

BH. Shabbos House Rohr Chabad serving UAlbany - 5 Classes for the 9 Days + 1 on Eicha - 5783/2023

Lesson #1) TITLE "BEIT HABECHIRAH" (THE CHOSEN HOUSE/HOME)

הלכות בית הבחירה

While the Rambam repeatedly refers to Beit HaMikdash, he titles the first unit about it: Laws of the Chosen House.

המקום אשר יבחר ה'

"The Place G-d will Choose (as the Temple)".

This verse is repeated 14x in Parsha Re'eh! Why the vague ambiguity?

Rebbe: Not about ambiguity for place is already chosen. But to overly emphasize its chosen-ness & its chooser! (Home!)

Rabbi Yisrael Rubin: Presidential Timber parable, being in running adds to its significance even if not ultimately chosen.

Baal Shem Tov: Any & every place Divine Providence leads us is a place G-d chooses for us to make a Divine dwelling.

Lesson #2) THE HIDDEN ARK

וּבָעֵת שֶׁבָנָה שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת הַבַּיִת וַיֵּדַע שֶׁסוֹפוֹ לְחָרֵב בָּנָה בּוֹ מְקוֹם לְגִזְדוֹ בּוֹ הָאָרוֹן לְמַטָּה בְּמַטְמוֹנוּת עֲמֻקּוֹת וְעַקְלָלוֹת וַיֹּאשִׁיחֵהוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ צִוָּה וַיִּבְנֶה בְּמִקְוֵם שֶׁבָנָה שְׁלֹמֹה שְׁנַאֲמַר (דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים ב' ל"ג) "וַיֹּאמֶר לְלוֹיִם הַמְּבִינִים לְכֹל יִשְׂרָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשִׁים לֵה' תָּנוּ אֶת אָרוֹן הַקְּדֹשׁ בְּבַיִת אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה שְׁלֹמֹה בֶן דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אִין לָכֶם מִשָּׂא בְּכַתֵּף עֲתָה עֲבְדוּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם" וְגו'.

"When King Solomon built the Temple he knew it would ultimately be destroyed, so he built a place in the Temple directly below, in the hidden depths reached by winding passages. Later, King Yoshiyahu ordered that the Ark be hidden in the hiding place prepared by Solomon. He told the Levites, 'Place the Holy Ark in the house that Solomon son of David King of Israel built. The Ark shall no longer be borne on your shoulders; now go serve your G-d.' "

Rambam Mishne Torah, Hilchot Beit HaBechira 4:1

Some of Rebbe's Questions: (see LKS Vol 21 Terumah 2, also: shabboshouse.org/mendels-messages/digging-for-the-lost-ark/ and chabad.org/therebbe/article_cdo/aid/148171/jewish/A-Buried-Treasure-The-Entombment-of-the-Ark.htm)

- Why historical tidbit in book of Jewish Law?
- This placement of ark is Talmudic argument, why does Rambam take side on this?
- Why is this included in the unit of Temple architecture & structure, not in unit of furnishings & equipment?

Core of Rebbe's Answer:

- Second Temple without Ark!?
- Not Afterthought but by Design!
- (Continuum of) Ark on Two Levels

And this is also true of the Jewish People.

Lesson #3) THE DOORS

Who will build the Third Temple – G-d or man? Built by heaven or by earth? There are conflicting verses. And Rashi seems to go with descend from heaven, while Rambam insists it will be built by man on earth.

Rebbe resolves these opposing opinions in several ways:

- Man builds physical shell, G-dliness imbues it with heavenly spirituality.
- Known (built by man) vs. Unknown (filled in by G-d).
- This differential is another outcome of whether we are meritorious or not at Redemption.
- 3rd Temple built by G-d, aside for the doors/gates – to be affixed by man, which completes the construction.

Q. What is the meaningful significance and message of doors/gates that this specific piece of Beit HaMikdash construction is (according to the last answer) considered to be our human contribution?

A. See also Rebbe's talks on (1) Beit HaMikdash as a neck (not the head), (2) the role of the Amah Traksin divider between Holies and Holy of Holies, -- and also parable-related: The Doors Mechanism of Monsters Inc. and 2nd message on this page about UAlbany's Burst Bubble: shabboshouse.org/mendels-messages/the-burst-bubble-at-ualbany-2020/

Lesson #4) NAMES ON STONES

2 of the 8 Special Kohain Gadol (High Priest) Garments are relevant here: Ephod (Apron) and Choshen (the breastplate).

The Ephod was a backwards apron, tied in front under the Choshen breastplate, whose shoulder straps had two onyx stones, each engraved with six tribes of Israel. The Choshen-breastplate (with its 12 stones, each inscribed with a tribe of Israel) was tied to the Ephod-apron. There's a specific verse prohibiting the breastplate from veering away and separating from the Ephod-Apron. Why this explicit in-the-verse specific biblical prohibition for this?

So the tribes of Israel were listed twice: On Ephod-apron shoulder stones, and on the 12 Choshen-breastplate stones.

Rebbe: Backward-facing Ephod-Apron vs. Forward-facing Choshen-breastplate. Is'kafya vs. Is'hapcha. Bittul Self-Control and Self-Transcendence vs. Internalization & Personalization. (Maamar Tetzaveh 5726)

Rabbi Yisrael Rubin: Double listing represents communal (6 per stone on Ephod) vs. individual (1 per Choshen stone). For Rebbe vision on this theme see: shabboshouse.org/mendels-messages/moshe-rubins-bar-mitzvah-speech/ and shabboshouse.org/mendels-messages/rebbe-a-korach-rashi-and-waldo/ and more!

Lesson #5) BELLS & POMEGRANATES AT THE HEM

Re: The Ornaments on the Hem of the All-Blue Ephod Robe

וְעָשִׂיתָ עַל־שׁוּלְיֹוֹ רִמְוֵי תְּבִלָּת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי עַל־שׁוּלְיֹוֹ סָבִיב וּפְעֻמָּי זָהָב בְּתוֹכָם סָבִיב

And on its (of the all-blue "Me'il" tunic robe's) bottom hem make pomegranates of blue, purple, and crimson wool, on its bottom hem all around, and golden bells in their midst all around. (Shemot, Tetzaveh 28:33)

Rashi: "in their midst" = BETWEEN the pomegranates **Ramban** (Nachmanides): = WITHIN the pomegranates

About Bells: Bells make noise! They make the most noise with factors like void and emptiness, no porous absorbent material to muffle or soften their sound.

Rebbe sees argument as: Noisy (empty, resistant, clunky, friction etc) **Judaism – is it best Muffled or Celebrated?**

See this well-articulated piece by Yanki Tauber: chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/1169/jewish/Noise.htm

Why at the Hem? Jews living on the edge deal with this most. There's more resistance, friction and struggle at the fringe, on the edge.

One more word about the (Upper) Hem: There's a special Mitzvah that is only spelled out in the verse regarding the Hem (though it most aspects it applies equally to the rest of the High Priests special vestment clothing):

וְהָיָה פִּירְאֲשׁוֹ בְּתוֹכָוּ שֹׁפָה יְהִיָּה לְפָיו סָבִיב מִעֲשֵׂה אֹרֶג כְּפִי תַחְרָא יְהִיָּה־לּוֹ לֹא יִקְרַע:

Its opening at the top shall be turned inward; its opening shall have a (lip or) border around it, the work of a weaver. It shall have [an opening] like the opening of a coat of armor; it shall not be torn. (Shemot, Tetzaveh 28:32)

Why of all the clothing was this "shall not be torn" law specified here?

The Ephod Robe is the one which accents, emphasizes and celebrates the hem, the fringe, the Jew on the edge. This is an area that needs extra reinforcement, extra support.

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Lesson #6) MY FAVORITE EICHA (LAMENTATIONS) VERSES

Eicha is the Book of Lamentations, the saddest book in the Jewish Bible. It is read on Tisha B'Av, the darkest day on the Jewish calendar. But interspersed in all the sadness and despair, there are a few affirming, positive, uplifting verses of hope. These are my personal favorites:

Chapter 3 Verses 21-26 are especially filled with hope and uplift.

זֹאת אֲנִישִׁב אֶל-לִבִּי עַל-בֶּן אוֹחִיל

3:21: “Yet, this I take to heart, and therefore I still hope.”

חֶסְדֵי י' ה' כִּי לֹא-תִמְנוּ כִּי לֹא-כָלוּ רַחֲמָיו:

3:22: “G-d’s Kindness certainly hasn’t ended, his mercies are not exhausted.”

חֲדָשִׁים לְבִקְרִים רַבָּה אֲמוֹנָתְךָ

3:23: “Renewed each morning, great is Your faithfulness.”

חֲלָקִי ה' אֲמַנְנָה נַפְשִׁי עַל-בֶּן אוֹחִיל לוֹ

3:24: “G-d is my portion, says my soul, therefore I have hope in Him.”

טוֹב ה' לְקוֹן לְנַפֵּשׁ תִּדְרָשְׁנִי

3:25: “G-d is good to those who trust in Him, to those who seek Him.”

טוֹב וַיַּחֲלִי וְדוּמָם לְתַשׁוּעַת ה'

3:26: “It is good to silently hope for G-d’s salvation.”

קִרְבַּתְּ בַּיּוֹם אֶקְרָאךָ אֲמַרְתָּ אֶל-תִּירָא

3:57: “You draw near on the day that I call, telling me not to be afraid.”

הַשִּׁיבֵנו ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשׁוּבָה חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ בְּקֶדֶם

5:21: (The second to last verse which is again repeated at the end, to close on a positive high note):

“Bring us back, G-d, and we will return. Renew our days as of old.”

See some of our commentary and personal insight on these verses at:

shabboshouse.org/mendels-messages/favorite-eicha-lamentations-verses/