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## INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON **TERUMA** - 5771

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Thoughts on the Weekly Parsha from

**Lord Jonathan Sacks**

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British  
Commonwealth

<http://www.chiefrabbi.org/tt-index.html>

Terumah 5770 This week's sedra and those that follow it to the end of the book of Exodus, describe the great collective project of the Israelites in the desert: building a mikdash, a portable Sanctuary, that would serve as the visible home of the Divine presence. It was the first collective house of worship in the history of Israel.

The opening command, however, emphasizes an unusual dimension of the project:

G-d spoke to Moses saying: "Speak to the Israelites and have them bring Me an offering. Take My offering from everyone whose heart impels him to give . . . They shall make me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell among them." (Ex. 25: 1-2, 8) The emphasis is on the voluntary nature of the gifts. Why so? The Sanctuary and its service were overwhelmingly compulsory, not voluntary. The regular offerings were minutely prescribed. So too were the contributions. Everyone had to give a half-shekel for the silver sockets needed for the building, and another half-shekel annually for the sacrifices. The Sanctuary itself was the pre-eminent domain of the holy, and the holy is where G-d's will rules, not ours. Why then was the Sanctuary specifically to be built through voluntary donations?

There are some biblical passages whose meaning becomes clear only in hindsight, and this is one. To understand this week's sedra we have to move forward almost five hundred years, to the time when King Solomon built the Temple. The story is one of the most ironic in Tanakh.

Our initial impression of Solomon is that he was a supremely wise king. He had asked G-d for wisdom, and was granted it in abundance:

G-d gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and the breadth of his understanding was measureless as is the sand on the sea shore. (I Kings 4: 29) During Solomon's reign, Israel reached its greatest heights, economic and politically. The building of the Temple was itself seen by the Bible as the completion of the exodus from Egypt. Unusually the text tells us the date of the project, not only in terms of years of the king's reign, but also in terms of the exodus:

In the 480th year after the Israelites had come out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign . . . he began to build the Temple of the Lord. (I Kings 6: 1)

The reference to the exodus is striking and deliberate. It reminds us of the phrase Moses used to the Israelites as they were about to enter the land:

Now you have not yet come to the resting place and the inheritance that the Lord your G-d is giving you. (Deuteronomy 12: 9) The classic commentators take this to be a reference to Jerusalem and the Temple. Thus Solomon's project brought the narrative of the exodus to closure. It was the last chapter in a long story.

Yet ultimately, and significantly, Solomon failed as a king. After his death the kingdom divided. The ten northern tribes seceded from Solomon's son Rehoboam, and formed their own kingdom under the rebel Jeroboam. This was the critical turning-point in biblical history. Weakened by division, it could only be a matter of time before both kingdoms eventually fell to neighbouring empires, and so it happened.

The real question is not, why did Jeroboam rebel? Politics is full of such events. It is: how was he able to do so and succeed? Coups d'etat do not happen when a nation is flourishing, successful and at peace. Israel was all these things in Solomon's reign. How then was Jeroboam able to mount a coup, with real expectation of success?

The answer lies in the impact the building of the Temple had on the people. We are told:

King Solomon conscripted labourers from all Israel - thirty thousand men. He sent them off to Lebanon in shifts of ten thousand a month, so that they spent one month in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was in charge of the forced labour. Solomon had seventy thousand carriers and eighty thousand stonemasons in the hills, as well as thirty-three hundred foremen who supervised the project and directed the workmen. (I Kings 5: 27-30) The Tanakh tells us that it was this burden that made the people restive after Solomon's death:

So they (the people) sent for Jeroboam, and he and the whole assembly of Israel went to Rehoboam and said to him: "Your father put a heavy yoke on us, but now lighten the harsh labour and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you." (I Kings 12: 3-4) The elders who had been Solomon's advisors told Rehoboam to accede to the people's request: "If today you will be a servant to this people and serve them and give them a favourable answer, they will always be your servants" (12: 7). Rehoboam, influenced by his own young, impetuous advisors, ignored their advice. He told the people he would increase, not reduce, the burden. From then on his fate was sealed.

Something strange is happening in this narrative. On several occasions we hear words that appear in the Mosaic books either in the context of Egyptian slavery or in laws forbidding the Israelites to act harshly towards slaves. The phrase "harsh labour", spoken by the people to Rehoboam, is used at the beginning of Exodus to describe the enslavement of the Israelites (Exodus 1: 14). The description of Solomon's "carriers", nosei saval, reminds us of the sentence, "Moses grew up, and went out to his brothers and saw their burdens" (shivlotam, Ex. 2: 11). After Solomon's death, the people use the word yoke: "Your father put a heavy yoke on us" (I Kings 12: 4) - yet another term that recalls slavery in Egypt: "Therefore, say to the Israelites: I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. (Ex. 6: 6).

Solomon's supervisors are described as ha-rodim ba-am, the verb used in Leviticus 25 to describe how a master should not treat a slave: "Do

not rule over (tirdeh) them ruthlessly" (Lev. 25: 43, 46, 53). Solomon built "store cities", miskenot, the same word used to describe the cities built by the Israelite slaves for Pharaoh (I Kings 9: 19; Ex. 1: 11). Like Pharaoh, Solomon had and chariots and riders (rechev and parashim, I Kings 9: 19; Exodus 14-15).

Without saying so explicitly (indeed, at one point denying it: "But Solomon did not make slaves of any of the Israelites", I Kings 9: 22), the Tanakh is hinting that the building of the Temple turned Israel into a second Egypt. Solomon was altogether too close to being an Israelite Pharaoh.

The irony is overwhelming. Solomon was Israel's wisest king. The nation stood at the apex of its power and prosperity. Momentarily, it was at peace. The king was engaged in the holiest of tasks, the one that brought the exodus narrative to completion. Yet at that precise moment, the faultline developed that was eventually to bring centuries of tragedy. Why? Because Solomon in effect turned the Israelites into a conscripted labour force: the very thing they had left Egypt to avoid. On the surface, the text tells another story. Solomon fell from grace because his foreign wives led him astray into idolatry (I Kings 11: 4). Yet it was not this that led to the rebellion of the people.

No sooner do we understand this than we appreciate the significance of another text. When David first conceived the plan of building the Temple, G-d sent word through the prophet Nathan:

"I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with the tent as My dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel: Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?" (2 Samuel 7: 6-7) There is a hint here that G-d disclosed to David the danger involved in the project. Only later did it become clear. Even then, Solomon's son could have salvaged the situation, had he listened to the advice the elders gave him.

There is a profound theological statement here. The free G-d desires the free worship of free human beings. As the sages used to say: "The Holy One blessed be He does not behave tyrannically to his creatures" (Avodah Zarah 3a). It was not accidental but of the essence that the first house of G-d - small, fragile, portable, the opposite of the grandeur of the Temple - was built by free, uncoerced, voluntary contributions. For G-d lives not in houses of wood and stone, but in minds and souls of free human beings. He is to be found not in monumental architecture, but in the willing heart.

The Echoes of Tragedy An excerpt from an Address to the Nexus Institute Amsterdam September 2009 So far I've been making two points: the first, that life can imitate art and become part of its intertextuality; the second, that life, unlike art, has no closure. It can repeat itself endlessly, re-enacting tragedy time and again in different ages, with different actors, who may think they're the audience but in fact they're onstage and part of another drama. I said that tragedy was born in ancient Greece. What is extraordinary, given the history of the Jewish people in antiquity and ever since, is that there is no Hebrew word for tragedy. Here is a people who lived through one tragedy after another and didn't have a word for it. When you want to say it in Hebrew you say tragediah. Hebrew had to borrow the word. I suspect the same is true in Islam, because Jorge Luis Borges, the Argentinean writer, once wrote a story called Averroes' Search, in which he imagines the great Islamic thinker translating Aristotle's Rhetoric and being defeated by the word tragedy which, however hard he tried, he simply couldn't understand. There is another strange fact which may explain the first. What I discovered when my books were being translated into Hebrew, is that this ancient language, four thousand years old, has no word for person, and this created enormous difficulties for my translators. Hebrew has ish, which means 'a man', adam which roughly means 'Homo sapiens', enosh which means 'a mortal', and ben adam, which means

'son of man', but no word that corresponds to 'person'. How extraordinary that the religion that first taught that each one of us is in the image of God, and that every life is like a universe, a belief shared with Islam, should have no word for person. Why? The answer lies in the history of the word person itself. It comes from the Latin persona which means a mask, specifically a mask worn by a character on a stage. In other words it refers to a role played within a theatrical drama. It's a metaphor that belongs to cultures that can say, with Shakespeare: All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players: Or more powerfully, in Macbeth: Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, And then is heard no more. Cultures that do not see the world as a stage, do not see people as persons, that is, as actors in a play. That is why they lack the concept of tragedy. Because the essence of tragedy is that it has a prescribed ending. You know from the beginning that it's all going to end in tears. Tragedy belongs to a world in which there is such a thing as inexorable fate, what the Greeks called moira or ananke. That is a mindset wholly alien to the Hebrew Bible. In Judaism there is no prescribed ending, no inexorable fate, because we are not merely actors; we are co-authors of the script. We don't know in advance what the next scene will be, because it depends on us, and we can choose. An opera can be tragic, but life itself cannot, if you believe that there is human freedom, that we can change, that we can act differently from the way we did last time, and that therefore as agents, not merely actors, we face a constitutively unknowable future, unknowable because it depends on us. That is why in Judaism there is no word for tragedy, because the story hasn't ended yet, and life is life, not art. COVENANT & CONVERSATION is now available in book form! Vol. I: Genesis, The Book of Beginnings VolII: Exodus, The Book of Redemption: Available Autumn 2010

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**Rabbi Mayer Twersky** - Giving and Receiving Inbox permanent link -

[http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2008/parsha/rtwe\\_terumah.html](http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2008/parsha/rtwe_terumah.html)

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Rabbi Mayer Twersky Giving and Receiving The Torah presents the mitzvah of contributing to the mishkan in an unusual fashion. "V'yikchu Li teruma - Let them take for Me a portion (Artscroll translation). The Torah speaks of taking rather than giving even though ostensibly Bnai Yisroel are being called upon to give. Why?

The Kli Yakar offers a beautiful explanation. In the realm of Torah and mitzvos he who gives (in actuality) receives in return much more than he has given. For example, says the Kli Yakar, a teacher of Torah gives of his time, his wisdom, and, ultimately, himself. Nevertheless, Chazal teach us "umitalmidai yoser mikulam", I have learned more from my disciples than my teacher. A teacher gives, but, in return, he receives even more than he has given. The Torah hints at this lesson by exhorting Bnai Yisroel to take a contribution to the mishkan. The contributors will be taking much more than they are giving.

This perspective on life has profound implications. For instance, at times we may feel burdened by requests - both institutional and personal - for tzedaka. "I'm busy now. Why must you bother me once again?" is a thought which, at times, flashes through our minds and engenders resentment within us towards our fellow Jew. But, in reality, the opportunity of tzedaka outweighs the demand. We are being approached for a finite sum, which, when given to a worthy cause, will yield eternal schar.

The Vilna Gaon comments that the word venasnu, and they shall give, is (as spelled in the original Hebrew) a palindrome. In light of the Kli yakar's insight, we can appreciate the significance of the palindrome. Giving is cyclical because one always receives in return.

The Torah "makes demands" on our time. (Time is not really ours, but that idea is best kept for some future occasion). It's time to learn, to daven, do chessed, etc. we silently wonder, "but when will I have time for myself?" When such plaintive questions arise, we would do well to review the lesson of "v'yikchu Li teruma".

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Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh

The Mishkan as a Continuation of Ma'amad Har Sinai

**Rav Zechariah Tubi, Rosh Kollel Rabbanut**

It is not by chance that the Torah juxtaposes the portion of the Mishkan (Parshat Teruma) to the portion of Ma'amad Har Sinai (Parshat Yitro). Rather, the Mishkan is the necessary continuation of Ma'amad Har Sinai. How is this?

It says about Mt. Sinai: "The glory of Hashem rested on Mt. Sinai" (Shemot 24:16), and it says about the Mishkan: "Moshe and Aharon came to the Tent of Meeting ... and the glory of Hashem appeared to the entire people." (Vayikra 9:23) The "glory of Hashem" is the Divine Presence, so that the very same Divine Presence that descended upon Mt. Sinai was carried over to the Mishkan. The Ramban writes in his commentary to the Torah (Shemot 28:1):

The secret of the Mishkan is that the glory that rested upon Mt. Sinai rests upon it in a hidden manner. Just as it says: "The glory of Hashem rested on Mt. Sinai," and it says, "Behold! Hashem, our G-d, has shown us His glory and His greatness" (Devarim 5:21) – so, too, it says about the Mishkan: "The glory of Hashem filled the Mishkan." ... The glory that was revealed to them at Mt. Sinai was always with Israel in the Mishkan.

When Moshe would come, the speech that spoke with him at Mt. Sinai would come to him, as it says at matan Torah: "From heaven He caused you to hear His voice in order to teach you, and on the earth He showed you His great fire" (Devarim 4:36) – so, too, it says regarding the Mishkan: "When Moshe arrived at the Tent of Meeting to speak with Him, he heard the Voice speaking to him from atop the Cover ... from between the two Cherubim." (Bamidbar 7:89)

R. Bachya adds (Bamidbar 7:89)

You already know that the glory that descended at Mt. Sinai is what was carried over to the Mishkan. Just as [G-d] descended on Mt. Sinai with groups of angels – so, too, Israel when the Mishkan traveled are made into groups. Just as He bounded Mt. Sinai and said, "No hand should touch it" – so, too, He bounded the Mishkan: "A foreigner who comes close shall be put to death." The same is true here; when they completed the dedication of the Altar and set up the Mishkan they offered twelve sacrifices – correspondingly, at Mt. Sinai Moshe built twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel ... Just as it says here, "When Moshe arrived at the Tent of Meeting to speak with Him" – correspondingly [it says] in Sinai: "When Moshe came before Hashem to speak with Him, he would remove the mask."

Thus, the Mishkan is the direct continuation of the dwelling of the Presence that was at Sinai. It says at ma'amad Har Sinai: "Israel encamped there" – as one person with one heart. This is the day that we were made into a nation whose common denominator is the Torah. This is the uniqueness of Am Yisrael, since "Our nation is a nation only with its Torah." The Torah that was given at Sinai is the testimony to the uniqueness of Am Yisrael; it is what was placed in the Ark that was in the Holy of Holies. The Mishkan was built for the purpose of the Torah, as the focal point of the Mishkan was the Ark, in which the Tablets were placed. From there G-d spoke with Moshe, as it says, "It is there that I will set My meetings with you, and I shall speak with you from atop the Cover." (Shemot 25:22)

The sanctity of Mt. Sinai left, but this sanctity carried over to the Mishkan, and through the Mishkan it moved over to the Temple in Yerushalayim – the place that unites all of Klal Yisrael: "Like a city that is united together." (Tehillim 122:3) The Rambam writes in Hil. Beit Hachochim that the goal of the Temple is to unite Am Yisrael through the pilgrimage on the three festivals. The service of each Jew also has to be directed to the Temple: "So that all of Israel direct their heart to one place." There is no individual service of Hashem, only communal service of Hashem: "Talpiyot – the hill that all mouths turn to." (Berachot 30a) This is the reason that it is prohibited to use metal in making the Temple, because metal is the symbol of violence and wars – it divides, whereas the Beit Hamikdash is the center of wholeness and peace. Thus, metal cannot be a part of the building of the Temple, because its very nature contradicts the goal of the Temple – to unite.

The Ark – in which are placed the Luchot and the Torah, which is the focal point of the Temple – has incomplete measures: "Two and a half cubits its length, and a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height." (Shemot 25:10) Only through joining the half is the Ark complete. Similarly, the Torah without Israel or Israel without the Torah are only half, and only through joining together is there complete service of Hashem.

The most serious transgression during the days of the First Temple was the offering at bamot. One who builds a bama for himself and separates from the service of Hashem in the Temple, separates himself from Hashem and from Israel, and this causes the disintegration of the nation: "The people still slaughtered and burnt sacrifices at the high places." (Melachim I 22:44) Similarly, the Temple, which is for the public – has to be built by the entire community: "from every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion." (Shemot 25:2) In the future the Temple will unite the entire world, as it says: "My House will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples." (Yeshaya 56:7)

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**Thanks to hamelaket@gmail.com for collecting the following items.**

**From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein**

**<info@jewishdestiny.com>**

**Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein**

**Jerusalem Post :: Friday, February 4, 2011**

**WHEN ADAR ENTERS :: Rabbi Berel Wein**

Even though it is only Adar I that is now arriving, nevertheless any Adar brings with it anticipation and a feeling of optimism and satisfaction. This is in line with the words of the rabbis that "when Adar enters, joy and happiness enter with it." You will note that it does not say that when Adar arrives we will be joyous and happy. Rather Adar brings with it the happiness and joy and that we will somehow therefore be the beneficiaries of that atmosphere that Adar brings with it.

This may at first appear to be just a linguistic example of splitting hairs. But I think not. The Jewish calendar is not just a record of time and dates. It creates atmosphere, feeling, emotions and values. The feelings engendered by the months of Elul and Tishrei are far different than those of Adar. It is the sensitivity of our soul and the memories of our traditions that infuse the spirit of the month within us.

So it is Adar that brings with it that atmosphere of good tidings and eventual joy coming ahead. In Israel it also marks the beginning of the turn of the seasons. There is a hint of spring in the air, even though this year we here in Israel, unlike the rest of the Western world, have had a very dry and mild winter. But spring is certainly the season that everyone looks forward to and Adar ushers in the advent of the season that will arrive.

Adar's main claim to fame is naturally the fact that the holiday of Purim falls within the month. It is clearly identified by name in the Book of Esther itself. The month of Adar is identified in that book as being the twelfth month in the Jewish calendar. This year, as is the case seven times in every nineteen year lunar-solar cycle, there are two months of Adar. So Adar will not only be the twelfth month this year it will also be the thirteenth month of the Jewish calendar year.

The rabbis who ordained and perfected the permanent Jewish calendar in the fifth century ordained that Adar is the only month that can be doubled up, so to speak. There are many reasons given for this decision, based upon weather, agriculture, travel conditions and other vagaries of life. But in a simple sense, the rabbis wanted us to enjoy the atmosphere of hope and optimism that is the atmosphere of Adar a little longer.

It has been a long exile and very difficult events have occurred to us. It would have been very easy to give in to sadness and depression, loss of hope and a feeling of despair. Adar comes to dispel all of those feelings. Purim is the prototype of the Jewish spirit, of our indestructibility, eventual survival and eternity. We can always use a double measure of such spirit. Hence the rabbis in their wisdom decreed that only Adar was to be doubled up in a fairly regular sequence of years. For when Adar enters so does hope and joy and a feeling of eternity.

This month of Adar contains the day of Purim Katan – the minor Purim celebrated on the 14th day of Adar I. This is also to be seen as a harbinger of the great Purim that is yet to come. The knowledge that there exists a small and minor Purim is itself a heartening message. Good tidings and hopes for redemptions do not always burst upon the scene suddenly. Rather, they usually come incrementally, one step at a time. The preparation for the great Purim is encased in Purim Katan, the minor Purim. If one can commemorate minor achievements, small victories, and gradual improvements then one can expect even greater achievements in the future. Life is never an all or nothing instant winner game.

Purim Katan leads to the great Purim which in turn leads to the holiday of redemption and national freedom, Pesach. So Adar I has great lessons contained within its calendar days. The appreciation of its hopeful messages fuels our optimism even when apparently everything around us is falling apart and undergoing rapid and uncertain change.

We should view the advent of Adar, even the first Adar, and even the minor Purim as being positive promises of goodness and security and salvation from our enemies and all of the evil that is unfortunately so prevalent in our world. Yes, my beloved friends when Adar enters so does goodness and happiness.

Shabat shalom.

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**From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein**

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**Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein**

**Weekly Parsha :: TERUMAH :: Rabbi Berel Wein**

The parsha of Terumah follows those of Mishpatim and Yitro. In parshat Yitro we experienced the moment of the revelation at Mount Sinai and the granting of the Torah to the Jewish people. In parshat Mishpatim the Torah began to fill in the details of Jewish law and life, especially as they relate to human and societal behavior and the standards of such behavior that the Torah wishes us to uphold.

In this week's parsha of Terumah the Torah presents another challenge to human behavior – wealth, money, charity and the ability to give away what one may deem to be his or hers. The Torah demands from us the ability to donate to others, to give to great causes, to the public welfare and to be able to share with others our material possessions.

The rabbis of the Talmud stated that this is one of the major identity tests of life. Miserliness, a bad eye and an unwillingness to be able to contribute to others in need are held to be violations of Torah principles and morals. The Torah at Sinai instructed us not to steal, not to take from others what belongs to them without their explicit consent. Now the Torah raises the bar and asks us to be able to give away what we deem to be ours to others less fortunate than us or to national and religious causes that benefit us all.

All of this is implied in the request for donations to help build the holy Mishkan/Tabernacle. The Lord could have provided us with a ready built spanking new Mishkan/Tabernacle on His own. Instead He challenged us then and in every continuing generation of Jewish life to build a Mishkan/Tabernacle on our own and from our own resources. And that requires a proper view of our own wealth and what we do with it.

My beloved Talmud rebbe taught me over sixty years ago how to read the daily newspaper – how to filter out the golden nuggets of life and morality from the overwhelming amount of dross that fills the pages of all of our newspapers. There was an item in the newspaper last week about a baseball pitcher who gave up a guaranteed salary of twelve million dollars for 2011 and retired from the game because he felt in all honesty that he could no longer pitch effectively and did not wish to be paid for essentially doing nothing.

This naturally goes against the grain of the vast majority of professional athletes whose greed and avarice is so well known. That is why it made news – it was a man bites dog story. But it indicated to me that the lesson of parshat Terumah still lives in the human heart.

To be able to walk away from money not honestly earned is a Torah value. And to share and give of our wealth to others and to the building of society, to Torah education and a national home for Jews, is also a supreme Torah value.

We have to build our own Mishkan/Tabernacle constantly in every generation. The Torah's attitude towards the sharing of our wealth is the key to such a form of Mishkan/Tabernacle building. Shabat shalom.

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From Ohr Somayach <ohr@ohr.edu>

To weekly@ohr.edu

Subject Torah Weekly

**TORAH WEEKLY - Parshat Teruma**

**For the week ending 5 February 2011 / 30 Shevat 5771**

**from Ohr Somayach | www.ohr.edu**

**by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - www.seasonsofthemoon.com**

**OVERVIEW**

G-d commands Moshe to build a Mishkan (Sanctuary) and supplies him with detailed instructions. The Children of Israel are asked to contribute precious metals and stones, fabrics, skins, oil and spices. In the Mishkan's outer courtyard are an altar for the burnt offerings and a laver for washing. The Tent of Meeting is divided by a curtain into two chambers. The outer chamber is accessible only to the kohanim, the descendants of Aharon. This contains the table of showbreads, the menorah, and the golden altar for incense. The innermost chamber, the Holy of Holies, may be entered only by the kohen gadol, and only once a year, on Yom Kippur. Here is the Ark that held the Ten Commandments inscribed on the two tablets of stone that G-d gave to the Jewish nation on Mount Sinai. All of the utensils and vessels, as well as the construction of the Mishkan, are described in great detail.

**INSIGHTS**

**Means To Be a Mensch**

*"...and let them take for Me a portion, from every man whose heart motivates him, you shall take My portion." (25:1)*

"Being a mensch" is one of those untranslatable Yiddish phrases which define what it means to be Jewish.

A few years ago an El Al flight to London was carrying a young child in need of an urgent and critical operation. Apart from the child's medical problem, there was another problem: money. The parents had barely enough to cover the cost of the flight to London, which involved the purchase of a whole row of seats to accommodate the stricken child and his medical support systems.

During the flight, a religious Jew who was traveling in first class came to the back of the plane to pray with a minyan. On his way back to his seat he went over to the father of the child and asked how the child was doing. In the course of the conversation the father mentioned he had no idea how he was going to be able to cover the cost of the operation. He was already way over his head in debt with the medical expenses that he had already incurred. He would need nothing short of a small miracle. Without further ado the man took his leave, walked back to the first class cabin, pulled out his hat, and proceeded to tour the aisles of the first-class cabin collecting for the operation. In approximately ten minutes his hat contained checks to the value of some 0,000, sufficient for both the operation and the flights and all the medical expenses to date.

If Jews excel at anything, it's tzedaka — charity.

"Charity," however, really doesn't translate the word tzedaka. Tzedaka means "righteousness." Unfortunately as we live in a largely selfish and unrighteous world, the word "righteousness" usually finds itself being used with the reflexive pronoun "self" as in "self-righteous." However, "righteousness" is no more than "rightness," doing what is right. A Jew gives tzedaka, not because it's charity, not because he is charitable, but because that's what's right. The definition of what is right is what G-d wants. Thus ultimately we give tzedaka not because our hearts reach out to the plight of others but because that's what G-d wants from us.

"...and let them take for Me a portion, from every man whose heart motivates him, you shall take My portion."

There are three kinds of tzedaka, and they are all hinted at in this verse. The highest level is "let them take for Me a portion." Here the giving is "for Me" because that's what G-d wants us to do. The second level is when we give tzedaka out of the kindness of our hearts because we cannot bear to see the suffering of the poor, "from every man whose heart motivates him." Noble as it is, this is not the highest level of giving.

And the third level is the person who would really prefer not to give at all, but is too embarrassed to say no. About him the verse says, "you shall take My portion."

No one will ever know from which of these groups were the passengers in that first-class El Al cabin, but one thing is clear: whatever a Jew's motives, he knows what it means to be a mensch.

Source: Nachalat Chamisha in Iturei Torah

Written and compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

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From Shema Yisrael Torah Network <shemalist@shemayisrael.com>

To Peninim <peninim@shemayisrael.com>

Subject Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

**Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum -**

**Parshas Terumah**

**And let them take for Me a portion, from every man whose heart motivates him. (25:2)**

Does Hashem need our money? After all the miracles and wonders that He wrought for the Jewish People in and out of Egypt, does He need our money? Hashem has everything. He needs nothing. Clearly, He needs nothing from us, except sincere conviction. Did we really mean what we said when we declared, Naase v'nishma, "We will do and we will listen"? Talk is easy; talk is cheap. Are the people ready to put their money where their mouths are? Are the Jews prepared to spend, to share, to give - or

are we just all talk? For some people it is easier to say, "We will do," than to put their hand into their pockets and declare, "We will give." A Jew is supposed to have faith in the Almighty. It is one of the most basic tenets of our faith. One who professes to deny Hashem's existence is not only a fool, but he is also an apikores, heretic. Clearly, this is a negative quality. Having said this, we relate a homily from Horav Yitzchak, zl, m'Vorka, who remarked that Hashem created all character traits and attributes - even those which are undesirable and evil- to be used for positive, good purposes. This includes anger, arrogance, stubbornness, etc. It, of course, applies only under certain conditions and in specific circumstances. When asked what the purpose of apikorsus, heresy, is, he replied that instances occur in which one should act as if he is faithless.

How is this possible? The Rebbe illustrated with the following example. There are circumstances in which a poor man stands before a person of means and begs for assistance. His life is coming apart. He has nothing to eat and no way to support his family. "Please," he begs. The wealthy man responds, "Do not worry. Things will be fine. Hashem will help you." He says this to assuage his own guilt for not giving the poor man his due. Let this miser believe a little less and give the poor man a little more. All of a sudden, when it comes to helping another Jew who is down and out, he becomes a sanctimonious believer. It was in a situation such as this that apikorsus is considered constructive.

Rav Yitzchak once approached a wealthy man, requesting a donation from him on behalf of one of the wealthy man's relatives who had been going through a difficult period. This individual was notorious for his refusal to help anyone - even his own flesh and blood. This time was no different. The answer was no.

Rav Yitzchak just sat there waiting, staring, offering no response, refusing to arise from the chair and leave. The man reiterated, "I told you my answer. I will not change my mind. I will not give you any money." No response. The Rebbe continued sitting, staring, ignoring the wealthy man as if he were non-existent. The man was becoming insolent. "I said I would not change my mind. I have work to do. The answer is still no," he said.

"There is a reason to wait," the Rebbe replied. "Every individual possesses two inclinations: a yetzer tov, good inclination; and a yetzer hora, evil inclination. The evil inclination is born with him, so from birth his yetzer hora has been a part of him. The yetzer tov, however, does not become a part of his psyche until he reaches adulthood - thirteen years later. It, therefore, takes the yetzer tov a little bit longer to voice its opinion. I already heard from the evil inclination. Now I am waiting to hear what the good inclination has to say concerning this charitable endeavor. That is why I am waiting." The man took the hint. He received the message and gave Rav Yitzchak a considerable donation. It is all in the packaging.

**They shall make an aron of acacia wood, two and a half cubits its length; a cubit and a half its width; and a cubit and a half its height. (25:10)**

The measurements of the Aron were presented in fractions. Each of its dimensions included a "broken measure" - two and a half, one and a half, one and a half. Chazal teach that, given the fact that the Aron symbolized Torah study, a lesson may be derived from here concerning the character of the talmid chacham, Torah scholar. One who masters Torah erudition has not necessarily joined the ranks of the Torah elite. He does not achieve this position until he has refined his character traits, a goal which sees fruition only after he has integrated the Torah's lessons into his psyche. He becomes "one" with the Torah. Regardless of his achievements, the talmid chacham must view himself as "broken," still an incomplete person. He has so much more to study, so much further to go in developing himself into a receptacle of Torah. He always sees himself as standing in the middle of his journey. While he is acutely

aware of his accomplishments, they pale in comparison with how much more he has to achieve.

A multitude of stories depict the character of our Torah giants, how they shunned praise, always feeling that their achievements were extremely limited in contrast with their obligations. The Maharam Schick, zl, was one of the preeminent leaders of Hungarian Jewry. A talmid muvhak, primary disciple of the Chasam Sofer, zl, he developed a relationship with his rebbe that inspired him throughout his life. Indeed, before his death, the Maharam Shick said that he remembered every Torah thought which he had heard from his revered rebbe.

Throughout his life he was plagued with ill health, the result of a weak body. This, of course, had no effect on his spirit; his devotion to Torah study and its mastery was his beacon of strength. He developed a warm relationship with the Yetev Lev, father of the Satmar Rebbe, zl, and Rav of Sighet. The episode takes place when the Yetev Lev visited the Maharam Schick during his last illness, to which he ultimately succumbed.

The Maharam was in intense agony, pain racking his frail body. The Yetev Lev approached his friend's bed and held his hand for a few moments. Finally, the two long-time friends embraced and kissed, both acutely aware that this was probably the last time they would see one another. Suddenly, the Maharam moaned and said, "I am suffering overwhelming pain, and I wonder why. What did I do to deserve such intense pain? It must be the result of bitul Torah, wasting time that should have been spent studying Torah."

The Sigheter Rav left and decided to pay a visit to the Maharam's yeshiva. While there, he related the incident that had taken place at the home of their revered Rebbe: "Can you imagine that the Maharam attributed his agony to bitul Torah? He has always been the quintessential masmid, diligent student of Torah. His mouth does not wane from Torah. Nary a moment is wasted. What could he mean?"

The Rav thought for a moment, then commented, "Unless he is referring to the passage in the Talmud Berachos 5A, wherein Chazal say, 'If one sees himself plagued by yissurim, pain and misery, he should introspect and scrutinize his actions. If, after a complete scrutiny he is not yet able to find anything wrong with his actions, then he should attribute his pain to the sin of bitul Torah.' Now you will understand the meaning of, pishpeish v'lo matza, 'he scrutinized and found nothing wrong with his actions.'" The Maharam introspected his life and found nothing negative to which to attribute his misery! Therefore, he suggested that perhaps it is for the sin of wasting time from learning Torah!"

The Maharam led a life that was essentially perfect. Yet, he did not rest on his laurels. Until his very last breath, he continued to demand more of himself.

### **You shall make two keruvim of gold - hammered out shall you make them. (25:18)**

The existence of Hashem in the world is not a novel Jewish idea. It is a reality that is accepted by most people. The Navi Malachi (1:11) says: "From the rising sun to its setting, My Name is great among the nations." The nations of the world are aware that there is a Creator. On every American dollar we proclaim, "In G-d we trust." All one has to do is open his eyes to witness His manifold miracles and wonders before our very own eyes. One idea, however, is purely Jewish: A personal G-d. Man is troubled with this pressing question: How is it possible to establish a relationship with the Almighty? Hashem is spiritual, all-encompassing, unlimited, all-powerful, above and beyond anything that man could possibly conceive. In contrast, man is limited, inadequate, bound by constraints of time, weak. In other words, man is the total opposite of Hashem. We are His creations. So, how do the "two" come to the table?

A difficult philosophic query frustrates the gentile world. Their greatest philosophers and theologians have grappled with it and have arrived at no conclusive explanation. They are stumped. It is specifically in this

question where the difference between Jew and gentile, righteous and wicked, saint and sinner, is revealed. Yes, they believe that the Almighty created the world, but today He is too busy, too involved, to micro-manage day-to-day activities. There are those who believe that a simple man cannot reach G-d. Thus, they conjured the concept of a medium, a prophet, a son - anything but a personal G-d.

The Jew knows that Hashem's function as G-d did not end with the world's creation. Hashem continues to be involved in every aspect of this world at all times and in all circumstances. In addition, it is not merely a remote possibility to develop a relationship with Him; it is a critical component of our dogma. We can speak with Hashem through the medium of prayer, blessings and Torah study. Last, we believe that Hashem loves us unconditionally, with a strong love that will endure forever.

Horav Shimshon Pincus, zl, posits that this idea is symbolized by the two Keruvim which were above the Aron in the Beis Hamikdash. One Keruv symbolizes Hashem, while the other represents Klal Yisrael. While this idea may seem logical, what is most impressive is that the two Keruvim were identical! Shlomo Hamelech says in Shir Hashirim (5:2): Pischu li achosi raayasi yonasi tamasi, "Open up your heart to Me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfection." In the Midrash, Chazal say, "Do not read this as tamasi, my perfection, but rather, as teumasi, my twin. This means that in the relationship between Hashem and Klal Yisrael they are both equal - like twins! This is incredible. How do we understand this? Rav Pincus analogizes this to an illustrious Rav, such as Horav Yosef Chaim, zl, of Baghdad, whose brilliance in Torah and spiritual elevation were legendary. The great man comes home and is confronted by his young daughter who asks him for a piece of cake. Rav Yosef Chaim replies, "Let me ask your mother." Now, should someone so distinguished as Rav Yosef Chaim, the leader of Sephardic Jewry, have to ask his wife's permission to give his daughter a piece of cake? Yes! Because when he married her, she became his equal - his twin. This is an ultimate relationship. What creates the bond that makes them "twins"? It is the love that exists between them. When husband and wife live together in harmony, they create a bond of equality. That is the result of love.

This is what Chazal mean when they compare our relationship with Hashem to that of twins. The mutual love that exists between Hashem and Klal Yisrael is so strong that it creates such an equality. This is why Hashem grants tzadikim, righteous persons, unique powers. Imagine a couple comes to a tzadik to intercede on their behalf, to bless them with a child. The tzadik listens and blesses them, practically guaranteeing them a child within a year. How does he do it? He is not G-d. How does he make such a promise?

It is a gift from Hashem, Who grants him the power to establish, to alter, to amend things in the world. Chazal say that, under certain circumstances, a tzadik can annul a Heavenly decree. Indeed, when one applies himself properly, he realizes that the relationship between Hashem and the Jewish People is one of the greatest miracles that occurs in the world.

In the Kuzari, Rav Yehudah HaLevi writes that a Jew is endowed with a special capacity for awareness of Hashem. While nevuah, prophecy, is the highest expression of this capacity, every Jew, regardless of his spiritual plateau, has the potential to feel a closeness to Him. I think it all depends on how much we can divest ourselves of the external ruffraff that goes on around us. This determines how close we feel. Many great people feel this closeness to an acute degree. You see it on their faces; you sense it in speaking to them; when they daven; when they learn; when they talk about Hashem. There is one individual who stands out, who perhaps towers above many, who seethes with emotion during moments of spiritual ascendance. Horav Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz, zl, menahel of Mesifita Torah Vodaath and architect of Torah chinuch in America, was that person.

Reb Shraga Feivel would often quote the Baal HaTanya, who, while laying on his deathbed, pointed to the beams of the ceiling above his bed and remarked, "I see here more than wooden beams. I see the Divine words of Creation that brought them into existence." His thoughts were constantly on Hashem, because he lived with a sense of obligation to give of himself entirely to the Almighty. Perhaps this is why he was so driven to build Torah in America. He was motivated by his intense love for Hashem and His People. He viewed b'chol meodecha, which means with all of your resources, as a mandate to utilize all of one's talents in service of Hashem.

The mission statement, the anthem, of Torah Vodaath under Reb Shraga Feivel was taken from Sefer Chareidim: Bilvavi Mishkan evneh, la'hadar Kevodo, "In my heart I will build a Tabernacle to His glory." His voice would tremble when he read the words written by the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh, and he placed them as his personal petition, between the cracks of the Kosel. The Ohr HaChaim addressed the Shechinah with the words of Shlomo HaMelech in Shir HaShirim 5:2, Achosi rayasi yonasi tamasi "My sister, my beloved, my dove, my perfect one." So close did he feel to Hashem.

Reb Shraga sought to imbue his talmidim, students, with this awareness of Hashem. He tried to infuse them with this same emotion. He taught that an individual's awareness of Hashem's Presence depends on sensitizing himself to it. The following analogy was used to illustrate this idea. Twin brothers were separated at birth and each was in a different area. One brother was raised in the home of a wealthy banker, while the other was raised on a farm. Many years went by and, shortly after they reached adulthood, the brothers were reunited. As they stood on a busy street corner talking to one another, the brother who was raised on a farm stopped to listen to the sweet song of a lark. His brother, who was raised by the banker, heard nothing, or, at least, it meant nothing to him. On the other hand, when someone nearby dropped a coin on the street, the brother raised by the banker heard the sound above the din of the street noises, while the brother who had been raised on the farm heard nothing. Each brother had heard what his ear had been accustomed to hearing - and appreciating. Thus, one should sensitize himself to sense Hashem everywhere. He is present. We just have to look and listen.

On the last Simchas Torah of his life, Reb Shraga Feivel sat in Bais Medrash Elyon, his yeshivah in Monsey, New York. Together with his students, while observing the waning light, he sang the haunting melody of Horav Aizik Kahliver, zl. Galus, galus, vie lang bist du - Shechinah, Shechinah, vie veit bist Du. "Exile, exile, how long are you - Shechinah, Shechinah, how distant You are." To him, it was more than a song; it was his heartfelt emotion. Reb Shraga Feivel told his students that the saintly Divrei Chaim, Horav Chaim Halberstam, zl, m'Sanz, used to send his chassidim to Reb Aizik, as the Divrei Chaim put it, "to study in the yeshivah of galus haShechinah." Reb Aizik's love for Hashem was so intense and so strong that he imbued his students with his passion. To truly love, one must want to share this love with others. Reb Shraga Feivel loved Hashem with overwhelming intensity, and he infused this passion into others.

**You shall put the Partition under the hooks...and the Partition shall separate for you between the Holy and the Holy of Holies. (26:33)**

The Aron HaKodesh was separated from the Holy by the Paroches, Partition. Accordingly, the Aron was kept sealed in the Holy of Holies. Within the Aron were the Luchos, Torah and Shivrei Luchos, broken shards of the first Luchos. Klal Yisrael never had the opportunity to study from this Torah scroll. We must endeavor to understand what purpose is served by a scroll that is not seen. Indeed, the Aron is referred to as, Aron HaEidus, Ark of Testimony, attesting to Hashem's continued love for the Jewish People and His forgiveness of their sin concerning the Golden Calf. If no one ever saw the Aron, how did it "testify"? In his hesped, eulogy, for the Brisker Rav, zl, Horav Zalman Sorotzkin, zl, explained that this scroll served another lofty purpose. It guarded the

Torah from forgers, amenders and progressives, who in every generation seek new ways to undermine the Torah and sabotage its authenticity. Hashem commanded that the accuracy and pristine nature of the Torah be protected in the sanctity of the Holy of Holies. It was forbidden for anyone to enter the Holy of Holies, except for the Kohen Gadol on one day of the year - Yom Kippur, a day reserved for holiness and purity, when all work is prohibited. This is neither the time nor the place for the individual entering the Holy of Holies to engage in any form of sabotage. These conditions helped insure that the Torah would always remain in its original form.

The Brisker Rav remained within his small apartment in Yerushalayim, concealed within his world of Torah. He shunned politics and rarely involved himself in mundane activities. He was neither a rosh yeshiva, nor did he have an official position. He was the gadol ha'dor, preeminent Torah leader of his time. He was uncompromising in his adherence to the Torah and immovable in protecting it against its would-be falsifiers. As long as the Brisker Rav lived, Klal Yisrael was assured of an individual who would not allow the Torah to be breached.

The Torah scroll was doubly protected. It was kept sealed within the Aron HaKodesh, which was kept off-bounds by the Paroches which, in turn, separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy. Did the Aron require dual protection? I think an important lesson is to be derived herein. We have suffered the effect of the falsifiers for hundreds of years. The French Revolution brought us the Haskalah, Enlightenment, which spawned a number of secular incursions against the traditional way of Jewish life. First, Torah She Be'al Peh, Oral Law, was not from Heaven; then, the Divinity of Torah She B'ksav, the Written Law, was repudiated. This led to intermarriage and, ultimately, the baptismal font. We fought the enemy from without, and, while we definitely sustained serious casualties, we are still here today, thriving and growing, Torah Judaism is fast becoming a way of life that is the accepted way that a Jew should live.

In addition, there is the battle from within. I refer to those who claim to pledge allegiance to the banner of Orthodoxy, but who look for every new way to undermine traditional Judaism, all under the guise of pluralism. Unity among Jews is all-important, but at what expense? What do we have to give up in order to establish unity? The sanctity of the Torah cannot be challenged. Its purity may not be impugned. Those who deny the Divinity of the Torah are clearly not our recognized leaders. To regard them as such, and consider them equal, is an affront to the Torah and Hashem Yisborach.

Which battle is more difficult - from within or without? Interestingly, when the Kohen Gadol entered the Holy of Holies, the Partition was moved slightly. The Kapores which enclosed the Aron was never moved. The cover above the Torah within was never moved. This should tell us something.

**With their faces toward one another; toward the Paroches, Cover, shall be the faces of the Keruvim. (25:20)**

We are a complex nation, filled with diversity, contrasting attitudes, divergent emotions, and distinct character traits. Yet, something unifies us as a nation. What keeps us together? The core which unites the Jewish People as one nation is the belief in the Torah and in the One incorporeal G-d. The Torah says in Devarim 27:9, Hayom niheyseia l'am, "Today you became a nation." This is a reference to the day we received the Torah at Har Sinai. Rav Saadya Gaon writes, "Our nation is a nation only through the Torah." Beyond our essence as a nation, we are truly divided.

This is not a new concept. While the sons of a single man do share a commonality of ideas and customs, it does not necessarily mean that they can form together as one nation. Avraham Avinu had two sons who went their separate ways, forming two diverse nations. Yitzchak Avinu had two sons who did not see eye-to-eye and, hence, developed into distinct nations. Yaakov Avinu's family was large, and they suffered strife from

within. An accord between the brothers did not come easily. They were split according to their maternal pedigree. In his final moments on this world, Yaakov called his sons together and blessed them. He compared them to different creatures. Horav Zalman Sorotzkin, zl, says he did this to demonstrate that they had nothing to unify them as a nation. They were too different from one another. This worried the Patriarch until, at the last moment, he found the one idea that could unite them all: faith in the Oneness of Hashem and acceptance of the yoke of His kingdom. In the Talmud Pesachim 5b, we are taught that at the time of Yaakov's petirah, passing, the tribes told him: Shema Yisrael, Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem Echad. "Hear O Yisrael. Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is One." He then passed away, reassured in the knowledge that his sons had one element that unified them: their belief in Hashem. This conviction was capable of unifying them as one nation.

It did not last. One would think that in the crucible of affliction, in Egypt, our first exile, we would have gotten along. No - there was slander and lashon hora among them. When they left Egypt, they should have been overjoyed. When people are happy they normally get along. They did not. The wilderness experience was rife with quarrels, complaints, and grumbling. Nothing seemed to work for them. It was only when they came to Har Sinai that their distorted ideas, the bitterness that plagued them, was corrected. When Klal Yisrael heard Hashem speak, when they heard Him command them to believe in Him and reject other deities, to accept His Torah and become a mamleches Kohanim v'goi kadosh, "a kingdom of Priests and a holy nation," the common element within their Jewish souls was aroused, so that they proclaimed their faith in the one and only G-d. The diversity of their natures was removed. They were now one nation whose diversity was focused on one common goal, one unified faith, one G-d.

Torah is the only entity / idea that has united our nation. Without belief in the Torah, its Divine Authorship, both Written and Oral, we have nothing to unify us. We are just not on the same page. This explains the Lutzker Rav's message of the Keruvim, "With their faces toward one another, toward the Cover shall be the faces of the Keruvim." The Keruvim were in the form of a young child, in order to teach us that childhood education must be grounded in Torah. Indeed, we must hammer the Keruv from the same block of gold as the Kapores, Cover, itself. A Keruv may not be added. It must be one with the Torah. The link between Hashem and Klal Yisrael stems from Jewish children studying Torah. The voice of prophecy was heard from between the two Keruvim. Its message was symbolized by the Keruvim facing toward one another, symbolizing love and facing toward the Kapores/Aron/Torah, denoting the focus of that love: Hashem. True unity will reign among us, children and adults, only when the children turn their faces to the Torah.

#### **Va'ani Tefillah**

#### **Zeh Keili v'anveihu**

#### **This is my G-d and I will beautify Him/ wish to serve Him in a beautiful way**

The simple meaning is that I wish to serve Hashem in a beautiful way. Chazal use this pasuk as the basis for the halachah of hiddur mitzvah, the concept of performing mitzvos in a beautiful way, going out of your way to beautify the mitzvah. When one performs mitzvos in such a manner, it shows that mitzvos are important to him, that they play a significant role in his life. When we perform mitzvos in a beautiful way, it indicates that we feel privileged and enthusiastic that Hashem has placed the yoke of mitzvos on our shoulders. This responsibility gives us pleasure. Targum Onkelos offers an alternative explanation for the word v'anveihu. He sees the word related to naveh, a beautiful dwelling. Therefore, he translates the pasuk as, v'avni lei mikdash, "and I will build for Him a Bais Hamikdash." This will be Hashem's abode. Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl, extends this idea a bit further. He sees the person as the dwelling, thus the pasuk will read: "I wish to become a dwelling for Him." This means that I wish to live my life in such a manner that it becomes an abode for

His Shechinah in this world. Is there a higher aspiration? This is what He expects of us. When we are exhorted, Kedoshim tiheyu. "Be holy," prepare yourself to be a vessel upon which the Divine Presence will rest. Sponsored l'zechar nishmas R' Moshe Yehudah Leib ben Asher Alter Chaim z"l niftar 24 Shevat 5769 By his family

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Subject Rabbi Frand on Parsha

#### **Rabbi Yissocher Frand - Parshas Teruma**

#### **The Symbolism of the Keruvim**

The Chumash commentaries see symbolic messages in each of the various utensils that were used in the Mishkan and even in all the various subcomponents of those utensils. Certainly, a prime example of this is the discussion surrounding the Aron [the Ark, containing the Tablets of Testimony] and its subsidiary components including the Badim [poles that appeared to be used to transport the Aron] and the Keruvim [two cherubic gold angels on top of the Aron].

The Aron itself not only symbolizes Torah, it actually contains the Torah itself. The Badim symbolize those who support Torah. Just as the poles could never be separated from the Aron, so too the supporters of Torah can never be separated from Torah. We have spoken about this in the past.

Tonight we wish to focus on the symbolism of the Keruvim. What do the Keruvim that adorn the top of the Aron represent? The Chasam Sofer writes in the name of his mentor, Rav Nosson Adler, that the Keruvim represent Torah scholars, those who study Torah. Why is it that those who study Torah are represented by the child-like figures of the Keruvim?

If we had to come up with a symbol for Talmidei Chachomim, we would not pick child-like images. We would be more likely pick images of adults with long gray beards. Why did the Torah chose to symbolize Talmidei Chachomim with child-like faces? I once read in the name of Rav Shmuel Rozovsky that this teaching a lesson that a Torah Scholar must always possess a child-like exuberance to learn Torah. Typically, only children possess such exuberance. As we get older, we become jaded and nonchalant about things. If we can think back to when we were children or can think back to the way our children were or the way they are – that first time that one learns Chumash, the excitement is palpable. The first time one's child recites the Mishna of "Mah Nishtana," he is so keyed up that the excitement keeps him up for the entire Seder! Likewise, the first time one learns a blatt Gemara.

The way to become a Talmid Chacham is to make sure that our learning always maintains the symbolism of "...and I shall speak with you from atop the lid, from between the two Keruvim that are on the Aron of the Testimony..." [Shmos 25:22]. A person must try to hold onto that child-like enthusiasm, in order to become a true Talmid Chochom.

As we've mentioned in the past, the word for a sage in Hebrew is not "Chochom", it is "TALMID Chochom". Even the great sage remains a STUDENT.

There is a famous story of a Rabbi in Norfolk Virginia who told his secretary that he would not take any calls between 10:00 and 11:00 each morning, because that is the time that he sets aside to learn Torah. When the members of the Board of Directors heard about their Rabbi's blocking out this time slot each day to study Torah, they complained to him: "We thought you finished the Seminary already. Why do you need to keep on studying?"

This is a concept that is foreign to people who were zoche to learn in Yeshiva. For us, the Chochom is the TALMID Chochom, the sage who is still a student. Learning never stops. That is why Talmidei Chachomim



are represented by Cherubs. In order to grow in learning, a person needs to maintain the excitement and enthusiasm of young children. There is another component to the Keruvim beside their child-like faces. They were also facing one another: "Pneihem ish el achiv" [Shmos 25:20]. Rav Nosson Adler explains that although they were FACING one another, they were not actually LOOKING at one another. Each of the Keruvim were in reality looking downwards towards the Aron itself. The symbolism of facing one another without looking at each other may be explained as follows: Torah scholars may sometimes disagree with one another and disagree vehemently because they are each interested in understanding what the Torah says and they may understand it differently from one another. Their focus is not with each other but with what the Luchos HoAydu [Tablets of the Testimony] say, their focus is on the Truth as it emerges from the Torah. But even though they are focused downward and may have sharp differences of opinion on what the Truth is, they do not turn their backs on one another and they certainly do not march away from one another in opposite directions. Despite their disagreements, Talmidei Chochomim are never disrespectful of one another. They always remain facing one another with respect, with comradeship, and even with love. The last Mishna in Tractate Sotah states that one of the signs of the era preceding the Moshiach (Ikvesa d'Meshicha) is that "Truth will become rare (ne'ederes)". The Gemara expounds based on use of the word ne'ederes that Truth will become "Adarim Adarim" – like flocks. What do Chazal mean by that? Chazal mean that in the pre-Messianic era, people will think that Truth is only found in their particular "flock" (i.e. - sect or group). Everyone will think that anyone from a different "flock," from a different type of grouping cannot possibly have the Truth. We know that this is not true, but unfortunately we see this attitude in our own times. We have divided into different groups each of which thinks that they have the monopoly on Emes [truth] and each of which may not feel that they need to have the courtesy to treat other groups with respect, even though they too may be totally committed and totally "for the sake of Heaven."

This is what the Cheruvim are supposed to represent. One can be focused on the Kapores and on the Aron containing the Luchos in order to gain the Emes, but one can and should remain facing (courteous to and respectful of) other Talmidei Chochomim who are also interested in that same Truth, even though they come to different conclusions of what that Truth is telling us.

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Parsha Parables By Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetz

**Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky**  
**Parsha Parables Parshas Terumah - 5771**  
**Stories & Anecdotes that Illuminate the Weekly Torah Portion and Holidays**  
**Inner Sanctum**

The Mishkan was one of the most detailed structures in the Torah. The minutia of the smallest parts is recorded for posterity and eternity. Indeed, Rashi expounds on a phrase in this portion: "According to all that I show you, the pattern of the Mishkan and the pattern of all its vessels; and so shall you do." Rashi notes the seemingly superfluous addition, "so shall you do" and explains, "So shall you do for eternity, if a vessel gets lost or destroyed, then you must replace it in the exact measure" (See Exodus 25:9). It really seems difficult to comprehend the reasons for all these instructions in a barren desert. What for?

One of the most expounded verses in the Torah, almost perfectly themed for homiletic analysis and pontification, appears in this week's portion. "And you shall make me a sanctuary and I shall dwell within them" (Exodus 25:8).

Many of the commentaries are quick to point out that the Almighty does not say, "And you shall make me a sanctuary and I shall dwell within it." He does not say that He shall dwell within the confines of a physical sanctuary, rather the Ribono Shel Olam, Master of the Universe, says that he will dwell within them. The commentators expound, saying within each and every one of us. And that is all fine. But why bother with the details of a Mishkan if He is not dwelling in the Mishkan, rather within each of us? Imagine. A king details the most intricate plans of a palace and then says, "I won't live in it, I'll just spend time with the builder strolling together in the forest." Verse after verse details myriad showpieces and utensils for this Tabernacle, specifying cubits, half cubits, exact types of material - gold, silver, copper, wool and linen - and then G-d tells us that he will dwell within us! Build it and I will dwell within you!?

**The Story**

Though I am not a philosopher, nor do I use this weekly column to espouse philosophical thoughts, my good friend Alan Jay Gerber recently gifted me a small but powerful volume, *Crisis, Covenant and Creativity, Jewish Thoughts for a Complex World*, written by Rabbi Nathan Lopes Cardozo.

In it, he discusses the fallacy of so many of the detractors of Judaism as we know it, from Jewish heretic Boruch Spinoza to outside antagonists like St. Thomas. Their underlying critique of Judaism was that they considered the system of detailed halacha, codified actions for every single aspect of life, antithetical to the inner devotion and spirituality we all should strive to attain. Conformity to minutia, "The rule of right living," according to Spinoza, restricted devotion. But the story of the Mishkan tells us something else.

Rabbi Cardozo tells the story of his neighbor, a music teacher, who would teach his students a particular piece of Mozart night after night. Rabbi Cardozo was so used to the piece, that he knew every nuance as well as every note.

So when he saw a poster announcing that famed violinist Yehudi Menuhin was going to play that particular piece, Rabbi Cardozo immediately bought tickets and went to the concert, thinking I know the piece so well that if Mr. Menuhin, makes a mistake, I'll be able to correct him.

He came back confused. The concert was superb, but it did not sound anything like the music he was hearing nightly from his neighbor's home. How could that be?

He mustered the courage to approach his neighbor, "I don't understand," he said. "I went to hear the same piece of Mozart that you play nightly. But when I heard Menuhin, it was totally different."

The teacher explained, "You heard a completely different piece of music."

"It can't be! I have the program. It's the same piece!"

"No," explained the teacher. "It was the same symphony but not the same music. You see, when I play Mozart, I take Mozart's notes and I play Mozart. When Menuhin plays Mozart, he may take the notes from Mozart, but he plays Menuhin."

**The Message**

There is a certain power that the master composer endowed within each and every one of us. He gave us rules and laws, a set of notes if I may say. The notes are indeed detailed instructions that we are to follow, if we are to live His spirit; however, once we grow to do his will, He wants to dwell within us! The rules may sound restrictive, but they are the channel to allow G-d to dwell within us. Adherence to His creative mind does not stifle the spirit, it opens it. The service of Hashem manifests itself through each one of us and our capabilities - each playing a

different piece of music through the same notes! And thus the eternal subjugation to the details of His architectural instruction is the path for us to become the vessels of his glory, and there is no greater bond between the human being and the G-dly spirit than that!

In honor of Ronald and Sonya Krigsman shetichyu. Saadia and Sorala Krigsman and family, Chaim and Ann Krigsman and family, Tzvi and Hudi Krigsman and family, Meyer and Sharon Weissman and family  
Yeshiva of South Shore | 1170 William Street | Hewlett | NY | 11557

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**A Thought for the Week with Rabbi Jay Kelman  
Parshat Terumah - The Aron of Eden**

Judaism sees the sparks of the Divine within the most mundane of activities. Revelation at Sinai is followed by a series of laws dealing with such topics as slavery, property damage, assault and battery, lost objects, and court procedures. While all societies have civil codes, Judaism sees these laws as rooted in the Divine system of justice. Their observance embodies the essence of Judaism no less-in fact more-than the "rituals" of Judaism.

These laws are followed by the commandment to build a Mishkan , a sanctuary, to serve as an earthly abode in which the Divine presence may rest. Revelation must lead to social justice, even, or shall we say especially, in the most trivial of human interactions. This, in turn, leads to the manifestation of the presence of G-d in our midst.

The central component of the Mishkan was the Aron Hakodesh , which housed the luchot ( the tablets) and according to some, the entire Torah, testifying to the covenant between G-d and the Jewish people. Sitting on top of the Aron were two cherubim , made from a single piece of solid gold. The cherubim faced each other with wings soaring upwards to heaven.

Our Sages note that the cherubim had the faces of children (Rashi 25:18), one male and one female. Full of innocence, purity, wholesomeness, and brutally honest, it is the child within us who leads us to G-d. Yet to be corrupted by the deceit all around us and unable and unwilling to be let reality get in the way of dreams, children must serve as our models. We must strive to give expression to our childhood yearnings even as we age. We must learn to grow intellectually and emotionally; and yet paradoxically we must also maintain our childhood naïveté.

"And (G-d) chased away Adam and stationed the cherubim at the east of Eden , along with the revolving sword blade to guard the path of the tree of life" ( Breisheet 3:24). Banished from the Garden of Eden for having eaten from the tree of knowledge, G-d surrounds the tree of life with cherubim lest man eat from that tree, too.

It is the cherubim that protect the purity of the Garden, preserving it from the ravages of man. Like the child, the Garden must remain devoid of sin. The Torah often compares man to a tree; both require much nurturing, and it is often many years before one begins to give fruit. We plant trees, and more importantly nurture children, not knowing how successful our efforts will be. So much is beyond our control; nonetheless we give it our best efforts. It is the cherubim , the children, who protect us, who grant us life and a future, years after we die. This idea is most subtly and beautifully alluded to in the biblical text. As a consequence of the sin G-d tells man "for you are dust and to dust you shall return" (3:19) and banishes Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Immediately thereafter the Torah tells us that "the man knew his wife and she conceived and gave birth to Cain". Despite their impending mortality they live on forever through their descendants, the bnei adam , the human race.

The Torah begins with the description of G-d's creation of man, male and female, in His image. It would take twenty-six generations for man to

build a tabernacle to house the Divine presence, for man to "create" a home for G-d. It is the cherubim, the innocent male and female children, who link the physical creation of G-d and the spiritual creation of man. May we merit the proper fusion of the physical and spiritual, the pure child and the sophisticated adult, suffusing our day-to-day activities with Divine purpose.

Rabbi Kelman, in addition to his founder and leadership roles in Torah in Motion, teaches Ethics, Talmud and Rabbinics at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

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*According to two opinions in the Gemara, the source prohibiting tying and untying knots on Shabbos originates in this week's parsha. I therefore bring you:*

**Knotty Situations  
by Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff**

Mrs. Goldstein ties her tichel on Shabbos the way her mother always did. Her son Yankie explains that she should not tie or untie her tichel this way since it is a double knot. Must Mrs. Goldstein tie her tichel differently? And may she untie the knot that is holding the tichel on her head?

Yankie's older brother, Reuven returns from yeshiva and tells his mom that it is okay to tie the baby's shoes with a double knot. Mom has never done this, always assuming that one cannot tie a double knot on Shabbos, even though baby Rivka's shoes almost never stay tied on Shabbos as a result. Of course, Yankie does not miss the opportunity to disagree with Reuven and emphasize that one may not tie the shoes on Shabbos just as one may not tie the tichel.

What's a mother to do?

She calls the Rav, who begins to explain...

As we see, these and many other shailos in regards to knots affect our weekly observance of Shabbos. We must learn these halachos thoroughly to be certain that we are keeping Shabbos correctly.

Tying and untying knots are two of the 39 melachos prohibited on Shabbos. Several types of knots were tied in the course of constructing the mishkan, which is our source for what is forbidden on Shabbos. For example, it was necessary to tie and untie the nets used to catch the chilazon that provided the techeiles dye. Also, the weavers of the mishkan curtains had to tie knots whenever a thread tore (Gemara Shabbos 74b).

**KNOTTING MIN HATORAH**

The Mishnah and Gemara teach that some knots are prohibited min haTorah, others are prohibited midirabbanan, while others are completely permitted. They also state that any knot that may not be tied may not be untied either. If tying it involves a Torah prohibition, then untying it is forbidden min haTorah (Mishnah Shabbos 111b). If tying the knot is only midirabbanan, then untying it is midirabbanan. If one is allowed to tie a particular knot, one may also untie it (Rambam Hilchos Shabbos 10:7).

Although several examples of prohibited and permitted knots are mentioned in the Mishnah and Gemara, exactly what defines a "prohibited knot" is never discussed. This issue is left for the Rishonim to discuss, who have two approaches to define the issue, that of Rashi and that of the Rif.

**RASHI'S DEFINITION**

Rashi and most Rishonim contend that it is prohibited min haTorah to tie a permanent knot, it is prohibited midirabbanan to tie a semi-permanent knot, and that it is permitted to tie a temporary knot.

But where does one splice between a prohibited semi-permanent knot and a temporary knot that is permitted? Although there are different

opinions concerning this, everyone agrees that Rashi permits tying any knot that will be untied within 24 hours from when it is tied (Beis Yosef 317). A knot of such short duration is considered temporary and is permitted (Mishnah Berurah 317:6, quoting Pri Megadim). On the other hand, everyone agrees that Rashi forbids tying a knot that remains for a week or more. This is long enough to be considered semi-permanent and tying it on Shabbos was prohibited by Chazal. What Poskim dispute is whether Rashi permits tying a knot meant to last more than 24 hours but less than a week, some viewing this knot as semi-permanent and others viewing it as temporary (Rama 317:1). One may follow the lenient opinion under extenuating circumstances (Biyur Halacha 317:4 s.v. she'einam kevuim).

#### JUMPROPES AND SHOELACES

Thus, according to Rashi, tying two lengths of jump rope together to make a longer jump rope may be prohibited min haTorah since one might leave the knot permanently. Tying a knot attaching a boat to a pier is prohibited midirabbanan since it may be left for a long period of time. It is not prohibited min haTorah since it will definitely be untied eventually (Gemara Shabbos 111b with Rashi). One may tie shoes since they will be untied later the same day. (It should be noted that one may not put a new shoelace into a shoe on Shabbos because it is considered completing a vessel, see Magen Avraham 317:7).

#### RIF'S DEFINITION

The Rif and Rambam present a different approach why one may tie some knots on Shabbos but not others. In their opinion, a knot that is permanent is prohibited min haTorah only when it is a type of knot that a craftsman would tie, called a "keshet uman." A permanent knot that would not be used by a craftsman is only midirabbanan. In addition, a knot that a craftsman would tie but is not permanent is also only midirabbanan, whereas a knot that is neither permanent nor used by a craftsman is totally permitted.

In the Rif's opinion, there is no intermediate category for semi-permanent knots. According to most interpretations, he considers any non-permanent knot as temporary even if it remains tied for a long time. Thus, tying a knot and leaving it for several months will be permitted so long as it is not a craftsman's knot according to these interpretations of the Rif's opinion (Pri Megadim; Aruch HaShulchan 317:3; Avnei Nezer #178; Mishnah Berurah 317:5; However, compare Taz 317:1 and Graz 317:2).

Furthermore, according to this approach, tying a craftsman's knot with intent to untie it after several months will only be midirabbanan according to the Rif because it isn't permanent.

#### WHAT NOT TO KNOT

Here are some examples of knots that are prohibited min haTorah. In the time of the Mishnah, boatmen would tie a knot at the prow of a boat or ship that was never removed. Such a knot is prohibited min haTorah on Shabbos. According to Rashi, this is because the knot is permanent while according to the Rif it is only forbidden min HaTorah because of the additional factor that it is tied by trained boatmen.

Similarly, knots tied by shoemakers or sandal makers of Talmudic times were prohibited min haTorah (Gemara Shabbos 112a), since they were tied permanently (and according to the Rif because they were also craftsmen's knots).

Tying knots of tefillin and tzitzis is a Torah violation since these are craftsman's knots and permanent (Gemara Eruvin 96b; Shabbos 131a). Tightening the knots of one's tzitzis may also violate a Torah prohibition.

Suturing stitches is prohibited min HaTorah because the knot tied after each stitch is a permanent skilled knot (Nimla Tal Kosheir #16).

Therefore, whenever possible, a non-Jew should perform this suturing on Shabbos (see Rama 328:12).

#### WHAT KNOT TO KNOT

According to both Rashi and the Rif, one may tie a knot that will be untied within 24 hours. Thus according to all opinions, one may tie a gartel on Shabbos or the belt on a bathrobe or any other garment that is usually untied when the garment is removed. Similarly, a woman may tie her tichel in place because a woman always unties this knot when she removes it so that she does not dishevel her hair.

#### MAY I KNOT THIS KNOT?

In conclusion, there are three disputes between Rashi and the Rif.

#### PERMANENT, BUT NOT CRAFTY

1. According to Rashi, a permanent knot is prohibited min HaTorah even if it isn't a craftsman's knot, since permanence is the only criterion for the Torah's prohibition. However, the Rif will consider such a knot to be prohibited only midirabbanan if it is not a craftsman's knot.

We should note that a knot that will never be untied is considered permanent even if one does not need the knot anymore. Rashi explains that the knot used to bind the aravos and hadasim to the lulav is considered permanent since one never bothers to untie it. This is true even though this knot will not be needed for more than a few days and then the lulav will be discarded.

Thus, knotting a bag of garbage on Shabbos violates a Torah prohibition according to Rashi since the knot will never be untied (see Rashi Sukkah 33b), whereas according to the Rif it is only midirabbanan unless one used a craftsman's knot.

#### SEMI-PERMANENT, BUT NOT CRAFTY

2. We mentioned that tying a semi-permanent non-craftsman's knot is prohibited according to Rashi, but permitted according to the Rif. Therefore, Rashi would prohibit tying a plastic bag with a simple single knot that is meant to last for more than a week (and possibly even for more than a day) since this knot is semi-permanent although it is certainly not a craftsman's knot. The Rif would permit this since it is neither a craftsman's knot nor a permanent knot.

However, we should note that the exact definition of a "craftsman's knot" is uncertain. Because of this question, some poskim rule that one should not tie any knot very tightly even though one intends to untie it shortly (Shiltei HaGibborim).

#### CRAFTY AND TEMPORARY

3. A temporary craftsman's knot is prohibited according to the Rif, albeit only midirabbanan, but is permitted according to Rashi (who considers a craftsman's knot no different from any other knot). Thus, securing a rope in order to rappel down a hill is prohibited midirabbanan according to the Rif since one would certainly use a craftsman's knot for this purpose. Rashi permits tying this knot if one intends to untie it after a few hours.

#### HOW TO WE PASKIN?

Most poskim rule that we should be stringent like both opinions (Rama 317:1). Therefore, one may not tie a craftsman's knot even if it is temporary (even though Rashi permits this), and it is also prohibited to tie a semi-permanent knot even if it is not a craftsman's knot (and would be permitted according to the Rif). Therefore, one may not knot a bag closed with a semi-permanent knot, nor may one tie a craftsman's knot even for a few hours' use.

Under extenuating circumstances, one may tie or untie a temporary knot even though it qualifies as a craftsman's knot and rely on Rashi, or tie a non-permanent knot that is not a craftsman's knot and rely on the Rif (Maamar Mordechai; see Avnei Nezer #178:6). In both of these

situations the dispute is only whether tying the knot involves an issur dirabbanan. Although we usually rule stringently, as explained above, in an extenuating situation one may rely on the lenient opinion.

#### INTERIM SUMMARY OF KNOTS

We have learned that one may not tie a permanent or semi-permanent knot or a craftsman's knot, and also that one may not tie one tight knot on top of another.

#### PERMANENT BONDING

Tying knots in a permanent way not only affects halacha but also has hashkafic ramifications. When Moshe Rabbeinu asked to understand Hashem's ways, Hashem told him that as long as he was alive he would only be able to recognize Hashem "from behind." Chazal explain that Hashem showed Moshe the knot of His tefillin, which represents the permanent attachment that exists between Hashem and the Jewish people.

Just as tefillin are tied with a permanent knot, so too Hashem's relationship with the Jewish people is a permanent bond. And just as the tefillin straps tie what is below to what is above, so too their knot connects our mundane world below to the Heavenly world above.

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