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PARSHAS TERUMAH EDITION – VOLUME 15, ISSUE 7 – ADAR 2, 5785/MARCH 1ST, 2025

TORAH QUESTION OF THE WEEK BY RAV MOSHE KLEIN: THE TABERNACLE IS NOT JUST A HOLY PLACE IN THIS WORLD

Last week's question: What was the point of the details of the Mishkan? Isn't the main thing the connection in one's heart? Why is the Torah getting all exact about the structure?

Answer: We must understand that the Mishkan is not just a very holy place, as many people think. It's a lot more than that. The **Midrash Tanchuma** (Nasso 16) writes that Hashem says, *"I want to have a place to live in this world the same way I live in the upper worlds."* This may confuse us, as we know Hashem is not human that is bound to time and space, and His Honor spreads around the entire world. Yet, Hashem wants a place in this world that contains a concentration of His Shechinah. This is more than just saying the Mishkan is a holy place.

The Midrash adds that *"after the sin of Adam Harishon, Hashem removed His Divine presence to the Heavens. When Avraham Avinu arose and performed good works, Hashem immediately descended from the seventh firmament to the sixth. When Yitzchak arose and stretched out his neck upon the altar, He descended from the sixth firmament to the fifth.... When Moshe arose, he brought down the Divine Presence to earth."* So, the Shechinah came down from the seventh firmament, and we know how vast space is, so to have this concentration of Shechinah gives us an inkling of how many rules are needed to sustain it.

There is not even a *mashal* (parable) to give here, but we know for a combination to work, very specific numbers must be entered, and order must be used. For the Shechinah to be in this world, there must be an exact formula in place. The Kohen Gadol is only able to enter the Holy of Holies once a year and if he wasn't worthy, he died. People don't die when they go to holy places, but when the Shechinah is in the Holy of Holiest, one must be on the level to survive. To live with the Mishkan, it had to be built perfectly and with exactitude.

The **Ramban** (Shemos 25:1) brings down that the secret of the Tabernacle is that the Glory which abode upon Mount Sinai [openly] should abide upon it in a concealed manner. The same way it says (Shemos 24:16) *And the glory of the Eternal abode upon Har Sinai*, so it is written of the Mishkan (ibid. 40:34), *and the glory of the Eternal filled the Mishkan*. Think about Har Sinai for a moment. The mountain was shaking – there was a fire all the way up to Shomayim. There were tremendous sounds, and it was very frightening, making people flee for miles. All that Shechinah is hidden in the Mishkan. Can you imagine how precise it must be?



The Gemara (Berachos 55a) states that Betzalel was able to combine letters to create the Mishkan because he knew the letters used to create the heavens and the earth. It turns out that the Mishkan was a microcosm of the entire world. To build it, one had to know the combination of letters, the *Alef-Beis* that was used to create the world. In other words, one had to know the secrets of Creation itself to make a small area that contained the space for Hashem to rest His Presence! The amount of exactness needed here was unbelievable. At Har Sinai, all the people saw Hashem's Presence directly. They could literally see the words – it was Hashem descending the seven heavens.

This is why most of the *Karbonos* (offerings) that were brought on Yom Kippur were brought for Tumas Mikdash. Any impurity that may have happened during the process of bringing offerings is what people repented for on the holiest day. Hashem was forgiving the people so that He would be able to further reside amongst us. We had to make sure that everything in the Mishkan, the flawless structure, was pure. The Gemara (Brachos 6a) relates that the Shechinah is with ten men who pray together, which generally happens in shul. The Gemara (Megilah 29a) adds that our shuls are a miniature Mikdash. We must remember that Hashem's Presence is in shul. Is a shul an adult playground or is it a place where we greet the Divine Presence? We don't have to be in a state of fear when in shul, since even in the Beis Hamikdash there were joyful occasions. There just must be a level of seriousness to remember that we are in a special place.

Question: Why is the Mizbeach Hazahav (the Golden Altar) in this parsha when this parsha is primarily for the clothing of the Kohanim, and not about the vessels?

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In this week's parsha we see the goal of a Jewish home. The Torah tells us (Shemos 25:8) "And they should make me a sanctuary so that I can dwell among them. According to **Rabbi Samson Rephael Hirsch** the true meaning of this Pasuk is that it describes our goal in marriage, which is to build a home where the Shechinah (Divine Presence) is comfortable to reside; a place where Hashem can dwell among us because it is a place that is devoted to Hashem and the fulfillment of the Torah. How can we accomplish this lofty goal?

When the Torah speaks about the building of the Mishkan it uses the word ועשו - and they should make. When it speaks about the building of the Aron it uses the word ועשו - and they should make. For all other implements of the Mishkan the Torah uses the word ועשית - you should make. If we look closely at the building of the Aron, it will give us clues on how we can accomplish the lofty goal of building a true *Bayis Ne'eman*.

The Aron was made from two different materials, Shittim-wood and gold. **Rashi** (Shemos 25:5) asks, from where did they have Shittim wood in the wilderness? Rashi answers R'Tanchuma explained: "Our forefather Yaakov, foresaw through Ruach Hakodesh (Divine Inspiration) that the Jews were destined to build a Mishkan in the desert. He brought Shittim trees to Egypt and planted them there and he commanded his decedents to take them with them when they would leave Egypt." According to Rabbi Samson Rephael Hirsch, trees symbolize steady consistent growth and development, and in addition, a Shittim tree is a type of cedar tree that symbolizes greatness and strength.

Gold is a symbol of the purest and most refined morals and ethics. Put together, they formed the Aron which held the *Luchos* as well as the Torah scroll that Moshe wrote. The Aron had staves that Rashi (Shemos 25:15) writes shall not be removed from it, forever. The staves had to stay in place forever, never to be removed. If we put this all together, we get a clear picture of the goal of a Jewish home. A true Bayis Ne'eman revolves around the Torah, as the Aron housed the *Luchos* and the first Torah scroll.

A true Bayis Ne'eman B'Yisroel is a place where there is constant growth and development just like a Shittim tree is constantly growing and developing. Our homes should be a place where people are looked at as a work in progress instead of as a finished product, just like a tree. Steady consistent growth is a pivotal part of growing in Torah and we want to create a safe space in our homes for that.

An example of this is complementing our spouse, making sure to focus on the effort they are putting in. Daily compliments can help us make sure growth that is happening stays consistent. Greatness and strength are what is needed to withstand the tests of the outside world, and we want our homes to be as strong and pure as solid gold, dedicated to the purest and most refined morals and ethics. These morals and ethics are not what is dictated by the society we live in; rather they are dictated by the Torah, which has withstood the test of time and will never change its values. An example of this is the respect we show our spouses, saying gentler phrases like "If you can...", "I would appreciate if..." instead of "Get me..." or "I need you to..."

Finally, we want our homes to have staves which that be in place forever, symbolizing the fact that a Bayis Ne'eman can be uprooted and replanted wherever Hashem sends us. An example of this is being flexible when our spouse makes a request which is challenging. If we aim this high, then the Shechinah will always be present in our homes. Maintaining Shalom Bayis is not easy, but dedication to these ideals by both husband and wife will ensure that the Shechinah is always present, helping us. It is a lofty goal but let us make a supreme effort to encourage each other as the dividends are worth the effort. May Hashem fill our homes 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. You may visit torahmarriage.com or email Rabbi Greenfield at rabbigreenfield@gmail.com

SUGAR RUSH ON THE 613 MITZVOS BY R'ELI REIT

MITZVAH # 152 – KOSHER FISH

According to the **Rambam**, there is a Mitzvah to check if fish have the two kosher signs before eating them. The kosher signs are fins and scales. As the Pasuk (Vayikra 11:9) says, "This is what you shall eat from what is in the water: whatever has fins and scales." Others disagree with the Rambam and hold that there is no Mitzvah to check the fish.

Rather, the Mitzvah is only to refrain from eating fish that don't have these signs. Some people mistakenly think that it's not important for fish to be kosher. In reality, non-kosher fish are as non-kosher as pork. The need to have kosher signs extends to all sea creatures, not only fish.



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TERUMAH - CARE FOR THE KIDS

I was at a dinner for a school in England and was sitting with **Dayan Aharon Troy**. It was Parshas Terumah and I asked him the following question: It says we put two *keruvim* (cherubs) on top of the Aron. **Rashi** (Shemos 25:18) says that the *keruvim* have the faces of little children. These are supposed to represent the little cherubic faces of young kids. However, in Parshas Bereishis, the Torah (Bereishis 3:24) tells us that when Hashem chased Adam and Chava out of Gan Eden, He put *keruvim* to block the way back in. Rashi (ibid.) says that these were angels of destruction. We can make an argument that children are angels of destruction or that they are cherubic, or they may even be both, but shouldn't there be one clear definition?

Dayan Troy answered without hesitation. If we put them into the *Kodesh Hakedoshim*, they resemble cherubic creatures, but if you kick them out of Gan Eden, they become like angels of destruction. It's a very important idea to keep in mind when it comes to children. Rabbi Lazarus (Rosh Yeshiva of Derech) used to have staff meetings occasionally to discuss whether to ask a boy to leave or not. He mentioned in one of the meetings that he was fasting. The Halacha is that if one is judging *Dinei Nefashos* (capital crimes), the judge needs to fast that day. When the Rosh Yeshiva must throw a student of Yeshiva, they are being proverbially put to death.



To take one of the *Keruvim* and throw them out of the Holy of Holies when they go outside of Gan Eden, does one stop to think about the consequences that will transpire because of that action? Let's be fair – not every Yeshiva can handle every student, and one doesn't do the student a favor by keeping him or her where they don't belong. But to throw a student out on the street without a contingency plan is not the right thing, either. The job of a *Mashgiach* (spiritual Dean) is to know the strengths of every student and not just to determine when someone doesn't fit in and must be expelled.

Rav Elazar Shach, ZT"l, got very angry when he heard that someone was thrown out of Yeshiva and called it "*mamash* (literally) murder". To take the *keruvim* out of a holy place is to create angels of destruction. We must be very careful to appreciate the greatness and potential of every child. This potential is to be honored, respected, and cared for. If they are left without a spiritual oasis, they will certainly become angels of destruction.

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TERUMAH - WHAT ARE YOU MADE OF?

When the Torah describes the Menorah, there are many details listed. Moshe had difficulty visualizing what the Menorah was to look like. **Rashi** (Shemos 25:40) says Hashem showed him a Menorah of fire as the prototype. There are different opinions in the Midrash as to what happened next exactly. Suffice it to say, the process was done or at least inspired miraculously. Why was this necessary?

There's an idea brought down in the **Sefer Otzros HaTorah** that Hashem only helps us when we push ourselves to our utmost. After we've exhausted all possibilities that are within our own power and we still desire it, only then does Hashem step in to provide Siyata Dishmaya (Divine help).

Rabbi Moti Piller teaches that there are three times in the Torah that Chazal inform us that Moshe had difficulty visualizing. One is the Menorah (as mentioned). The other two are the *Machtzis Hashekel* (the half-Shekel) and the new moon. In all these cases, the Torah uses the word "zeh" - this! This implies an idea of showing something visually.

It was as if Hashem was saying, "Moshe, you want to know what the new moon looks like - here it is! You want to understand how the Menorah was fashioned - this is it! The Shekel to use - here, let me show it to you!" What's interesting is that these three items - the Menorah, Shekel, and HaChodesh (Mem-Shin-Heh) - spell out Moshe's name.

If we want to really understand the essence of Moshe, let's not look at his accomplishments. Let's look at where he struggled. Look at what he pushed himself and desired to know and connect to. We often look at our own selves and take stock of our strengths and weaknesses. It's easy to associate oneself with that which one is good at. But if that is all one is focused on, then he or she is staying in their comfort zone. It means they are not growing. A coach of mine likes to say that if what you are doing or speaking about is not making you uncomfortable, it means you are not doing your best or most meaningful work.

So, where will you challenge yourself this week?

TERUMAH – POWER OF THE TORAH



The Torah tells us that the Ark should be covered with gold inside and out. The Chachamim tell us that this is symbolic to a Torah scholar who must be of the same high quality inside and out. The Gemara (Berachos 27b-28a) records the dispute between the nasi Rabban Gamliel and Rabbi Yehoshua concerning the status of the evening prayer as optional or mandatory.

As the story unfolds, the Gemara explores the motifs of exclusivity and inclusivity. In his administration of the then-closest equivalent to the contemporary Talmudic yeshiva, Rabban Gamliel imposed rigorous admissions standards, whereas others proposed a more tolerant policy, accepting a far wider range of students to the Beit Midrash. Rabbi Gamliel was relieved of his duties and Elazar Ben Azarya, who had an open-door policy, took over the mantle of leadership. He dismissed the guard at the door and welcomed in The Gemara goes so far as to cite a debate as to whether 400 or 700 benches were added to the Beis Midrash on the day Rabbi Elazar Ben Azarya was appointed Nasi.

When he saw the tremendous growth in the number of students, Rabban Gamliel was disheartened. Rabbi Gamliel saw that the students who weren't good inwardly and outwardly actually became great! This is because the Torah transformed them into scholars of the highest caliber and Rabbi Gamliel was saddened that perhaps, he held them back from reaching greatness. We see from here the importance of *Limud Torah* (learning Torah), the study of which changes people. One who learns Torah is called a Ben Torah, the son of a Torah. Just like a father and a mother give birth to a child, when one learns the Torah, he becomes a new person. The Torah shows us the way and we need to learn it day and night. We should remember that it is our purpose in this world.

There is a story of a man who came to America to make a living and provide for his son's Torah education. He opened a store that sold socks. After he became successful, he started selling shirts and pants and asked his son to help during his time off from Yeshiva. When the business expanded to new levels, he took his son out of Yeshiva to work in the store full-time. Clearly, this defeated the purpose, as the entire reason for the business being formed was to support the son as he learned Torah. Sometimes, we forget the point and purpose of our lives, so let's stay on track and invest in our Torah study in a real and sustainable way.

We stated previously that all the halachos mentioned here deal with public domains that do not have an eiruv, or they have an eiruv which one does not wish to rely upon.

May a woman wear a plastic sheitel cover?

In the previous article, we mentioned the problem of wearing a plastic hat cover on Shabbos. Certain poskim hold that since it is only intended to prevent the hat from getting wet and not to prevent the body from getting wet it is not a garment.

Rav Weiss, ZT"l, writes that the advantages of the plastic sheitel cover are that it covers part of the face, is not only worn to prevent the sheitel from getting wet but is also worn as clothing. The problem is that it is only worn when raining and removed as soon as the rain ceases. As such, Chazal were concerned that a person would remove the covering and carry it in a pocket, which invokes a severe prohibition of carrying. Rav Weiss concludes that a woman may not wear such a plastic covering on Shabbos.

May one wear jewelry in a public domain?

Background: although jewelry and ornaments are not 'clothing' nevertheless they serve a function and wearing them on Shabbos is not considered carrying, provided that they are worn in the regular manner. However, Chazal were concerned that one would remove one's jewelry to show to a friend and carry it in a *reshus harabim* (a public domain) and transgress the issur of carrying.

They therefore prohibited wearing most jewelry. Most jewelry and ornaments may be worn nowadays because the **Rema** writes that women do not remove their jewelry to show their friends and therefore the major concern is removed. The explanation is that in former times pieces of jewelry were not common and women would wear them only on Shabbos, thus they would show their trinkets to friends.

As jewelry is much more common nowadays and worn all the time, this no longer applies. As mentioned, the prevalent custom is to wear jewelry but there is room to be *mehader* and not to rely on the various leniencies, especially in big cities that are likely to be a *reshus harabim d'oraisso*.

May one wear a watch?

It depends on how a watch is defined. If a watch is a piece of jewelry, it may be worn, based on the above halacha. We might say that a simple, cheap watch is not jewelry, but a gold watch is. The problem is that one cannot resolutely declare that one's watch is jewelry, because if it stops or is broken it would not be worn. There is leeway to say that since the watch is worn on the arm like any other clothing it is not called carrying and permitted.

Rav Moshe Feinstein, ZT"l, instructed his pupils not to rely on this leniency and they should avoid wearing watches on Shabbos. Others were more stringent and prohibited it altogether.



Accordingly, one must ask one's rav as to the correct conduct, especially in big cities that are likely to be a

What about wearing glasses when there is no eiruv?

Glasses that are continually worn may be worn on Shabbos even where there is no eiruv, as they are considered clothing. The **Chayei Adam** was stringent regarding glasses, because they were not fastened around the head as ours are and there was concern that they would fall and be carried. Reading glasses may not be worn because they are not considered clothing.

What about wearing sunglasses when there is no eiruv?

Even if there is scope to say that sunglasses are worn on one's body like any other clothing, nevertheless we are concerned that one might remove them when in the shade. Accordingly, one may only wear sunglasses outdoors within an eiruv. Medical sunglasses, which one wears even indoors are different because one would not remove them.

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Summary: We are currently discussing the trait of Chassidus, namely the idea of how to honor Hashem beyond the bare minimum.

The Ramchal writes: **“They further said (Shabbos 10a): ‘Rava would don a cloak and pray, saying: ‘prepare to meet your G-d, O Israel’ (Amos 4:12). They further said on the verse: ‘then Rivkah took the finest clothes of Eisav her older son’ (Bereishis 27:15) - Raban Shimon ben Gamliel says: ‘I served my father... but when Eisav served his father, he would only do so while wearing royal clothing’” (Bereishis Raba 65:16).”** (Mesilas Yesharim, Ch. 19)

It's a big challenge to get “excited” for a meeting with anyone when meetings take place three times a day. This is true even for when we meet the Creator of the World, Hashem, when we daven. It's a natural phenomenon for the reality of rote to take over and the “meeting” to be taken for granted, unless one is in dire straits and is desperate, or was just saved from a terrible had and is truly grateful.

As such, the Sages told us that the way to maintain our sense of awe before meeting with the King of Kings is to invest in proper preparation. As seen above, Rava had special clothing that he used for davening, a practice that finds a Halachic basis in the **Shulchan Aruch** (O.C. 98:4). He mentions a practice of special garments that are worn only for *tefillah*. It is worthwhile to quote him verbatim: “It is appropriate to have nice-looking garments designated for prayer, like the *kohanim*’s special garments. However, not every man can afford this expense.” Thus, his conclusion is that it is a nice idea to have special garments for *davening*, but it is not always possible for everyone.

Being dressed up to meet someone important is one of the ways to honor them and bring “specialness” to the meeting. We even find how the wicked Eisav would put on fancy garments when he served his father, Yitzchak Avinu, and how Rivka had to get Yaakov to do the same when he had to impersonate his evil twin in order to acquire the blessings from his blind father.

The Ramchal now makes a *Kal V'chomer*, writing: **“Behold, if this is so for flesh and blood, how much more so, for the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, that one who stands before Him to pray should wear honorable clothing, and sit before him as one who sits before a great king.”** (ibid. Chapter 19)

If we wear our best clothing to greet a dignitary or a politician, or to an important event that demands a distinguished wardrobe, how much more so do we need to “dress the part” – whatever that may be in our locale – to greet the One who created all the “significant” personalities. Hashem deserves no less and really much, much more.

A story is told (in the *Aleinu L'Shabbeyach*) about the **Imrei Emes** who once had to meet a high-ranking government official and, in his honor, he wore a nicer hat than he was accustomed to during the week. After the meeting was over and the Imrei Emes was about to pray Mincha prayer, his attendant brought him his regular hat. “*Chas V'Shalom*” he exclaimed, “If for the honor of a mere mortal I was wearing a nicer hat, then surely I will not take it off when I approach the King of all Kings.” It must be pointed out that when one dresses the part - even if he doesn't feel like it – the outer wear inspires the inner being (see ibid. Ch. 7).

We will continue in two weeks, B'Ezras Hashem, with other ways that we can honor Hashem in our lives.

“Speak to the Children of Israel, and have them take for Me an offering; from every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My offering” (25:2)

Why does the Torah instruct the people to “take” a donation rather than to “give” a donation? When a person gives *tzedaka*, he is really taking because he will get more in return than what he gave. The reward for *tzedaka* is that great. Not only that, but a donor becomes a better person when he gives. When a person understands this, it makes it easier to give *tzedaka* because he recognizes that doing this mitzvah helps him too. This is not only true of philanthropic donations, but also of investing time in our relationships. When we give of our time to others, we benefit as well. Hashem wants us to realize that and so He informed the people that they would really be taking and not giving when they donated to the Mishkan.

“You shall make two cherubim of gold - beaten shall you make them - from both ends of the lid” (25:18)

The **Mechilta** writes that all the vessels in the Mishkan could be made from other metals if there was no gold available. The lone exception is the *keruvim*, cherubim, which must always be of gold. **Rashi** explains that the *keruvim* had the faces of small children. R' Meir Shapiro writes that the placement of children on top of the Aron HaKodesh in the Holy of Holies teaches us the importance of educating Jewish children. This is a task that stands in the holiest place. The education of children must be the best, the “gold” standard, at all times, regardless of the circumstances. A child must be educated properly in the manner that he needs, both at home and at school. He cannot be given a second-rate education. The Gemara writes that a person's income is set on Rosh Hashana except for what he spends on Shabbos, Yom Tov, and teaching one's child Torah.

This expense is not a loss, but an extra stipend that does not affect the rest of a person's income. It is also important not to settle for a mediocre Torah education for our children but to give them the gold standard. The children are our future. Chazal tell us that when the time comes for the building of the Third Beis Hamikdash, everyone will go to help with the construction except for the children, who will remain learning Torah. What a child learns in his youth will remain with him forever. Chazal tell us that this is because the world is maintained by the Torah study of young children.

SHORT STORY OF THE WEEK

BY YONI SCHWARTZ

In the middle of an important meeting, **Rav Moshe Feinstein**, ZT"l, excused himself and left to attend a wedding. Confused, his driver asked, "We didn't have a wedding on the schedule, whose wedding is this?" There was no reply. When he arrived, he approached the chosson's father and told him that his son is lucky to have married such a special girl. He danced and even stayed for an unusually long time. As he was walking out, he turned around, went back in, and gave the kallah a bracha, making her feel like a million dollars.

Bursting from curiosity, the driver asked if the Rav could explain what just happened. Rav Moshe said, "A few days ago a girl from a very poor family from Yerushalayim knocked on my door and said she was about to get married. However, the *shidduch* only happened on the condition that the wedding would be in America. There was barely enough money for just one ticket for her. She explained that at her wedding, she would be all alone, with no family, and worried people would see a girl without any family and become suspicious of the *shidduch*. She asked if I'd attend the wedding, being like her family. Immediately, I agreed. When I was exiting, I realized that the kallah would only discover after benching that I was there and be worried the whole night. That's why I wanted to let her know myself in the middle that I was there."

Comment: In Parshas Terumah (Shemos 25:8), Hashem tells us, "Build for me a sanctuary and I shall dwell in them." On which the Rabbis say, "It didn't say 'In it'; rather, 'in them,' meaning, in the hearts of each and every Jew." We build a home for Hashem in the world by building a home for Him in our hearts, and each time we open our hearts to another person's struggles, like Rav Moshe, we invite the Divine Presence to dwell within us.

SPLENDID QUOTE OF THE WEEK

BY RABBI MENACHEM LOMNER

"Give some thought about the miracle of our bodies."

One of the miracles that the Jews saw every day in the desert was the fact that the Mishkan was able to stand. The middle bar that ran through the boards of the structure was miraculous in that it bent to go through them all. It is brought down that the Mishkan represents the body of a Jew. We also have many miracles that happen every day for us to stay intact and alive. Human nature is that since we are used to seeing it, we are not impressed.

The **Shulchan Aruch** (Siman 6) explains the Bracha of Asher Yatzar and what *umafli la'asos* means. Let's take some time to think about the miracles that happen to us at all times.

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