power and influence becomes the norm in much of human society. This by its very nature prevents the transformation of the physical into the holy, the fleeting temporary into the unending eternal.

The true purpose of gold and silver, architectural talent and building skill is to create a place of holiness and a constant reminder of the relationship between the Creator and the created. Therefore this week's parsha emphasizes the importance of donative intent. The Tabernacle/Mishkan was not to be built from funds gathered by taxation and coercion. Without proper donative intent there is no hope to convert the physical into the spiritual.

Halacha raises the question why we do not recite a blessing before giving one's donation to charity or the support of Torah. Many answers, almost all of them technical, are advanced to solve this question. I am struck by the question itself. For the basis of its being asked is that somehow one must inject holiness into an otherwise ordinary act of money being transferred. How difficult this is if it is not preceded by the recitation of a blessing. Holy intent creates holiness and can transform the material into the spiritual. *Rabbi Berel Wein and torah.org.*

## Haftarah Summary Rabbi Aron Tandler

This week's Haftarah from Kings I- 5 and 6, describes the construction of the first Bais Hamikdash. Shlomo Hamelech - King Solomon, assembled the necessary materials and laborers to accomplish this monumental task - the building of Hashem's home! 30,000 men were conscripted into the labor force, along with 70,000 transporters and 80,000 stonecutters.

In 2928, four hundred and eighty years

## Minyan Schedule

Erev Shabbat Parashat Terumah  
Kabbalat Shabbat 6.30 pm  
Candle lighting 12/02/16 7.34 pm

Shabbat Parashat Terumah  
Shacharit 13/02/16 9.15 am  
Children's Service 10.00 am  
Mincha (Mizrachi) 7.20 pm  
Shabbat ends 8.30 pm

Erev Shabbat Parashat Tetzaveh  
Kabbalat Shabbat 6.30 pm  
Candle lighting 19/02/16 7.26 pm

## Announcements

**Kiddush is sponsored by  
The Baram Einfields to  
mark their 24th wedding  
anniversary and to  
welcome Ari back from  
Israel, and**

**David and Kylie Skalicky  
celebrating their wedding  
anniversary**

after leaving Egypt, the construction began. The connection to this week's Parsha is obvious. The Bais Hamikdash replaced the Mishkan as the one place upon earth where G-d's presence was overtly manifest. It was during the 1st Temple when actual "miracles" occurred in the normal functioning of the Bais Hamikdash.

The whereabouts of the Mishkan is a matter of great historical controversy. Some claim that it was destroyed. Others claim that it was hidden within the Temple Mount in a great cavern directly beneath the Bais Hamikdash, and that it was placed there fully assembled. At present, a major archeological dig is underway to uncover the hidden Mishkan. *Rabbi Aron Tandler and torah.org.*

# Or Chadash

קהילת אור חדש

## WEEKLY BULLETIN

**Shabbat Parashat Terumah**  
4 Adar I 5776; 13 February, 2016  
**Shabbat Torah reading:** Stone Chumash  
page 444 and Haftarah page 1157.

**President** Jonathan Erlich  
**Rabbi-in-residence** Rabbi Franklin  
**Dvrei Torah** Rabbi Franklin

## Spirituality and Rituality Rabbi Marc D. Angel

The essence of authentic religion is developing a deep spirituality, a feeling of G-d's presence in one's life. This spiritual sense not only imbues the individual with personal meaning, but also leads to living a moral, righteous life. Our Bible presents the words and prophetic experiences of ancient Israelites, providing examples of religion at its highest spiritual moments. Yet, the Bible understands that our daily lives cannot maintain the highest level of spirituality at all times. We need rituals and rites that can serve to bring us into relationship with G-d on a daily basis, not only at moments of spiritual insight.

This week's Parasha teaches about the building of the Mishkan, the temporary sanctuary that was to accompany the Israelites during their sojourn in the wilderness. A number of subsequent chapters in the Torah deal with the "Temple ritual," the priests, the sacrifices. The purpose

of the Mishkan, and later of the Temples in Jerusalem, was to provide rituals and ceremonies that would bring the worshiper closer to G-d. By entering the holy precincts, one was to feel its sanctity, and become uplifted spiritually.

The problem with ritualized ceremonies is that they do not always achieve their goals. The Mishkan/Temple/Synagogue service can become rote. People can go through the motions without internalizing the religious experience. Our prophets inveighed against the gross non-religiosity of the Temple, when the priests and the people clung to the external ritual forms but did not penetrate to the spiritual content of the rituals.

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, in an address to the Rabbinical Assembly in 1953, discussed this problem as it relates to modern day synagogues: even when people attend the synagogue on the Sabbath, and hence should be very much tuned in to a spiritual experience, they still might not internalize the religious message. Here is an excerpt from that talk:

"Of course, people still attend 'services,' but what does this attendance mean to them? Outpouring of the soul? Worship? Prayer?"



Synagogue attendance has become a benefaction to the synagogue, a service to the community rather than service of G-d, worship of the congregation rather than the worship of G-d. A variety of suggestions have been made to increase synagogue attendance: invite distinguished guest speakers, radio commentators and columnists; honor individual members of the congregation; install stained-glass windows, place pledge cards on the seats and raise funds, remind people of their birthdays or anniversary dates. Well intentioned as these suggestions may be, they do not deal with the core of the issue. Spiritual issues cannot be solved by administrative techniques. The issue is not how to fill buildings but how to inspire hearts. The issue is not synagogue attendance but one of spiritual attendance. The issue is not how to attract bodies to enter the space of a temple but how to inspire souls to enter an hour of spiritual concentration in the presence of G-d."

Several years ago, I wrote an article touching on this issue. Here is what I said then, and what still needs to be said today. My dear and respected friend, Rabbi Nathan Lopes Cardozo, recently wrote an article about the "relocation" of G-d. He stated: "Synagogues, whether Orthodox, Conservative or Reform, are no longer His primary residence. Surely some of the worshippers are pious people who try to communicate with their Creator, but overall, the majority of these places have become religiously sterile and spiritually empty. So G-d is moving to unconventional minyanim and places such as Israeli cafes, debating clubs, community centers, unaffiliated religious gatherings, and atypical batei midrash. The reason is obvious. In some of those places people are actually looking for Him. And that is what He loves; not those who have already found Him and

take Him for granted. He is moving in with the young people who have a sense that He is there but cannot yet find Him."

While I believe that mainstream synagogues continue to be "G-d's residence" and continue to play a vital role in contemporary religious life, I think Rabbi Cardozo touches on an important reality. Why have growing numbers of thoughtful and spiritual people turned away from "establishment" synagogues?

Here are some possible reasons. Mainstream synagogues are often perceived as being run by a small clique of wealthy "machers", more interested in promoting their egotistical aims than in worrying about the spiritual needs of the community. Synagogues seem, to many, to have turned into businesses - mainly concerned with meeting budgets, increasing memberships, and fundraising. While these are certainly important concerns, what about the synagogue's soul? Why does the synagogue exist in the first place? What is the spiritual agenda? While budgetary goals are spelled out, spiritual goals are generally neglected. So why would spiritually sensitive people want to be swallowed up in this "business"?

Mainstream synagogues often measure success or failure in terms of quantity rather than quality. A synagogue is deemed "successful" if it fills seats at services and events, even if these services and events are religiously sterile. Yet, spiritual souls are often most comfortable in services and classes that allow them to transcend themselves, to learn, to grow. Why would thoughtful, spiritual people be attracted to an institution that focuses so much energy on quantity, and so little energy on real quality?

Mainstream synagogues often want rabbis who can raise money and get new members. The rabbis are, in effect, salesmen

whose success or failure is measured by how many dollars they produce and how many seats they can fill. What spiritually sensitive person wants such a rabbi? What self-respecting rabbi would allow himself to be marketed in this way?

Vaclav Havel wisely advised: "Seek the company of those who are searching for the truth, and avoid those who have found it." The "establishment" seems to be composed of those who have found the truth, or who don't really care much about the truth. The synagogues run services like clockwork, sometimes more meaningfully conducted, sometimes less so. People who are spiritually alive are looking for religious vitality, for a sense of striving. In many synagogues, though, they get services by hazzanim interested in showing off their voices; or by laymen whose mastery and understanding of the liturgy is less than scintillating.

I have been a rabbi in a mainstream Orthodox synagogue for many years. I can testify to the tremendous impact of such synagogues on the lives of so many people. I can testify to the beautiful souls who really pray, who really study Torah with purity. I can testify to the sense of communal solidarity that is formed among religiously-alive congregants. But I can also testify, based on my years of interaction with many rabbis and synagogues, that the "establishment" is indeed at risk of losing its soul, its *raison d'être*. Rabbi Cardozo is not wrong when he points to synagogues as being religiously sterile and spiritually empty.

Will our synagogues revitalize themselves by once again becoming spiritual centers for those searching for authentic Jewish religiosity? Will they once again focus on quality of spiritual experience rather than on quantity of dollars? Will they once again become the gathering place for Jews who are searching for truth, for G-d? Or has the soul of our synagogues already been sold away? *Rabbi Marc D. Angel and the Institute of Jewish Ideas and Ideals.*

## Elevating the Physical Rabbi Berel Wein

The main moral thrust of this week's

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*We have operated since 1995. During the year we arrange special activities including: learning, shiur/lecture series and social events.*

parsha is the challenge to take the mundane and ordinary and make of it something spiritual, holy and eternal. To our sorrow, we are well aware of how the supposedly holy can be made tawdry, cheap and negative. Thus the challenge of the opposite is truly a daunting one.

Dealing with money, gold and silver, workers, artisans and the like usually inhibits any sense of holiness and eternity. The material always seems to corrupt the spiritual. It is not for naught that there is strong rabbinic opinion that the Third Temple will not be man-made but rather will descend from Heaven completely formed. It is destined to be eternal while the Tabernacle/Mishkan in the desert and both the First and Second Temples were the products of human endeavor and earthly building materials.

All three of these great projects and physical institutions were destroyed and taken from us. Apparently we had failed in the goal of converting the earthly and temporary into the heavenly and eternal. So, if in fact this is the case then why does the Torah spend so much space and employ so many words to describe the physical construction of what, after all, remained only a temporary structure subject to conquest and destruction?

This is a question, which has nagged the brains of all biblical commentators for many centuries. It also poses the problem of this enormous challenge of the spiritual having to deal with the physical and in fact being dependent upon the physical in order to achieve its stated spiritual goal.

Part of the answer to this ongoing problem

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