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TORAH CENTER ON THE PARASHA

WEEKLY DIBRE TORAH BY THE RABBIS OF THE
SHAARE ZION TORAH CENTER

THIS WEEK'S RABBIS:

Rabbi Meyer Yedid

Rabbi Marc Sultan

Rabbi Ralph Gindi

Rabbi Joey Bikhari

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פרשת תרומה
PARASHAT TERUMAH

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פרשת תרומה **PARASHAT TERUMAH**

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PARASHA SUMMARY

TERUMAH - PARASHA SUMMARY

A description of the Mishkan and its Kelim

1- Hashem tells Moshe to collect money and materials from Bnei Yisrael for the Mishkan.

2- A description of the Aron, Kaporet (the cover of the Aron which contains the Kerubim) and the Shulchan.

3- A description of the Menorah and the Yeriot (the fabric and skin coverings over the Mishkan).

4- A description of the Kerashim (the beams that formed the walls of the Mishkan).

5- A description of the Parochet (the curtain that partitioned off the Kodesh Ha'kodashim) and the Masach.

6- A description of the copper Mizbeach (where the Korbanot were brought).

7- A description of the courtyard (its walls and dimensions).

THE 'ONLY' PERSPECTIVE

Rabbi Ralph Gindi

The Right Partner

We are constantly seeking success in so many different areas of our lives, be it in school, marriage, hinuch, business, charity, projects etc. A phrase commonly used in the world of success is 'it's not what you know, it's who you know' meaning - a key component to success is your connections with people and who you partner up with. A person can have great ideas and aspirations but at times he needs a partner to help him make his dreams a reality.

I would like to share with you an amazing thought that I believe is the key to choosing the right partner to see the success in any area we strive to succeed in.

Proper Positioning

The Torah specifies the placement of the various vessels that were used in the Mishkan:

וְשִׂמְתָּ אֶת-הַשְּׁלֶחַן מִחוּץ לַפְּרֶכֶת, וְאֶת-הַמְּנֹרָה נֹכַח הַשְּׁלֶחַן עַל צֵלַע הַמִּשְׁכָּן תִּימֵנָה וְהַשְּׁלֶחַן תִּתֵּן עָלָיו (כו,לה): צֵפּוֹן

“You shall place the Shulchan outside the Partition, and the Menorah opposite the Shulchan on the south side of the Mishkan, and the Shulchan you shall place on the north side.”

The Kodesh Kodashim (Holy of Holies) containing the Aron Hakodesh (Tabernacle) with the Luchot (10 commandments) was on the western side of the Mishkan. When a person left the Kodesh Kadoshim, the Shulchan (table) would be on his left and the Menorah would be on his right. In Judaism, in general and in the Beit HaMikdash ritual in particular, something on the right side has priority. The right side has greater holiness and greater significance than the left side. Therefore, the Menorah representing Torah & wisdom was appropriately on the right and the Shulchan representing sustenance & livelihood was on the left.

Right or Left

This is echoed by the words of King Solomon:

אָרְךָ יָמִים בְּיָמִינָהּ בְּשִׂמְאוּלָהּ עֵשֶׂר וְכְבוֹד (משלי ג,טז)
“Length of days on its right, and on its left, wealth and honor”.

“Length of days” represents the world-to-come, true eternity, Torah and Mitzvot - this is on the right side. On the left side - less important, less significant, less holy - is wealth and honor.

However, it seems problematic that a person entering the Mishkan (facing the west) will have the reverse perception. He will see the Menorah on his

left and the Shulchan on his right. This is the reverse of what should be, which will give him a mistaken perspective of reality. And even more so, it was only once a year, on Yom Kippur, which the Kohen Gadol would be walking out of the Holy of Holies that he would have the Menorah, which represented Torah, on the right!?

Hashems Perspective

Rav David Feinstein ז"ל explains that this configuration contains a very important message. We as human beings look at the world from the wrong perspective. We are not sitting in the Kodesh Kadoshim. We do not view the world from the perspective that it is really supposed to be viewed. From our perspective in our daily lives, it appears to us that wealth and honor have the higher priority in this world, that they belong on the "right side". While Torah & Good deeds are of lower priority and belong on the "left". That is because we have a skewed perspective. We are wearing the wrong glasses! The proper way to view life is from the perspective of the Almighty. When looking from the direction of the Kodesh Kadoshim, it is clear to everyone that Torah/Eternity is on the right side and wealth and honor are on the left side.

The Ultimate Partner

When making decisions in any area of our lives, we must strive to make that decision from Hashem's perspective. We shouldn't be swayed by what the world considers success, rather what Hashem considers success. This is a very difficult task as the entire world believes fame and wealth is what makes someone successful. However, we should know that our Great Grandfather Abraham Abinu has inherited to us the strength and ability to be able to go against the entire world to see the true truth.

Before every decision we make, we should train ourselves to ask, "מה ה' רוצה שאעשה?" - what does Hashem want me to do in this situation? If we ask ourselves this question before any move - we are partnering up with the Ultimate - Hakadosh Baruch Hu Himself! Just as a partner must be consulted with before making any moves, if we include Hashem in our decision process, by looking at the situation from Hashem's perspective, we are attaching ourselves to a partner like no other! With Hashem as our partner everything becomes possible - the best spouse, the most beautiful children, success in all areas - your partner is the creator of the Universe! All we have to do is consult with Him - Is this what Hashem would want me to do....? If the answer is 'yes' we can be 100% confident to go all-in, and with the greatest partner by our side we will see success.

May we have the strength to make the right decisions, from the right perspective, and see tremendous beracha in all areas, Amen.

Shabbat Shalom!

EFFORT IS EVERYTHING

Rabbi Joey Bikhar

This week's parasha lists the items that were donated to the Mishkan, the wools, the metals, and all the other materials that were needed for the building of the Mishkan. The Ohr Hachaim points out that the list of material that the Torah mentions seems to be out of order. The abnei shoham and the abnei miluim were the most precious stones that were placed on the shoulders and on the breastplate of the Kohen Gadol. These stones were delivered by the Ananei HaKabod (Clouds of Glory) directly to the doorstep of the Nesi'im! Why were they listed last?

The Ohr Hachaim gives a fascinating answer which we can apply to our everyday lives. He explains that although they were the most beautiful and precious of the materials, however since the stones were brought by the Ananei HaKabod to the doorstep of the Nesi'im, they did not have to exert any energy or effort whatsoever, nor pay any money, in order to attain these beautiful stones. What's most precious to Hashem are not the diamonds in the world, what's most precious is the effort that a person sacrifices to do the mitzvot! Although copper, wool and oils are not as expensive nor as beautiful as the stones, however they are more precious to Hashem because of the effort that was put in. That's why the abnei shoham and the abnei milluim were mentioned at the very end, only after the Torah listed all the other materials. Like we say at every siyum, "We toil and they (the goyim) toil. We toil and receive reward, and they toil and do not receive reward." Implying that we are not receiving reward for the end result, rather we are being rewarded for the effort itself!

Furthermore, when one works hard to attain anything in life, whether it's in their Torah learning, building a business, or a healthy relationship, the person becomes much more connected to what he is putting his efforts into and it creates a love and special connection to the results of his efforts.

For example, there can be a young boy who comes to classes and wants to learn and grow, but for some reason the boy is missing that

connection that keeps his drive going. With effort and sacrifice to write notes inside his Gemara, or to put in that extra time to review and understand the Gemara more clearly, he will be able to connect to the Torah and own it! The pasuk in Tehilim says, *כִּי אִם-בְּתוֹרַת יְקֻנֵּךְ הִפְצִו וּבְתוֹרַתוֹ*, *יְהִיָּה יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה* – the Torah is first called “Hashem’s Torah”, but in the end when you toil in the Torah day and night it is called your own Torah. The same goes in business, one cannot compare a self-built business to an inherited one, like the Gemara in Baba Metziah says, “A man would prefer one of his own measurements of fruits than 9 measurements of his friend’s fruits.” Rashi explains because it is more beloved to him since he put own effort into it.

The Gemara in Yoma (Daf 75a) says even when Hashem has to punish or curse someone, built into the curse is also a chesed. The Gemara goes on to give examples, Hashem cursed the snake that it should slide on the ground and eat dirt, but now everywhere it goes it has food. He cursed Kena’an that he and his descendants would be slaves, but through the curse came a beracha that he will always have food to eat from his master.

However, the Gemara does not mention the blessing in disguise that came about through the curse of Adam Harishon. The curse that Adam was given was that instead of having all of his needs taken care of in Gan Eden he would have to now work the land to produce his basic needs. Yes, this was most definitely a curse that change the history of the world, but based on our new understanding that we explained above the blessing that came about is an obvious one. Adam now had to toil in order to earn his parnassah, and that feeling of earning through effort is even greater than the previous state he was in in Gan Eden.

This lesson that we learn from the abnei shoham and the abnei milluim, and this secret of the Ohr Hachaim is one we should always live with. It’s not just about the end results and achievements, rather it’s the amount of effort we exert and sacrifices we make that count the most to both Hashem and ourselves.

Shabbat Shalom

THE MESSAGE OF THE ARON HAKODESH

Rabbi Marc Sultan

One of the most important vessels in the Mishkan was the Aron Hakadosh, the Holy Ark. It's interesting to note that the Aron was constructed differently than the other vessels. It had an outer layer of gold and two inner layers, one of wood and once again gold.

The gemara in Yoma (72b) discusses the reason why the Aron Hakadosh had gold outside and inside as well. No one saw the gold inside at all. What purpose did it serve? The gemara writes, it's there to teach us a lesson, a person must be *tocho ke'baro*, a true scholar inside and out. Which means through and through. I think we can understand that it means to be a real and sincere person on the outside, it means in our behavior, the way we act and deal with others.

However, what is considered the inside of a person? The inside is referring to our *Yirat Shamayim*, fear of heaven. Fear of heaven is not something that is noticeable from a person's outward actions. We can never determine someone's fear of heaven from the way he acts, it's determined by who he is. This is the simple meaning of *tocho ke'baro*, he is a true person both inside and outside.

Perhaps we can explain this in a slightly different way. The *pasuk*, when describing the plating of the Aron with gold in and out, uses a term, *מבית ומחוץ* - inside the home, and outside. Perhaps we can explain this literally. *חוץ* means outside, the way we act in public. How we talk to our friends, how we treat others in business or in *shul*. *מבית* can be referring to our homes, the way we act inside our homes. The way we treat our spouses, children and families.

How we act in public is no indication of who we really are! We can hide our real selves for the short time we are with others. We know we'd better hide ourselves; we all want a good image! However, in the *בית* is who we really are. It's impossible to hide who we really are inside our homes. Our true selves come out. Many of us are professional actors and we don't even know it. We are only fooling ourselves. Outside the home we can convince everyone what good people we are. But our family sees our true selves, when we aren't on stage.

We need to ask ourselves, does the image of who we are outside the home match the image our family has of us? Are we the same person at home as we are on the street? It is not an easy task, but if we can start to work on making sure our *בית* selves are a closer match to our *חוץ* selves, we can then begin to understand the message of the inner gold layer of the Aron.

Shabbat Shalom

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

Questions

1. Why was the “Mishkan” called by that name?
2. Why were the Keruvim atop the Aron Hakodesh formed with children’s faces?
3. Which mitzvah was performed seven times in history?

Answers

1. The word Mishkan in Hebrew consists of the same letters as Mashkon (collateral). Hashem said the Mishkan and both Bate Mikdash would serve as collateral. If the Bnei Yisrael sin, Hashem would take them away instead of wiping out the Bnei Yisrael. Moshe asked Hashem: “What will serve as collateral once the Mishkan and the Mikdash have been destroyed?” Hashem answered, “I will take one tzaddik and I will forgive all their sins.” In fact, Chazal say that the death of a tzaddik is more painful than the destruction of the Bet Hamikdash!
2. The golden Aron HaKodesh held the Luhot that Hashem gave to Moshe on Har Sinai. The Aron was placed in the holiest place in the world, the Kodesh HaKodashim, to signify that one achieves closeness to Hashem through learning Torah. The Keruvim, two angelic figures, adorned the top of the Aron HaKodesh. Their faces resembled those of children, one boy and one girl, representing the inherent purity that children possess. Hashem placed their figures on top of the Aron HaKodesh to express His special love for the Torah study of pure children. In fact, Hazal stress that the entire world exists in the merit of tinokot shel bet raban, pure yeshivah students!
3. The misva of ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם “Make Me a Sanctuary so that I may dwell in your midst...” was ultimately performed seven times in history, each time the Bnei Yisrael built a Mishkan or the Bet HaMikdash. The Mishkan was built five times: in the Midbar, Gilgal, Shilo, Nov, and Givon, plus the two Batei Mikdash that stood in Yerushalayim. [Note: When a new shul is built it is also a fulfillment of this misvah to some degree, since a shul is a Mikdash Me’at, a miniature Bet Hamikdash.]

LOANS

Rabbi Meyer Yedid

In last week's Parasha, Parashat Mishpatim, the Torah introduces us to many civil laws. If one looks in the Sefer HaHinuch (a work which explains each of the 613 misvot, arranged by the weekly parasha), one will see that the author split Parashat Mishpatim into two parashiyot – Parashat Mishpatim, and an additional parasha entitled “אם כסף תלוה את עמי” (Shemot 22:24).

The commentators explain that this reflects an ancient custom in some Jewish communities (such as Barcelona, Spain)¹. In these communities, they would split up Parashat Mishpatim into two parashiyot during a leap year (such as this year) and read a different pair of parashiyot together. Thus, according to this custom, this week would be the parasha of “אם כסף”.

Giving Loans

The commandment beginning this “parasha” is - “אם כסף תלוה את עמי את” – “העני עמך לא תהיה לו כנשה לא תשימון עליו נשך” – “When you lend money to My people, to the poor person who is with you, do not act toward him as a creditor; do not lay interest upon him” (Shemot 22:24). The main point of the pasuk is to prohibit charging interest on a loan, a subject which deserves its own discussion.

Rashi however, quoting a Midrash, writes “כל אם ואם שבתורה רשות חוץ מג' וזה” – “א' מהן” – “The word אם (“if”) in the Torah denotes something optional, except for three occurrences (where it denotes an obligation), and one of them is here”. In other words, here the Torah is issuing an obligation, a מצוה, to lend a poor person who is in need, as if the Pasuk read “You shall lend money to My people, to the poor person who is with you”.

The Rosh writes that the misvah is not only to lend a poor person for their sustenance, but even to lend them money to establish themselves in business, allowing them to become self-sufficient².

An Avera For Not Lending

Later on, in Parashat Re'eh, the Torah introduces the law of the Shemittah

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year cancelling outstanding loans. The Torah there warns a person not to hold back from lending a person in need due to the Shemittah year approaching (see Devarim 15:1-11).

Rabbenu Yonah, in his work entitled Shaare Teshuva, writes that the above warning of the Torah constitutes a מצות לא תעשה, a negative commandment³. Therefore, one who does not lend a poor person is in violation of both a מצות עשה (as mentioned above in Parashat Mishpatim) and a מצות לא תעשה (in Parashat Re'eh).

However, the Rambam implies that one only violates the מצות לא תעשה in Parashat Re'eh if he refuses to lend specifically because of Shemittah⁴. If he refuses to lend for some other reason, however, he would not be in violation of the מצות לא תעשה.

Therefore, according to the Rambam, if one refuses to lend a poor person due to the approaching Shemittah, he would be in violation of both a מצות עשה and a מצות לא תעשה. However, if he refuses to lend for any other reason, he would only be in violation of the מצות עשה mentioned in Parashat Mishpatim⁵.

Obligation to Lend a Wealthy Person

Shulhan Aruch⁶, when discussing the misvah of lending money to the poor, adds that it is also a misvah to lend money to a wealthy person who is in need of a loan. Rav Asher Weiss explains that, presumably, Shulhan Aruch holds that a wealthy person, when in need of a loan, is like a “temporary” person in need. Of course, he is not considered “needy” in the sense that he can take money of sedaka, but he is considered needy in the sense that he lacks money needed to continue making a living⁷.

However, the Rambam fails to mention this detail when discussing the misvah of lending the poor. He would seem to hold that, although it is a great act of kindness to lend anyone in need of a loan, the commandment of the Torah is directed specifically towards the poor⁸.

(In coordination with Mark A. Guindi)

1. עיין מנחת חינוך מהדורת מכון ירושלים, פרשת “אם כסף”
2. תשובת הראש כלל צ' סי' י"א
3. ספר שערי תשובה ח"ג אות ס"ז
4. רמב"ם הל' שמיטה ויובל פי"ט הל' י

5. ועיין מנחת אשה שמות סי' מ"א אות ב'
6. שריע חרי"מ סי' צ"ז ס"א
7. מנחת אשה שמות סי' מ"א אות ד'
8. רמב"ם ספר המצוות, מ"ע קצ"ז

חַכָּמֵי אֲדֵס יַעֲקֹב

ה'תרנ"ח - ה'תשכ"ג

Hacham Yaakov Ades was born in Yerushalayim on the eighth of Adar 5658 (1898), the youngest of his father's four sons. Each of Hacham Abraham Chaim's four sons were great talmide hachamim. His firstborn, Hacham Yishak, who was a genius in Torah and a great yere shamayim, passed away while he was a ba'hur. The next two sons, Hacham Moshe and Hacham Ezra Ades, were both rabbanim and marbitze Torah. Hacham Yaakov was the youngest son, the only one of the four who was born in Eretz Yisrael.

Hacham Yaakov was Rosh Yeshivah of Porat Yosef in Yerushalayim and was a teacher to many of the great rabbanim of the last generation, Hacham Ovadia Yosef, Hacham Ben Zion Aba Shaul, and more. He also had 3 sons, Hacham Ezra Nissim Ades, Hacham Moshe Yosef Ades, and Hacham Yehuda Ades, who all became gedolim and leaders in Torah.

One of Hacham Yaakov Ades' stories about his father (which were published in Pri Eitz Hagan, by Hacham Yaakov Kassin) reveals the greatness of the son as well: In 5679, close to the time of my marriage, when I was speaking to my saintly father about the saddikim, I told him what I had seen in a dream the previous night, "A splendid Hacham, of glorious appearance, and it became known to me that this was our teacher the Rambam, and I kissed his hand and he blessed me." My father said to me, "This is how he appeared, and this is what he looks like," describing everything to me exactly as I had seen it in my dream. I was amazed and I asked him, "Father, from where do you know this?" "He replied, "Know, my son, that during my neshamah's ascents to heaven at night, I have seen all the saddikim and I know what all of them look like; the Rambam, the Rif, the Rosh, the Rashba, the Ran and also the masters of kabbalah, the Arizal, R' Haim Vital, Hacham Shalom Shar'abi (the Rashash), and others. Once I saw our teacher the Rashash in a vision at night and he said to me, 'You must go to the trouble of explaining my words and making others understand them.' This was what he told me."