

TERUMAH
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

The portion which we read in shul last Shabbos was Terumah. It deals almost exclusively with detailed instructions on how we were to build the Tabernacle so that G-d may dwell among us. It is very strange to note that when G-d gave His instruction to Moses on how to build the Tabernacle He started with the Ark which contained the Ten Commandments and then described the Tabernacle proper. But when Moses began to build the Tabernacle he first started with the Tabernacle proper and then started on the Ark. Why? Also, it is very interesting to note we learn from the building of the Tabernacle the definition of work, that all acts which were required for the construction of the Tabernacle were considered work while those acts which were not required for the Tabernacle were not considered work. Why? It seems to me that these two things are related. G-d, when He related the instructions to Moses, started with the holiest object and then worked down to objects of less and less holiness. Moses, on the other hand, had the people begin on the less holy objects and then work up. This, I believe, teaches us the important lesson that when we begin to try to morally improve ourselves, we must always have fully in mind what our goal is, that the Ark and the Ten Commandments are the goals we are shooting for, but we must start with the problems and materials on hand, that we must

Man can't start with ideals - Ideas can't satisfy man, they must be translated into action - Nothing will stand which is not translated into action -

No work in which G-d can dwell can be considered work.

Terumah

10/1/20

THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING DISTINCTIONS
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In life we must learn to make distinctions. Many people do not take the trouble to learn how to distinguish things. They are satisfied with broad generalizations. This Torah portion teaches us that this approach is wrong. We have all heard that Judaism is opposed to the visual arts. This, however, is a false statement. There was a statue in the Holy of Holies. We Jews were punished for fashioning the golden calf because the people worshipped the work of their own hands. They created their own gods and worshipped them. Within the Holy of Holies, itself, in the Temple there was a statue of two cherubim with the faces of children locked in an embrace with their wings soaring to heaven. This was allowed because they were not worshipped. They were resting on the Ten Commandments. They were symbols that children must be rooted in the Ten Commandments if Judaism is to continue.

The hallmark of the Jew has always been that he has been able to make distinctions between the Sabbath and the week, between light and darkness, between Israel and the nations, and between the holy and the secular as we say in the Havdallah ceremony every Saturday night. Many people today fail to make distinction between light and darkness. Many people fail to make the distinction between right and wrong. They say anything a person wants to do is o.k., is fine. They refuse to set standards. There is a right and a wrong in the world, and although it is true there are many gray areas, there are many times when it is clear what is right and wrong. Drugs are wrong. Alcoholism is wrong. Wife beating is wrong. Cruelty is wrong, etc. Today many parents do not want to set standards, and many young people give in to peer pressure and do things they should not do.

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There is also a distinction between the holy and the secular, between means and ends. In today's life we teach skills, how to arrive at different goals, but we never define goals. We seem to think that being moral, helping people, and being a Mensch is just something that is a matter of personal preference. Some people like to be a Mensch. Other people would rather not be one. It is like some people like to play the violin and other^s do not. We must teach people that the most important thing is to be a Mensch. Being a lawyer or a doctor or an accountant are just means to a goal. No one is supposed to sacrifice morality or being a Mensch in order to reach these goals.

We also must learn to make distinctions between holy and holy. Not everything has equal value. Sometimes when our family needs help we have to sacrifice learning opportunities, etc. We also have to learn how to make distinctions between the Sabbath and the week, between man the creator and man the meditator. We cannot just spend all our time creating without sitting back and relaxing and enjoying what we have. At the same time, we cannot be passive and not be creative. We also have to make a distinction between Israel and the other peoples. You cannot be a Jew and remain a Jew just because you like lox and bagels. There is no reason to stay a Jew unless you believe that Judaism still has ideas the world still needs. It is important for young people to know about these ideas, otherwise they will not stay Jews.

Learning how to make distinctions is essential in order to become a mature human being. A baby learns by learning how to make distinctions. We cannot make wild generalizations. We have to distinguish between

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the golden calf, which is worshipping the works of our own hands,
and the cherubim, which stressed the vital importance of implementing
Judaism's moral and religious ideas in our youth if Judaism was going
to survive. In life we must learn how to make distinctions, otherwise
we will never mature and never be able to live the just and moral
life.

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In the Torah portion, Trumah, we learn how G-d spoke to Moshe saying "speak to the sons of Israel and they should take from Me Trumah". All the commentators ask why should it say "they should take from Me Trumah"? It should say "and they shall give Trumah". They should give a donation. They are not taking it. Also, the language is different when it enumerates certain objects they give. When it enumerates the blue thread and purple thread, etc. it does not state what they were to be used for, but when it mentions the oil it says that the oil should be for the light, the spices for the oil of anointing, and also spices for sweet incense and the onyx stones for the breastplate. Why does it have to specify its use? We also have a text which says "and they shall make for Me a sanctuary and I shall dwell in them". What is the meaning of that sentence? Life is a difficult proposition. We human beings are limited. We cannot do everything we want. We cannot even do things in the order we want many times. We cannot put on our shoes before our socks. We cannot reverse time. We cannot decide one day to be old and one day to be young. Our minds may soar but we are limited to reality. Unfortunately, in life there are many people who want life to be what they want it to be and not what it is. In life we have to learn how to make distinctions. Unless we learn how to make distinctions we are in trouble. Certain things are right in one context but wrong in another context. It is all right to wear a swimsuit at the beach but you should not come to the Synagogue in one. This lack of realizing that we have to make distinctions in life is what causes the young people to constantly yell hypocrite, but in life we have to learn to make distinctions. At the end of the Sabbath we say a special prayer called Hamavdil. When we make Havdallah we make a special prayer. "Blessed are You our G-d, King of the Universe, Who separates between holy and secular, between light and darkness, between Israel and the nations and between the seventh day and the six working days of creation." Sometimes we also conclude it with a blessing "He who separates between holy and holy". On the Sabbath we learn to be man the appreciator, the meditator as well as man the creator. G-d has given us a special gift by allowing us to be His partner in creation. He has given us the gift of creativity, but we have to learn not to abuse it. G-d separates between

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light and darkness. In Hebrew the word for light also means to beam, to shine, to ventilate, and the word Chosech also means to be restrained. Sometimes in life we have to let it all hang out and other times we should learn to be quiet, to be restrained. Freud is wrong when he said that we always have to always let it all out. Sociologists and psychologists have found out that the happiest marriages are when there is an element of restraint in them. Sometimes we have to learn to shut up as well as to talk. Since we have followed Freud there are more divorces than ever. A person has to know when to talk and when to be quiet otherwise you are always going to be fighting over petty little things. Rabbis, too, have to know when to talk and when to shut up. Sometimes even I get into trouble when I talk when I should have shut up and when I keep quiet instead of talking. The Halacha tells us a Rabbi should not say anything when he knows the people will not listen. We also have to learn how to make distinctions between the holy and the secular. We have to know what are ends and what are means. In America everything is important and nothing is more important than football. We many times have our values screwed up. Not everything is as important as everything else. Values of commitment, of family, of morality, of charity must come first. Unfortunately, in America we have confused flashy cars and fancy houses for real values. We also must learn how to make distinctions between Israel and others. The Jewish people cannot survive unless we believe we have a message to give the world. We cannot say that choosing Judaism is like choosing chocolate ice cream instead of vanilla. It is not a matter of taste. We have a message to give the world. You do not have to be a Jew to be a good American. Abraham Lincoln was not Jewish, George Washington was not Jewish, and Thomas Jefferson was not Jewish, but they were very good Americans. Our young people are drifting away from us because they do not know the message that we have yet to give the world. This does not mean that Jews are superior. It means that we feel as America feels that we have a unique way of life that the world needs. As Abraham Lincoln said, "America is the last best hope of the world". We Jews, too, must feel that Judaism has things the world needs. Unless we teach our children the distinctiveness of Judaism they will leave us. We also must learn how to separate

between holy and holy. Not everything in religion is on the same level. Some people get ahold of a few practices and make them everything. What about being a mensch? What about ethical behavior? What about the saving of human life? These, too, are important. Our religion is not superstition. It is not composed of a few magical acts. We have to teach our children and ourselves how to make proper distinctions. If we do they can be happy and lead a moral and a decent life. We human beings are pulled by many conflicting impulses. If we put them in the right context they will aid and help us. If not, we will be in trouble. Where are our children to learn how to make these distinctions? Only through Jewish education. Unless we have a strong Jewish education we will not be able to make these distinctions. That's why in this Torah portion it says you take the oil for light. You have to learn how to make distinctions between light and darkness, between letting it all hang out and being restrained. It says that you must take spices for the oil of anointing. We have to learn how to make distinctions between secular and holy, the oil of anointing which made the vessels holy in the Temple. We also have to learn how to make distinctions between the oil of anointing and the incense. We have to learn to make distinctions between holy and holy. Also, the onyx stones for the breastplate teach us that we must make distinctions between Israel and the peoples. Only if we do this can we become holy. Holy has the connotation of being able to make distinctions. It says in the beginning of this portion "they shall take from Me Trumah". The Jewish people were commanded to give approximately 2% of their crops to the priests. There were two elements involved. There was Haphroscha and Netina. Before they separated Haphroscha, their crops, they could not use them. After they separated them they could use their crops. The Kohen would then come whenever he wanted to take the crop and he would be given it. In order for us to be holy, to have the traits we all need we must learn to separate, to make distinctions. If we do that then we are sure that we will be able to lead the holy and good life and G-d will dwell in us. That's why it says "you will make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in you". You learn how to make distinctions and then G-d will

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dwell in us. We will be able to be holy.

The story about the basketball team whose players were very lax about coming to practice. Finally before the last practice before the big game the coach singled out one of the players and said, "I want to congratulate you. You are the only one who came to practice on time and stayed to the last minute. You are an example to your teammates", at which point the fellow turned and said, "Thanks, coach, that's the least I could do since I can't make the game". Unless we learn to make the proper distinctions and put what is important first we will not be able to live the kind of lives we are all capable of living.

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In this week's Torah portion, Terumah, we learn how the Jewish people were to make a sanctuary for G-d. It says "and they shall make for Me a Mikdosh, a place of holiness and I shall dwell in their midst". What does it mean that they should make a sanctuary for G-d? After all, G-d's glory fills the whole world. G-d is all over. Why should He need a sanctuary and what are we talking about when we talk about a holy place? What is the whole concept of holiness? In Judaism when we talk about holiness we are really talking about separation. When the Jews are called a holy people it means that ~~they~~^{we} are ~~meant~~^{to be} separate from others. When we talk about the Sabbath being a holy day it is a day set aside from other days. When we talk about holiness of kashruth we are talking about separating ourselves from other foods. Holiness has a connotation of separation. In life we need both the holy and the secular. In fact, the Rabbis say that a person who ^{would} make a weekday Shabbos is just as wrong as if he would make his Shabbos a weekday. ^{The pure concept of the Holy} ~~Holy~~ stands for the ideal, ^{Something to which we all aspire but which do not exist fully in the real world.} In life we are to aim for ideals, but we believe we have to live in the real world. We have to make the world come closer to our ideals, but we know that that is a long process and a difficult one. What we say about Shabbos is that it is a taste of ^{Eden} ~~Gan Eden~~, a taste of the world to come, a world which we will eventually create, a world in which everyone ^{will be} ~~is~~ free and equal, a world in which we can concentrate on Torah study and our family exclusively. It is an ideal but it is not the real world. The real world ^{is} ~~is~~ the other days of the week. It is our job to make them come closer to Shabbos. In dealing with ideals there are two ways ^{usable} ~~to~~ handle ^{in which they are} them. One is to ~~make them~~ ^{things} ~~ideals~~ which ~~we~~ ^{we} know can never be realized ^{in the} ~~and~~ so ~~to~~ ^{only} give them lip service, ~~but~~ ^{we} never try to achieve them. The other way is to pretend that ~~our~~ ^{our} ideals have already been realized in the real world even though we can all see by the injustice and inhumanity in the real world that they have not been achieved. Judaism's ^{deals with ideals in} ~~idea is~~ ^{ways.} neither of these. Judaism says that the ideals are real and we have to spend part of the time learning about them and studying about them and even on Shabbos living them ^{while} ~~and~~ the rest of the week we must try to implement them, to bring them into practice. This means we have to deal with reality. We could be accused of being compromisers because we are living in the real world. However, we are not because we have never given up our ideals. We still return to them time after time and want to

continually implement them. In Judaism we are urged to learn how to differentiate. After Shabbos we make Havdallah. We learn how to differentiate between holy and secular, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of creation. We must learn to differentiate between the ideal and reality, between holiness and the secular. The Temple was meant to teach us the ideals, but we should never become discouraged because in the real world things are not perfect. We have to work slowly to bring them up to the ideal. We should not withdraw in a huff because the world is not perfect. We also must distinguish between light and darkness, between truth and falseness. Many times people play with the truth to give false impressions like the commentator I heard the other day who made the following analogy: "What would you say if President Nixon or John Mitchell were given a Cabinet post right after Watergate? Wouldn't that be a travesty? That's what Israel is doing with Sharon." Of course, the cases are not similar. They were crooks. They broke the law. They were directly responsible. Sharon had no direct responsibility or intent to harm the civilians. He was indirectly responsible. The cases are not at all similar. In life we must learn to make correct distinctions if we are to be able to implement ideals in the real world. We also have to distinguish between Israel and nations. Many Jews are opting out of Judaism because they say there is no reason to stay Jewish. All Judaism has already been implemented. We cannot agree with this. We still have much to teach the world. We must distinguish between the seventh day and the other six days. We must, on Shabbos, learn about our ideals and practice them so that we will be imbued with the enthusiasm necessary to implement them in the real world for the other six days. G-d did not need the sanctuary. We needed it as a separate place in which we could visualize and see His ideals so that we could implement them in practice. That's why many of the symbols refer to Israel, to truth, to holiness. It is important that we separate the world of ideals and the world of reality so that we can bring the world of reality up to our ideals. This reminds me of a story in which a man called a doctor in the middle of the night and said, "Doctor, you have to help me. I am very sick." The doctor said, "Normally I don't make house calls, but if I come tonight I will have to charge you \$50". The man said, "How much do you charge for an office call?" The doctor said,

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"\$20". The man said, "O.K., I'll meet you in your office in ten minutes".

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The story of a Jewish farmer in Eastern Europe who, for the first time in his life, was going to have a bumper crop. All of a sudden the Mashiach came and said, "I'm here. Let's go to Israel." The farmer said, "But I'm having a bumper crop. I don't want to go right now." The Mashiach said, "What happens if a Cossack comes and takes your farm?" The farmer thought a moment and replied, "Why don't you take the Cossack to Israel?" This, of course, illustrates the reluctance of many Jews to go to Israel and also the fact that Israel now is surrounded by Cossacks, by many enemies.

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In the Torah portion Trumah we learn about the construction of the Tabernacle. We learn how the Tabernacle was to be the center religious focus of the Jewish people. It is hard to understand why the Tabernacle was chosen to be the central religious focus of the Jewish people. We Jews have always believed in a closer relationship between G-d and man. We believe we need no intermediaries or interceptors to even go to G-d direct. We feel we have open access to G-d all the time. Of course, this is one of the underlying themes of "Fiddler on the Roof". When Teviah speaks to G-d he is speaking out of the Jewish tradition. G-d is close to us. Yet the Tabernacle we built seems to stress an altogether different concept. It seems to stress limits, that man cannot really approach G-d, that man really has to stay outside. After all, there were certain parts of the Temple man could not enter. The high priest could enter into the Holy of Holies only once a year. The ordinary people could not enter the holy part of the sanctuary. Only the Kohanim could. In fact, people were barred from coming closer than a little distance from the altar. They were not allowed to then enter the inner sanctum of the Temple unless they were ritually pure. If they dealt with the mitzvah of cleansing and preparing the dead for burial, they could not enter into the sanctuary. Why should this be? We Jews have always been a democratic religion, a religion which has always elected its rabbis, etc., one in which we feel close to man and G-d. Why should the Temple have been the focus of Jewish worship, and in our prayers we still long for the Temple and for what it stands for. Even in the Six Day War hardened secular

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soldiers broke down in front of the Western Wall and cried.

People, too, when they go to Jerusalem, to Israel, they visit the Western Wall. Why should the Tabernacle have been the central focus of Jewish worship?

The answer to this, I believe, is that it stresses something we all need to know in life, and that is that we are limited. We all need G-d's help. We cannot do everything in life that we want to do. In spite of the slogan that "nothing is impossible", things are impossible. We cannot know everything individually and even collectively. We are called upon all the time to make decisions upon limited knowledge. The Tabernacle was to teach us what our role was in the world and what was our fitting and right place in the world. We Jews believe that G-d helps those that help themselves. We have to act. We have to come forward. We have to do. Yet, when it comes to decisions we are limited. We are limited by the knowledge we have, and many times we strike out in the dark. We need G-d's help to make sure we made the right decision. That is why Jews pray because we know that many times we make decisions, in fact the most important decisions of our lives, based upon intuition and faith. After all, before we got married we didn't interview 3 billion women to find the right one. We didn't, before choosing an occupation, look at the 700 or 800 listings of occupations at the Department of Labor before intuitively choosing something we thought would be fitting for us. It happens that many times the decisions we make are wrong. We pray to G-d that if we made the wrong decision we will not be harmed at it. How many times have we made a mistake, not stopped at a stop sign or gone through a red light? Thank G-d, we survive and do not have to pay the penalty for our mistakes

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although some people do. Many times in life we make decision,
but we ask G-d that even if we make wrong decisions to let them
come out right and, G-d, let us make the right decisions. We
need help. Even modern science admits now that man is not all-
powerful, because we cannot know everything. By the very
definition, a black hole means that man is limited because light
goes in and nothing ever comes out and we can never know anything
about a black hole except very indirectly. The same thing
applies to scientific laws. There was a big argument between
Nils Boer and Einstein, both Jews, about the theory of light.
Nils Boer said light was both a wave and a particle. Einstein
said it was impossible, and this was when he made his famous
statement that G-d does not play dice with the universe. He
meant we have to understand it is impossible for something to be
both a particle and a wave. Nils Boer told Einstein that is all
we will be able to find out. We are limited. We cannot go
beyond this as far as our comprehension of quantum mechanics of
light. This, of course, is a hard thing to come up against. We
must make decisions in life based only on partial knowledge.
That's why we need G-d's help, and that is why we pray, and that
is what the Tabernacle was to teach us: how to pray. Really,
the essence of all Jewish prayer we find really in three words,
"G-d, help me." That, of course, is what we need. We need the
help of G-d and the help of our fellow human beings. We cannot
do everything alone. When it comes to knowledge, too, man cannot
know everything. He has to rely on others to supplement his
knowledge. When it comes to life, itself, a man cannot live by
himself. He needs a mate. You cannot do everything yourself.
You cannot procreate yourself. You cannot live a happy life
yourself. You cannot be fulfilled by yourself. You need a mate.

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A person needs a family, too. One of the reasons for the skyrocketing divorce rate is that people do not have anyone to turn to. It used to be a family was always there to help you, to give advice, to give financial help, to serve as moral support, to serve even as babysitters. Now families are not around. All the responsibility is thrust on the nuclear family, and the nuclear family explodes because they need help. We all need help. We have to help each other. We need G-d's help. That is what the Tabernacle stood for. It stood for the fact that man has to act. We all have to act and do, but we need help. We cannot do it alone. We need the help of G-d and our families. That, of course, is a very important lesson to learn.

In the Tabernacle, too, you could not enter if you came into contact with the dead. We all know we are limited that way. We all know we are going to die. That was not the kind of limitation the Tabernacle was to teach us. The Tabernacle was to teach us that even in life we cannot do it alone. We need others and have to work with others and always ask G-d's help to make the right decisions, and even if we make the wrong decisions that we should not be penalized because of them.

I am reminded of the story of Mr. Goldberg, who was a pious man and tried to do right and help everyone during his lifetime. He was 80 years old and never asked G-d for anything. He decided this time to ask G-d for one thing. He said, "G-d, let me win the New York lottery." He looked in the paper the next morning and his name was not there. He said, "G-d, I'm going to give you one more chance. Let me win the lottery." Again, he look in the paper and his name wasn't there. He got very mad and said, "G-d,

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why won't you let me win?" He heard a voice say, "Mr. Goldberg,
don't you think you should first buy a ticket?" Yes, we have to
do things. We have to be ambitious and help ourselves, but we
have to realize we can be ambitious and work hard and help and
still fail without G-d's help. We need G-d's help and our
families help and our spouse's help and each other's help, the
help of friends and relatives and community. Let us all hope and
pray that we will always realize this and realize we need each
other's help and G-d's help.

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I recently returned from Israel. I went as a member of the Rabbinic Cabinet of Israel Bonds. There the highest leaders of government all talked to us, from Chaim Herzog, the President, to Yizhak Shamir, the Prime Minister, to Shimon Peres, the Finance Minister, to Binyamin Minyanyahu, the Assistant Foreign Minister, Natan Sharansky, Gidon Patt, Mordechai Gur, etc. The situation in Israel, of course, is serious but it is not dangerous in Israel. In Israel we did not feel any tension at all in the cities. It may be true that if a person would go to the Gaza Strip or some of the West Bank villages that he might encounter difficult situations, but in Tel Avia and Jerusalem there is absolutely no tension at all. There is more tension here in Houston in the 5th ward or even close by here on Stella Link in the Linkwood area than there is in Israel. As was mentioned to us, there has only been one Arab killed in Jerusalem during the past year. The murder rate in Houston is many times the murder rate in Israel or the violence rate in Israel. There is nothing at all to be afraid about to go to Israel.

We were told by the head of El Al that there are already direct flights coming from Warsaw to Tel Aviv and from Budapest to Tel Aviv, and they are negotiating now with Russia to have direct flights from Moscow to Tel Aviv. This, of course, means that there is going to be an influx of Russian immigrants who will be coming to Israel. One of the reasons they called us to Israel was to encourage us to have more Jewish people throughout the United States buy Israel Bonds so that the construction of new homes for Russian immigrants can proceed, that a great investment in the infrastructure of Israel has to be made so that the Russian immigrants can be absorbed, jobs can be found for them, houses built for them, etc. Also, tourism needs to be strengthened in Israel, and they want us to bring back the message that Israel is perfectly safe, and Israel is safe. What's more, those of you who can afford to should up your UJA contributions also, because it will take a lot of money to bring the Russian Jews to either Israel

or the United States. The feeling of the leadership in Israel is that there is going to be a lot of pressure mounted on Israel now. There have been changes in the Middle East, primarily by Russia. It seems that Russia for the last two years has not supplied weapons to Syria, and Russia has sort of pulled the plug out from the PLO. Probably as a result of Russian moves, Yasser Arafat has agreed to recognize Israel and denounce terrorism. Whether he really means it or not is a different story. This is probably why the Libya and Syria have not threatened his life for doing so because the Russians have told them to back off. However, this does not mean that everything is hunky dory in Israel and that everything can be resolved easily, because we all know that the PLO has more demands than just a state on the West Bank in the Gaza Strip. No Palestinian leader has given up on the right to return. That means that even after they would be given a state they would still insist that all those Arabs who originally lived in Tel Aviv and Haifa and Bersheva and all the other cities of Israel should be allowed to go back to the places to which they lived. Of course, that would mean the complete destruction of Israel, ^{Also} ~~that~~ a Palestinian state would be a very dangerous thing for Israel at this time. None of the leaders in Israel want a Palestinian state now, neither the Lichud or the Labor.

In fact, I had the honor of chairing the meeting where Mordechai Gur talked, a prominent Labor figure who is the general who captured Jerusalem and was Chief of Staff, and ^{although} ~~all~~ the Labor and ^{Likud} ~~State~~ comes from different points of the spectrum ^{they} ~~but~~ basically agree on what the future should be in Israel. They both agree that Israel is in for a terrible time of pressure, but that Israel can do nothing which will jeopardize her security. First of all, Israel has to remain strong, and second of all, that Israel has to talk to the Arabs to arrive at some sort of accommodation. What exactly the form of that accommodation will be they do not know. Maybe it will be that the Arabs will have ^{guaranteed} a certain number of seats in the Knesset.

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Maybe it will be that certain territory will be ceded to Jordan. Maybe it will be that there will be an exchange between the Arabs living in Israel proper and the settlers on the West Bank. Who knows what the final solution will be? Of course, that is why they have to discuss. As was mentioned to us many times, the main question in Israel is not with whom do you talk, but what do you talk about? A Palestinian state is out. As Binyamin Natiyahu explains, the moment you would have a PLO state the PLO would immediately make pacts and treaties with all the Arab countries and most probably with Russia, too, and then they would continue to launch terrorist activities because their demands are not satisfied by just having a state, just as Egypt's demand was not satisfied when all the Sinai was given back. They still wanted Taba even though Taba on many maps is marked as belonging to Israel. Therefore, this Palestinian state would start terrorist incursions, and Israel could not retaliate, as some people say, and take it back within 24 hours, because once they touched that Palestinian state there would be a general war with all the Arab countries and probably with Russia, too. Israel would find herself in a strategically impossible situation and she would be in great danger. Therefore, nobody wants a Palestinian state. Even those who want to speak with every Arab leader do not want to talk about a Palestinian state. There would be great danger in having a Palestinian state.

The issues in Israel today are very complex. The leadership knows that they are going to have to talk, but they are going to have to talk from strength and make an accommodation with the Arabs who live in Israel now. They are not interested in having the influx of the refugees come from Lebanon and Syria and Saudia Arabia and Jordan, etc. back into Israel. They know that that would sound the death knell of Israel.

In the Torah portion that we read, Terumah, we learn about the building of the Mishnah. We know that there are three different types of Kedusha, of holiness, in Judaism. There is holiness of time. We are all acquainted with it. We all know that the Shabbos is a temple of time. We Jews have been more interested in building temples of time than in building beautiful sanctuaries because we know that those sanctuaries can be taken away from us, and they were. They were burned and turned into places of worship for other religions. The temple of time nobody could take away from us: our holidays, our Shabbos. When we constructed a temple of time it had great meaning for us.

There is a second type of Kedusha in Judaism and that is Kedusha HaGuf, where we are supposed to be transformed into holy people. It says, "You should be a holy people," which means that we should transform ourselves to be kind, compassionate people who learn how to deal with our violent impulses and learn to control them. That we can do by studying Torah and doing mitzvahs, by being actively engaged in the construction of sanctuaries and stretching our hand out to the poor, etc. That is why it says, "You should take from me a Terumah." Why doesn't it say, "You shall give for me a Terumah?" The rabbis explain that when we extend ourselves for others, when we are involved in building a synagogue, then you are taking something. You are taking back holiness.

There is also something else, a third holiness which is Kedushas Ha'Aretz, which is the sanctification of space. This we Jews have not been able to do in the Galut. IN the exile we have been able to celebrate our holidays, and we were able to have Kedusha HaGuf, sanctifying our bodies by performing mitzvahs and transforming ourselves into kind, compassionate, caring people, but the sanctification of space we have not been able to do except within

the confines of our own homes where we Jewish people have prided ourselves on building homes that can withstand the ravages of the hostile environment, where we could have homes in which children could be raised and taught how to live moral and decent lives. We have always prided ourselves on the fact that we could raise good children. However, the holiness of space depends upon us having Eretz Yisrael, the land of Israel, and that is something that we have only recently just been able to acquire. We know that we cannot be like other people. We were told by one of the chief security officers of the West Bank that the army within 6 hours could end the Intifada, but, of course, they would have to take out machine guns and kill 1,000 people at one stretch, just machine gun youngsters. It would stop the Intifada immediately. In fact, when the Intifada broke out in Israel in the Gaza Strip on the same day a similar disturbance broke out across the border, and the Egyptians put them down by just machine gunning the demonstrators. Nothing was ever heard of it, and the press did not even report it, but several hundred were killed in just a few hours. We could do that, too, but that would not be the Jewish solution to the problem. We would be destroying our Kedushas HaGuf, our sanctity as a people and our sanctity as a land.

It is a difficult proposition that Israel faces because they have to be very careful that they do not make any mistakes. We do know that if they make a mistake another Holocaust could ensue, and do not fool yourself. If Israel goes down the tubes we in America are going to have a hard time, too. The Skinheads are already here. We are able to hold our heads up high because we know that there is an Israel, a place we can go, but if the world will destroy Israel then they will turn on the Jews of America, too. So we all know that Israel faces hard decision.

In life most of the decisions that we are called upon to make we make with limited knowledge. We do not interview 2 billion women before we decide who our mate is going to be, or 2 billion men if we are women. We do not investigate 500 occupations before we decide which occupation we are going to choose. This is why we need G-d's help because when it comes to making decisions in life we need to have G-d's help to make sure we choose the right way. It was interesting to note that almost all the speakers invoked G-d's name, ~~that~~ ^TThey know that they need G-d's help in this type of a situation, that when Israel comes to make decisions they cannot make a wrong decision which will endanger Israel's security and make it vulnerable to defeat, but, on the other hand, we cannot continue in a situation where we are continually beating up teenagers. Therefore, some solution has to be found for the problem, and eventually it will, but we have to have patience. We should not be stampeded by the media. The media wants Israel to make all sorts of concessions, but they will not have to live with the results. They will not have to live with the carnage that will ensue if Israel ever loses a battle. We have to be patient. There is hope, but we cannot expect anything to happen soon. The conclusion, I am sure, will turn out to be positive. G-d has not brought the Jewish people this far to let us down now., but we have to be patient and resolute and take it slowly. That is why even Mordechai Gur said, who is on the doves side, that he is very happy that there is a national unity government because although ~~Likud~~ ^{Likud} and Labor come from different sides of the issue, they basically agree that we have to go slow, that we cannot do anything that will endanger Israel's security, and that there has to be a wide national consensus in Israel as to what steps to take. There will be difficult negotiations, but we should not worry about it. We should not panic. We should not be afraid, ~~because~~, unfortunately, many Jews are. It is important to remember

that we Jews have to maintain Kedushas Zisman, our integrity and our holidays and our values, Kedushas HaGuf, the sanctity of our personal actions, and we have to maintain the sanctity of Eretz Yisrael, so we cannot do anything which violates Jewish tradition. On the other hand, we cannot commit suicide either. It is important for us to remember that in Eretz Yisrael our values have to flourish so that we will flourish. All parts of the community are trying to make sure Jewish values flourish to one extent or another, *the religious* the ultra-orthodox and the secular.

I had the opportunity to visit some of our boys who are studying in Israel, too, and I am telling you, too, that if you have an opportunity to do so, send your children to study Torah in Eretz Yisrael so that they can combine the Kedushas ^{the} ~~Oretz~~ _i the sanctity of the land of Israel with *Kedushas Haguf + Kedushas HaZman*

I am reminded of the story they tell about a general who was terrified before a battle. He picked up a pitcher and rubbed it, and, sure enough, out came a genie. The genie said, "I will give you three wishes. You can wish anything you want, but, remember, your enemy gets double of what you wish." The general wished for 1,000 tanks. Immediately he was given them, but his enemy was given 2,000 tanks. Then he wished for 1,000 planes and was immediately given them, but his enemy was given 2,000 planes. Then he thought for a moment and said, "Scare me half to death." Unfortunately, that seems to be the position of much of American Jewry. They are scared half to death, maybe in hopes that the enemy will be scared completely to death. There is nothing to be scared about. We should view the situation resolutely, with hope, and most certainly we should go to Israel as tourists and support Israel by buying bonds and by giving to the UJA. Let Israel soon know peace. *Amen*

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In the Torah portion Terumah we learn about building the Mishkan, the Tabernacle. We learn how it was to be constructed, in what manner it was to be constructed. It seems strange, though, that the instructions for building the Tabernacle are placed in the Book of Exodus. It is even more strange that over 40% of the Book of Exodus is devoted to building the Mishkan. Why should this be so that almost half of the Book of Exodus is devoted to building the Mishkan? ~~After all, the~~ ^{Book of Shmos} ~~Book of Shmos~~, as it is called in Hebrew, ^{is also called} ~~Sefer HaCeula~~, or the ~~Book of Redemption~~, ^{only} ~~should deal~~ with the exodus of the Jewish ~~people from Egypt?~~ We would think that perhaps the Book of Exodus would be combined with parts of the Book of Numbers and that this 40% or so of the Book of Shmos should be added to the Book of Vayikra, which talks about sacrifices. ~~After all, the sanctuary and the sacrifices go together.~~ Why was it that in this book, which is dedicated to freedom, that the Torah saw fit to combine this story of freedom with the story of the building of the Mishkan? What does the Mishkan have to do with the great message of freedom which the Book of Exodus proclaims?

It seems to me that here in the story of the Mishkan we have a very important lesson. Freedom is something that we all want and we all desire. However, it is more difficult to maintain freedom than it is to gain freedom. We all know ^{how} ~~that~~ many of the newly freed African nations they had freedom, ^{and} ~~they had a vote, but only once, and after~~ ^{gained} ~~they voted once~~ the people elected, refused to turn over power, and they became dictators for life. We know that the same thing happened ^{has been} in South America ^{for the last} ~~years~~ ^{ever since the countries there} won their independence, and ^{we} know also that in the newly freed countries in eastern Europe there is a great danger that the freedom that ~~the freedom that~~ ^{have} they gained now may be lost quickly, that they may not be able to maintain the

freedom that they ^{we} gained and ~~will elect dictators or see~~ ^{that} their governments ^{are indigen}
^{of being} taken over by ~~army factions or other~~ despots. It is easier to gain
freedom than to maintain freedom. ~~How is it that we are going to be~~
~~able to maintain freedom?~~ What is it that is required in order to
maintain freedom?

The rabbis teach us that the secret of maintaining freedom is actually
found in the Torah portions ~~which deal with giving the~~ Terumah. That
is why it says, "And they shall make for Me a sanctuary and I will
dwell in them." It does not say that G-d is going to dwell in the
sanctuary. After all, the whole world is filled with G-d's glory,
but it means that if we will build a sanctuary we will know how to
maintain freedom, and we will be able to have that freedom which is
necessary in order to serve G-d. G-d says, "And I will dwell in their
midst." Each of us contains a piece of G-d. Each of us has a soul,
and each of us will be able to do those things which cause our freedom
to endure, which cause our soul to be free if we will learn how build
a Mishkan.

In this Torah portion, too, we learn how it says, "Speak to the sons
of Israel and they shall take ~~from~~ ^{or} Me a ~~Terumah~~ ^{donation}." What does it mean
"they should take ~~from~~ ^{the} Me a ~~Terumah~~ ^{Donation}"? It should say they should "give"
a Terumah for me. The reason it says "they shall take from Me a Terumah"
is because in order to maintain freedom you must have holiness. Kedusha
is an absolute necessity for maintaining freedom, and that is why it
says here "they should take from Me a Terumah" because it is ^{we} ~~us~~ who
create holiness in the world, not G-d. We, by setting aside money
for charity, create holiness. We, by making a brocha before we eat,
create holiness. The only thing in the whole Torah that says that

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G-d made holy was the Sabbath, and then we have to resanctify the Sabbath in order for it to be holy. Otherwise the Sabbath, itself, would not be holy. That is why we say in the kiddush where we quote from the first chapter of the Book of Bereishis, where we learn how when G-d creates the Shabbos that G-d says that He rested from all the work which G-d created to do, that G-d blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because He rested from all His work which G-d created to do, which the rabbis interpreted to mean that we have to complete this holiness. We have to complete it by making kiddush Friday night. It is we who create holiness. We must learn that unless we have holiness we will not be able to have freedom. What do we mean by holiness?

Holiness in Judaism means that we set things aside, that things have to be done in their proper time and proper place, that unless we do things in the proper time and place and proper way we will defile ourselves. G-d created everything in the world, and He saw that it was good, but everything is good only if it is done in the right time in the right place. You do not wear a bathing suit to shul, and you do not go swimming in a tuxedo. I am reminded in the 1960's how they used to show pictures of young couples who would get married and immediately after they were married would consummate their marriage right in front of everybody. That, of course, is ridiculous. There is a time and place for everything, but, of course, young people do not understand that and many times you hear them cry "hypocrite, hypocrite". People are not being hypocritical because they are saying that certain things are good and certain things are bad. ^{at certain times} ^{at certain times} It used to be very wrong of much of the sex education in America because it taught that sex was actually wrong. It was only concession to the flesh. Judaism has never believed that sex was wrong.

Sex has its place. It has its place in marriage within certain times of the marriage. Therefore, it is very, very important, but it is good if it is done in the right way. This applies to everything in life. Holiness is knowing how to separate things, how to make distinctions between when you should do things and when you should not do things. People make a very big mistake when they live life without any distinctions. That's why the rabbis say that it is just as wrong to rest on a weekday as it is to work on the Shabbos. Of course, using the word "rest" here means to cease from all creative labors. Man was meant to be creative, and on Shabbos he is meant to be man, the meditator, man, the appreciator.

This applies to what we eat also. We cannot eat everything we want whenever we want it. Even with things that are kosher, you cannot eat meat and milk together. In order to be holy you have to learn how to make distinctions, and that is a great problem that many people have today because they do not know how to make distinctions. The same things goes for freedom. Freedom has limits. You cannot do everything you want when you want to do it otherwise you will not maintain freedom. That's what the dictators in Africa and South America would always say that they want to rule. They want to be elected and they think it is for life. That is what is wrong. You have to limit what you are doing. That, of course, is the main secret of the United States government, which is many times inefficient and many times is very slow moving, but there are many checks and balances. We are not free to do anything we want whenever we want to do it. In order to maintain freedom we have to accept limits. This is very hard to understand, and only because of the analogy of dieting can many people grasp it at all. We all know that if we eat everything we want whenever we

want however we want we are going to get fat, and we are going to actually lose our freedom. We are not going to gain our freedom. We will not be able to move or participate in sports or travel. We will get sick. We will ruin our life. In order to really be free we have to limit our lives. This applies throughout all aspects of life.

This is what the Tabernacle teaches us because the Tabernacle teaches us how sometimes we can go in certain areas and sometimes we cannot go in certain areas. Some people can do some things and other people cannot. It brings to our mind the fact that we are limited. We Jews say that we can drink alcohol. We even take it into the religion. We make kiddush every Friday night. We bring it to the shul, but you cannot drink to excess. You cannot drink to get drunk, and, of course, if you have a genetic predisposition to alcoholism you cannot drink at all. You should just drink grape juice. It just depends who you are and what the circumstances are. In order to maintain our freedom we have to accept limits. We have to be holy, and holy means that you take things out and you separate them, and you know that you can only go this far and not that far. That is, of course, why it says, "And they should take from Me a Terumah", that which is already set aside, that which is already designated for charity. From that they should take and give me Terumah. It should not just be a whim that whenever you feel like it or it strikes you that you give charity. Every day you have to set aside charity in order for you to be holy. The same thing goes for building the Mishkan. When G-d commanded Moshe to build the Mishkan G-d started with the holiest first, with the ark and the table and the menorah, etc., and he went down to the pegs and the boards, etc., but when Moshe built the Temple, when Moshe built the Tabernacle he started from the pegs and the boards and went up

to the ark cover and to the ark. When man starts he must start with the material at hand. Man cannot start from holy principles and work down. That is why people make a mistake. People start with principles, with very flashy and important slogans, but unless they are actually implemented in real life by setting limits to what you are going to do and what you are not going to do they will have no effect at all. Even the Communists banter about freedom, but you know there was no freedom in their countries until very recently. Slogans will not help. You have to start with the raw materials of life and build yourself up to a spiritual experience.

That is why, too, the rabbis tell us in the holy of holies there are only two things: the Ten Commandments and there was the cherubim. The cherubim were two children wrapped in a warm embrace with their wings soaring up to heaven, that in the Jewish list of priorities children come first and the Ten Commandments come first. The poles of the Ten Commandments were never allowed to be taken out of the ark. All other objects of furniture had rings and they put staves, poles, in them to carry and would remove these poles, but not the poles from the Ten Commandments. They always stayed there so people knew that they had to shoulder them. When it comes to choosing priorities in life, to choosing limitations in life we have to realize that what is good for our children and what is based on the Ten Commandments is the way we have to live, and if that puts so many limitations on us, so be it. That will ensure our freedom. That, of course, is what the Tabernacle was to teach us. It was to teach us that by accepting limits in life, by being limited to doing those things which are the core of the Ten Commandments and good for children especially, we will be able to maintain

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our freedom. Let us all hope and pray that all of us will always understand this so that we will always maintain our freedom so that the Mashiach will come.

I am reminded of the story they tell about a owner walkingⁱⁿ to one of his warehouses. There he saw a man lounging along the wall just leaning on it. He asked the man how much he made a week, and the man said he made \$200 a week. The man peeled off four \$50 bills and said, "Get out of here. I don't want to see your face again." The manager of the warehouse, his foreman, was aghast. The owner asked what the man did there. The foreman said he did not work there at all but was just delivering a package. By jumping to conclusions, by not knowing the facts, by not accepting limitations of our actions we can never assure our freedom. We will only act foolishly. Let us hope and pray that we will all accept these limitations so that we will act correctly. . . .
Amen.

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In the Torah portion Terumah we learn about the construction of the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle and the Temple were actually the same thing. The Tabernacle was the temporary temple which accompanied the Jewish people in the desert and which later found a permanent home in Shiloh. Later, after Shiloh was destroyed by the Philistines, David had determined that the Temple should now be situated in Jerusalem. He was not given the privilege of building the Temple; instead, his son Solomon built the Temple. The rules and regulations that concern the Tabernacle also concern the Temple. The Temple was a unique institution in Judaism. It only existed by itself and all the rules applied only to it. The synagogue is a different institution. The synagogue existed contemporaneously with the Temple. In fact, we have synagogues that we have found that existed side by side of the second Temple. There were synagogues at Masada. A hundred years before the Temple was destroyed we found synagogues throughout other areas of Jewish settlement, even in Jerusalem. The Temple and the synagogue were two different institutions. In the Temple the officiants were the priests, lineal descendants of Aaron. In the Temple there were animal sacrifices. In the synagogue anyone conducted the services, and in the synagogue there were prayers as we have today. There were no sacrifices and different rules obtained. There was no Holy of Holies. There was no limited area where certain people could not enter and where you could only enter on Yom Kippur, etc. We know that the Catholics when they started their religion patterned their services after the Temple in Jerusalem. That is why their officiants are called priests and why they have an altar and symbolic sacrifice and incense, etc. The Protestants, when they broke away from the Catholics over 400 years ago, came to us and asked us what kind of service we had. We told them so they patterned their service after the synagogue service with two readings and the Psalms and sermons, etc. The Temple had a special kind of holiness which is not found in a synagogue,

although a synagogue is also called a little temple, which means that it has a certain amount of holiness but not the holiness of the Temple in Jerusalem. What do we mean by holiness? Holiness comes from the word in Hebrew, "Kodosh", which means "to be separate". When you separate things then you make them holy. In fact, there are two aspects to holiness. The Shabbos is holy because we do not do certain things. We must have restrictions. Unless you have restrictions on something it cannot be holy. In addition to the restrictions, you do some positive act. Shabbos is holy because we do not do certain things on Shabbos. We do not work on Shabbos, and then afterwards we do some positive acts, like making kiddush, like making hamotzi, challahs, havdallah, etc. Shabbos means, though, that we restrict ourselves from doing certain activities. Unless you have the concept of restriction, that there are certain things you cannot do, then you do not have the concept of holiness. Holiness is connected with negative things as well as positive things. Unfortunately, in America today we do not conceive of Shabbos in any restrictive sense; therefore, you do not feel holiness. Holiness is both a function of not doing things and also of doing things, and we fail to understand that this also applied to the Temple. In the Temple you could not go to the Temple anytime. You had to be ritually pure in order to go to the Temple. The Temple had restrictions within in and only then could you bring sacrifices. Certain sacrifices you could only bring under certain conditions, other ones you could bring if you were thankful to G-d for certain wonderful things that had happened to you or in appreciation for recovery from sickness and other things, but the sanctity of the Temple came because of the restrictions that were there. It was set apart. We human beings are holy because we are set apart from the animals. All those people who believe that man is just another animal take away man's holiness. Man is no longer special or unique and, therefore, those people who look at man as another species then have no qualms about killing individuals. The only thing that is important is that

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the species should continue. That was, of course, a view of Stalin. It did not make any difference how many Russians died as long as Russia, itself, survived, and maybe it was better that some of the Russians died because Russia would survive then stronger. We do not believe that. We believe that every human being is unique and special and holy. That, of course, is what the concept of holiness means. It means that we are set apart. The same thing is true of Eretz Yisroel. Eretz Yisroel is a holy land. It has Kedusha, holiness, because in Eretz Yisroel there are many things you cannot do. You cannot work the land on the 7th year; you cannot cut the corners of your field; you cannot pick up forgotten sheaves but have to leave them for the poor. Then there are positive things such as giving Terumah to the priests, you have to give 10% to the Levites of your crops. Eretz Yisroel is holy because of the negative restrictions and also because of the positive things you have to do.

The same thing, of course, applied to the holiness of the Temple, as I mentioned before, because in life there are two aspects, just as there were two separate contributions to the Temple. One contribution was the half shekel, which we talked about last week and which all the Jews participated in. It spoke about the fact that all Jews are equal. All Jews are equal before G-d, and then you have the contributions, which we are speaking about in today's Torah portion, for all the appertances of the Temple and there everyone was supposed to give according to his means because there are two aspects to life which we must always balance. That is that we must always realize that each of us is equal because we have a soul from G-d, and, therefore, we cannot do things against each other. We have to treat each other with respect, but, on the other hand, each of us has talents that are different and unique and special and some people are blessed with more talents than others. Therefore, we see that we even have negative commandments and positive commandments. The negative commandments teach us

what we cannot do to each other. We have to treat each other with respect and dignity. We have to treat a retarded person with dignity and respect as well as a genius. We have to treat people of one sex with respect and dignity just as we treat the person of the other sex with respect and dignity. When it comes to human beings we are all holy and are separate and apart, so there are certain things we cannot do to each other. Therefore, though, we also know that we have special and unique talents and these unique talents have to be given full play. We have to be able to develop our talents. Unfortunately, different societies do not recognize that both these things are true. In the communist society they stress equality but then they refuse to let people develop their individual talents because they thought that everyone was really equal and it was only different circumstances which caused this one to come forth with this idea and this one to be more ambitious, etc. On the other hand, in the capitalist society we many times downgrade equality and all we are interested in is people fulfilling their talents, and those people who fall behind and those people who do not have the ability are many times discarded and that, of course, is wrong.

When we talk about the holiness of the Temple we are also talking about sacrifice. What do we mean by sacrifice? It is not good to sacrifice everything. If we sacrifice to obtain certain goals and in the process we sacrifice our family and morality and in order to pursue music or any other goal that we have, literature, writing, or even the ideas of our mind, we sacrifice people, then we have done the wrong thing. That is, of course, why in the Temple contact with the dead did not allow you to participate in the Temple ritual, because the Temple had to do with allowing a person to pursue his talents but within limits. If the sacrifices that you were to make would cause the deaths of others, then, of course, these were not proper sacrifices. That, of course, is one of the important

lessons of the Temple.

This Shabbos we are honoring the members of the Chevra Kadisha. The Chevra Kadisha, of course, treat every human being equally at death. They are dressed in the same Tachreecheem. They are supposed to be buried in the same type of wooden coffin. The same prayers are said because man or woman we are all equal, genius, retarded, musical talent, athletic talent, literary talent, we are all equal. Therefore, at death we all have to be treated with the same degree of respect. Of course, at death there are no other distinctions. People can no longer act. They no longer have the positive ability to change things. The human being is still holy so he has to be treated with respect because this is the negative aspects of holiness, but man no longer can do the positive things. That is why when we came to the Temple we had to realize that everyone was unique and special as well as equal, and, therefore, we downplayed death, which stresses, of course, the equality of each of us. Therefore, in the ancient Temple you had to be joyous when you brought your sacrifices. You had to be joyous and happy knowing that you could make a difference in the world, that your unique talents could produce positive things. However, if they produced death, if they produced death of others, then, of course, you could not enter into the Temple. We do know, though, that many times people fail to realize this. They fail to realize what holiness is all about. Holiness is the acceptance upon oneself of restrictions as well as positive deeds.

That is why this whole controversy of whether the Jewish Community Center's early childhood department should be open on Jewish holidays is completely false because in order for a Jew to feel holiness he must stop doing his normal routine on that day, and then he can add positive things. We see this in America today, too. I know it is Thanksgiving because I do not go to work on Thanksgiving. Whether I eat a turkey or not is immaterial. The only thing is I do not go

to work. I do not do the same routine. If children are going to go to school and have their same routine on a Jewish holiday, even though they sing a few holiday songs and maybe learn a few holiday stories, although it is hard to see how this could even happen because your most Jewishly committed teachers will not be there, they are still not going to feel the holiday. You can only feel the holiday when you do not do your normal routine, when you do not do what you normally do. The same thing is true of other holidays in America, the Fourth of July, Memorial Day, etc. Whether I go out to the cemetery on Memorial Day or not is not as important as that I do not go to school. If I do not go to school I know it is Memorial Day. True, it will have added impact if I also go to the cemetery and honor the war dead, but whether I do or not I still know it is Memorial Day because I did not go to school. Therefore, in order to understand the Jewish concept of holiness we have to understand that it means we are set apart, that things are different, and because things are set apart, therefore, we realize the full import of holiness throughout our whole being. Unfortunately, many people think holiness is just a concept of the mind, but it cannot be understood and felt if you just think holiness is a concept of the mind. That's why, of course, we find so many people who are educated who do not do the right thing. How many doctors have you met who are constantly smoking even though they tell their patients to stop smoking? They know what is right and wrong. Or, how many of them are overweight? They know what is right and wrong, but it has not affected their whole being. The only way these Jewish concepts can affect your whole being is if you both observe them negatively and positively. That is, of course, very, very important. That is why the negative commandments, 365, are more than the positive commandments, 248, because without having the negative commandments your whole body is not encompassed in these commandments. You do not feel them emotionally and spiritually and physically as well as mentally. It is important that we understand that.

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Yes, everybody is equal. Everybody is holy and that is why we cannot do certain things to human beings. We have to treat every human being with dignity and respect but, on the other hand, every human being also has the right to develop their talents, and we are not all equal and the sexes are not all equal. Men cannot have children; women can. Women have good minds and can be mathematicians just as men can, that just as anything that they can do they should be given the opportunity to do, but, on the other hand, we should not feel, as the communists do, that everyone is exactly the same and, therefore, there are no differences in ability and talents. We have to, though, understand that each of us is holy because we have been set apart. We have been set apart from the animals. We have been set apart by G-d. This means that you have added responsibilities for each other because you are set apart and that you also have the duty also to develop your talents as long as they do not impinge on the holiness of someone else. Let us hope and pray that we will all understand what holiness really is so that we will treat each other with dignity and respect while, at the same time, allowing each of us to develop our own talents, that these talents must never be obtained by sacrificing the dignity and self-esteem or the life of others. In ancient pagan religions they used to actually sacrifice human beings or they would sacrifice their dignity and self-respect through sacred prostitution, etc. We Jews do not believe that is the right way to sacrifice. Sometimes you have to defend your family, sometimes you have to defend your country, but the important thing to remember is that human beings are not pawns. That, of course, is the big mistake of Saddam Hussein. To fulfill his ambition he is willing to sacrifice hundreds of thousands, maybe millions, of his own people. That is not the right type of sacrifice. Our Temple tells us we must be holy. Holiness means that we have to respect other people and, true, we have a responsibility to develop ourselves but not at the expense of other people. Let us all remember

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this so the Mashiach will come. Amen.

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In the Torah portion Terumah we learn how the Jewish people donated gold and silver and copper and blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen and goat's hair, etc. in order to build the Tabernacle. The Torah teaches us that the Jewish people were commanded to build the Tabernacle so that G-d should dwell among them, not in the Tabernacle but among the Jewish people, that the Jewish people will become a holy people and are to become a holy people when they learn how to make a sanctuary in which G-d will dwell upon them. All the rabbis ask the following question. In the beginning of this Torah portion it says, "Speak to the sons of Israel, and they should take from Me an offering." Why does it say "and they should take from Me an offering"? It should say that they shall give Me an offering. What does it mean they shall take from Me an offering?

Also, after the Torah lists how they gave gold and silver and copper and blue wool and purple wool and crimson wool, etc. it says that they gave oil for the lighting, spices for the oil of anointing and for the incense and Shoam stones and setting stones for the Aphod in the Choshun. In the beginning when it first talks about the gold and the silver and the copper it does not say what it is for. It does not say that it is gold for the ark, silver for the base and the sockets, copper for the altar. It does not say at all what these things are to be used for, but when it comes to the oil it says oil for the light, spices for the oil of anointing and for the incense, stones for the Aphod and the Choshin. Why does it mention for what purpose the oil, etc. would be put when it does not mention to what purpose the gold and the silver and the copper would be put?

WE all know that in Judaism we are commanded to be holy, and holiness in Judaism means to separate yourself from. The word for holy, the Kadosh, means to separate yourself. We know that if we are to be a holy people we have to separate ourselves from alcohol, from intoxication, from drugs, from

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sexual immorality. We know that we have to separate ourselves from evil practices, etc. In the west, unfortunately, there seems to be a dichotomy between those people who believe in personal morality and those people who believe that society should be moral and that the government has a responsibility to see that all its citizens are taken care of properly. Perhaps this stems from the Middle Ages where it was believed that redemption could only come when a people were personally moral and a state had no role at all in seeing to it that society should be moral, that everybody in society should be taken care of, etc. Therefore, we find in American life people who are personally pure, people who do not get drunk, people who are ambitious, people who are not addicted to drugs, people who are themselves family oriented, who are good husbands and good fathers but who could not care the least about the poor. They do not feel they have any responsibility at all to the poor. They do not feel that the government should take care of the poor. They do not feel that the government should in any way be involved in health insurance, which we are debating now. All they feel is that they should be personally pure and that the government should stay out of all these other areas. Judaism, on the other hand, believes that we have to have a holy society. On the other hand, there are people who believe that the society should be holy, that the government should make sure there is a floor beyond which nobody can fall, that the poor are taken care of, that there are health provisions for everyone in the society, and, yet, they, themselves, are personally impure. They, themselves, lead a life that is immoral. Many of them got aboard the drug culture. Many of them do not believe at all in limiting their personal habits so that they are personally impure but they believe that society should be pure, society should be holy. This dichotomy does not exist in Judaism. In Judaism we believe that we should be personally pure and that society should be pure, too. That is why we build a sanctuary so that holiness will

be found in all of us, that the purpose of the sanctuary, the purpose of holiness is that we should be holy in everything that we do, that we personally should be holy and that society should be holy.

In fact, if we look carefully at the first sentence again when it says, "Speak to the sons of Israel and they shall take from Me a Terumah", why does it say they should take from Me a Terumah? Well, if you notice that in ancient Israel a Jew had to give away 25% of his income before he even paid taxes, he had to give 2% to the poor, he had to give another 2% as Terumah, as an offering to the priest, he had to give 10% to the Levites, and then he had to give another 10% in the sixth year to the poor and on other years he took it up to Jerusalem where he had to spend it on food and drink, which meant that he had to invite all his friends and family and relatives to consume this amount of food and drink, otherwise he could not possibly consume this much. Then, of course, there were incidental offerings of the firstborn and of the challah and the first wool, etc., so when the Jew came to give the offering to the priest, the Terumah, he had to do it in two steps. He first had to separate the offering. He had to take from his grain that 2% that he was going to give to the priests and then afterwards he could use the rest of his crop, but he had to first designate this 2%. Then when a priest came by he would give it to him, this 2%. The same was true with the other offerings. There were two steps. You first had to take a part away and you had to designate it, and then when the opportunity came you gave it to the person to whom you had designated to give it. In other words, in Judaism in order to have any type of relationship with anybody you first must determine what it is that you are going to give up because it is impossible to have a relationship with anybody, it is impossible to have a holy society, it is impossible to have a relationship with G-d unless you first are willing

to give up something. You have to determine what it is that you are willing to give up. Unfortunately, in our life today there are many people who intermarry and they are not willing to give up anything, and that is why their marriages fail. They are not really willing to compromise on their careers, they are not willing to give up their hobbies, they are not willing to give up their attitudes, they are not willing to give up anything, and unless you are willing to give up something you cannot have a relationship. You cannot have a holy society. Marriage is called in Judaism Kedushin, holiness. You cannot have a holy marriage unless you are willing to give up things. You cannot have a holy society unless you are willing to give up things to help the poor and the less fortunate. You cannot have a relationship with G-d unless you are willing to give up things.

When it comes to gold and silver we understand that. We understand how you have to give up part of your income in order to make a marriage work. A husband has to give his wife money. They have to share their talents. A wife has to be willing to give up her figure to have children. People have to be willing to give up things. You have to be willing to give up time, travel plans, etc. Why, though, does it mention oil for the lighting, spices for the oil of anointing, etc.? The rabbis say that this refers to Havdallah, to making distinctions. Every Shabbos night after Shabbos is over we say the Havdallah and in the Havdallah we thank G-d Who has made distinctions between holy and secular, between light and darkness, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of creation. The rabbis say that this oil stands for this oil of Havadallah, that when we come to be holy we not only have to determine that we are willing to give up money and silver and wool, etc., material things, but we also have to give up certain attitudes. That's why it says oil for the lighting because you know there is such a thing as right and wrong, and in a marriage you have to be willing

to admit that you are wrong, that you made a mistake. Yes, there are gray areas and, yes, it is possible that a person could always rationalize and say he was always right, but you cannot have a relationship, a human relationship, unless you are willing to admit that you are wrong. Some people are not willing to give up that attitude. They feel debased every time they admit they are wrong. They feel humiliated every time they have to admit they are wrong, but you cannot have any relationship with another human being unless you are willing to admit when you are wrong. That, of course, is the distinction between day and night. Sometimes you are wrong. You cannot always fudge the differences.

The second thing that we are called upon to do is the spices for the oil of anointing, and the rabbis say that is the distinction between holy and secular. You know that you also have to be willing to give up your demands. You cannot always make demands. Sometimes your demands are right and sometimes your demands are wrong. For example, a woman came to me very upset because her husband would not let her go to a funeral of a loved one. It was not a mother or father. It was an aunt who was very close to her, but her husband did not want her to go because they had tickets to a concert and they would lose the tickets and the \$100 they cost. Sometimes you cannot make demands, and that, of course, what the whole point of Karas Mishpocha is. There are certain times you cannot make sexual demands on your wife, and vice versa. There are sometimes when a husband has taken a salary cut and his wife cannot make demands on him. She cannot make financial demands when it is not there. She cannot make him feel bad when it is just not there. We have to also in any type of relationship be willing to give up making demands at inappropriate times. There is a Shabbos and there is a Chol. There is a time to make demands and a time not to make demands.

Then we have the oil for the spices. That, the rabbis say, stands for the seventh day and the six days of creation. G-d wants us all to grow, and we all should grow, but we have to remember that our growth is secondary to our marriage. Our marriage must be first, but there are some people who do not want their spouses to grow. Some husbands will not let their wives go to school. They will not let them grow, and some wives will not let their husbands move to take a better position, and, because of that, their marriages will never work, because the wife is not willing to give up anything to let her husband grow and the husband is not willing to give up anything to let his wife grow. Of course, growth must be secondary to their marriage. Their relationship is first, but if their relationship is first and everybody realizes that, you have to let your spouse grow, and if you do not let your spouse grow, then the relationship is doomed. You will not have a holy relationship.

Finally, we have the distinction between Israel and the peoples. The rabbis say that stands for the Shoam stones, the setting stones in the Aphod and the Choshun. You have to do Jewish things in order to have your marriage work. Jewish things cause a couple to come together, cause a family to come together, to have Friday night together, celebrating holidays together, keeping a kosher home together. These things all make for a closer and more permanent marriage relationship. If you do not do Jewish things it is much harder to keep the relationship going. Oh, it is possible to do but it is not as easy to do it. Therefore, in order to have a relationship, be it a marriage relationship or just a relationship between friends or a relationship even in business, you have to be willing to give up something. In order to be holy you have to be willing to give up something. You have to determine what it is that you are willing to give up. If you are not willing to give up anything, then you are not going to be able to have a relationship.

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I am reminded of the story they tell about a husband and wife had a fight, and these people did not know how to keep a relationship. The husband talked to his friend the next day and said, "You know, my wife and I had a fight and at the end of the fight I had my wife begging on her knees." The friend asked what she said, and he said, "She said, 'Horace, stop being silly and come out from underneath the bed'." In order for us to have a good relationship with others, with G-d, to have a good society based on holiness we have to be willing to give up things. Let us all hope and pray that we will be willing to give up things so we will have these relationships so the Mashiach will come quickly in our day. Amen.

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In the Torah portion Terumah we learn about the structure of the Tabernacle and about the furniture that was in the Tabernacle. We learn about the ark, how the ark was really composed of three different boxes. There was a gold box on the inside, a gold box on the outside, and a middle box which was made out of acacia wood. Of course, the acacia wood was all covered over by a border so the whole box looked like it was gold. The rabbis say that one of the reasons for this was so that our inner intention and our outer action should correspond. The highest form of mitzvah is when we intend to do something for the sake of the mitzvah and not in order to get glory. Of course, the rabbis tell that when it comes to mitzvahs between man and man it is not that crucial whether we are doing it because we want our name in the paper or honor or we did it for the sake of the mitzvah. The poor are still benefitting. However, of course, it is a higher mitzvah to do it without hope of reward. Many people, though, misinterpret this to mean that when you do a mitzvah with a full heart you have to really feel like doing the mitzvah. If you do not feel like doing the mitzvah then you should not go ahead and do the mitzvah. Somehow the mitzvah is tarnished. This is not true. In fact, the rabbis say that it is a greater mitzvah to do a mitzvah when you are commanded than to do a mitzvah because you feel like it. I always give this following illustration to my Sunday school class and they almost always get it wrong. I give the following illustration. A little old lady comes up to you and asks you for \$10 and out of the goodness of your heart you reach into your pocket and give her the \$10 with a smile. Is that the greater mitzvah or in the second case where the little old lady comes up to you and asks you for \$10 and you, too, reach into your pocket but you do not want to. It is a struggle. You really do not want to do it but you remember what your parents taught you. You

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remember what the Torah says. You remember what you learned in Hebrew school so, therefore, you take out the \$10 and also give it to her with a smile. She does not know what is going on in your mind. What is the greater mitzvah? Almost all the students say that the greater mitzvah is when you do it with a full heart without thinking about how difficult it was and how you really did not want to do it. The rabbis say no. The greater mitzvah is when you do it when you do not really feel like doing it but you do it anyway with a smile. That is a higher form of mitzvah. We all know that. When the baby is crying in the middle of the night and you do not want to get up and take care of the baby you know that if you are a good mother you have to get up and take care of that baby. We all know that if you are running a store and do not feel like getting up in the morning you had better get up or otherwise you will lose all your customers. We know that when it comes to doing a mitzvah many times we may not feel like doing it but we still have to do it anyway.

I am reminded of the story they tell about a boy who did not want to go to school. His mother shook him and shook him and shook him and finally she woke him up. She said, "You have to go to school." The boy said, "I don't want to go to school. Tell me why I have to go to school." She said, "All right. Number one, I pay taxes. Number two, because the teachers are counting on you. Number three, you are the principal." We all know that many times we do not feel like doing things but we do them anyway and that is a great mitzvah. In fact, many times young couples come to my office for marriage counseling. One of the greatest problems that I have to counsel is when each one of the

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spouses wants the other to do something with a full heart. The woman will complain, "I know he came with me to the ballet but he really did not want to and I want him to want to." Or the man will say, "She came to the football game with me but she really did not want to." Who cares if she really did not want to? She came because she loves you. It is too much to ask that a person should have to suppress all their feelings. As long as they came with a smile, as long as they came even though they did not want to do it. Many things in life we do not want to have to do. There is a terrible notion in the world today that you should only do those things that you feel like doing. It is not true. Nobody could ever keep a job if you only went when you felt like it. Nobody could ever get grades in school if you only went when you felt like it. It is wrong. So the first thing the Tabernacle teaches us is that we have to do things even when we do not feel like it. That is why there were regular services in the Tabernacle twice a day in the morning and evening, and whether you felt like it or not these sacrifices had to be offered by the Kohanim. Whether you felt like it or not you had to bring certain sacrifices because the very act of doing mitzvahs even when you do not feel like doing it is enobling and elevating.

The second thing the Tabernacle teaches us is that we all need G-d's help. In fact, if we look at the structure of the Tabernacle we will see it is a very strange structure for a democratic religion like Judaism. After all, the Israelites could only go so far, the Kohanim could only go so far, the high priest could only go so far. The high priest could only go in the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur and even then only with a smoking sensor so he really

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could not see everything. The structure of the Tabernacle was to teach us that we cannot know everything in the world. That is why we need G-d's help. We need G-d's help to help us make decisions. When we pray for things we know that G-d helps those who help themselves. Food is not going to drop out of the heaven into our laps. We cannot remain passive and get G-d's blessing. We have to do things but we have to make the right decisions. If we were to open up a business in Houston in 1979 we could not help but make money even if we were terrible businessmen, but if we opened up a business in Houston in 1986 we could not help but lose money even if we were a great businessman. Most of the decisions that we make in life we make based on inadequate knowledge. We do not interview two and a half billion women before we get married. We do not look through the 500 listings of jobs and professions by the Department of Labor. We know that we need G-d's help and the Tabernacle was to teach us, even in its form, that we need G-d's help because we have to make decisions based on inadequate knowledge and G-d helps us make the right decision.

The third thing that the Tabernacle teaches us is that we cannot overgeneralize. People make the statement that Judaism is against art and they give proof for that the golden calf. Here the Jews were worshipping an image and they were punished severely for that. Therefore, all graven images are prohibited by the Torah, but did anyone ever look at the ark cover that is described in this Torah portion? It is two children in a warm embrace with their wings rising up to heaven. Isn't that a graven image? Why is this allowed and the golden calf was

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not allowed? The difference is that this was based on the Ten Commandments. People did not worship this graven image. This graven image stood for the fact that G-d wants us to raise our children based on the Ten Commandments, so not all graven images have been banned in Judaism. In fact, if you go to most synagogues you will see images of lions and other art in the synagogue. You cannot overgeneralize. That is why humor is also a great Jewish tool because humor is judgmental. Humor teaches us that what is good in one situation may not be good in another situation, may be absurd in another situation. That is why Jews have always used humor. In fact, we have always made fun of ourselves because of our great analytical and logical ability. That's what all the stories of Chelmed are about. We all know the famous story about Chem, how they asked the people of Chem, which is more important, the sun or the moon? The people of Chem all answered the moon because it shines when there is no light. We all know that we cannot come to make overgeneralizations. If we do we end up in tragedy. Communism killed at least 20 million people because of their misconception of human nature. If everybody owns everything then nobody owns anything. Nobody is responsible. The Nazis made a terrible mistake by making all sorts of generalizations about race and self-worth and they killed 6 million of our people. We cannot over generalize and that is what Jewish humor is meant to teach us. You can take good concepts and put them in the wrong context and they turn out to be evil.

I am reminded of the story they tell about a man who used to get a salary of \$250 a week. One week he got \$500. He did not say anything and just pocketed the money. The next

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week he got \$180. He was really steamed and went up to his boss and said, "What's going on here? I am supposed to get \$250 a week and here I only got \$180." The boss looked at him and said, "Why didn't you complain last week when you got \$500?" The man said, "Boss, one mistake I can forgive but not two." We all know that we must never overgeneralize, that we must put everything in the right context.

This Torah portion teaches us three basic principles derived from the Tabernacle on how we should behave. One is that it is the greatest mitzvah to do a mitzvah when you do not feel like it. It has nothing to do with intent, with whether you are going to get an award for the mitzvah or not. You still are not going to get a reward for a mitzvah but even if you do not feel like it you have to do a mitzvah. The second thing is that we should always remember that we need G-d's help because we need G-d's help to make decisions. The third thing is we should not ever overgeneralize. Let's all hope and pray we will learn the lessons of this Torah portion so the Mashiach will come quickly in our day. Amen.

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In the Torah portion Terumah we learn how the Jewish people were commanded to build a sanctuary. It says, "And they shall make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in them." It does not say that I will dwell in the sanctuary, but that I will dwell in the people. After all, the whole world cannot contain G-d and His glory, as the Psalmist tells us. How can a little building contain G-d? The rabbis say that the purpose of the Tabernacle was not to contain G-d's glory but it was to make the Jewish people feel holy, to make the Jewish people know and feel that they had a purpose in life, that they had meaning in life, because without meaning in life, without the feeling that you can accomplish things of importance, it is very difficult to deal with all the tragedies of life. We all know that life is filled with problems, with sickness, death, setbacks, and, therefore, we all need this inner strength in order to overcome life's problems. The Jewish people were to make known that if they would build this Tabernacle to G-d, if they would work for good institutions, if they would work to make this a better world, G-d would help them, that G-d would allow them to have that inner meaning that we all need in order to overcome life's problems. The noted psychologist, Victor Frankel, says that what is most important in life is the drive for meaning. He differs from Freud, who said that the most important thing was the sexual drive, and Adler, who said that the most important thing was the drive for power, and from Jung, who said primordial symbols really control us. He said that man's drive for meaning is what allows us to pursue life vigorously, and he proved this from the concentration camps. The only people who survived the concentration camps, assuming, of course, that the Nazis did not gas you or burn you or shoot you or kill you in some other horrible way, were people who had meaning in life. Many people who felt that life had no meaning anymore just sat down and died.

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They were called Musselmen because they felt that life had no purpose anymore. Only people who had a strong religious belief and it could even be a secular belief, like the communists had which, of course, later proved to be false, which allowed them to continue because they knew that they were important, that they had to pursue their quest to outlive the Nazis so that they could prove that the world could be perfected, that this was only a passing aberration, but that took a lot of inner strength and courage.

The rabbis ask, where does this inner strength come from? They tell us that G-d has given us all this inner strength; we just have to realize that it is there. They tell us from the building of the Ark how this inner strength is really there. They tell us that the Ark was really composed of three boxes. There was a small box of gold, then there was a bigger box of acacia wood, and then there was a larger box of gold again. This meant that there was gold in the inside and gold on the outside. The rabbis say this proves that a person should be inside as you are outside, that you should not be a hypocrite, that those things that you have publicly proclaimed should be what you really are on the inside. Then they ask the question, what did they need the wood for? Of course, you could claim that they needed the gold because gold is so malleable and would be twisted in all sorts of grotesque shapes unless you had the wood there, but then the rabbis ask, why do we have to be so specific and say acacia wood? The rabbis say that the wood there stands for our humaneness, that G-d has given us the strength to be good in this world and overcome all its problems, not by denying our humanness but by actually embracing it and saying that we, as human beings, can accomplish

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and do great things. We do not have to deny the fact that we eat and drink and need social contact and relations with our wives and that we have certain needs. These needs can all be sanctified. In fact, this is what the Kutzbah rebbe said, quoting on a verse in the Torah portion Mishpotim, when he said, "Men of holiness you should be for me." In other words, you are still men, you are still human beings. The gold on the outside and the gold on the inside refer to the spirituality which we can all attain, both inside and outside in our demeanor and our appearance, but we have to work for this. It does not come by denying our humanness. After all, G-d has a lot of angels. He does not need any more angels. If He would have wanted us to be angels, He would have created us as angels, but He created us as human beings with human needs and drives, and all these human drives can be sanctified. He gave each of us great talents, and we can use these talents if we want to, but we have to use them in a holy and good way.

This explains, too, about the difference between Jewish worship and many other religion's worship. In many other religions, worship is actually an esthetic experience. Its purpose is to ascend to G-d, to a certain degree. You know, an esthetic experience is wonderful and exhilarating and we see the beauty of things, but, in a certain sense, it is also very depressing because we see the beautiful art that is produced by great artists, we see a beautiful painting or sculpture and we admire it and are filled with awe for its creator. However, we know something very important, and that is that we cannot do it. The same thing is true of an athletic performance. We see a wonderful athlete who can do all sorts of wonderful and

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marvelous things and we cannot do these things. We marvel at it. Therefore, an esthetic experience is basically a passive experience and, in a certain way, a depressing experience because, although we are glad that somebody can do these things, we cannot do these things. Basically, those religions that stress that religious worship should be an esthetic experience are telling us, yes, there is beauty in this world and there is more beauty in the world beyond this world, and eventually you will ascend to heaven and see this great beauty. This gives us some hope and solace, but this is not the Jewish view. The Jewish view is we want to bring G-d down to earth; we do not want to ascend up to G-d. Our worship is to remind us that G-d helps us and is with us all the time, that G-d has given us the power to overcome our problems. All we have to do is to perceive, to use that power which G-d has given us. True, we have human limitations, and, true, we can only comprehend things through our limitations, but G-d says that is all right. Therefore, when we went into the Tabernacle, when we come into a synagogue today, we can comprehend the fact that G-d is with us, that G-d is always with us. G-d is a unity and is indivisible, and when we feel part of G-d's presence we feel all of G-d's presence. We all know that we cannot accomplish great things. We can fulfill our talents and still be moral and just; that we can make this a better world. We can do these things, and that is the purpose of Jewish prayer, to enable us to continue to work in this world, to continue to use our talents in a positive way and not in a negative way. The purpose of Jewish prayer is not to give us an esthetic experience, to make us feel how awesome G-d is, although G-d is awesome, but to teach us how G-d is there to help us and that G-d will help us and that we have the power to do great things. Many times people

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forget that they have the power, but when they come to the religious services they feel immediately once again that G-d has given them this power to do great and good things. Yes, we are covered inside and outside with gold, but that acacia in the middle is our humaneness, our growing, living thing, and that is what a human being is, and we human beings can, in spite of our foibles, accomplish and do great things. This is, of course, very important because we all have to realize that we all have to struggle to do good things. It is so hard sometimes to write that charity check or to do what we know is the right thing to do, but we can do it. We have the power and the ability to do it.

I am reminded of the story they tell about General Eisenhower, who, after the Second World War, was walking one dark night to the PX when all of a sudden around the corner ran a soldier who did not watch at all what he was doing and he knocked right into the General and almost knocked him to the ground. The General picked himself up, dusted himself off, looked at the soldier and said, "Soldier, do you know who I am?" The soldier replied, "No, Sir." General Eisenhower said, "I am the commanding officer of the Allied Armies. I am General Eisenhower." The soldier looked at him and said, "Sir, do you know who I am?" The General replied no and the soldier said, "Thank G-d," as he ran away. We all know who we are. We have been given the power to create a wonderful and good world. We are not to do this by denying our physical being, by claiming that we have to become hermits or deny our physical attributes. We are to do this by affirming our physical attributes, but we know that G-d has given us the power to use our physical nature for great spirituality and

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goodness. All we have to do is use this power. If any time we doubt whether we have the power, all we have to do is come to the synagogue and the synagogue will once again affirm the fact that we have this power. That is why we say in this Torah portion, "And they shall make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in them." When they make a sanctuary, when the Jewish people are working together for positive things, for positive institutions, when they are working to spread goodness and right in this world, rest assured they can feel that G-d is with them and will give them the power to do these good things. Let us all hope and pray that they will do these good things so the Mashiach will come quickly in our day. Amen.

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(Terumah)
FEBRUARY 2003
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We all know that we each have been blessed with certain talents and certain deficiencies. Not everyone is born with an IQ of 150 or great athletic ability or musical talent or great interpersonal skills. Some of us excel in certain areas, and are very poor in other areas. Some people are mediocre in all areas. Some people, unfortunately, are very poorly endowed in many areas, although everybody has certain strengths. Each of us is called upon to develop our strengths. Each of us must constantly work at developing our strengths. We cannot just rely on our G-d-given talents. We must constantly improve them and develop them.

In life, many of us are dealt devastating hands. Those people who came of age during the Holocaust were not able to enjoy normal teenage years or early adulthood, yet they never gave up. Some people say that the lesson that we learn from the Holocaust should be, "Never again." This may be true, but it is not really all up to us. It is not in our power to determine whether or not crazed enemies of our people will again come to power. After all, look at what happened with Al Qaida and many regimes in Arab countries and Europe now. However, we are called upon to never give up. The lesson that

we learned from the Holocaust is we never give up. The survivors of the Holocaust never gave up. They showed us that the true role of the Jew is to never give up. They started new families, and many of them became greatly successful.

From the time of Abraham, we Jews have always been positive, no matter what the tragedies thrown against us. Noah lived through a holocaust, but his response to it after he survived was to become a drunk. We say that Abraham started monotheism, but Noah was still alive until Abraham was 52 years old. Noah knew all about monotheism, but Noah gave up. We, the descendants of Abraham, never give up. No matter what our talents, no matter what our circumstances, we must always try to improve, to do better, to never give up.

This lesson is emphasized in the Torah portion, Terumah, where we learn about all the articles that were donated to build the Tabernacle. The Torah lists 15 articles: gold, silver, copper, blue wool, purple wool, crimson wool, etc. However, when Rashi speaks about what was donated to the Tabernacle, he said that they donated 13 items. How is this possible since if you count what the Torah lists, there are obviously 15 items? Why did Rashi say only 13 items?

What's more, when the instructions for building the Ark, which contained the Ten Commandments, are given, it says that the Ark was two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubit wide. Why does it use half measures? Why doesn't it just say three cubits and two cubits? When it talks about the table, it says it should be two cubits long and a cubit wide. Why does it mention a half when it talks about the Ark? Why doesn't it just say three cubits by two cubits? After all, the Ark was a very small object. If you say that a cubit is 18 inches, then the Ark was only 45 inches long and 27 inches wide. It contained the Ten Commandments, but the Ten Commandments were engraved on two stones. They were never ever as big as portrayed in our synagogue. Moshe could never have held these stones if they were as big as portrayed in our synagogue.

Many commentators discuss why Rashi says there were only 13 items donated by the people to build the Tabernacle when the Torah lists 15 items. The answer is that Rashi did not count the oil and the spices. He did not count these items because they were expendable. They had to be constantly renewed. The other items went into building the structure of the Tabernacle, were permanent and were comparable to our G-d-given talents. The oil and

the spices were comparable to the constant effort we must always expend, to the optimistic view that we must have of life.

We all know that the DNA that we are given, the genes that we have, are very important, but it is more important what we do with what we have. The oil and the spices stood for what we do with our permanent structure. We all know that none of us is perfect. If any of us would be perfect, we would not need any doctors. Every one of us suffers from one defect or another. In fact, the rabbis say that we are only born with half a soul. All of us are born incomplete, that when the soul comes down to earth, it is cut in two, and each of us is looking for our mate. Eve was created when Adam was split in two. Eve was not created from his rib, according to our tradition, but Adam was split in two. A man needs a woman, and a woman needs a man, not just to procreate but to complete themselves. We all know that each of us needs to complete ourselves. That's why we need education. That's why we need to learn social graces. We have to offer the spices and the oil continuously. I had a good friend who everyone thought was perfect. He was handsome and had a wonderful physique, and he had a fine sense of humor and was brilliant with many degrees, but he died at 32 because he got involved in the drug culture. I had another friend who had polio as a child. He worked hard at

gaining his strength back in his legs, and he ended up a professional athlete.

The rabbis all ask the questions, why does it say, "And they shall take from Me an offering?" You give an offering; you do not take an offering. Rabbi Kenatopsky explains that what we are talking about here is creating holiness. When we give Terumah, which is the word used for offering here, to a Kohen, we first set it aside. After we set aside this portion of our crop, we can use the rest of the crop. Before we set aside this portion of our crop, we cannot use any of our crop, and our crop is then called Tevel. The setting aside of the crop is called Hafrosha. When we give it to the Kohen, it is called Netina. To make something holy, we first have to set it aside, designate it. We have to learn how to make distinctions. We have to expend effort.

This, too, was the purpose of the oil and the spices. We first had to use the oil for light. We had to learn how to make a distinction between light and darkness. This is what we say in the Havdallah every Saturday night. Then we have the oils filled with spices, which was used to anoint the vessels of the Tabernacle, to teach us how to distinguish between the secular and the holy, and then we have the incense spices to learn how to separate between the holy and the holy. To lead a good and decent life, we have to learn how

to separate between light and darkness, holy and secular, and even between holy and holy. Not everything is on an equal level of being holy. I once knew a teenager who would never help his mother with chores because he had to learn Torah or pray. That was wrong. We also know that human life takes precedence over Shabbat. I am reminded of the story of a young man in Kolliel whose wife always asked him before he went to learn at Kolliel, to take out the garbage. He did not want to do it because it would make him lose that time from learning Torah. His wife nagged him every day about taking out the garbage. Finally, he told his teacher about it. The teacher did not say anything at all, but the next morning the young man heard a knock on the door. He was very surprised when he opened the door to see his teacher there. He said, "Rebbe, what are you doing here?" The Rebbe responded, "I have come to take out the garbage."

In life, we must learn how to make distinctions between good and bad, between holy and secular, between holy and holy. This is even more important than what we have been given genetically. We can almost always overcome our problems if we have the right attitude and do the right thing, if we take the medicine we are supposed to, eat the way we are supposed to, exercise like we are supposed to, learn how to conduct ourselves the way we

are supposed to, and understand the importance of making correct moral decisions. We must learn how to differentiate between holy and holy, how to prioritize our Jewish values correctly so we can reach our full potential. We never give up on anybody. We want everybody to reach their potential, and everybody can if they use the right oil and spices, even if we have been horribly wronged or been afflicted with a disease or had to endure a Holocaust. We all must never give up, but always strive to better ourselves and our conditions.

I am reminded of the story about the Japanese emperor who was looking for a new samurai. He held contests all over Japan. He finally chose three candidates who came before him. He had his servant let loose a fly, and the samurai went swish with his sword, and immediately the fly was cut in half. The emperor was pleased. The second samurai stepped forward, and the servant let loose the fly. The samurai's sword went swish swish, and the fly fell, both wings severed from his body. The emperor was very pleased. Finally, the third samurai came forward, a Jewish boy. The emperor's servant released the fly, and the Jewish samurai made a little circle with his sword. The fly looked dazed, but kept on flying. The emperor was very displeased. He said, "What's this?" The samurai replied, "I'm a Jewish samurai. We

believe in circumcision, not the death penalty."

Everybody can improve. Nobody should be thrown away and considered a nothing. Everybody can reach their potential. We should not give up on anybody and especially on ourselves. That is the Jewish message, and that is why the Ark is not three by two, because we are all halves. None of us is completely whole. We all need to improve ourselves. We all need to work at it, and if we work at it, we can achieve great things. We will never be able to get to the three or two, but we can get close. Let us all hope and pray that none of us will throw anyone, including ourselves, on the dust heap in spite of the many obstacles which may be thrown in our way, but that we will all always try to achieve our potential. Let us all hope we will all do so, so the Mashiach will come quickly in our day. Amen.

TERUMAH 2003
Rabbi Joseph Radinsky

In the Torah portion Terumah, we learn how the Jewish people were told that they should make a Mikdash, a sanctuary, and G-d says, "And I will dwell in them." The purpose of the Tabernacle and the Temple, or now the synagogue, is to make us better people. We build the Tabernacle, or the synagogue today, in order that G-d should dwell among us. The word Mikdash comes from the word holy, and means "that which is holy." In Hebrew, you can add a Mem in front of a word, and it changes a verb to a noun. When you say Katav, it means to write. If you add a Mem in front of it, it means a letter, that which is written. For the word Shachav, which means to lie, if you add a Mem in front of it, it means a couch. The Temple is to make us holy. It is to make us spread holiness in the world.

In the Torah portion Mishpatim, we have the sentence, "Holy men you shall be to Me," and the Kotzker Rebbe explains that this means we are not to be angels. We are supposed to be holy in the world as men and women. We are not supposed to withdraw into cubicles and just study Torah. We are supposed to spread the Torah by our actions and by our willingness to teach Torah to everyone who wants to listen. That's why I admire what TORCH

and Lubavitch are doing, because they are willing to go out and spread Torah.

In all our pursuits, we are supposed to make G-d's name holy.

We learn that Avraham was a lover of G-d. What does it mean, a lover of G-d? We cannot even see G-d. How could Avraham be a lover of G-d? The rabbis explain that this means that Avraham, through his actions and his deeds, made G-d beloved in the eyes of everyone. Everyone looked at Avraham and said, "What a wonderful man he is! What a wonderful G-d he has!" He sanctified G-d's name in the world. Kiddush Hashem does not just mean giving up your life for our religion. Every Jew is supposed to make G-d's name holy throughout the world. We each create a Mikdash in every community, a synagogue, which is known in Hebrew as a Mikdash Katan, to help us be a better people so we can sanctify G-d's name, so that we can make G-d's name beloved to all people. We do not believe in building huge cathedrals. The purpose of a synagogue is not to have a big edifice per se; it is meant to cause each of us to want to make G-d beloved in the world.

Last Shabbat, a terrible tragedy occurred. The shuttle Columbia fell from the skies. Ilan Ramon, one of the seven astronauts, was killed. When he embarked on this shuttle mission, he made sure he had kosher food. He took

with him a mezuzah, and he took with him a kiddush cup to make kiddush on Friday night. He also took a little Torah which was used in the Bergen Belsen concentration camp, and also a picture drawn by a young man in the concentration camp who drew a picture of earth as seen from the moon. He perished in the concentration camp.

I knew Ilan Ramon. He used to sit right next to me at every Yom Hazikaron commemoration which is held every year in our synagogue. He had a warm Jewish heart. I do not know how the papers could call him secular. In Israel, they had a strange definition of what is religious. If you are a shomer Shabbat, they label you as Chilonee, or secular, even if you make kiddush on Friday night and keep Pesach, etc. I remember how when I was Hillel director at Purdue, along with my job as Rabbi of the shul, a poet came from Israel to give a lecture. The first thing he said to me was, "I'm not religious." I said, "Okay, you're not religious." He then asked me where a restaurant was. He told him there was a restaurant a block away. He said, "What do you mean? It's Pesach. I can't eat chometz." I looked at him and asked, "Do you make kiddush Friday night?" "Certainly," he replied. I asked, "Do you fast on Yom Kippur?" He said, "Of course." I then asked if he had a bar mitzvah, and he retorted, "What kind of a question is that?" I then said, "You

are not non-religious. You are ultra orthodox."

Ilan Ramon had a proud Jewish heart. He belonged to Shaar Hashalom, the conservative shul in Clear Lake, and his kids received a Jewish education there. He probably would have sent his kids to Beth Yeshurun or the Beren Academy if he lived closer. On the Shabbat that he died, he was going to read from the little sefer Torah that he brought with him into space. This sefer Torah was given to him by the professor with whom he had worked to prepare one of the scientific experiments in space. The professor's name was Yehoyechem Yosef. Professor Yosef was interned in Bergen Belsen concentration camp as a boy of 12. His bar mitzvah was coming. The Chief Rabbi of Holland, Rabbi Dasberg, was also in that bunk. He was determined that Yehoyechem would have a bar mitzvah. He taught him how to read the Torah, how to conduct services, and he helped him prepare a sermon. When the day of his bar mitzvah arrived, everyone in that bunk got up at 2:45 a.m. so the Nazis would not suspect anything. When Professor Yosef was about to begin chanting the Torah, he heard a noise outside. He looked outside and there was his mother. She had risked her life to come and hear her son. She did not dare enter the bunk because that would mean instant death for everyone if she were caught there. Professor Yosef concluded his Torah

reaching and sermon, and they were finishing up their prayers when they heard the whistles of the Nazis. They quickly finished the prayers and Yehoyechem went outside to see his mother. His mother kissed him, and then he held her hand as they walked to the gate which separated the women's compound from the men's. He never saw her again. He went back into the bunk, and Rabbi Dasberg gave him the little Torah from which he had read, and said, "You are more likely to survive this holocaust than I. I give you this Torah with only one condition, that you will make known this story."

Professor Yosef did survive, and it was this Torah that he gave to Ilan Ramon to read from in space. Professor Yosef kept his word. This Torah and the story behind it is now known throughout the world. There was a huge headline in the ultra orthodox newspaper of Jerusalem which said, "Ilan Ramon Has Sanctified G-d's Name From One End of the World to the Other." He was a good, warm-hearted Jew who loved his family and loved his people and loved his religion. He truly made the Kiddush Hashem a sanctification of G-d's name. Unfortunately, his Kiddush Hashem ended with his death. He made G-d beloved to all those with whom he came into contact.

In this Torah portion, we also learn about the Keruvim, the cherubs, that were on top of the Torah. They formed a part of the cover of the ark. The only

other place in the Torah where we learn about the Keruvim is when we learn about how Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden, and how G-d stationed Keruvim with the flame of an ever-turning sword to prevent Adam and Eve from returning to the Garden of Eden. The Keruvim on the Torah teach us that we can make this world a Garden of Eden if we will take its lessons to heart, and if we will become better people through studying it and through building places of worship we can study it. Unfortunately, their ever-flaming sword consumed the Columbia and the astronauts on board, but we know that we can create a Garden of Eden here if we will sanctify G-d's name by making G-d beloved to all the peoples. Ilan Ramon certainly sanctified G-d's name and made Him beloved to all the peoples. May we all continue to do so. May we all make G-d beloved in the eyes of everyone, and may we become better people because we have absorbed the values of the Torah so the Mashiach will come quickly in our day. Amen.

File
Tamar

Rabbi, Cantor

Dear family and friends,

Today, I am celebrating my Bat Mitzvah, assuming the responsibilities of a Jewish adult, responsible not only for my own actions, but also as an active member of my community, faith, and country.

In preparing for this important occasion, my Mom and I decided that we would devote special time each week, with our close friend and teacher, Mindy Pollak, studying the Mitzvoth and righteous deeds that are incumbent upon Jewish woman and the importance of these Mitzvoth in the development and growth of the Jewish people.

Women have many special responsibilities and commandments to perform.

Today, I would like to discuss three special commandments. The three

Mitzvoth are: the separation of Challah, חלה הפניית נרות Candle-

lighting, נתינת יראת השמים and Family Purity. נתינת יראת

Woman by virtue of their special role in the home are entrusted with these important tasks. The Midrash in Breishit Rabbah relates that in the homes of Sarah & Rivkah, our matriarchs, a candle burned from Shabbos eve to Shabbos eve, a constant blessing was found in the dough, and a pure, heavenly cloud covered the entrance to the tent.

The Shabbat candles spread light and joy, enabling us to transcend the difficulties of each week. By lighting these candles, women create the special Shabbos atmosphere, a vision of the World to Come. In establishing a home filled with joy in the performance of Mitzvoth and Torah study, she spreads the light of the Shabbos candles to all who enter. The true Jewish woman is thus endowed with the power to “burn her Shabbos candles” all week giving radiance and guidance to her family and community.

The blessings that come to a home also depend on the extent to which that home is open to the needy. A family which gives with a generous heart and a good spirit, causes true blessing “to be found in their dough”. It is the Jewish woman who is primarily responsible for setting this tone of generosity for the household.

If a woman illuminates her house with the light of Torah, bringing to it the blessings that come through modesty and chesed, surely a “heavenly cloud will cover her tent”. Just as the cloud of purity protected Sarah and Rivkah, her home will be protected from the storms of this world. The light which emanates from it will grow stronger and stronger until it can dispel even the greatest darkness that may cover this world.

There can be no better example of Jewish women’s light changing history than at the time of our slavery prior to the exodus from Egypt.

At this critical point in Jewish history, it was the moral courage of the midwives, violating King Pharaoh’s decree and saving Jewish babies that saved our nation. When Jewish men despaired over their harsh slave labor in Egypt, it was their wives who kept the hope of redemption alive and encouraged them to go on. When Amram, (Moshe’s father) separated from Yocheved, his wife due to the frustration of bearing children who would be murdered, it was his young daughter Miriam who prevailed upon him not to destroy the Jewish people out of hopelessness for Pharaoh’s evil decrees.

Just as our forefathers were redeemed from Egypt by the merit of righteous

women אֵשֶׁת יִצְחָק בְּיָמֵינוּ יִשְׁעָנוּ

so shall we be redeemed

with the coming of Mashiach speedily in our days.

I also find it very appropriate that this week's Torah portion, and the Haphtorah portion I have just completed carefully detail the building of the Mishkahn the Tabernacle, and the Beit Hamikdash, the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

These portions are very specific in detailing the architectural design, planning, and construction of our National Houses of Worship.

The very act of building a holy building, whether the Beit Hamikdash in Jerusalem, or a smaller one in Texas, requires careful planning and much devotion, for the outcome not only brings physical beauty but spiritual renewal. In the last few years, both this Synagogue, as well as my wonderful day school, the Robert M. Beren Academy, have undergone new construction which has brought our entire community both physical pride and spiritual growth.

Among the many wonderful people involved, I want to especially thank my parents and grandparents, David & Ruth Mitzner, for their role in helping to build our communities Batei Kadosh.

Unfortunately, we are renewing our Shul one extra time. My brother Steven's Bar Mitzvah was the first Shabbat in our wonderful new building, a time to renew and rejoice. My Shabbat is our first Shabbat here after Tropical Storm Allison. This time we had to remold and remediate, and now hopefully we will rejoice.

To bring our Shul Mazal, Dad is planning Michael's Bar Mitzvah in Orlando, and the Rabbi will cancel the prayer for rain in 2006. (long pause)

This is a very special day in my life, I feel fortunate to celebrate this day in our beautiful Synagogue. I want to especially thank Susan Reichenthal, Harry Schneider, the Durotech Company, and especially my dad for all their hard work.

I would also like to thank my teachers at the Beren Academy who have helped me gain a wonderful education. Special thanks to Rabbi Perton, Mrs. Yacobian, Rabbi Nimchinsky, Rabbi Siegal, and Rabbi Edelman who have made Torah learning so meaningful and enjoyable. I would also like to thank Rabbi Radinsky, Cantor Dean, and my friend and teacher Mindy Pollak, who have helped prepare me for today. The three of you have always taken a special interest in me. Thank you.

Thanks to my friends and relatives who have come from near and far, to help me celebrate this joyous occasion. Rabbi, thank you in advance for recognizing them all. Uncle Jacob, Aunt Marilyn, Cousins George and Nathan, we all miss you and I am very happy to have you here for my Simcha. Cousin Nathan, Mazal tov on your Bar Mitzvah, you did a wonderful job. Aunt Dassy, the time spent with you is very special to me, I admire your spirit. I bet I am just like you when you were growing up. Whenever you come to town, I can always count on a wonderful time.

Grandma, I have always felt a special bond with you. Mommy tells me how we used to cry together during the year of my surgeries. I appreciate all the times that you traveled here to take wonderful care of me.

Abba, it is wonderful to have such a warm and caring grandfather always smiling and always wanting to help me. Our times together especially during the holidays are among my fondest memories.

Poppy, like the beautiful artwork behind me, you have taught me and our entire family to always remember, Zachor. Poppy, your life and great strength sets an example not only for me but for everyone who meets you.

Bubby, you and grandma exemplify for me our families and the Jewish people's continuity from generation to generation, Ldor Vador. I truly enjoy the time we spend together.

Steven, you are my favorite older brother, although sometimes you act as my third parent, I know you are always trying to help me. I do appreciate you and love you very much.

Michael, you are my favorite younger brother, though sometimes we get in each other's hair, I do realize how special a person you are, I love you very much.

Mom, you are truly amazing. You are the best mother, friend, and advisor a girl could have. You always are there for me when I need you. I know that your special care helped save my leg. Thanks for working so hard to make this Bat Mitzvah weekend so special for me. I love you with all my heart.

Dad, I admire you so much. I know how hard you work to give our family a wonderful life. Although I am your princess, you have taught me to be strong and always strive for what I want. No matter how busy you are you always make time for me , our family, and the community. I love you very much.

As many of you are aware, I was born with a deformed tibia. Had I grown up just a few years earlier, I would not have been able to keep my leg. I would first like to thank Hashem for watching over me and giving my doctors the knowledge to help me. A special thanks to my doctors, my pediatrician Dr. Ray Calderon and my amazing surgeon Dr. John Guggenheim whose four surgeries and great care saved my leg. Finally, to my wonderful mom who never left my side for an entire year. I hope to be worthy of this wonderful gift.

Thank you all for joining me on this most special day. Shabbat Shalom.

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