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פרשת תרומה
Parshat Terumah

Ashreinu | אשרינו

Enhancing your Study of the Weekly Torah Portion

This week's Ashreinu is sponsored by Mark and Joanna Dennis and family in memory of Joanna's father, Mr. Barry Garfield, whose yartzheit was on ב׳ אדר. May his Neshama have an Aliyah.

Mrs. Michal Zisquit

Adam Dennis ('21)

Zachary Dennis ('23)

Abby Dennis ('20)

Parshat Terumah begins the process of building the Mishkan, about which Hashem says

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ
וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם

"make for me a mikdash and I will dwell within them" (Shmot 25:8).

Clearly this pasuk needs elucidation. If the Jewish people are told to build a sanctuary for God to dwell in on this earth, then once they make the Mishkan, shouldn't He dwell within it?

Rabbi David Fohrman notes something very interesting about the layout of the Mishkan and the

Face to Face

Mrs.Michal Zisquit

keilim therein. Think of the Mishkan from a birds-eye view; if you look at it from above, at the top end, there you will find the aron kodesh, then the *parochet* that separates the Kodesh HaKedoshim from the Kodesh, below the *parochet* on the left side is the menorah, and opposite the menorah on the right, is the *shulchan*. Under that is the *mizbe'ach haketoret* ,the incense altar, and under that, in the *heichal*, the large *mizbe'ach* is found. If you think about it, the vessels of the Mishkan resemble a face. And not only does the Mishkan resemble a face from an aerial perspective, but there seems to be an intrinsic connection between the vessels of the Mishkan and the features of a face.

The Aron Kodesh houses the *luchot*, representative of our brain. The Torah is something we learn and understand and only then can we put it into practice. The dimensions of the Aron surpassed the dimensions of the Kodesh HaKedoshim, meaning that its very existence was a complete and constant

miracle. Normally you cannot fit a large object in a small room that is smaller than the object itself.

Interestingly, the surface area of the brain really shouldn't fit into our skulls but because of its folds and crevices, it does. According to a website called "How Stuff Works" (which sounds very official), "the cortex dominates the exterior surface of the brain. The surface area of the brain is about 233 to 465 square inches (1,500 to 2,000 cm2), which is about the size of one to two pages of a newspaper. To fit this surface area within the skull, the cortex is folded, forming folds (gyri) and grooves (sulci)."

Next comes the menorah and the shulchan, representing the eyes. The menorah represents eyes for obvious reasons: you need light to see, to illuminate that which is to be seen. The shulchan housed the show bread, which was placed there at the beginning of the week and only eaten an entire week later. Why? Just for it to be seen all week.

Next is the *mizbe'ach haketoret*, where incense is offered. Incense is a sacrifice comprised of fragrant spices, representing the nose. Finally, the big *mizbe'ach* upon which animals were sacrificed to be eaten represented the mouth.

The Mishkan is essentially God's face; it's where we meet God face to face. God says, "make me a Mishkan and from there I will speak to you." If you want to meet God, if you want to spak to Him face to face, that's to be done at the Mishkan in the center of our camp, where His face is found. God didn't need a Mishkan built for His own purposes, He wanted it built for us. We are physical people, and so we need esoteric and theoretical concepts to be relatable – the way we relate is on a physical and tangible level. We needed a dwelling place for God to be present among us. The Mishkan is place in which we can relate to God, where we can literally see the פני אלוקים within ourselves. Now that we don't have the Mishkan, may we all be zoche to fulfill the pasuk of

בלבבי משכן אבנה

-to build a Mishkan, a place to relate to within ourselves, a true fulfillment of ושכנתי בתוכם -"and I will dwell within them."

In It, To Win It

Adam Dennis ('21)

The Gemara Ketubot (62b) quotes a story of Rebbe setting up a *shidduch* between his son and the daughter of R' Yose Ben Zimra. Both parties involved agreed to let Rebbe's son learn in the Beit Medrash of Rav for 12 years before the wedding. However, when his soon-to-be wife passed in front of him, Rebbe's son changed his mind and decided he only wanted to stay for six years and then get married. Before anything happened, R' Yose's daughter passed in front of him again, and the Rebbe's son decided he wanted to get married immediately and he couldn't wait even six years. He quickly became embarrassed and ashamed for disappointing his father, for wanting to get married so fast, but to his surprise his father responded reassuringly, saying

בְּנִי דַּעַת קוֹנְךָ יֵשׁ בָּךְ

– "my son, you're acting the same way Hashem did". He then explained:

מֵעִיקָּרָא כְּתִיב תְּבִיאֵמוֹ וְתִטָּעֵמוֹ (שמות טו:יז)
וּלְבַסּוֹף כְּתִיב וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם
(שמות כה:ח)

Originally, during the splitting of the sea, Hashem told the Jews that He wanted them to build a Beit Hamikdash when they entered Eretz Yisrael, however only a few parshiyot later, in this week's Parshat Terumah, Hashem commands us to build a dwelling place for Him to dwell in immediately (i.e., the Mishkan). Rebbe was explaining that just as Hashem's love for us caused Him to hasten the timing of when Hashem wanted to build his dwelling place, so too his son's love for R' Yose's daughter was causing him to want to get married as soon as possible (*L'maysa*, he still went to yeshiva for 12 years and things worked out more or less).

The Ohr HaChaim points out something very interesting about this pasuk. Grammatically, it would make much more sense to say ושכנתי בתוכו , not

בתוכם("in it" vs. "in them"). Why would Hashem rest in them not in it, it being the dwelling place? He goes on to explain that the Mishkan was meant to be situated right in the middle of the camp of Bnei Yisrael and they should surround it with the *degalim*, flags.

How do we understand what is happening? The Ohr HaChaim answers his own question by saying that at Har Sinai, the Jews saw that Hashem was surrounded by degalim of angels with God " בתוכם ". The Jews lovingly desired also being able to serve Hashem on this level and therefore Hashem commanded them here to make the Mishkan " בתוכם " and as Rashi explains there, it is meant to be " לשמי ," done for the sake of Hashem's name and out of pure love.

We see two different sides of the situation. Hashem loves Am Yisrael, and thus decided to hasten His command to build His dwelling place among them while still in the desert. Am Yisrael loves Hashem and therefore wanted Hashem's presence "in their midst."

Even now, Hashem's love for us is immense and just like the Jews in the midbar, He is waiting for us to show that love and desire back. Once we realize this and are able to reciprocate and want to build בית שלישי לשמו,we will b'ezrat Hashem merit to see its being built in the near future! Good Shabbos!

Perfect Placement

Zachary Dennis ('23)

This week's parsha, Parshat Terumah, details the building of the Mishkan and all the things inside it. When talking about the Aron, the pasuk says:

וְנָתַתָּ אֶת הַכַּפֹּרֶת עַל הָאָרֹן מִלְמָעְלָה וְאֶל הָאָרֹן תִּתֵּן אֶת הָעֵדֻת אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ

"And you shall place the Aron cover on the Aron from above, and into the Aron you shall place the testimony, which I will give you" (Shmot 25:21).

Hashem tells Moshe to place the luchot inside the Aron. The only problem is that Hashem just gave that exact command five pesukim earlier. What's going on? Rashi explains that the repetition is coming to teach us that Moshe should first put in the luchot and then put on the lid, not the other way around. The Ramban, Ohr HaChaim, and others all pounce on Rashi's answer and ask the obvious question: why does Rashi need an extra pasuk to learn to put the luchot in before putting on the lid – it's common sense!

There are many explanations for what Rashi might be saying, but I want to focus on the suggestion of the Tur, who explains it with a great lesson. The Tur explains that what Rashi mean to say was that the lid wasn't to be put on at all until the *luchot* were placed inside the Aron.

Just as the Aron wasn't allowed to be completed until the *luchot* were inside it, we too are incomplete without Torah flowing in us. In order to be a complete person, one needs to first make sure they have Torah values inside of them and only then can their "lid" be placed on. May we all be *zoche* to apply the lesson of the Aron and make sure we have Torah values in our lives in order to become complete.

The Details

Abby Dennis ('20)

As you read this week's parsha, Parshat Terumah, you immediately notice the precise details the Torah uses to discuss the Mishkan. The Torah goes above and beyond in explaining the exact details with which Bnei Yisrael were to create the Mishkan. Every little detail is written out, including the structure and length of each beam, rod, and knob. Not a single component is left out.

While on the surface level this may seem like a "boring" parsha, it is anything but. The explanation of why we need each detail is integral to understanding who we are as a people. We often question why we focus so much on the minute details in Judaism or whether God really cares if I do x, y, or z on Shabbat. In an article written by an

anonymous rabbi, this idea is explained through a *mashal*. He argues that you would never send an email without the . in ".com" even though it is just one little dot. That dot represents something much bigger than its size, and the difference between "com" and ".com" is immense. He then compares this to our *avodat* Hashem, as every little detail is important and crucial, whether we realize it or not.

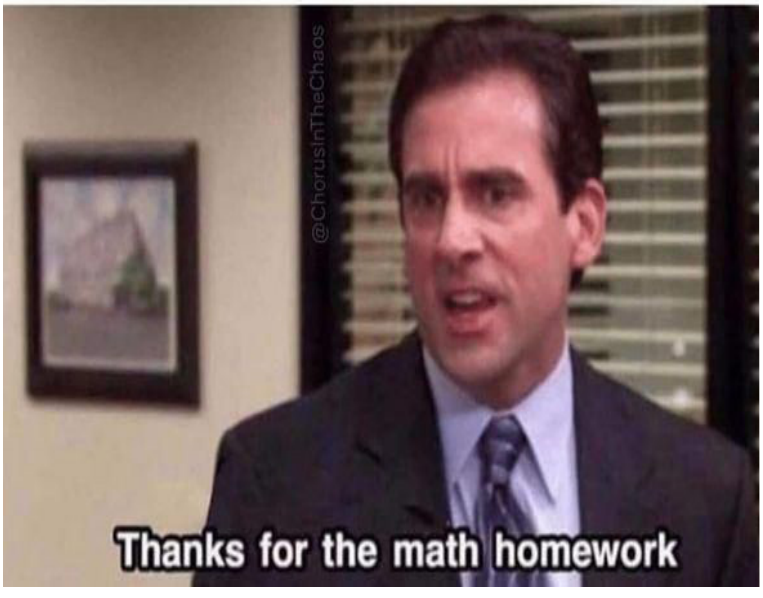
Rav Pinkus, in his sefer *Shabbat Malchata*, expounds on this idea by comparing the Mishkan to the brain. He explains that just as with brain surgery, where the surgeon must be very exact and one tiny slip-up is life threatening, so too with the Mishkan. If you mess up even one tiny detail of the Mishkan, it is life threatening.

Studies have shown that the more devoted you are in a relationship, the more the details matter. If you're throwing your best friend a birthday party, you're not just going to throw together a few balloons; you're going to get their favorite cake, favorite chocolate, and the gift they've been wanting forever. When you're invested, the details count the most. In our own personal relationships with God, we should constantly be striving for that closer bond and we should all be *zoche* to have a close connection to Hakadosh Baruch Hu where the details matter the most.

■■■

Meshugana Memes

When you're trying to figure out the dimensions of the Tabernacle and your translation uses cubits.



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