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- **Russian Website:** <http://www.boruh.info/> This website is in Russian, many articles and the parasha are posted on it every week.



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Richard Amram Elofer



Hubert Paulleta



Jael Wells Cuellar



Carlos Muniz



Alexandra Obrevko



Sabine Baris

English Edition:

Richard-Amram Elofer

Russian Edition:
Alexandra Obrevko

French Edition:
Sabine Baris

Spanish Edition:
Jael Wells Cuellar

Portuguese Edition:
Carlos Muniz

Dutch Edition:
Hubert Paulleta

Emails:

English: richard@elofer.com

Russian: sashok_l@mail.ru

French: sabinebaris@gmail.com

Spanish: jael_wells@hotmail.com

Portuguese: cdmuniz@gmail.com

Dutch: hpaulleta@hotmail.com

Credit photos:

Richard Elofer, Alexandra Obrevko, Jael Wells Cuellar
Hubert Paulleta, Laurent Baris and Advent Digital Media

for more information: contact us at www.jewishadventist.org

Weekly
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We pray every week for leaders of the Jewish Ministry, According to our list of prayer for 2016, I suggest that our partners pray from February 28 to March 5, 2016, for Ruslan Drumi, Sergiu Caraus, who are the co-leader of the Jewish ministry in Chicago, Il. They are running this ministry there. Thank you for to pray for their ministries.



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NEWS

MINISTRY IN FLORIANOPOLIS

✿ Richard Elofer has been in Florianopolis in Brazil from February 9 to 15. This trip was very important for the Jewish ministry in the State of Santa Catarina. In addition of being with the Jewish Adventist congregation, preaching and teaching them, Richard gave a seminar to the pastors of Florianopolis, 50 pastors met with him for three hours in order to share and debate on the Jewish ministry. The next meeting was with the president of the Israelite Association of Florianopolis and her assistant, where we assured the Jewish community of our support and friendship especially in this time of growing anti-Semitism. Gifts were exchanged and greetings were shared. The next meeting was on Shabbat afternoon with the elders of the Conference.



The Conference organized a congress for the elders on the weekend, 700 elders met together on the theme "Mission with Passion." It was again a great privilege for Richard Elofer to address this audience on G-d's mission and

Mission in the Bible to them. A report about this trip and meetings was written in Portuguese on the following website: <http://noticias.adventistas.org/pt/noticia/institucional/lidermundial-de-congregacoes-judaico-adventistas-visita-florianopolis>

NEXT CELEBRATION: PURIM

✿ Purim is celebrated on *Adar* 14. However, this year there are two months of *Adar*. *Adar* I and *Adar* II, that is why there are two celebrations of *Purim*, a minor one, called *Purim Katan* on *Adar* I 14 (February 23) and the "regular" *Purim* on *Adar* II 14 (March 23). *Purim* is the feast of Esther that celebrates the great miracle of escaping from a Holocaust during the Persian Empire. Everybody can read this story in the biblical book of Esther. The following *mitzvot* are performed on *Purim*:

- 1) Reading of *Megilat* Esther (scroll of Esther).
- 2) Reciting the *Al HaNisim* (on the miracles). A prayer in which we thank G-d for the great miracle of Purim.
- 3) *Mishloach Manot* — sending gifts.
- 4) *Matanot LaEvyonim* — gifts to the poor. On Purim we should give charity to at least two poor people.
- 5) *Seudat Purim* — *Purim* meal.

Parasha Overview:
KI-TISSA

Moshe conducts a census by counting each silver half-shekel donated by all men age twenty and over.

Moshe is commanded to make a copper laver for the *Mishkan*. The women donate the necessary metal.

The formula of the anointing oil is specified, and G-d instructs Moshe to use this oil only for dedicating the *Mishkan*, its vessels, Aharon and his sons.

G-d selects Bezalel and Oholiav as master craftsmen for the *Mishkan* and its vessels.

The Jewish People are commanded to keep the Sabbath as an eternal sign that G-d made the world.

Moshe receives the two Tablets of Testimony on which are written the Ten Commandments.

The mixed multitude who left Egypt with the Jewish People panic when Moshe's descent seems delayed, and force Aharon to make a golden calf for them to worship. Aharon stalls, trying to delay them.

G-d tells Moshe to return to the people immediately, threatening to destroy everyone and



PARASHA FOR
THIS WEEK

Ki-Tissa

כִּי תִּשָּׂא
Exodus 30:11 - 34:35



“And he received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made a golden calf. And they said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’” (Exodus 32:4)

COUNTING ISRAEL

From time to time it is difficult to translate exactly what the Hebrew text says. The title of this weekly parasha, *Ki-Tissa*, comes from the verse 12 where G-d asks Moses how to make a census of Israel: they have to take from each person a half shekel, and the census is done just by counting the amount of shekels received. Thus the text says literally “*Ki Tissa et Rosb Bnei Israel... When you count the head of the children of Israel*” (Exodus 30:12). This words became the usual and idiomatic expression *nasa rosb* (to count the head) for counting a mass of people. The word *nasa* in the sense of counting never occurs by itself without specification of the things to be counted, that is why Rabbi Hirsch says that for the Jewish tradition *nasa rosb* is a figure of speech meaning “sum total.”

PRIESTHOOD, A POSITION BY GRACE

The Torah states: “**The LORD said to Moses, ‘You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, for wash-**

ing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it,” (Exodus 30:17-18). The section on the copper basin reminds the *Kohanim* who serve in the Sanctuary that they did not reach the honored position of their priesthood by virtue of holy conduct and a holy way of life already achieved. Rather they officiate in the sanctuary as emissaries of the nation, strictly on the basis of the qualities they represent: They are to represent before the eyes of the nation the sanctification of the life which the Bible requires of the nation.

Let's remember that when the priests were ordained all the parts of the body were immersed (*Tevilah*) in the water of the *mikveh*, and after the ordination all the parts of the body except the hands and feet are invested with the symbolic character of the priesthood by being clothed in the priestly garments. Only the hands and feet, with which a person carries out his main doings and endeavors, remain unclothed. Instead, they are washed by water taken from the basin. When we look at the detailed laws of this washing that its purpose is not simply cleanliness. That is why this washing must be performed with an utensil, which

was sanctified, and by which the water become symbolically *Kadosh* “holy”.

OIL OF HOLY ANOINTMENT

The next description is about the utensils of the first room of the sanctuary called the Holy Place, particularly about the oil for anointment, the incense, the table and altar of incense: “**The LORD said to Moses, ‘Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh 500 shekels, and of sweet-smelling cinnamon half as much, that is, 250, and 250 of aromatic cane, and 500 of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil. And you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil.’**” (Exodus 30:22-25). It seems that since we have the receipt of this oil, its confection would be easy, but in fact it was not easy to make this holy oil. According to the Jewish tradition, the revelation of its preparation was assigned to Moshe alone. For by means *Shemen Mishkhat-Kodesh* (Oil of Holy anointment) the Sanctuary and all its parts were consecrated and sanctified in the Name of G-d. Therefore, this oil had to

be prepared by Moshe, the instrument of G-d's will. The anointing oil prepared by Moshe was the only oil ever used for anointing the kings of the House of David and the High Priests throughout the generations (Yoma 52b).

THE GOLDEN CALF

In this week's *Parasha, Ki Tissa*, we read about one of the gravest sins committed by the people of Israel, the sin of the Golden Calf. The Torah tells us, “**And the people saw that Moshe delayed coming down from the mountain, so the people gathered around Aaron and they said to him, ‘rise up and make for us gods that shall go before us; for as for Moshe, the man that brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’**” (Ex 32:1)

The Jewish people consider that Aaron was completely innocent of this sin. They give this explanation for what happened: Aaron knew that Moshe would descend from the mountain, so to delay them, he said, “Go and bring the golden rings which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons and your daughters and bring to me.” Aaron figured that the women will re-

fuse to give their jewelry and this would delay them until Moshe came down from the mountain. However, when the women didn't give their jewelry, the men took their own golden jewelry and brought it to Aaron.

Aaron knew that if the people built an idol, they would complete it quickly. Therefore, he took charge and tried to postpone it until Moshe returned. Aaron took the gold and threw it in fire, but out came the Golden Calf!

In fact in the Bible, the full tribe of the Levites came to support Moses when he came back. “**So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, ‘Whoever is for the L-rd, come to me.’ And all the Levites rallied to him.**” (Ex 32:26.) Why does the Torah add the seemingly extra word “all”? It would have been sufficient to just write “**and the descendants of Levi gathered unto him.**”

The Chatam Sofer, Rabbi Moshe Schreiber, a renowned 18th century Hungarian rabbi, tells us that “**all**” comes to include even Korach and those Levites who later rebelled against Moshe. Though they were greatly displeased with Moshe, when it came to the honor of the Almighty, they joined him to

fight for the Almighty.

Rabbi Zelig Pliskin said: We should put aside personal prejudice and philosophical differences if we are called upon to take action for the Almighty, for Israel or any righteous cause.

AHARON AND THE GOLDEN CALF

The Torah states regarding the gathering of gold to make the Golden calf: “**And Aharon said to them, ‘Remove the golden earrings which are on the ears of your wives, sons and daughters, and bring them to me.’**” (Exodus 32:2) How is it possible that Aharon would help make an idol? The commentator, Daas Zkainim, explains that Aharon's intentions were righteous. This is what he said to himself: “Now that Moshe has not returned, if I will appoint Caleb or Nachson as the leader in Moshe's absence, when Moshe returns they will not be eager to give up their position of leadership. This will cause a major quarrel. If I do not appoint anyone as leader, they will choose a leader themselves and this will also cause a major quarrel. If I will assume leadership until Moshe returns, perhaps he will feel when he comes

build a new nation from Moshe.

When Moshe sees the camp of idol-worship he smashes the tablets and destroys the golden calf.

The sons of Levi volunteer to punish the transgressors, executing 3,000 men.

Moshe ascends the mountain to pray for forgiveness for the people, and G-d accepts his prayer.

Moshe sets up the *Mishkan* and G-d's cloud of glory returns. Moshe asks G-d to show him the rules by which he conducts the world, but is granted only a small portion of this request.

G-d tells Moshe to make new tablets and reveals to him the text of the prayer that will invoke Divine mercy.

Idol worship, intermarriage and the combination of milk and meat are prohibited.

The laws of Pesach, the first-born, the first-fruits, Shabbat, Shavuot and Succot are taught.

When Moshe descends with the second set of tablets, his face is luminous as a result of contact with the Divine.

Haftara Overview

1 Kings 18:1 - 18:39

Israel experienced a great apostasy in the time of Moses. “He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.” (Exodus 32:4).

In the Haftara too Israel Experienced a great apostasy In the time of the prophet Elijah: “So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. “O Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.” (1Kings 18:26)

The people of Israel is under the domination of Jezebel, an evil queen and Ahab, a weak king. Jezebel kills many prophets of God while some of them are protected by Obadiah the governor.

Elijah decides to challenge the king Ahab: Elijah said, “As the LORD Almighty lives, whom I serve, I will surely present myself to Ahab today.” (1Kings 18:15).

What is strange in this story is that the one who is faithful, Elijah, is accused by the king to make trouble in Israel: “When he



“And the LORD said to Moses, “Go down, for your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves.” (Exodus 32:7)

back that I tried to usurp his position. Therefore, until Moshe returns I will keep them busy with talk about making a meaningless golden calf. The women will be reluctant to give up their jewelry and therefore I will be able to stall for time.”

Rabbi Zelig Pliskin say: This is an incredible lesson on judging people favorably! Next time you see someone doing something absolutely inexplicably despicable, before condemning him for his behavior, ask yourself, “What positive motivations and intentions could he possibly have had?” Maybe if you were to know his true motivations, you’d realize that he meant nothing wrong and even tried to prevent something negative from happening.

SHOW ME YOUR GLORY

One of the most beautiful text of the Torah is in this parasha. In spite of the golden calf sin, G-d shows his love to Moses and Israel.

Moses loved so much the Israel that he interceded for them “Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive their sin — but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.” (Ex. 32:31, 32). Moses was ready to give his life for the people of Israel.

G-d answers to Moses that he will not count the innocent for guilty, each one is responsible for his own sin “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book.” (Ex 32:33). And G-d sends again his angel to lead Israel “and my angel will go before you” (Ex 32:34). Then in the next chapter this angel has another name, it is called the “face of G-d” “My Presence [Panay in Hebrew which means “my face”] will go with you, and I will give you rest. Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence [panecha “your face”] does not go with us, do not send us up from here.” (Ex. 33:14-15.) This angel, or presence, or face, is the one with whom Moses spoke in the wilderness. In the same chapter, a few verses before it is written how Moses spoke to G-d “The L-rd would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend.” (Ex 33:11) In Hebrew it is said *Panim-le-Panim* “Face-to-face” exactly the same word used to describe the angel in the verse 14 and 15.

It is not the first time we meet this angel: “See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him.” (Exodus 23:20-21.) He is the special angel of Israel, the protector of Israel called in Daniel 12:1, Michael.

Now in the chapter 33 this angel is called *Panim* (the face or the presence). This angel is very special, He is the guide and the savior of Israel, in fact he is the Messiah of Israel which pre-exist his coming. In the prophet Micah it is written, “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” (5:2.) This ruler is *Mashiach ben David*, he is from the tribe of Judah and has to be born in Bethlehem, the very city of David. This Messiah is older than just his age, because the text adds that his “origins are from of old, from ancient times in Hebrew *mimay olam* from the days of eternity.”

It was just after hearing G-d speaking about this angel, that Moses made an incredible request “Now show me your glory.” (Ex 33:18.) G-d was clear with Moses he repeated what we already know “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.” (20) but G-d is ready to do something that he has never done before. “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the L-rd, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” (19) the glory of the Lord is his goodness and compassion. What a wonderful G-d we have.

APOSTOLIC WRITINGS — MARK 15:29-41

We can notice some quick parallels between the parasha and the *Besorah* of Mark.

- In the parasha nobody is there to defend Moses and G-d when Israel is ready to worship the Golden Calf. In the *Besorah* too nobody is there to defend Yeshua who has been wrongly accused.

- In the Parasha Moses is so disappointed by the sin of Israel that he breaks the Tables of Testimony written by the hand of God and received on mount Sinai. This destruction of the Ten commandments could be seen as a parallel with the curtain of the temple that was torn top to bottom at the time of the crucifixion of Yeshua.

- When Moses asked G-d to show him his glory, G-d described his love for humanity: “The L-RD, the L-RD, the compassionate and gracious G-d, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness” in the same way, Yeshua on the cross is a demonstration of G-d’s love for humanity and for Israel.

- Maybe the strongest parallel between the *Parasha* and the *Besorah* is the story of Elijah in the *Haftara*. We already have noticed that the people of G-d is not always faithful to his vocation, that is why from time to time we feel sorry for some of their behaviors. It is the case in the parasha for this week, *Ki-Tissa*, where Israel experienced one of the greatest apostasy in the time of Moses, the Golden Calf: “He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast ... Then they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.” (Exodus 32:4).

An other very sad time in the

history of Israel is presented in the *Haftara*. Indeed, Israel in the time of Elijah worshiped Baal: “So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon.” (1Kings 18:26)

The third great time of apostasy and unfaithfulness of Israel was in the time of Yeshua, the Messiah sent by G-d to teach and to save his people, and who was not recognized by most of the leaders. They were very cruel with him: “In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. ‘He saved others,’ they said, “but he can’t save himself!” (Mark 15:29-31).

The text of the *Besorah* has a clear link to the text of the *Haftara*, which is about Elijah, Yeshua says on the cross “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” (Mark 15:34). Some people didn’t hear very well what he said: “Listen, he’s calling Elijah.” (Mark 15:34). The Jewish people was waiting for the coming of Elijah just before the coming of the Messiah (Malachi 4:5). Today, if anyone claims that Yeshua is the Messiah, others question the validity of this affirmation asking where is Elijah? That is why even the talmidim of Yeshua from time to time doubted and asked this question to Yeshua: “Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” (Matthew 17:10). Elijah is omnipresent in the *Besorah*, the four of them contain twenty-six times the name of Elijah.

The greatest confusion was that Israel did not know how the Messiah would come and how Elijah would precede his coming. Since Elijah went to heaven in a chariot of fire with-

out dying, they thought that he would literally come back in the same manner. And also they were suffering so much under the occupation of the Romans, that they were waiting for a Messiah who would deliver them from this oppression, and would give independence to Israel. But they were wrong in their understanding of the coming of the Messiah as well as the coming of Elijah. Mashiach came first not as a political leader to fight the Romans but as a spiritual leader to teach and to redeem his people in the whole earth, and when Elijah went to heaven it was not to come back anytime, but as a reward of his faithfulness exactly like Enoch who went to heaven without dying too.

Yeshua was very clear on the identity of the Elijah who had to precede the coming of the Messiah, for him it was *Yochanan Hamatbil* (John the baptist) who was the Elijah who had to come. Speaking about Yochanan, Yeshua affirmed: “And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come” (Matthew. 11:14), later answering the question of his disciples, he said: “But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him” (Matthew. 17:12).

Yochanan came in the spirit of Elijah, he had the same courageous attitude of Elijah, he did not hesitate to say to king Herod the truth. “For Yochanan had been saying to Herod, ‘It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.’” (Mark 6:18). Herod killed Yochanan, he was beheaded by the king. However, his mission, to prepare the coming of the Messiah, was fulfilled.

saw Elijah, he said to him, “Is that you, you troubler of Israel?” (1Kings 18:17)

Ahab is the one who brought idolatry to Israel, but he is so blind that he does not see anymore where is the problem. Elijah does not hesitate to say the truth to the king “But you and your father’s family have. You have abandoned the LORD’s commands and have followed the Baals.” (1Kings 18:17)

Elijah is a courageous man, even though later he will be afraid to be killed by Jezebel, it is this sort of man and woman the world needs.

“Would that every minister (Pastor or Rabbi) might realize the sacredness of his office and the holiness of his work, and show the courage that Elijah showed! As divinely appointed messengers, ministers are in a position of awful responsibility.” (PK 149).

STORIES AND TRADITIONS

HOLINESS OF THE SHABBAT

A wealthy man bought very expensive material at the fair and gave it to a tailor to make a suit and coat for his son. When the tailor finished the pants, he brought it to the father who proudly gave it to his son. The boy tried on the new pants, then went out to play. Before long the boy came home crying. He wasn't careful and, as a result, he dirtied and tore his pants.

The same thing happened when the tailor brought the vest and jacket. When the tailor finally brought the coat, the father called his son and said, "With the other garments you were negligent and damaged them. Please guard this garment for this coat is all that remains from the expensive cloth which I originally bought!"

The same is with Shabbat. When G-d created the world, everything was perfect. The Torah tells us that when He examined His creation on each of the six days, "G-d saw that it was good." Adam and Eve who were created on the sixth day, were also perfect and they resided in Gan Eden — Paradise.

Then on the sixth day Adam and Eve sinned. Like the story with the boy, their action had such great negative impact that it tarnished the six days and everything created during those days. The only day which was not affected by their sin was the seventh day — Shabbat, for it had not come yet. Just like in the story where the father pleads with his son to "guard" the coat, so too, G-d tells us, "Guard the Shabbat for it is holy". For Shabbat is the only day of the week which stayed in its pure original form.

HE WAS NOT ONE OF US

The rabbi listened to the young boy intently. The other children were puzzled: they did not remember this boy from their cheder (class), yet they were amazed at the remarkable fluency he displayed in reciting his piece. Rav Chaim was not impressed at all. He turned to the young man and said, "please tell your father that there are better ways to earn a few coins!" With that he dismissed the child.

The students were shocked. "How did the Rabbi know?" Their curiosity forced them to approach Rav Chaim. He smiled as he answered them. "There are two ways to say the Gemarah. One is filled with spirituality. The child's body is swaying and filled with the emotion of Torah. The other is just repetitive rote. This young man lacked the fire and the true joy that the Jewish children have when learning Torah. I knew he was not one of us."

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

One of the boldest decisions in Jewish history was made by King Yoshiahu in the waning year of the first *Beit Hamikdash*. Upon the opening and reading of a long-lost *Sefer Torah* the message that struck him was the grim warning that because of Israel's sins "G-d will take you and the king you have appointed to a nation who you and your ancestors never knew" (Devarim 28:36). He then turned to the Levites and instructed them to store the Holy Ark in a secret subterranean chamber so that it would not fall into the hands of the enemy who would eventually destroy the *Beit Hamikdash* and take the people into exile. The *Mishna* relates that the hiding

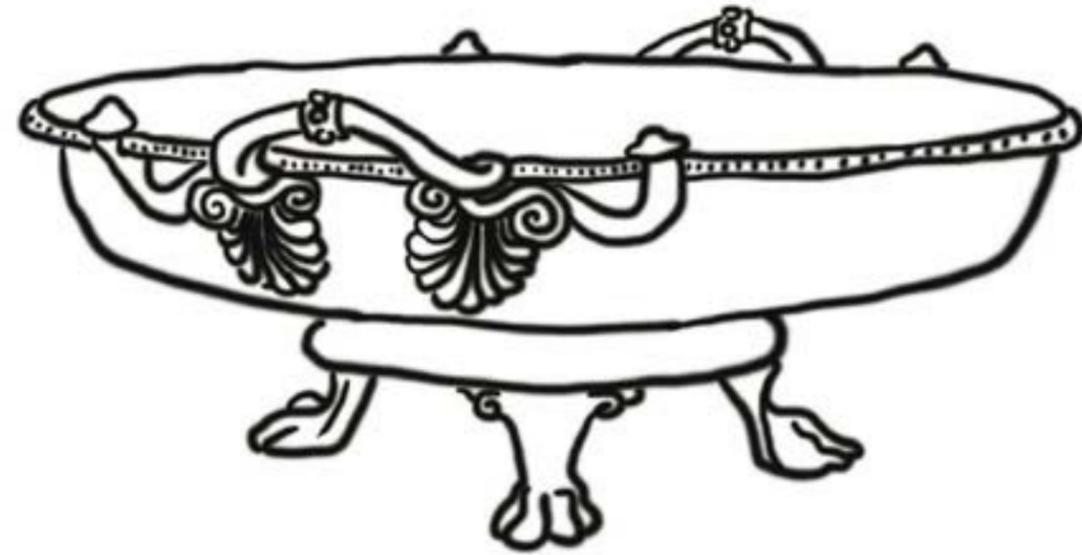
place of the lost Ark was almost discovered during the period of the second *Beit Hamikdash*, which functioned without a Holy Ark. A kohen who was relaxing from his labors noticed that one of the marble slabs on the floor in his area was not exactly even with the rest. He rushed to share this discovery with a colleague but died before he could finish his story. It was assumed by all that the variation he alone had noticed marked the site where the Holy Ark was concealed. Another discovery was made in the area where *kobanim* disqualified from sacrificial service because of some physical flaw were busy chopping wood for the altar and removing the worms from the logs. The ax of one of them fell to the floor and was immediately consumed by a fire that came up from under the floor. The conclusion was that this marked the site of the hidden Ark. It is interesting to note that despite these discoveries no effort was made to conduct an archeological excavation to retrieve the Ark. This was probably because prophecy had revealed to them that the Ark, along with four other sacred elements, would not be present in the second *Beit Hamikdash* so that the failed "raiding" of the Holy Ark was submission to the will of G-d. (Shekalim 6a)

DEMONSTRATING KINDNESS

Avraham established an inn where he cared for his guests in every conceivable way. He influenced the world to believe in G-d, not by logical proofs or lectures but by demonstrating through his own example that G-d's kindness extends down through all the worlds to this, the lowliest."

KIDS PARASHA KI-TISSA

כִּי תִשָּׂא



Exodus 30:11 - 34:35

"The LORD said to Moses, "You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet. When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations.""

(Exodus 30:17-21)

Inspirational Corner

❖ Now, instead of the first-born of all Israel, the Lord accepted the tribe of Levi for the work of the sanctuary. By this signal honor He manifested His approval of their fidelity, both in adhering to His service and in executing His judgments when Israel apostatized in the worship of the golden calf. (PP 350)

Inspirational Corner

❖ The Israelites, in their adoration of the golden calf, professed to be worshiping God. Thus Aaron, when inaugurating the worship of the idol, proclaimed, "Tomorrow is a feast unto The Lord." They proposed to worship God, as the Egyptians worshiped Osiris, under the semblance of the image. But God could not accept the service. Though offered in His name, the sun-god, and not The Lord, was the real object of their adoration. (PP 760, note 4)