



# JOSEPH KUSHNER HEBREW ACADEMY

## RAE KUSHNER YESHIVA HIGH SCHOOL

### Dvar Torah

### Parashat Terumah

### A HOME FOR THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

We are accustomed to hearing the story of Matan Torah in the following, linear, way. Hashem gathers Bnei Yisrael around Har Sinai, Moshe ascends to the top of the mountain, Hashem (followed by Moshe) tells us the 10 commandments, he remains on top of the mountain for 40 days, Bnei Yisrael become impatient and build a Golden Calf, Moshe comes down and breaks the luchot, etc. However, the Torah doesn't present it exactly in this order, uninterrupted. Rather, the Torah presents to us the laws of building the Mishkan before there is any mention of the Sin of the Golden Calf or Moshe breaking the Luchot. It is almost as if, these laws are presented to Moshe while he is on Har Sinai during the 40 days. In fact, many commentaries say just that, most notably the Ramban. He says that Hashem told these laws to Moshe as a type of guide book for how to build the Mishkan. Why is this, what Hashem chooses to tell Moshe during the latter's most profound contact with the Divine? Rabbi David Fohrman points out that the answer can be found in how the Torah presents these instructions. One would expect Hashem to tell Moshe how to build the structure of the Mishkan, followed by the design of the interior. Instead, Hashem tells Moshe, first, to build the Aron. It is almost as if Hashem is saying, build the Ark first, because that is really the whole point of the Mishkan. And, what is the point of the Aron? To house the Luchot: **כֹּא וְנָתַתְּ אֶת-הַכִּפֹּרֶת עַל-הָאָרֹן, מִלְמַעְלָה; וְאֶל-הָאָרֹן--תִּתֵּן** **אֶת-הָעֵדוּת, אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ. כִּב וְנוֹעַדְתִּי לְךָ, שָׁם, וְדִבַּרְתִּי אִתְּךָ מֵעַל הַכִּפֹּרֶת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכָּרִים, אֲשֶׁר עַל-אֲרוֹן** **הָעֵדוּת--אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה אוֹתְךָ, אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**. Hashem tells Moshe to place the Luchot in the Aron, and He will speak to Moshe from there. Hashem will speak to Moshe from there, because the Luchot are there. The Aron, and thereby the Mishkan, is meant to be a home for the 10 commandments which represent the fundamentals of our spiritual and moral code. In the process of Hashem giving us the Torah, he tells us that this needs to be, physically and figuratively, at the center of our lives. He tells us to build a home for it in the Mishkan, in the Aron. This way it will guide our lives on a very practical level. We should merit having the Aron, and the Beit Hamikdash, once again becoming the center of our lives, as it houses within it our spiritual and moral guide, the covenantal commandments.

Shabbat Shalom,  
Rabbi Adam Hertzberg