

SHABBAT SHALOM. Today is 4 Adar I 5779. Tonight we do Kiddush Levanah.

TORAH DIALOGUE

(p. 326 Hz) (p. 500 S) (p. 306 Hi) (p. 444 AS)

TERUMAH תְּרוּמָה Exodus 25:1

[Compiled by Rabbi Edward Davis, Rabbi Emeritus (RED)
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1. This Parshah embodies the essence of Tzedakah. Tzedakah is the root of all money! The Halachah of Tzedakah indicates that the money has to be obtained honestly. The gold and silver that Bnei Yisrael took from Egypt is being used for the construction of the Mishkan. Is this money rightfully obtained? The fact that Hashem allowed the donation is testimony that the gold and silver are considered wages for all the slave labor that Bnei Yisrael performed in Egypt. [In Miami Beach there is a stained glass window donated to the synagogue by Meyer Lansky. I wonder how that was arranged halachically.] The word Tzedakah is translated as Charity. But charity implies a voluntary gift, while Tzedakah technically is an obligation! This was pointed out in the book "How The Jewish Language Grew" by Edward Horowitz, in stating that some Hebrew words defy an accurate ability to be translated.

2. The Mishkan was a place for Hashem to dwell among the people. This was very important, for it allowed for the sanctity for the people. The nation of Israel is elevated by God's presence among the people. What happened when we lost the Holy Temple? The Christians pounced on the idea that once Hashem exiled the Jewish people from Eretz Yisrael and destroyed the Holy Temple, that meant that the Jewish people had lost our Chosen People status. The New Testament is a document that states that the Chosen Nation is not Jewish. The Christian and Moslem world would never tolerate a Holy Temple in Jerusalem. The building of a new Holy Temple would mean that we are God's Chosen People. (RED)

3. The first utensil to be made is the Holy Ark which housed the Tablets, the Ten Commandments, and the Torah. This was there - never to be visited or used. These were placed in an area realized as the Holy of Holies! Why were they never to be used? The purpose of positioning the central Torah there was to negate the possibility of forgeries. Moshe wrote a Torah for each tribe; thereby allowing copies to be made and learned from. If an attempt were made to amend or to develop a new Torah, then we could check the original text to eliminate the forgery. This would expose the sinner who attempted to alter even one letter of the Torah. It is an amazing feat to recognize the beauty of our system of copying our Scripture by hand throughout the years. [Once, years ago, a Scribe visited us from New York. I took advantage of his presence and had him work on some Torahs. I asked him what brought him to South Florida. He said he was asked by a Reform rabbi in South Florida to check some of their Torahs. The rabbi admitted to him that the Torahs were the only items in their Temple which were truly authentic, and he wanted them to stay that way.]

4. Poles and staves were permanently placed at the sides of the Ark, never to be removed, even in their stationary position in the Mishkan, and later in the Temple. And these poles were visible as they were protruding through the Parochet, the curtain that secured the Holy of Holies. I believe that the message of the staves was to make sure that we understand and accept the fact that the Torah is portable. Even though the Ark was never removed from the Temple and never viewed by the people, the message was there. This I believe was the lesson to be arrived at in the life of Jeremiah the prophet. He was alive during the destruction of the First Holy Temple by the Babylonians, and the subsequent exile of the Jews to Babylonia. The pressure was upon Jeremiah to lead the people into Exile and make sure that our religion could survive the destruction of our Temple. People would have concluded that our religion could not survive without the Temple. The Torah is alive and well, even without our Temple! (RED)

5. The Cheruvim were the form of young children with wide angelic wings. This was part of the Ark that housed the Torah. This was to teach us that the education of the children had to be grounded in the Torah. The Cheruvim could not be hammered out of gold and attached to the Ark; it had to be formed as part of the Ark. The voice of prophecy was heard from the space between the two Cheruvim. Likewise the link between the Jewish people and God stems from the Jewish children studying Torah. Even with the absence of prophecy, Hashem's message to us would come from the children learning Torah. It was recorded (Bava Batra 12) that Titus would predict future events by asking a Jewish child what verse he had studied that day.

HAFTORAH

(p. 336 Hz) (p. 515 S) (p. 857 Hi) (p. 1157 AS)

KINGS I מְלָכִים א' 5:26

The haftorah deals with the construction of the First Holy Temple under the leadership of King Solomon. And it was 480 years from the Exodus from Egypt until the beginning of the building of the Beit HaMikdash in the first year of King Solomon's reign. The term "and it was וַיִּיָּד" is normally looked upon by our Sages as a term denoting sadness and trouble (Megillah 10b). The Talmud (ibid.) asks about this verse in our haftorah which describes the building of the Holy Temple, an event that is reason for joy and not sorrow. The Talmud concedes that not all cases of וַיִּיָּד (and it was) are significant in noting trouble or sadness. The Midrash (Breishit Rabbah 42:3) is more insistent that this principle holds true. The Daat Sofrim offers an explanation that validates the Talmudic principle and tarnishes this moment of happiness in the times of King Solomon. It is sad to note that it took Bnei Yisrael 480 years to fulfill a divine command to build the Holy Temple. Furthermore, the existence of the Temple did not have the proper effect on Bnei Yisrael. Soon after its construction, the nation divided, and even those Jews loyal to the ritual worship were sacrificing on private altars (בְּמִזְבְּחֵי) and not going to the Holy Temple.

QUESTIONS FOR PARSHAT TERUMAH 5779
by Rabbi Edward Davis, Rabbi Emeritus

- I. From the Text
 1. How many articles were available to donate for the building of the Mishkan? (25:1-7)
 2. What was the first utensil commanded for the construction of the Mishkan? (25:10)
 3. What are the Cheruvim? (25:19)
 4. What are the dimensions of the copper altar? (27:1)
 5. How was the gate (doorway) to the Mishkan connected to the Mishkan? (27:16)
 - II. From Rashi
 6. What does the word Terumah mean? (25:2)
 7. What are the three Terumahs that are mentioned in the Torah? (25:2)
 8. What is the Tachash animal? (25:5)
 9. What were the spices used for in the Mishkan? (25:6)
 10. From where did Bnei Yisrael get acacia wood in the desert? (26:15)
 - III. From the Rabbis
 11. When the Torah commanded Bnei Yisrael to construct the Ark, it used the plural verb "And they shall make the Ark..." (25:10). The rest of the Mishkan is commanded in the singular. Why? (Ramban)
 12. The Torah states that we should not make images. How do we explain the Cheruvim? (Chizkuni)
 13. What did the Shulchan (Table) and the Menorah represent?
 - IV. Haftarah : Kings I
 14. What was the "tax" burden that King Solomon placed upon Bnei Yisrael to construct the Holy Temple?
 - V. Relationships
 - a) Moshe – Pinchas (2 answers)
 - b) Yehoshua – Rachav
 - c) Aharon – Eliezer
 - d) Batsheva – Shlomo
 - e) Levi – Kehat
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ANSWERS FOR PARSHAT TERUMAH 5779

1. 13.
2. The Ark.
3. Angelic figures like children with wings.
4. 5 cubits by 5 cubits (square) and 3 cubits high.
5. It was not connected to the Mishkan. It was free standing, blocking the opening in the walls to the Mishkan.
6. To separate for Hashem a portion of your resources.
7. One is the half shekel that everyone gave (for the making of the sockets); two is the gifts for the purchase of the sacrificial animals; and three is the gifts here of the items needed to build the Mishkan.
8. It was an animal that is extinct, but existed at that time in the desert; it was multi-colored.
9. They were ingredients needed for the anointing oil (for the Mishkan and its utensils, kings, and Kohanim, and for the incense offering).
10. Yaakov brought acacia trees to Egypt from Canaan and told his sons to take them from Egypt when they leave.
11. Everyone should have a role in learning Torah (which is in the Ark).
12. The Torah commands us to make it (an exception to the rule).
13. The Table: material possessions. The Menorah: intellectual and spiritual achievement.
14. 30,000 men to construct the Temple.

Relationships

- a) Great Uncle Moshe (And Uncle Moshe)
- b) Husband - Wife
- c) Uncle Aharon
- d) Mother - Son
- e) Father Levi