



Because Torah Is for Every Jew

Parshas Terumah

February 16, 2018

A Taste of Torah Is There Room in the Home?

by Rabbi Avraham Dovid Karnowsky

Sometimes we approach life with an all or nothing approach. "I wish I would never speak *lashon hara* (slander), but since I find myself falling into the trap, I will give up and focus on other areas of Judaism." "I would love to spend my entire day in the *bais medrash* (study hall), but since that's not practical for me, I won't go at all."

This line of thinking comes from a mindset that G-d demands perfection, and anything less than perfect has zero value. While it is true that we should all aspire to perfect ourselves, and ultimately we all need to arrive there one way or another (some of us by our own actions, some by going through a cleansing process of suffering, etc.), that does not mean that anything less than perfect is worth nothing. Let us delve into a Medrash in this week's Torah portion, and we will learn how much G-d values the efforts of every Jew, as long as one is performing to the best of one's ability at the time.

The Medrash relates a parable: There was a king who had an only daughter. One of the kings from a different land came and requested her hand in marriage, and she gave her consent. The groom then expressed his desire to take her to his land.

Upon hearing this, the father came over to his future son-in-law and said, "This daughter you want to take is my only daughter, and I can't separate myself from her. However, she did agree to marry you, and I have no right to stop you from taking her. So please do me this one favor: Wherever the two of you travel, prepare for me a small room where I can reside next to

you, because I am unable to separate from my daughter."

So, too, says the Medrash, G-d said to the Jewish People, I have given to you the Torah. I cannot separate myself from it, but I can't stop you from taking it. So wherever you go with the Torah, please make for Me a small house where I can reside in it.

It appears that G-d is inseparable from the Torah, and since He gifted it to us, He requests that we build for Him a house wherever we go. Obviously, this needs more explanation. What is the meaning of this house that is requested of us, and how do we go about building it?

The Sfas Emes (Rabbi Yehudah Aryeh Leib Alter; 1847-1905) explains that there is a level that Moshe reached where he completely transformed himself into Torah, to the point that he was able to be in Heaven for forty days and nights, like an angel. However, most of us are not on that level; we are very much living in this physical world, indulging in the pleasures it appears to offer. We are quite far from a state where the body is completely subservient to the soul.

To this, G-d has one request: At the very least, make a small room for me wherever you go. Even as you are indulging in the physical, at least dedicate a little bit of it to me. It's not an all or nothing deal. Even if we are enjoying our food, one can try and have in mind, for at least a short while, that this food will give me strength to serve G-d better. As we are eating delicious food on Shabbos, we can dedicate some amount of

Stories for the Soul

Give His All

based on a story on revach.net

Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk (1853-1918) was renowned as a true genius in Torah learning. Less famous was his devotion to helping those in need.

In 1895, after a fire destroyed many homes in Brisk, Reb Chaim slept on the floor in the hallway of the local synagogue. He refused to sleep in his home when so many others didn't have a roof over their heads.

When money came into his hands, it didn't remain by him very long, as Reb Chaim would distribute it to the needy. At some point, the community of Brisk stopped giving him his paycheck directly and gave it only to his wife, because he would disperse it immediately to the poor.

His house was open to the public and people would make themselves at home. It was not unusual for Reb Chaim to not have a place to sleep because someone was sleeping in his bed! His son the Brisker Rav, Rabbi Yitzchak Zev Soloveitchik, commented that his father's home was worse than a public thoroughfare. In the street, he explained, one cannot set up his bed and go to sleep; the authorities will remove it if one attempts to do so. In Reb Chaim's house, said the Brisker Rav, people would simply park themselves where they pleased!

In this week's parsha, Hashem instructs Moshe that all generous-hearted people should donate for the construction of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle). It is not enough to give; one must develop a generous attitude toward others.

Kollel Happenings

POOR DEFENSE: THE ETHICS OF REPRESENTING A GUILTY CLIENT

Join Richard Kornfeld, Shareholder at RechtKornfeld PC, and Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher, Senior Educator for the Denver Community Kollel, as they investigate the proper balance a defense lawyer must maintain in his work. Wednesday, March 7th, at 12-1:15 p.m. at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$25. RSVP info@denverkollel.org.

DENVER COMMUNITY KOLLEL 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AND GROUNDBREAKING

20 years is a special milestone, and the Kollel will celebrate two decades of bringing Torah to Denver with a groundbreaking for its future home, the Kollel West Denver Torah Center, on March 6th at 6:30 pm. For more info, to place ads and make reservations, visit denverkollel.org, email journal@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855

KOLLEL PURIM CELEBRATION

The Kollel invites the community to join its annual Purim Seudah to be held on Purim, Thursday, March 1, 5:15 pm at the Ethel A. Beren Auditorium, 1261 Zenobia. Cost: \$18 per person/\$60 family max. The entire community is invited to join in Simchas Purim (no charge!) following the seudah at approximately 6:30 pm until... To reserve and for more info, email info@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855.

Increase Your Jewish IQ

By Rabbi Yaakov Zions

Last week we asked: Which psalm(s) of song were recited in the Temple on Yom Tov (Jewish holidays), and how do we commemorate this?

A: A list of some of these psalms can be found in the Talmud (at the end of Tractate Sukkah) and Masechta Sofrim (another compilation by the Sages). The Sephardic custom is to not recite any *Shir Shel Yom* on Yom Tov. Rather, they recite a psalm before *ma'ariv* and during *Pesukei D'zimra* relating to that Yom Tov (a different psalm for each Yom Tov, not each day of Yom Tov).

Most Ashkenaz communities recite the regular *Shir Shel Yom* (as if it were a weekday), while those who follow the customs of the Vilna Gaon recite a special psalm for that day of Yom Tov. These psalms are generally those which were recited in the Temple, with some exceptions.

An interesting idea relating to the Ashkenazic custom is found in the writings of the Chasam Sofer (Rabbi

Moshe Schreiber, 1762-1839). He questions the custom of reciting the opening sentence "Today is day ___ for which the *Levi'im* recited the following (psalm) in the *Bais Hamikdash* (Temple)" on Yom Tov. He felt it seems untrue to declare that this was the song recited on that day in the Temple, when, in fact, the regular daily psalm was substituted for the Yom Tov psalm.

In defense of the general custom, it seems that we are not claiming this to be the psalm the *Levi'im* would have recited on that particular day during Temple times. Rather, we are stating: "Today is day ___ for which the *Levi'im* generally recited the following psalm". (See *Chidushei Chasam Sofer*, Beitza 4b and Rosh Hashana 30b)

This week's question: Why is Psalm 104 (*Barchi Nafshi*) recited on Rosh Chodesh?

To submit an answer to Rabbi Zions, email ryz@denverkollel.org.

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Yonasan Eybeschutz - Part VII

As Jewish communities across the world struggled to recover from the catastrophe, many people remained followers of Shabbetai Tzvi, somehow believing his conversion as part of the process of the Redemption.

The rest of the Jewish communities were on the lookout for secret Sabbateans, as they are called, for they rightfully felt it was necessary to quash the remnants of the movement that had wreaked so much havoc upon world Jewry.

A Taste of Torah

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that in honor of Shabbos. My house and car may be nicer than absolutely necessary, yet I can dedicate some corner of it to G-d. We may not be on the level of Moshe, but at least we are doing our best to bring holiness into our lives and homes.

The Torah states (Terumah 25:8),

"They shall make a Sanctuary for me, so that I may dwell among them." The *Sfas Emes* concludes with a powerful promise. Whoever makes a sanctuary for G-d in his life to the best of his ability will merit to have the Divine Presence rest in his home. As long as there is room in the home!