

# Torah Wellsprings

Collected thoughts  
from  
Rabbi Elimelech  
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Terumah



בס"ד

# Torah WELLSPRINGS

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# Torah Wellsprings

## Terumah

### Defining Success

This week's Parasha discusses the *mitzvah* of *Terumah*. One way to translate the word *Terumah* is elevation. The Torah is coming to teach us an important lesson regarding the high times we experience during our life. When one enjoys some form of success—financial or spiritual, he must know that his accomplishments come from Hashem. On the words ויקחו לי תרומה, Rashi writes לי לשמי. This means to recognize that *all* of your successes are from Hashem. And to prove that it is from Hashem the *pasuk* states, מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו. Just as one understands that all the movements of his body stem from the beating of his heart, because if his heart would fail to beat his body would cease to function, תקחו את תרומתי, so

shall everyone know that all of his success comes from Hashem.

What is success? Everyone has his own definition. What some people consider to be success others perceive as a disaster.

The Chofetz Chaim (*Metzora*) tells the following:

A businessman saw a house for sale at a low price, so he bought it and immediately put the house up for sale again.

It was a clever idea. In less than a day, he sold the house for double the investment.

A day later, someone asked him if the house was still for sale. He explained that he has a client prepared to buy it for triple the amount he paid for the home.

The businessman was very upset. Had he waited another day, he would have tripled his investment.

In contrast, the Chofetz Chaim said, he remembers a poor porter who would stand daily near the marketplace, waiting for someone to offer him a few pennies to carry a heavy basket to their home. He stood there in the summer heat and the snow and hail in the winter, and he was delighted with every job he got. With the money he earned, he prepared a small meal with his family and quickly returned to his spot near the marketplace to wait for his next job.

Notice the contrast between these two people? A businessman earns a lot of money, yet he is sad and feels like a failure. On the other hand, a poor porter earns pennies, and he feels

that he is living a successful life. Success is a matter of perception.

The Chofetz Chaim *zt'l* had a special place in his heart for poor people. He considered them to be closer to Hashem than the average person.

When the Chofetz Chaim's Rebbetzin was *niftar*, the Chofetz Chaim asked the *chevrah kadisha* to bury her next to a certain poor, G-d fearing woman, whom his Rebbetzin would praise. The Chofetz Chaim explained, "In *Tehillim* (109:31) it states, *כי יעמד לימין אביון*, "Hashem stands to the right of the destitute." It doesn't say that Hashem stands to the right side of a *tzaddik* or *gaon*. Hashem is to the right side of the poor, and therefore, I want my wife to be buried near that poor woman."<sup>1</sup>

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1. In Reb Shlomo Kluger's *zt'l* ethical will, he requested to be buried next to a poor person who lived with *yiras Shamayim*.

A *bachur* consulted the Chofetz Chaim about a certain *shidduch*, and the Chofetz Chaim advised the *bachur* to visit the family's home and see what it was like.

After visiting, the *bachur* returned to tell the Chofetz Chaim what he saw. "They are so poor!" he said. "You won't believe how their house looks. First of all, it's tiny. I don't know how they live there with all their children. The floor is just plain dirt, without tiles. They sit on crates because they don't own any chairs."

The Chofetz Chaim replied with a smile, "Nu! And tell me another *maalah* (quality)." The Chofetz Chaim considered their poverty a plus in the *shidduch*.

Often it is so because when one marries a girl from a wealthy family, he will often have to maintain her old living standards, which can be expensive. Furthermore, as the Chofetz

Chaim taught, the poor are close to Hashem. Hashem stands at their right side, so what can be a better *shidduch*?

The Chofetz Chaim, himself, married a poor girl. At first, he looked for a girl from a wealthy family so that he could study Torah for many years. His brother, in particular, wanted the Chofetz Chaim to do a wealthy *shidduch*. The Chofetz Chaim was a scholar, and rich people would have certainly taken him as a son-in-law. But his stepfather wanted him to marry his daughter, and the Chofetz Chaim realized that if he didn't marry her, it would affect the *shalom bayis* between his stepfather and his mother, so he agreed to the *shidduch* with this poor girl.

The Chofetz Chaim attributed his ability to devote his life to studying Torah and writing *sefarim* to marrying a poor girl. He related that his friend married a girl from a

wealthy family, and soon after the chasunah, he was drawn into the world of business and lost all his money. If the Chofetz Chaim had married a wealthy girl, the same could have happened to him. So, he attributed his spiritual success to his marriage to a poor girl.

Once, a poor man complained to the Chofetz Chaim about his difficult life. The Chofetz Chaim told him, "In heaven, we will be judged for our deeds, and we will need a good lawyer to save us from Gehinom and punishment. You will have the best lawyer because Hashem Himself will stand at your right side to plead your case. As it states (*Tehillim* 109:31) *כי יעמוד לימין אביון*, להושיע משפטי נפשו, 'Hashem stands at the right of the destitute, to save him when his soul is judged.' So, you are the most fortunate of all."

The Chofetz Chaim once spoke to a group of

wealthy people about the great zechus they have to support Torah. "In Olam HaBa, your reward will be equal to that of the Torah scholars," he told them.

One of the wealthy men challenged the Chofetz Chaim, "If so, I have an offer for you. Join me in my business. You will earn a lot of money, you will support Torah, and your reward will be equal to someone who studies Torah!"

The Chofetz Chaim replied, "You are correct. My reward in Olam HaBa would be the same, but I would be missing out on Olam HaZeh!" The joy of studying Torah surpasses all pleasures this world has to offer.

The poor know that they have nowhere to turn other than to Hashem Himself, and therefore Hashem takes special care of them.

As Rabbeinu b'Chaya (*Shemos* 22:22) writes, "When people are hurt, they go to their friends for help. But orphans and widows are weak, and no one comes to their aid. Therefore, they don't trust in man. Rather, they trust in Hakadosh Baruch Hu Who helps, saves and protects. And since they trust in Hashem, Hashem helps them more than He helps others." The same goes for the poor; they know that they can't manage without Hashem's help, and therefore Hashem helps them.

The Nesivos Shalom related that they were confronted with many obstacles when they were building the Slonimer Yeshiva in Eretz Yisrael. The founders and *roshei yeshiva* would meet periodically to seek ways to overcome the difficulties. Inevitably, they would conclude these meetings with the following words, "We are *umbehofeners*, and the *umbehofeners helft der*

*Aibershter*." Translation: "We don't see any hope. And Hashem helps those who feel helpless." Because Hashem helps those who turn their eyes to Him. As the Seforno (*Shemos* 22:26) writes, "[Hashem says] I have compassion on anyone who prays to Me when he doesn't have anyone who can help him, other than Me."

After reading the above, we are left to wonder who are more successful, the wealthy or the poor?

### Turning Yourself into a Mishkan

Shlomo HaMelech built the first Beis HaMikdash, and he was overwhelmed with the idea that Hashem would reside in this relatively small area. He said (*Malachim* 1, 8:27), *כי האמנם ישבב אלקים על הארץ, הנה השמים ושמי השמים לא יכלכלוך אף כי הבית הזה אשר בניתי*, "Would Hashem truly dwell on earth? Behold, the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain

You, and indeed not this house that I have built!"

So how does Hashem reside in the Beis HaMikdash?

The Arvei Nachal quotes the Alshich HaKadosh, who explains that the Beis HaMikdash was built with the donations of Bnei Yisrael. The donations were given with (1) love, (2) fear of Hashem, and (3) with a burning desire to serve Him. Hashem dwells in the holiness of the Jewish nation's love, fear, and yearning to serve Him.

It states (25:8), ועשו לי מקדש, ושכנתי בתוכם, "They shall make a Mikdash for Me so that I may dwell in them." The *pasuk* doesn't state ושכנתי בתוכו, "I will dwell in it," which would mean that Hashem will dwell in the Mishkan, but rather ושכנתי בתוכם, "I will dwell in them," in the Jewish nation. The Alshich explains that Hashem will dwell in every Yid.

Hashem wants to reside within every Yid who can resemble Hashem's Mishkan.

One merits having Hashem dwell in him when he attains the three attributes that made Hashem want to dwell in the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdash. When one loves, fears, and desires to serve Hashem, Hashem wants to be there.

As the *Zohar* (*Chadosh, Rus* 97:) writes, "There is nothing closer to Hashem than the heart of man. This is more cherished to Him than all *korbanos*."

And it states (*Tehillim* 73:26), צור לבבי והלקי אלקים לעולם, "Hashem is the rock of my heart and my portion forever." Hashem is my צור, my portion and my support, because of לבבי, my heart. The love, fear, and yearning of the heart turn me into Hashem's sanctuary.

There are other attributes that are needed to turn

oneself into a Mishkan (which we will discuss later on), but most important are these three attributes of love, fear, and a desire to serve Hashem.

It states (*Shir Hashirim* 3:9-10), אפריון עשה לו המלך שלמה מעצי הלבנון... תוכו רצוף אהבה מבנות ירושלים. The אפריון refers to the Mishkan and Beis HaMikdash that were constructed for Hashem, and the *pasuk* wonders how it was possible to build these dwellings מעצי הלבנון, from Lebanese trees, and other materials of this world, such as gold and silver? How could a building made from physical matter be a place where Hashem resides?

The *pasuk* replies, תוכו רצוף אהבה מבנות ירושלים. The Bnos Yerushalayim represents the Jewish nation. The *pasuk* clarifies that the Jewish nation donated the items with love, and

therefore Hashem wanted to be there.

The Arvei Nachal writes, "It is known that when one makes himself holy with these attributes (love, fear, and desire to serve Hashem), the Shechinah comes to him. Hashem loves these emotions, and wherever these emotions are found, Hashem goes there. However, we can't compare the holiness of a Yid who stands alone to the kedushah of many Yidden together. Therefore, Hashem commanded that every Yid should donate to the Mishkan. Each Yid donated with as much love as he could muster, and the Mishkan was built from these donations. As a result, the Mishkan possessed the kedushah of the entire nation of Bnei Yisrael together, and this drew down Hashem's Shechinah in the most appropriate manner..."<sup>12</sup>

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2. It seems that the same can be said when one is among many

## Desire

Let's discuss desire to serve Hashem, which is one of the primary elements that turns us into a Beis HaMikdash.

People don't recognize the value of desire. Instead, they admire and respect

deeds. "How many blatt did you study?" is asked more often than "How many blatt do you *want* to study?"<sup>3</sup>

If someone is working in *kiruv*, people ask him, "How many *baalei teshuvah* did you make?" They don't ask, "How many *baalei*

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Yidden who love, fear, and desire to serve Hashem (such as in a beis medresh). Hashem's presence is among them.

**3.** There was a teenage bachur who wasn't learning well in yeshiva, and his rebbe was very upset with him. "Why do you come to yeshiva if you don't know anything?" he once rebuked him.

Once, a tzaddik from Eretz Yisrael came to America, and the rebbe brought his class to this tzaddik to receive his brachos. Each student had a moment alone with the tzaddik. When it was this bachur's turn, he requested, "Please give me a brachah that I should experience the sweetness in Torah."

The tzaddik began to cry because that was the most beautiful request. It expressed his deep desire to learn Torah, although he wasn't succeeding. The rebbe, who was also in the room, was shocked to hear this request. He didn't know that this student wanted to study Torah, and was struggling with the yetzer hara that was preventing him.

The tzaddik blessed him, and after the bachur left the room, the tzaddik urged the rebbe to spend a lot of time with this special bachur, to help him succeed in Torah.

The efforts paid off, and now this student is a talmid chacham and a marbitz Torah.

It all begins with desire. That is the highest and ultimate level.

*teshuvah* are you striving to make?" But in Hashem's eyes, desire is more important.

Rebbe Tzaddok HaKohen *zt'l* takes note that the Torah discusses at length Avraham Avinu's *hachnasas orchim* and the Akeidah, although both were a mere desire of Avraham. Avraham didn't really do *hachnasas orchim* with the *malachim*, because *malachim* don't need to eat. And Avraham never actually sacrificed Yitzchak because a *malach* came and stopped him. Avraham is praised for his desires and not for the outcome.

The love that Hashem has for the heart of a Yid is expressed in many places.

As it states (*Mishlei* 23:26), "תנה בני לבך לי, *"My child, give your heart to Me."*

And Chazal say, רחמנא, לבא בני, Hashem desires the heart.

Reb Hillel Kolemaya *zt'l* (*Maskil el Dal*, vol.3 1:4) asks

that the *pasuk* at the beginning of the *parashah* (25:2) refers to the donations of the Mishkan, תרומה and תרומתי. תרומתי means "My donation," which sounds like Hashem donated. And תרומה is the Jewish nation's donation. So, which one is it?

Reb Hillel Kolemaya explains that Hashem saw the desire in the Yidden's hearts and knew that if they could give more, they would. Therefore, Hakadosh Baruch Hu placed a *brachah* into their donations, and the amount they donated miraculously matched the amount they wanted to give.

The Yid's donation is called תרומה. The parts that were miraculously added on is תרומתי, Hashem's donation- the amount that Hashem added on, so it should equal the Yid's desires.

The lesson that we learn from this *pasuk* is very encouraging. Hashem

doesn't only measure what we do, He also considers what we want to do, and He can increase our accomplishments to match our desires.

The *Zohar* (*Korach* p.179) writes that תרומה has the letters, תורה מ, alluding to the Torah that was given in forty days. Reb Hillel Kolemaya explains that the *Zohar* implies that the same happens with Torah and mitzvos.

He writes, "There are many holy Yidden who constantly yearn and pray with all their hearts to connect to Hashem and to understand Torah and to serve Hashem properly and to praise Hashem. Yet, many of them can't bring their desires to fruition. The Torah says to Bnei Yisrael, דבר אל בני ישראל and דבר means to console.<sup>4</sup> Tell them and encourage them,

'You are Hashem's nation, children of the living G-d; you are the holy flock who desires with all your souls to know the Torah and to keep the sweet mitzvos. Stop crying; there is hope... I guarantee you won't only be rewarded for the mitzvos you perform. I will combine your pure desires and give you credit as though you performed the good deeds you wished you could do.'

### A Word of Encouragement

One factor that weakens our desire to serve Hashem is our failure to accomplish what we want to do. We want, we try, and when we fail, we feel upset. When this happens a few times, people think, "Why should I keep on trying, only to fail and be disappointed again? I am better off to stop wanting."

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4. דברו על לב ירושלים, (*Yeshayah* 40:2), דברו על לב ירושלים, "Speak consolingly to Yerushalayim."

He is wrong on three counts:

1) The desire itself is precious to Hashem, even if he fails.

2) He will have some successes. So, it won't be a total failure. Perhaps he won't succeed as much as he hoped for, but something small is also good.

For example, he wants to spend more time studying Torah, and due to this desire, he finds five more minutes three times during the week. It wasn't what he had in mind, but five minutes, three times a week, is also an accomplishment!

We'll prove it:

It states in *Megillas Esther* (4:17), ויעבר מרדכי, and the Gemara (*Megillah* 15.) has a *machlokes* what this means. According to Rav,

this means that Mordechai transgressed the yom tov, because he established a fast on the first day of Pesach.<sup>5</sup>

Shmuel says, דעבר ערקמא דמיא, that Mordechai crossed a body of water to gather Bnei Yisrael, because Esther requested (4:16), לך כנוס את כל היהודים הנמצאים בשושן וצומו עלי, "Go, assemble all the Yidden that are to be found in Shushan, and fast for me..." and Mordechai crossed over the body of water to gather the Yidden.

How large was this ערקמא דמיא, the body of water?

Some say that it was a river. They explain that Shushan had two districts on either side of the river. One side was שושן הבריה, the royal capital city, where Achashveirosh and his staff lived. Mordechai

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5. Rashi explains that Haman's letters went out in Shushan on the thirteenth of Nisan. The Jews fasted the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, and on that last day, towards evening, Haman was hung.

HaTzaddik also lived there, as it states (Esther 2:5) איש יהודי היה בשושן הבירה ושמו מרדכי "There was a Yid in Shushan, the capital city whose name was Mordechai..." The pasuk implies that he was the only Yid who lived there.

The other side of the river was שושן, where the ordinary citizens of Shushan lived. All Yidden living in Shushan lived there. Mordechai crossed over this river to gather the Jewish nation.

However, there is another place in Shas that mentions the words עורקמא דמיא (see *Megillah* 28:) and there Rashi says that it is a puddle.

The *Manos HaLevi* (written by Reb Shlomo Alkabetz, composer of *Lecha Dodi*) follows that explanation. All Mordechai did was cross over a puddle to tell the Yidden to gather and pray. Why does the megillah tell us about that? It seems insignificant.

The *Manos HaLevi* replies, "I say that this tells us a great thing. Even when something is small, when it is done for a mitzvah, it is worth writing about it in a *sefer*. As Rashi writes, it wasn't a large river, just a puddle (*Megillah* 28:). Nevertheless, the megillah tells us ויעבר מרדכי, that Mordechai walked over the puddle, as though it was a great achievement. Because every deed is accounted for."

So, let's go back to our mashal. Someone desired to study a lot of Torah, and all that his desires accomplished was five minutes more, three times during the week. He should feel that his desires paid off. They weren't for nothing. Five minutes, three times a week is an **i m p r e s s i v e a c c o m p l i s h m e n t**. Everything that one does for ruchniyos is a great success.

3) If he wants long enough, he will succeed in

the end. As the *Zohar* states, "There isn't a desire that is lost."

The same is with tefillah. Our sages tell us that sometimes one davens and isn't answered. He davens again, and still isn't answered. It could be that he didn't daven enough. All that is possibly lacking is just one more prayer to reach a certain quota of tefillos required for his salvation, and then his deliverance will come.

We find the same by Moshe Rabbeinu. He davened 515 tefillos to be allowed to enter Eretz Yisrael. If he would daven just one more tefillah (or if the Yidden would have davened for him), the quota of tefillos would be completed, and he would merit going into Eretz Yisrael.

Yearning is similar. If we yearn and yearn to serve Hashem properly, we will eventually succeed.

The Tiferes Shlomo (ד"ה והיו הכרובים פורשי כנפים למעלה) writes, "The *keruvim* demonstrate the love between Hakadosh Baruch Hu and Bnei Yisrael. In the entire Beis HaMikdash, there wasn't a miracle that took place like that of the *keruvim*. A piece of gold came to life. Because when Bnei Yisrael davened three times a day, the *keruvim* would raise their wings upwards, as the *Zohar* (*Acharei*) tells us. This expressed to Bnei Yisrael that Hakadosh Baruch Hu desires their tefillos. Also, Chazal (*Yoma* 54:) tell us that the *keruvim* would hug one another, revealing the love between Hakadosh Baruch Hu and Bnei Yisrael. The *keruvim* also taught the nation that they must never lose hope. Similar to the *pasuk* (56:3), ואל יאמר הסרים הן אני, עץ יבש. Let not the barren one say, 'Behold I am a shriveled tree.' Because Hakadosh Baruch Hu showed with the *keruvim*, which became spiritual and intelligent and they

sang songs to Hashem (as the Zohar tells us) and this gives us strength..." It reveals to us that there is hope for the Jewish nation. If pieces of gold can become spiritual, then surely a Yid can become spiritual. So, don't lose hope. You may have tried many times, you wanted, you failed, but keep on trying, and continue yearning. In the end, Hashem will grant you success.

### Sanctifying One's Limbs

How does one become a Mishkan for Hashem? We discussed love, fear, and yearning to serve Hashem, but there is more. One must also sanctify and purify his body so he will be worthy of containing Hashem's presence.

It states (26:1), ואת המשכן ותעשה עשר יריעות... מעשה חושב תעשה אותם, "You shall make the Mishkan of ten curtains... with a woven design..." These were the curtains

that covered the roof and the sides of the Mishkan.

Rashi writes that two pictures were woven onto the curtains. One side had the picture of a lion, and the other side had the design of an eagle.

These two animals (lion and eagle) symbolize the absolute requirement of being cautious with the holiness of the eyes.

The Mishnah (*Avos* 5:20) states, הוי... קל כנשר "Be light like an eagle." The *Tur* (*Orach Chaim* 1) explains, "To be light like an eagle is referring to eyesight. It is compared to an eagle because just as an eagle flies in the air, it is with eyesight. The Mishnah is teaching us to close our eyes from bad sights because the beginning of an *aveirah* is for the eyes to see and then the heart desires, and then he completes the deed."

The curtains that covered the Mishkan had

the picture of an eagle to remind Klal Yisrael to be swift to close their eyes, just as an eagle flies swiftly through the air.

The other side of the curtain had a picture of a lion, an אריה. Notice that אריה has the same letters as ראיה. Once again, this hinted to the nation to be cautious with their eyes and eyesight.

The *parashah* also discusses the two *keruvim* on top of the *aron*. The *Zohar* says that these two *keruvim* represent the two eyes of a human being.

The *keruvim* are mentioned somewhere else in the Torah. When Adam HaRishon was banished from Gan Eden, it states (*Bereishis* 3:24), וישכן מקדם לגן עדן, את הכרובים... לשמור את דרך עץ החיים, "Hashem stationed the *keruvim* at the east of Gan Eden...to guard the way to the Tree of Life."

Rashi explains that those *keruvim* were *malachei chavalah*, destructive angels.

So, what are *keruvim*? Holy items in the Kodesh Kadoshim, or damaging angels?

The answer is the *keruvim* are the eyes, and they can be holy when they are used to looking at holy things, or they can *chas veshalom* be impure. In the Mishkan, the *keruvim* were inside (inside the Kodesh Kadoshim) so they represent holiness. But the *keruvim* stated in *Bereishis* stood outside (outside Gan Eden), and when the eyes are outside, they are like *malachei chavalah*, destructive angels.

The Beis Yisrael *zt'l* said (*Shemos* 21:28), ובעל השור נקי, if you are cautious with your eyes, you will be found righteous in judgment.<sup>6</sup>

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6. אראנו ולא עתה אשורנו ולא קרוב, (Bamidbar 24:17), "I shall see him but not now, I shall look at him, but it is not near."

Pure eyes begin with pure desires because one sees what he wants to see. Chazal say that one shouldn't look at the clothes of woman that are hanging to dry because this can cause him to have improper thoughts. And Chazal (Menachos 43:) say that the color of *techeles* in *tzitzis* resembles the sea, and the color of the sea resembles the heaven, and the color of the heaven resembles Hashem's throne, the *kisei hakavod*. Therefore, *tzitzis* with *techeles* will bring him to *yiras Shamayim*. One must associate with several associations before he connects the color of the *techeles* to the *kisei hakavod*. But if *yiras Shamayim* interests him, his mind will find the connection. Because one sees what he wants to see.

We'll explain with a *mashal*:

Two friends went to the zoo, and when they returned, they discussed what they saw. One said

how impressed he was by how organized the zoo managed their chores. The feeding, cleaning and even the locations of the cages were all arranged neatly.

The other was discussing the graphics of the description posted in front of each cage. He was excited about the talent that went into it.

As it turned out, one of them worked in business organization, so that's what interested him, and that's what he saw in the zoo. The other worked in graphics, so that is what he saw.

People see what they want to see, and therefore, the beginning of *shmiras einayim* is to want to see good.

If a person wants to turn himself into a *Mishkan*, he must be cautious with his eyes.

He must also be cautious with his thoughts.

It states, כרובים מעשה חושב, "With a woven design of *keruvim* shall you make them." The Chasam Sofer (*Drashos* 112:) says that חושב, refers to people's thoughts, and the *keruvim* are images of *malachim*. "This hints to the idea that when one has holy thoughts, this makes him just like the *malachim* in heaven."

The Ahavas Yisrael of Viznitz *zt'l* said that Adar is an opportune time to guard one's thoughts because in Adar we are happy, as it states, משנכם אדר, מרבין בשמחה, and בשמחה spells מחשבה, thoughts.

Furthermore, Chazal tell us that Haman had permission from heaven to make his evil decrees because Bnei Yisrael bowed down to the idol of Nevuchadnezzar. The Gemara (*Megillah* 12.) asks if they worshipped idols, why did they deserve to be saved? The Gemara replies, הם לא עשו אלא לפנים, the Yidden didn't *want* to worship the

idol. They were coerced by Nevuchadnezzar and were afraid to disobey.

We were saved from Haman's plot because of our righteous thoughts. Our thoughts were with Hashem, although the deeds were of *avodah zarah*.

Adar, the month when the miracle occurred, is an ideal time to purify the thoughts. It was our pure thoughts that saved us.

As we wrote above, it states ושכנתי בתוכם, "I will reside among *them*," and the Alshich explains that Hashem desires to dwell in the heart of every Yid. Therefore, it states (25:9) וכן תעשו, "And so shall you do" and Rashi writes, לדורות, for all generations. This means we have a mitzvah to build a Mishkan and a Beis HaMikdash even in our times. But how can we do so? The answer is, ושכנתי בתוכם, turn yourself into a Beis HaMikdash.

Tzaddikim said that this is easier to accomplish than we might think.

There is a *mashal* of a king who was banished from his palace and sought a place to stay. A loyal subject brought him into his home. The home was clean, but he was poor. He gave the king some dry bread, and at night, he made him a straw bed on the ground. The king was very happy with all of this. Obviously, it was not fitting for the great king, but when the king doesn't have anywhere else to be, this is also good.

The *nimshal* is that when there is no Beis HaMikdash, as it is, sadly, in our times, it is easier to host the king. Whoever is loyal to the king and wants to serve Him, and he cleans up his ways as best as he can, the king will desire to stay with him. It is easier in these generations than when the Beis HaMikdash stood.

Also, when there are so few people in the world devoted to Hashem, he can work on himself to be one of the few in whom Hashem will want to reside. He can merit being Hashem's Mishkan.

We've seen that by having love, fear, and yearning for Hashem, and by purifying our eyes and thoughts for Hashem, we can turn ourselves into Hashem's Mishkan, a place where Hashem resides.

## Torah

Now, we add that if you study Torah, you can become Hashem's Mishkan. This is because Hashem loves the Torah, and therefore, He is with those who study and know Torah.

The Ba'ch (on *Orach Chaim*, 47) writes, "Hashem desires that we study Torah so that our souls will become fortified with spirituality... Hashem gave the Torah to the Jewish people so that

our souls and bodies, with their 248 limbs and 365 sinews should unite with the 248 mitzvos *asei* and the 365 mitzvos *lo sa'asei* of the Torah. If Yidden studied Torah with this intention, they would become Hashem's chariot and a Mishkan for the *Shechinah*. Hashem's *Shechinah* would rest in them, and the world would be filled with Hashem's glory."

Therefore, everyone should study Torah because this will turn our hearts into an abode for Hashem.<sup>7</sup>

The *parashah* begins, ויקחו לי תרומה, and the *Zohar* says that the word תרומה stands for, תורה מ', the Torah that was given in forty days. Chazal tell a mashal of a king who had a daughter whom he loved dearly, and he would spend a lot of

time with her. When she married, the king asked his son-in-law to build a small room near them, so he could always be near his daughter. Similarly, the Torah, which Hashem loves, used to be in heaven. Hashem loved the Torah, and he studied it in heaven. After the Torah was given to the Jewish nation, Hashem requested that we build a Mishkan, so He can be near the Torah, which he loves so much.

Also today, although there is no Mishkan, Hashem wants to be with the Yidden who study Torah. As Chazal (Brachos 8.) say, "From the day the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed, Hakadosh Baruch Hu's only place in the world is the four cubits where Torah is studied."

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7. Torah study also purifies us from sin. The Tzror HaMor writes that the cover on the aron is called kapores (which can also mean forgiveness) because "Torah atones, more than all korbanos."

Reb Yitzchak Hutner *zt'l* tells a *mashal* of a person who put his house up for sale. The bids went higher and higher until someone offered a very high price, but he still didn't sell it to him.

The highest bidder asked him, "Do you want to sell your house or not? I'm the highest bidder; no one is going higher, so why don't you sell it to me?"

The property owner replied, "I never intended to sell the house. I just wanted to know how much the house is worth."

Reb Yitzchak Hutner explained that if you want to know the value of a good deed, see how hard the *yetzer hara* attempts to prevent you from doing it. If you experience immense opposition, you can be sure that it is a very special deed.

The lesson applies to studying Torah. As one of the Belzer Rebbe's said,

"The *yetzer hara* doesn't mind if you speak about chassidus...as long as you don't study Torah." The *yetzer hara*'s efforts to prevent people from studying Torah tells us just how important it is.

And when we succeed in studying Torah, we become a Mishkan for Hashem.

### **Overcoming the *Yetzer Hara***

Many factors can prevent people from studying Torah.

We will list some of them:

(1) People busy earning a living feel that they don't have time for Torah study.

(2) People sometimes feel that they aren't in an environment conducive to Torah study. For example, they say, "If I were in that yeshiva, or if I lived in a different community, I would learn more, but

where I am now, I cannot study Torah."

(3) "I don't have *yishuv hadaas*, peace of mind, to study Torah."

(4) *The yetzer hara doesn't let me study Torah.*

The *yetzer hara* keeps people's minds occupied with temptations physical pursuits, which prevents them from devoting their thoughts to the Torah.

We can refute all these excuses.

(1) *I need to earn a living, and I don't have time for Torah study.*

The Sfas Emes *zy"א* disproves this logic because setting aside time to study Torah generates *brachos* and increases our *parnassah*. It is the opposite of what we think. Setting aside times to study Torah

doesn't harm one's *parnassah*. It improves it.

The Sfas Emes explained that this is alluded to by the *shulchan* (which represents *parnassah*) that stood not far from the *aron*. This indicates that *parnassah* goes to those who study Torah.

(2) *The atmosphere in my yeshiva or my city isn't conducive to studying Torah.*

This is a fallacy because it is a good place to study Torah no matter where you are.

The proof is from the *aron*. The *aron* was 2.5 *amos* long and 1.5 *amos* wide (see 25:11) and it stood in the *Kodesh Kodashim*, but it miraculously didn't take up space (see *Megillah* 10:).<sup>8</sup>

This teaches us that the Torah is beyond the limits of area and space.

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8. The *Kodesh Kadashim* measured 20 x 20 *amos*, and there were ten *amos* on either side of the *aron* to the wall. How is that possible? This was a miracle. The *aron* didn't take up any space.

Torah is beyond time, too.

Therefore, the only yom tov that doesn't have a date is Shavuos. Pesach begins on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, Rosh Hashanah is on the first of Tishrei, and so on, but Shavuos can fluctuate between the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, or 7<sup>th</sup> of Sivan. The Torah tells us that Shavuos is the 50<sup>th</sup> day after the second day of Pesach, but it doesn't state its date. The lunar month can be either 29 or 30 days. The length of Nisan and Iyar will determine when Shavuos will be, and it can change from year to year.<sup>9</sup>

This teaches us that Shavuos is beyond the constraints of time.

So, Torah is beyond time and space, and

therefore, the Chasam Sofer zt'l says, one should never say, "This isn't a good time, or place, for Torah study."

Rashi (Devarim 6:5) writes, שלא יהיה לבך חלוק על המקום. Rebbe Shlomo Karliner zt'l explained that one should never say that his place or situation isn't good. It is always a good place and a good time to study Torah.

(3) *I don't have the peace of mind to study Torah.*

Again, a false statement because you will attain peace of mind if you study Torah.

A tzaddik once said that a lack of *yishuv hadaas* is never an excuse not to study Torah because the nature of Torah is that it is

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9. This doesn't happen anymore. Today, Shavuos is always on the 6th of Sivan because Nisan is always thirty days and Iyar is always 29 days. But when the months were established by witnesses, both months could be 29 days and then Shavuos would be on the seventh of Sivan, or both months could be thirty days, and then Shavuos would be on the fifth of Sivan.

מחכימת פתי and משיבת נפש  
Torah study engenders  
*yishuv hadaas*. You might  
lack peace of mind at the  
beginning of your studies,  
but as you study, you will  
gradually calm down and  
have *yishuv hadaas*.

(4) *The yetzer hara doesn't  
let me study Torah.*

There are solutions for  
this problem, too. There  
are techniques that can  
help us overcome the  
yetzer hara.

It states in this week's  
parashah (25:11), וצפית אותו זהב,  
מהור, "You shall cover [the  
*aron*] with pure gold." The  
*aron* represents the Torah,  
and gold represents wealth.  
Rebbe Eizik of Kamarna  
taught that when you want  
to study Torah, tell yourself  
that you want to study  
Torah in order to earn  
wealth because then the  
yetzer hara will leave you  
alone.

After you are studying  
already, you can now study  
*l'shem Shamayim*. But

begin by studying *shelo  
lishmah*, for personal gain,  
such as to earn wealth,  
because then the yetzer  
hara will not consider your  
deeds so important to try  
to stop you from studying  
Torah.

Someone wanted to  
wake up very early to  
study Torah, but the yetzer  
hara didn't let him do so. A  
gadol asked him, "Which  
food do you like very  
much?"

He replied that he  
enjoys ice cream.

"Buy yourself a tub of  
ice cream and eat some of  
it on days that you wake  
up early."

He did so, and this  
helped him awaken early.

Dovid HaMelech used  
this technique to bring  
himself to study Torah. As  
he wrote (Tehillim 119:59)  
חשבתי דרכי ואשיבה רגלי אל עדותיך,  
"I considered my ways, and I  
returned my feet to your  
Torah." The Midrash  
(Vayikra Rabba 35:1) says that

Dovid planned to go elsewhere, but his feet brought him to the beis medresh.

The holy sefarim explain that Dovid HaMelech told his yetzer hara, "I want to go to this place where I can earn some worldly gain," and the yetzer hara let him go there. And after he was freed from the yetzer hara's clutches, he went where he truly wanted to go, to the holy beis medresh.

Rebbe Eizek of Kamarna added that this is alluded to in the *pasuk* (*Bereishis* 12:4), וילך אברם כאשר דיבר אליו ד' וילך אתו לוט. *Lot* can mean covered, concealed (as in *כשמלה*). If you want to go in Hashem's ways, cover it with some worldly matter, and the *yetzer hara* will permit you to go on this path.

Rebbe Yitzchak Deribitch *zy"u* (the father of Rebbe Michel of Zlotchev *zy"u*) wanted to go from city to city to give *drashos* and encourage people to

improve their ways. The *yetzer hara* came to him and said, "Why should you waste so much of your time traveling from place to place? Wouldn't it be better for you to remain home and study Torah?"

Rebbe Yitzchak replied, "Essentially, you're right, but I need *parnassah*. When I travel around, people pay me for my speeches." Rebbe Yitzchok was using money as a ploy to silence the *yetzer hara*. He wasn't interested in the money, but it concealed the good deed from the *yetzer hara*, and he was successful in his mission.

## Adar

The Meor Einayim (*Terumah*) writes, "There is a reason for the name of each month. The month אדר spells א' ד"ר, 'Alef dwells.' Alef is the Alufo Shel Olam (Chief/Master of the World). Because just as א is the first letter, so is Hashem first of all creations. א' ד"ר means

Hashem rests His *Shechinah* in the world below."

The essence of Adar is similar to that of the Mishkan. Hashem resided in the Mishkan, and during the month of Adar, we become aware that Hashem lives in the world.

The Gemara says, הרוצה שיתקיימו נכסיו יטע בהן אדר, "If a person desires that his property should remain with him, he should plant an adar." Simply understood, the adar is a notable tree, and people speak about it. They will say, "Do you know what Shimon has in his field? He has an adar tree!". That way, everyone will know that the field belongs to Shimon, making it harder for someone to steal the field from him.

The Bnei Yissaschar (Adar 1:8) adds another explanation to the Gemara.

Adar is when we attain awareness that א' דר, that Hashem dwells in the

world; He is the reason and cause behind everything that occurs in this world.

When you know that, you will know that the property you own, the job you hold, and every other detail of your life are all planned and arranged by Hashem, who is א' דר, who dwells in the world.

Thus, the Gemara says, הרוצה שיתקיימו נכסיו, if you want that your property to always remain with you, יטע בהן אדר, plant into your heart the lessons of Adar. Train yourself to be aware that you didn't buy the property by the strength of your hand or by your wise decisions. It happened because that was Hashem's plan. Hashem gave it to you. This *emunah* is *mesugal* that the property will remain with you.

We add that the same applies to all the other matters we enjoy in life: family, prestige, wealth, and more. Know that it all

comes from Hashem. It didn't happen by chance. And this *emunah* is *mesugal* that they will remain with you.

The Kedushas Levi (*Terumah* ד"ה וראה) explains that אדר means clothes (see *Malachim* 2, 2:13, אדרת אליהו). Because the miracles that happen this month are clothed within nature. "Some miracles, such as *kriyas Yam Suf* and other miracles were entirely beyond the rules of nature. However, the miracle that happened in Adar [the downfall of Haman], happened within the boundaries of nature. Because the month of Adar is when Hashem runs the world within nature.

It is a time of אדר, Hashem's presence is seen but dressed within the rules of nature.

For a description of the type of miracles that occur in Adar, we repeat an old *mashal*, told by early

scholars and is quoted in *Bnei Yissaschar* (*Kislev* 4:83):

Doctors informed the family of an ailing patient that there was nothing they could do to save their relative. There was no cure.

The doctors added, "Actually, there is a cure, but it is impossible to get it. Far off in the east, on islands off the Indian coast, grow precious healing herbs. The Indian government doesn't export those herbs to other lands because they need them for their citizens, and these days, no one is traveling from India to our town. So, there is a cure, but we can't get it to your relative."

The desperate family responded, "We will hire someone to travel to India and bring back the herbs."

The doctors replied, "It is a hazardous trip. Many who traveled this route didn't survive. Furthermore, the trip can take years, and your

relative only has a few days to live."

"That's not the only problem," the doctor continued. "Even if we had the herbs right here, we don't know how to prepare them. The herbs need to be mixed, cooked, and prepared in a special way, and no one in this country knows how to do it. There's a wise doctor who lives far away in Spain. He knows how to prepare the medicine. But to send someone to Spain to bring back the doctor will take years. Additionally, it isn't certain that the doctor will survive the trip because the route to Spain is also perilous. And as your relative doesn't have much more time to live; there's absolutely no hope."

The family realized that there was no hope. So they cried and prepared themselves for the inevitable.

Suddenly, someone came into the room and

said, "A ship from India has just docked in our country. The ship has the herbs this dying person needs."

They were very happy, but the doctor reminded them that the herbs are useless if you don't know how to prepare them.

Just then, someone else came into the room and said, "A ship just arrived from Spain, and the renowned Spanish doctor is on it."

The family rushed to buy the precious herbs and hired the Spanish doctor to prepare it.

The ill person recovered.

"It's a miracle," the family shouted.

It was indeed miraculous, yet nothing unnatural occurred. Every detail could be explained by the rules of nature.

This describes the miracles of Adar.

Everything is natural, but the miracles are obvious.

The Bnei Yissaschar writes that the Purim miracle was a thousand times greater than the story we just related. Nevertheless, the process of the miracle is similar. It was a miracle dressed within the rules of nature.

The Ahavas Shalom *zt'l* teaches, "אדר is *roshei teivos*, רעוא דרעון אשתכח, "immense desire and love are found." Hashem's love to us is revealed this month, and He performs miracles for us.

The *tzaddikim* of Ziditchov *zt'l* didn't say *tachanun* the entire month of Adar. The Lemberger Rav *zt'l* (*Yeshuos Yaakov*) asked Rebbe Eizik of Ziditchov *zy'a* for a halachic source to this custom. He said, "I don't want to hear a source from Kabbalah or

chassidus. I want to hear a halachic source."

Rebbe Eizik Ziditchover replied, "The entire month Adar is a *yom tov*, as it states (*Esther* 9:22), והחודש אשר נהפך להם מייגון לשמחה, ומאבל ליום טוב 'the month that was overturned from distress to joy, from mourning to *yom tov*...' So therefore, the entire month of Adar is a *yom tov*, and we don't say *tachanun* on *yom tov*."

Although most people say *tachanun* in Adar (each person should follow his custom in this regard) nevertheless, it is important to know the specialness of these days. This year there are two Adar's: two months of joy, two months to recognize אָרָר, that Hashem dwells in this world, and two months to appreciate all the miracles Hashem performs for us.<sup>10</sup>

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10. *Hashgachah pratis* stories happen to us all the time, but we are generally not aware of them. When we ask someone to share a

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*hashgachah pratis* story that happened to him, sometimes he will answer, "I have to think about, and I'll let you know when I come up with something" or he will tell a story that happened several years ago. But there are so many *hashgachah pratis* miracles that happen to us all the time, every day. Why should we need to think to find something to say, and why should it be that the only stories we have at our exposal are from years ago (although it is a mitzvah to tell these stories as well). What can we do to be more aware of the *hashgachah pratis* happening around us all the time?

A great idea is to get into the practice of saying, מאת ד' היתה זאת, "This is from Hashem.". Whoever you meet, whatever you see, and the things that you must do, tell yourself, *this is from Hashem. Hashem arranged it.* By doing so, you will become aware of the myriads of examples of *hashgachah pratis*.

The Beis Ahron zy"א teaches this lesson on the pasuk, מאת ד' היתה זאת, "This is from Hashem, and it is a wonder in our eyes." One should constantly say, "This is from Hashem," and then he will see the wonders of Hashem with his own eyes.