

SANCTUARY SWEET SANCTUARY

by Rabbi Dovid Green

In this week's parsha it says "Make for Me a sanctuary so that I may dwell among them" (Shemos 25:8)

In the book *More Shabbos Stories* by Rabbi Shimon Finkelman (Artscroll Mesorah publications) it says that Rashi points out to us that the Hebrew words for man (eesh) and woman (eeshah) are identical except for the additional of the fifth letter of the aleph-bas which is "hey". Hey represents HaShem. Just as the sanctuary, or mishkan in the desert was a dwelling place for G-d's presence, so too is the union between man and woman a miniature mishkan when peace and Torah values reign there.

To illustrate this point Rabbi Finkelman tells us an eye-witness account regarding Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (1910-1998). Rabbi Auerbach was being accompanied home after teaching the morning sessions in yeshiva. The young man noticed that the venerable sage paused before ascending the stairs to his apartment to straighten and groom his appearance. The curious young man asked if a distinguished visitor awaited the Rabbi in his apartment. "Actually" came the reply, "I am preparing to greet the presence of HaShem (the Shechinah), for the Shechinah is present whenever a husband and wife live together in peace and harmony".

Rabbi Auerbach was not simply praising his personal accomplishment of achieving a peaceful home. He was praising his wife and appreciating all she had created in their home together with him. At the funeral of his wife Rebitzen Chaya Rivkah Auerbach in 1974, Rabbi Auerbach publicly stated "Although it is customary to ask forgiveness of the deceased, I will not do so. My wife and I lived together according to the Code of Jewish Law (Shulchan Aruch). We never offended each other or hurt each other in any way. There is no reason for me to ask forgiveness.

In the world of education it is well known that a student's misbehavior and poor performance in class can be caused by or certainly exacerbated by the lack of peace between the parents at home. One of the most effective tools to combat the forces that will attempt to trip us up and "lose it" with a spouse is quiet. If you must disagree, do so in a calm voice. Better yet, count to ten first or even twenty-five. If you must express upset, ask your spouse to join you alone to discuss the matter. A united front is the glue which joins the family unit. A container with a crack cannot hold any substance for long. Let us maintain our homes as the beautiful and unified "containers" which can receive and grow with the presence of the Schinah.

Good Shabbos

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