

“Jewish Unity Live And The Tabernacle”

In this week's parsha every Jew was commanded to participate in the gathering of materials for the building of the Mishkan and its utensils. They gathered and brought all kinds of gold, silver and wool. The Torah spends hundreds of pesukim describing the dimensions of all that was to be put together. A special team of artisans was formed to coordinate the activities involved in building the Mishkan.

In parshas Vayakhel the Torah tells us that leading this team was Betzalel. Betzalel was charged with the mission of deciding who should build what, and which gold should be used for each vessel. He possessed the unique qualities to lead the team of wise men, using each and every person who wanted to join in to help in the right way. He was given the ability to understand the depth of what materials should be used where and who should be involved in building. Let's not forget, this building stood at the center of Jewish life for hundreds of years, and it would serve as the epicenter of the Yom Kippur service. It was the holiest place we had for Jews to offer sacrifices and grow spiritually. Today, we don't have the Tabernacle or the Beis Hamikdash. We grow close to G-D by davening and learning Torah. By supporting your shul and Torah organizations, you are thereby joining Betzalel in his mission to provide a place for Jews to connect.

A Jew's connection is critical for him and his family. To ensure a strong and vibrant future, each and every Jew must take responsibility for his or her family and find a way to get them engaged in meaningful Torah study. This has been our secret to survival. The Assyrian Greeks who tried to destroy us are gone. The Babylonians who tried to wipe us out are gone. Communism which tried to stop Judaism is gone. Hitler is gone. We Jews are here and flourishing. Torah and mitzvos are being learned and cherished every day.

This weekend, our Kollel will be celebrating its 27th anniversary. The Kollel has been one of St. Louis' strongest and most high-achieving Tabernacles. We have provided dynamic Jewish leadership and Torah classes for all ages and levels of observance. Creative programs and a special team of devoted Rabbis and their wives have touched thousands of lives and have brought us closer to each other and Hashem.

Please join me this Sunday at the Sheraton Westport Chalet beginning at 5pm as we build our Tabernacle together, uniting our community and bringing more and more individuals and families closer to their Jewish heritage. I'm looking forward to seeing you there! (*Rabbi Shaya Mintz*)