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PARSHAS PEKUDEI EDITION – VOLUME 15, ISSUE 10 – ADAR 29TH, 5785/MARCH 29TH, 2025

TORAH QUESTION OF THE WEEK BY RAV MOSHE KLEIN: - THE CONNECTION BETWEEN OIL AND WISDOM IN THE TORAH

Last week's question: *What is the whole concept of anointing (taking oil to put) on the Keilim (vessels) as the Pasuk (Shemos 40:9) says: "You shall take the anointing oil and anoint the Mishkan and everything within it." There is even a whole recipe, and it's used when appointing a melech (king). What is the significance of this practice?*

Answer: To understand the concept of anointing oil we go to the Pasuk (Shemos 30:23), which states: take *Besamim Roish* (choice spices), which **Rashi** (ibid.) explains to mean, "excellent ones". The Midrash (Shir Hashirim Rabbah 1:13): *"A bundle of Besamim (myrrh) is my beloved to me. What is a bundle of myrrh? Rabbi Azarya in the name of Rabbi Yehuda interpreted the verse regarding Avraham our patriarch. Just as this myrrh is the first of all the kinds of spices, so too, Avraham was the first of all the righteous."*

Just as this myrrh, its fragrance diffuses only through fire, so too Avraham, his actions became known only after he was cast into the fiery furnace. Just as this myrrh, anyone who gathers it his hands become bitter, so too, Avraham would embitter and torment himself with suffering." As a side, the **Ramban** himself brings down this Midrash when he investigates what the myrrh is.

The *shemen hamishchah* (anointing oil) had many miracles happen through it. The Gemara (Krisus 5b) writes was used to anoint the Kohanim Gedolim and the Kings of the House of Dovid. Moshe Rabbeinu prepared only 12 Lug (about 2 gallons) of this oil. Miraculously it was enough for all past generations and all future generations. When Moshiach is revealed, it will be returned to us, which means it didn't lose anything.

The **Abarbanel** offers a few ideas regarding this. First, when one makes a sign through the shemen, it's like checking off something. It's an act of delineating that certain individuals are different – the Kohen Gadol, the king, and vessels of the Beis Hamikdash – all are designated, individualized, and reserved for the service of Hashem. However, it goes deeper, writes the Abarbanel.

We find (Shmuel Alef, 16:13) that when Shmuel the Prophet took the horn of oil and anointed Dovid as king a spirit of Hashem passed over Dovid from that day. The anointing of the oil wasn't just a sign or reserved Dovid, it transformed Dovid into a completely different person.



Furthermore, the Abrabanel points out that oil communicates a sense of stature and elevation. When one mixes oil and water together, oil rises to the top. When Aharon Hakohen was anointed, the oil was placed on his head, as the Pasuk (Tehillim 133:2), the **Radak** explains that the oil went on his head, then the beard, followed by the clothing. The oil represents elevated wisdom, which goes to the beard – the *zakein*, which means *zeh shekana chachma* (this one acquired wisdom).

The Gemara (Menachos 85b) adds that the people of Tekoa regularly consume olive oil, wisdom is found in them. Oil is placed on the head because it elevates the head, be it the Kohen Gadol or the King. It flows to the beard and then to the rest of the body to indicate that everything is meant to be done with wisdom. The **Zohar Hakodesh** teaches that wisdom is the power of *mah* (what). The power of what a person does lies in the wisdom that they have.

The *gematria* (numerical value) of *mah* is 45, which is also the *gematria* of *adam* (man). If one doesn't have wisdom, they are not considered to be a person. One who is missing *seichel* (logic) won't be able to guard themselves from dangerous threats and won't be able to continue existing. As such, the more wisdom one has, the more existence one has. *Chochma* is the power to exist and to reason. That is also the secret of the person, and the anointing oil was created to do just that – to give power to the individual and the vessel.

Rav Reuven Shmeltzer, Shlita, teaches that the word *Chochma* comes from the words, *koach mah* – being in the state of creation. When a person can invent something that didn't exist before in a spiritual sense, that's spiritual. The state of manifesting something from nothing i.e. creation is *Chochma*. (See *Iyov* 28:12.) Once creation happens, things decompose and break down. →

TORAH QUESTION BY RABBI KLEIN, CONCLUSION

Yet, if they are in a state of *ruchneyus* and *gashmeyus* mixed - coming from nothing - that stays forever. In other words, spirituality never dies, only physical things do. When is there the state that the physical can live on? In the state of creation where the *ruchneyus* is fused with the *gashmeyus*. That is why the oil never got lost and that is why oil, חֶמֶה, was used to elevate the kohen, the king, and *keilim*. The message is that physical beings that serve Hashem are physical beings saturated with kedusha. Although we don't have the *Shemen Hamishcha* today, we can learn from it. We may never be a Kohen Gadol or king but learning about them and soon seeing them speedily in our days should give us the awareness of how just holy we actually are.

This week's question: Why do we need to serve Hashem with karbonos (offerings)? Does Hashem need it? Also, if learning Torah equals all the other Mitzvos, why would Hashem take away the learning time of Kohanim to serve in the Beis Hamikdash?

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SUGAR RUSH ON THE 613 MITZVOS BY R'ELI REIT **MITZVAH # 156 – GETTING RID OF CHOMETZ**

On the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan (Erev Pesach), we are commanded to get rid of our Chometz. As the Pasuk (Shemos 12:15) says, *"On the first day, you shall not have Chometz in your house"*. This is known as *"Hashbasas Chometz"* or alternatively as *"Biyur Chometz"*. We accomplish this Mitzvah by burning Chometz on Erev Pesach and by ensuring that there is no Chometz left in our house. If the Chometz belongs to someone else, then one is not responsible for it. Hence, it is typical for Jews to sell their Chometz to a non-Jew for the duration of Pesach.

YESODE **HASHOLOM**

SHALOM BAYIS INSIGHTS FROM RASHI BY **RABBI YITZ GREENFIELD**

PEKUDEI - RIGHT ATTITUDE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

In this week's Parsha the Mishkan (Tabernacle) was completed. The Torah (Shemos 39:43) writes: *"Moshe saw all of the work and behold they had done it; as Hashem had commanded, so had they done; and Moshe blessed them."* There are a few questions on the way the Torah words this Pasuk. First, what is the significance of the Torah saying that the work was done twice? Second, what exactly was the blessing Moshe bestowed upon them?

Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch, ZT"l, explains that the first time the Pasuk tells us B'nei Yisroel did the work, the Torah is cluing us in to how the work was done. When Klal Yisroel worked on the Mishkan they were filled with enthusiasm. Every part of building the Mishkan from the smallest detail to the largest job expressed the responsiveness and dynamic of the entire nation. In other words, they did it with pleasure!

The second part of the Pasuk informs us that there was not one craftsman who added or subtracted an iota from what Hashem had commanded. Anyone who is an artist knows how difficult this is! An artist wants their work to be unique, but with the work of building the Mishkan, every artist took scrupulous care not to deviate from the command of Hashem even in the slightest bit. So, what was the bracha Moshe gave to Klal Yisroel?

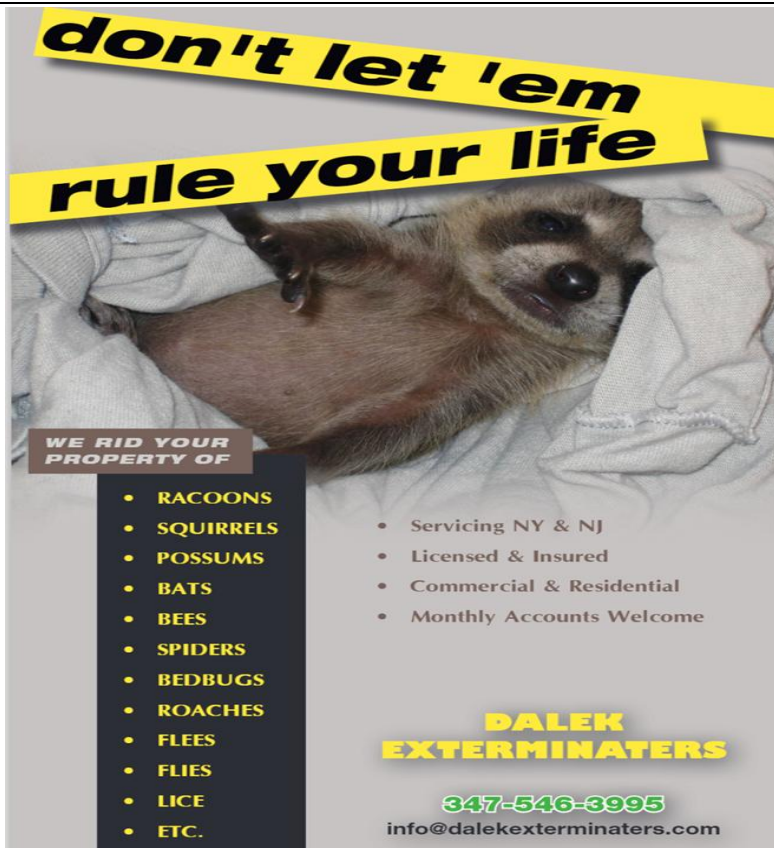
Rashi tells us And Moshe said to them, 'יִיְהִי נַעֲמָה ה' - אֱלֹקֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כִּנְוָנָה עֲלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כִּנְוָנָה - *May the Shechinah rest in the work of your hands, May the pleasantness of the Hashem our God be upon us.*" Rashi informs us that this is one of eleven psalms that are attributed to Moshe Rabbeinu (from Tehillim, chapters 90-101). Moshe blessed Klal Yisroel that it should be apparent to them how the Torah way of life is pleasant, that the work that they did in the Mishkan should be long-lasting and that Hashem should establish a blessing in all that they do. We can easily apply the lessons here to our homes. We should aim to do the "work" of building our homes with enthusiasm.

For example, when chores become repetitive, such as preparing dinner, going to work for the family, or helping our children with homework, we need to remember that we are building something eternal. In addition, we should try not to deviate from the words of the Torah even one iota, such as sharing juicy *Lashon Harah* (evil speech) with our spouses. Finally, we need to pray to Hashem that he establishes all our efforts with success.

Building a true *Bayis Ne'eman* necessitates taking these three ingredients and bringing them all together. We, who value having the Shechinah in our homes will work hard to put in the effort, even when we are not in the mood. May Hashem bless our efforts with success and may our homes shine with the light of Shalom Bayis.

Rabbi Greenfield MS MFT is the author of the Torah marriage toolbox course. Create more Shalom Bayis in your home by visiting torahmarriage.com or email rabbigreenfield@gmail.com

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PEKUDEI – MORE TO LEARN

With this Parsha, Sefer Shemos comes to an end. The question could be asked, why is the whole story of building the Mishkan (Tabernacle) taught here in the book of Exodus – Book of Redemption which speaks about the Jewish people going out of Mitzrayim (Egypt)?

The **Ramban** (in his introduction to Shemos) writes that this Sefer is the book of Geulah and the Mishkan was a traveling Har Sinai. “Ki Mitzion Tetzei Torah” – we needed the Mishkan to be the source for us to have that constant communication. We took Har Sinai with us, which eventually became the Beis Hamikdash. Har Sinai itself lost all its Kedusha (holiness), as its Kedusha was transferred from there to the Mishkan to the Beis Hamikdash.

When we go through the Seder and the whole story - specifically Dayenu - we say, “*You brought us into the Land of Israel and we built the Beis Hamikdash.*” That is the conclusion of the story. As we conclude Sefer Shemos with Parshas Pekudei, we should remember that the Torah is not static. Rather, it’s an ongoing experience that travels with us wherever we go and stays with us wherever we are, finding its home in the Beis Hamikdash.



As we saw in Parshas Vayakhel, we don’t build the Mishkan on Shabbos, because Shabbos is the Mishkan in time. We take this opportunity to finish and say, *Chazak, Chazak, V’Nizchazek* – Be strong, be strong, and we will strengthen one another.” There are some people who finish the Torah and say, “I finished the Torah, and I didn’t learn anything” while others say “I learned that already.”

Each type of person needs strength. The one who feels they know it all needs strength to realize that there is so much to still learn. On the flip side, the ones who think they’ve learned nothing need the strength to appreciate what they accomplished. From that, we go further into Sefer Vayikra – Toras Kohanim with strength. We should merit to finish many Sefarim together, B’Ezras Hashem.

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PEKUDEI – PLUG INTO THE ULTIMATE ENERGY SOURCE

The beginning of the Parsha gives a detailed accounting of materials collected for the Mishkan and what they were used for. There were one hundred talents of silver that were donated and used to create 100 Adanim - sockets. The **Ba'al HaTurim** (on this Shemos 38:27) comments: “*Corresponding to them (the sockets) they instituted 100 Berachos [to be said] each day*”. What exactly is the connection between the Adanim and saying Brachos?

Two answers from the **Gerrer Rebbe** and the **Chidushei HaRim** (in a Sefer called *V'Dover Emes* from **R' Dov Loebenberg**, currently a Yungerman in Yeshivas Mir Yerushalayim.) First, he mentions that the sockets were the very foundation of the Mishkan. They held the planks that made up the walls upright. The Brachos we make are not merely to allow us to partake of food or to give praise to Hashem in our Tefillos. They are the very foundation of the inherent Kedusha of every Jew. When I make a Brachah it supports the infrastructure that allows my body to exude G-dliness in all my actions.

The second answer is that the word Adanim is related to the word Adnus - accepting Hashem's mastery over us. When making a Bracha we are recognizing and proclaiming that Hashem is the Master of the world. In a sense, you can say that really these two concepts are different facets of the same idea. The very action of accepting Hashem as our Adon is the foundation of our spiritual life force.

As such, the next time you eat, pause before you make the Bracha. As you say *Baruch Atah Hashem*, reflect for an instant on how by accepting Hashem as your Adon, you're laying down the foundation of your own spirituality. The nutrients that the food will give you will connect and be fortified by the spiritual Adanim that connect your Ruchni and Gashmi selves together!

SPLENDID QUOTE OF THE WEEK BY RABBI MENACHEM LOMNER

“When you support someone doing a Mitzvah you get the reward of doing the Mitzvah.”

The Torah (Shemos 39:31) tells that there were strings for the tzitz. These were for holding up the tzitz to be able to stay on the *mitznefes* (hat) of the Kohen Gadol. However, the tzitz never went on the mitznefes. It was the strings that were strung over the mitznefes to be tied behind the Kohen Gadol's head.

We see that the strings that were there to hold and support the Tzitz up are considered as the Tzitz itself. Whenever we help support Torah or any other Mitzvah we become an integral partner of that Mitzvah and we will get rewarded for doing the Mitzvah, as well.

PEKUDEI – REMOVE ALL SUSPICIONS



When there are rumors or suspicions about a great person, it is imperative that they are quelled immediately. We find this idea in our Parsha, Pekudei, when Moshe Rabbeinu does an accounting of all the materials and vessels of the Mishkan before the inauguration. Why was this necessary? Believe it or not, because in those days, people were whispering that Moshe Rabbeinu who overlooked the construction of the Mishkan, received fringe benefits and took something on the side for himself, G-d Forbid. Moshe immediately put out the fire and explained very clearly how every penny was utilized.

Unfortunately, the way of the world is that people like to talk without substantiated proof. A person needs to work hard to make sure that they always maintain a good name, which is not easy. Shlomo Hamelech says that a good name is better than fine oil. When someone smells good, only the people around him can enjoy the smell. However, when one has a good name, it reaches the end of the world (especially in today's digital world). Let us remember that our reputation is extremely valuable and protect it dearly as Moshe Rabbeinu did.



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***"These are the numbers of the Mishkan (of the Testimony) which were counted at Moshe's command; the work of the Levites under the direction of Isamar, the son of Aharon."* (Shemos 38:21)**

The Torah states that this accounting was done "at Moshe's command" because it was entirely his idea. Since he had personally overseen the intake of all of the donations for the Mishkan, Moshe wanted to make sure that he was above suspicion, so he voluntarily provided a full accounting of where every ounce of donated material had gone. Moshe's accounting should serve as an example for each of us. We have all received gifts from Hashem, such as material possessions, intellectual gifts, time, and more. We should hold ourselves accountable and be able to explain to ourselves and to Hashem how we have wisely used all that we have been blessed with.

***"All the gold that had been used for the work in all the work of the holy: the gold of the waving was 29 talents, seven hundred and thirty shekels, according to the holy shekel"* (Shemos 38:24)**

The **Seforno** says that the quantities of gold, silver and copper used in the Mishkan are recorded to show that they paled in comparison to the amount of materials used in the construction of the two Batei Mikdash, but that despite this fact, Hashem's Shechina had a greater presence in the Mishkan than in either Bais HaMikdash. This teaches us that neither the amount of wealth donated, nor the grandeur of the building cause the Shechina to rest among the Jewish people, but Hashem prefers those who fear Him and their good deeds, so he is present among them. The sanctity of our holy places is a result of the presence of Hashem that resides within it, not the extravagance with which it is built.

SHORT STORY OF THE WEEK BY YONI SCHWARTZ

The son of **Rabbi Shmuel Berenbaum**, ZT"l, went around collecting money for a night Kollel. When he arrived at a certain house, the homeowner asked him, "How much is the afternoon learning seder in Yeshiva worth to your father?" He said, "I don't know exactly, but I'll tell you a story. When my sister was getting married, the wedding was going to be held in a distant venue. My father asked her, 'How much more would it cost to have it in a closer venue? I don't want to miss afternoon seder.' She responded, '\$5,000.' He then gave her \$5,000 to avoid missing afternoon seder. So, I'm assuming it's worth at least that much to him." The man then wrote a check for \$5,000, an unusually large sum. When the Rav's son opened the envelope in his car and saw this huge check, he went back confused and politely asked for an explanation. The homeowner said, "Now I have a story for you." "Years ago," he said, "there was a very sick girl in the hospital.

As Rav Shmuel was there on another visit, the girl's parents heard the tzaddik was close by, went over and asked him to give their daughter a brachah, which he did. Afterward, she nervously said, 'I'm worried that I won't survive and that my disease will turn shidduchim away from me. Can you please assure me that all will be okay and one day I'll get married?' He said, 'I guarantee.' The family asked, 'How can you guarantee?' He said, 'I just know. In the merit of the Sages Abaye and Rava, it's going to work.'

"This girl," the homeowner added, "is my wife. When we got married, drove a long way, missing afternoon seder to be at our wedding."

Comment: In this week's Parsha, Pekudei, we learn about the mishkan's completion and Hashem resting his presence within it. Just as Hashem dwelled in the Mishkan, so too, when we sacrifice to help make another person happy, just like Rav Shmuel, Hashem rests His Presence within our homes and on our Shabbos tables.

As a prelude to *yetzias Mitzrayim* Hashem tells Moshe (Shemos 12:2), "*This month will be for you the first (lit. head) of months, it is first for you of all the months of the year.*" The first **Rashi** on Chumash teaches that the Torah might have begun here with the first commandment given to Israel through Moshe Rabbeinu. The Mishnah (Rosh Hashana 1:1) teaches of four Rosh Hashanas, of which the one in Tishrei is "Rosh Hashanah for years," while here the Torah designates Rosh Chodesh Nissan as Rosh (Hashanah) for months. The word *shana* is a form of the verb *leshanos* - to change.

Rosh Hashana in Tishrei coinciding with the birth of Adam demarcates the changes that befall us as individuals, as a species, as a universe of created matter. However *chodesh*, a month is connected to the root *lechadesh* - to renew, denoting everything new and beginnings in general. This marks the birth of the Jewish people as a nation, the first Mitzvah we are given, a beginning of all things- of holidays, of kings, of kingship. The **Aish Kodesh** asks on Rashi: why start the Torah in Shemos - can we really say that the account of the Creation of the Universe and the lives of the patriarchs is extraneous? Besides, this isn't even the first Mitzvah in the Torah anyway.

However, we know from halacha that the highest level of performance of Mitzvos is when they are done by individuals who have been commanded. The purpose of creation is the performance of Mitzvos and the essence of that performance derives from this first decree of Hashem to Moshe.

Thus, the establishment of Nissan as the first month takes precedence over Creation that is tied to Tishrei. The refreshing of Hashem's covenant with us that is renewed every day is of greater enduring significance than the ongoing creation of the material world as it runs its course. The month of Nissan also has special significance for the performance of Mitzvos that is inherent in the sanctity of the month and the season.

This is the time of renewal, of rebirth, it is the season of redemption. For the students of the **Arizal** the month of Nissan was bound up with the elevation of the *Shechinah* out of her depredation in the ordeal of our shared exile. The performance of Mitzvos in our world invigorates the Shechinah and gives her form and power to act which in turn propels us toward higher spiritual achievements.

Rabbi Itche Meir Morgenstern connects this idea to the language of the aforementioned Mishnah - a new year for kings. In Nissan, we are reestablished as kings in this world. We reaffirm our commitment to Torah and Mitzvos, we receive (according to the **Rashash**) our tasks and purposes for the coming year, and in assuming these responsibilities we make ourselves partners to the Creator and nobility among humanity.

Chodesh Tov to All!

*Summary: We have been discussing the Ramchal's approach to honoring Hashem by honoring His special day, Shabbos, and we discussed last week how it is important to get ready for such a day (it's more exciting – in a way – to get ready for Pesach which is once a year, as opposed to Shabbos that comes in weekly and can be easily taken for granted because of its frequency). The **Ramchal** now takes the last example of how the Sages honored Shabbos and dissects it.*

The Ramchal writes: **"Rav Nachman bar Isaac carried things in and out, saying: 'If Rav Ammi and Rav Assi visited me, would I not carry thus for them?' (Shabbos 119a). Notice, the comparison of Rav Nachman which contains a model for us to learn from. For he would contemplate what he would do for a person he wishes to honor and then would do a similar thing for the Shabbos".** (Mesilas Yesharim, Chapter 19)

Rav Dovid Feinstein, ZT"L, was part of the delegation that traveled to France a few years ago to offer support and solidarity to the local Jews. On the private plane home, the Satmar Rebbe, **Rav Aharon Teitelbaum**, shlita, approached Rav Dovid. "Our fathers were very close," he said, "and it's a shame that we never really got close. And we're only a mile apart, across the Williamsburg Bridge. When can I perhaps visit for a shmooze?"

"Anytime," said Rav Dovid warmly. "You're the Satmar Rebbe. You say when's good for you."

"How about this Thursday evening?" asked the Rebbe. "No," Rav Dovid stated firmly. "Thursday night I can't." The Satmar Rebbe apologized and asked what occupied Rav Dovid's Thursdays. "Thursday night I do the shopping for my wife." When an important guest is scheduled to come to us, we don't start preparing an hour or two beforehand. We start days in advance by cleaning our home, cooking, and making everything look presentable. Shabbos is the day Hashem wants us to honor Him on, so we need to get ready way in advance.

The Ramchal adds: **"On this matter it was said: 'one should always be clever in the fear of Heaven' (Berachos 17a) - to know and deduce one thing from another, and devise new ways of bringing gratification to his Maker in every possible way."** (ibid. Ch 19)

A Chassid uses the basic laws of the Torah to determine the underlying Will of Hashem and uses that understanding to expand upon the basic requirements - to bring Him satisfaction. At times, the chassid must innovate techniques to undercover novel ways of serving Hashem. One must learn to be strategic and mindful. In a good relationship – be it a marriage or a friendship – each party not only meets the needs of the other but also anticipates their needs before they arrive. Someone who cares asks about their loved one: "What would bring them joy? What's their love language – is it acts of service, receiving gifts, or quality time?" If it applies to human beings, we can rest assured that it applies to our Creator.

The Ramchal ends off: **"When we recognize Hashem's great loftiness above us, any connection to Him which He grants us should be deemed by us to be a tremendous honor. Since, He in His great goodness and despite all our lowliness, chose, in His humility, to bestow honor on us and give us His holy words. We should, at the very least, honor them with all our strength and demonstrate the extent of their esteem to us."** (ibid. Chapter 19)

Rabbi Avigdor Miller, ZT"L, comments: suppose the President is passing by and you offer to serve him. Were you elected to his cabinet? Only important people can serve the President, but if he is kind enough to let you serve him, you should appreciate the privilege. Hashem is too elevated that humans should do anything for Him, so when we get the opportunity, we should grab it and know how much of an honor it is for us.

More to come next week, B'Ezras Hashem.



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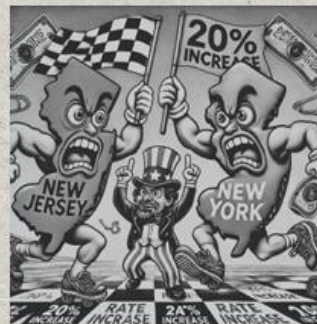


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- **How:** We have the lowest prices with the best service and equipment.
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- **When:** Call us now at 888-Sun-4-Energy to see what we can do for you!



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