



הרב הראשי עיה"ק אלעד **מרדכי מלכא שליט"א**
נשיא וראש מוסדות "אור המלך"

מחבר ספרי שו"ת דרך המלך, אמרי מרדכי, ודרכי המלך על המועדים ועוד
רשת מעונות, ורשת גנים, ת"ת פרי תואר, ובית יעקב פרי תואר, תיכון בית יעקב החדש, ת"ת מאור ישראל,
ישיבה קטנה ארחות יהודה, ביהמ"ד גבוה לרבנים ודיינים "לקח טוב" קופת "מפעל החסד" אלעד
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Parashat Teruma

Every Man is Required to be a *Mishkan* for the *Shechina*

Questions:

- 1) The *parasha* states (25:8), "And construct for Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell within them." Why does the *pasuk* say "within them" and not "within it?"
- 2) Why were the Jews commanded to cover the *Aron*, which housed the *luchot habrit*, with gold? The *Aron* represented the height of spirituality, while gold represents the mundane!

Mankind's error

When we look at the world, we will see that people generally think that there are *tzadikim* in every generation, who reach their lofty levels by separating themselves from the world. They think that they afflict themselves with fasts and by rolling in the snow. Furthermore, they are believed to study Kaballah, and so on and so forth. One who is not worthy of living in such a manner, is believed to be totally unworthy of having the Divine Presence reside upon him, and is thought to be a simpleton. However, our holy Torah teaches us that if one sanctifies his character traits and deeds, each and every individual is worthy of being a *Mishkan* and having the Divine Presence reside upon him, as we will soon explain. However, if man does whatever he pleases, thinking not about fulfilling the Will of Hashem, but rather, chooses to live life with a bad character, the results will be disastrous. This is as we see in our generation, how evil dominates, influencing individuals to wage war against Prime Minister Netanyahu, conducting investigations, because he accepted a bribe of cigars, in order to overturn the government. How shameful and disgraceful we must look in the eyes of the world! Can there possibly be such blinding hatred between Jews, members of the Chosen Nation? And it is all being done in the name of justice and integrity! But in truth, there is not even the slightest bit of integrity involved, merely the lusts of the government, which blinds them. Does anyone really believe that for cigars, he would do such a thing? Even the simplest man alive would not be willing to do such a thing! This stems only from the wicked character traits, jealousy and lusts of the government. It is clear that such individuals, who are controlled by their Evil Inclinations, are not fit to be a *Mishkan* for the *Shechina*. Rather, they are comparable to those who destroy the *Beit Hamikdash*. This, therefore, is man's job in this world, to make himself a fitting dwelling place for the Divine Presence, as we will explain.

Eliyahu HaNavi says that anyone can merit Divine Inspiration

We will also begin by quoting what Eliyahu HaNavi wrote in *Tanna Dbei Eliyahu Rabba (Ish Shalom-parasha 10)* on the *pasuk* (*Shoftim* 4:4), "And Devorah the prophetess..." Eliyahu asked why Devorah merited judging Israel and prophesizing for them. Eliyahu responded that it matters not if one is a



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gentile or Jew, man or woman, slave or maidservant, everything depends on one's deeds; if they are meritorious, Divine Inspiration will rest upon him.

Everyone must use their individual talents

R' Naftali Amsterdam once said to his rebbi, R' Yisrael Salanter, "If I had Rebbi's refined character traits, the pure heart of the *Yesod VeShoresh Ha'avodah*, the great mind of the Shaagat Aryeh, then I would be great in Torah and Heavenly fear!" R' Yisrael answered him, "Naftali, Naftali – it is with **your** head, **your** heart, and **your** character traits that you are demanded to succeed and draw down the Divine Presence, not with anyone else's."

Judgment in the World to Come

The *Gemara* (*Yoma* 35b) relates what will transpire in our ultimate judgment. Three scenarios are depicted: that of a poor man, a rich man and a lustful person. Each one comes with excuses why he could not learn *Torah*. Either, he was too poor, too rich or too easily enticed by sin. Each of these claims is proven wrong, either by *Hillel Ha'zaken*, *Rabi Elazar ben Charsom*, or *Yosef Ha'tzaddik*. The proofs against his claims are as follows: *Hillel Ha'zaken*, although very poor and constantly struggling to bring bread to the table, exerted himself and learned *Torah*. *Rabi Elazar*, although he was extremely wealthy and his finances required much preoccupation to arrange and take care of them, was nevertheless totally immersed in the study of *Torah*. *Yosef Ha'tzaddik*, who although was put to difficult tests with the wife Potifar, never fell to sin. **We see then that Hillel will seal the verdict of the poor, Rebbi Elazar ben Charsom will seal the judgment of the rich, and Yosef seals the judgment of the sinners. Our Sages are teaching us that every individual, no matter what situation he is in, is required to do what he is capable of doing. He should not calm himself by listening to his Evil Inclination, which tells him that it is too difficult a task and that it is beyond his capabilities. For the Torah was not given to angels, nor only to select individuals.**

Building a *Mishkan* inside oneself

Now we can explain the *pesukim* in this week's *parasha*. The grandson of the Baal Shem Tov, the *Degel Machaneh Efraim (Ki Tisa)* quotes the *pasuk* (31:4), "To weave designs, to work with gold, silver, and copper." He writes that everyone knows that everything depends on one's thoughts. He quotes the *Zohar*, which states that the *Mishkan* and its vessels were a microcosm of the lofty, spiritual world. For surely, the Torah did not write a detailed account of the construction of the *Mishkan* and its vessels for no reason. Rather, it was to teach us how every man can build his own personal *Mishkan* and vessels, to cause the *Shechina* to rest inside him. For this was the whole purpose of the construction of the *Mishkan*, as the *pasuk* states, "And construct a *Mishkan* for Me, and I will rest inside of them [בתוכם]." The Torah does not state that the *Shechina* will rest inside of **it**, which would allude to the *Mishkan*. Rather it states, "Inside of **them**," meaning, inside each Jew. **You see that the Torah wishes to teach us that each man is fit to be a *Mishkan* and have the *Shechina* rest inside of him. Everything depends upon his deeds and his intentions when performing them. As long as his entire goal is to**



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perform the Will of Hashem, he sanctifies his actions and turns them into a *Mishkan* for the Divine Presence.

The golden *Aron* teaches us that even gold can be transformed into holiness

The Ben Ish Chai answers similarly regarding the *Aron*, upon which dwelled the Divine Presence. Hashem wishes to teach us that even the most mundane item can be transformed into the height of spirituality, if we are wise enough to use it for a lofty purpose. Therefore even the gold, despite the fact that it had previously been a very mundane item, was nevertheless turned into a holy item. So too, a Torah scroll written on parchment, which yesterday and been no more than animal skin, in a short time had been transformed into the holiest object. This is an answer to all those who think that one who observes Torah and mitzvot is deprived, since he can't eat and drink everything he wants and enjoy this world. Here the Torah is teaching us that the exact opposite is true. You can eat, drink, and enjoy, just intend to do so for the sake of Heaven, so that you will have strength to serve Hashem. Sadly, many err and do not understand that specifically a Torah observant Jew is the happiest of men. For example, take Shabbat. One who does not observe Torah and mitzvot thinks that Shabbat limits a person, since he does not have a "free day" to spend with the family. Of course, the exact opposite is true. Shabbat is the day that the family can truly enjoy each other's company; just look at how much a Torah observant Jew enjoys Shabbat. On the other hand, look at how those who have not merited to observe Shabbat have nothing to do with themselves. Each one of the family members lives his own life, and they never enjoy each other's company.

Each student's obligation

We have learned to what extent each individual is required to desire and demand of himself to be a *Mishkan* for the *Shechina*, as Eliyahu Hanavi said. Therefore when an individual intends to perform Hashem's Will with everything that he does, even the most mundane deeds, he sanctifies them, as the *Ben Ish Chai* wrote. Therefore, when he eats, sleeps, or takes a stroll to relax, he should intend that it is all for the sake of gaining strength to serve Hashem. He should exert as much effort as possible, for Hashem does not make unfair demands and doesn't expect us to be angels. With his own capabilities and talents, everyone must do his utmost. He will then reach great heights and will turn into a *Mishkan* to house the Divine Presence. As we see that the *Aron*, despite being laden with gold, held the Torah and was a dwelling place for the Divine Presence. All the more so in our weak generation, it is not desirable to fast and afflict oneself, for he will only lose out in the end. The Raavad has written that leaving over a portion of food at the end of a meal and not finishing it entirely, is even greater than a fast, since he is leaving his desire for the food unsatisfied. May it be the Will of Hashem that we merit sanctifying our deeds and our only desire and will should be to carry out His Will. We will then



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merit being a *Mishkan* for the Shechina and the Torah, both we and our descendants, forever and ever. *Amen*.

With Friendship and Love,

Rav Mordechai Malka