

Parshas Terumah

For the week ending 4 Adar 5756
23 & 24 February 1996

**Dedicated to the memory of Mr. Jack Annis whose life was the embodiment of devotion, concern and love for others.
May his good deeds be an inspiration to all his family.
The Israel Print Edition is dedicated by Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Farb, Los Angeles, California**

Summary

Hashem commands Moshe to build a *Mishkan* (Sanctuary) and supplies him with detailed instructions. The Bnei Yisrael are asked to contribute precious metals and stones, fabrics, skins, oil and spices. In the *Mishkan's* outer courtyard is an Altar for the burnt offerings and a laver for washing. The Tent of Meeting is divided by a curtain into two chambers. The outer chamber is accessible only to the *Kohanim*, the descendants of Aaron. This contains the Table of showbreads, the Menorah, and the Golden Altar for incense. The innermost chamber, the Holy of Holies, may be entered only by the *Kohen Gadol*, and only once a year, on Yom Kippur. Here is the Ark that held the Ten Commandments inscribed on the two tablets of stone which Hashem gave to the Jewish nation on Mt. Sinai. All of the utensils and vessels, as well as the construction of the *Mishkan*, are described in extraordinary detail.

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a wedding-hall bedecked with food and flowers and streamers and musicians...

Commentaries

A SWELL PARTY

“Let them (the children of Israel) take for Me a portion.” (25:1)

“What a great wedding this is! The food! The flowers! The bridesmaids’ dresses! (Was that real silk?!)”

“Ah - this is nothing. You should have come to the wedding I went to last week. This guy wanted to make some impression I’ll tell ya! He rented the Space Shuttle and the ceremony was performed while the bride and groom were floating in outer space wearing spacesuits!

“Wow! That must have been great.”

“Yeah - it was okay, but somehow there was no atmosphere...”

All the preparations for a wedding are for one purpose only - to bring *simcha* to the *chassan* (groom) and *kallah* (bride). But there are those who focus on the trappings and miss the essence, those who come only to eat and drink, and ignore the essential point. Similarly this world is no more than a wedding-hall bedecked with food and flowers and streamers and musicians. All for one purpose. To bring the *chassan* and *kallah* together. That the soul of Man be wedded to the Creator. But there are those who wander through life like guests at a wedding banquet, picking up a chicken drumstick here and an egg-roll there, and completely miss the point. **“Let them (the children of Israel) take for Me a portion.”** Let them separate themselves from what is superficial and superfluous in life and connect themselves constantly to the essence. To wed themselves constantly to the Divine Presence.

(Adapted from *Degel Machane Efraim*)

GIVE AND TAKE - 1

“Let them (the children of Israel) take for Me a portion.” (25:1)

Giving can sometimes be taking. When a man marries a woman, he must give her something of value. We usually use a ring for this purpose. If, however, *she* were to give *him* something, the marriage would not be valid. An exception to this rule is the case where the groom is someone of importance, who normally would not receive gifts. If his bride-to-be gave him the ring, then the marriage would be valid, **because she receives the pleasure of him accepting her gift**, and so it’s like he was really giving and she taking. **“Let them take for Me a portion.”** Really, it seems that the Torah should have written here “Let them *give* Me a portion”. However, the fact that Hashem accepts our offerings gives us more pleasure than the value of what we give to Hashem, and so it is we who are really doing the taking...

(Adapted from the *Alshich* in *Kehillas Yitzchak*)

Prepared by **Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel**
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Parshas **Terumah** — 4 Adar 5756, 23 & 24 February 1996

Production Design: **Lev Seltzer** ∞

GIVE AND TAKE - 2

“And they shall make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell within them.” (25:8)

An entity and its parts have a symbiotic relationship. They both must give and take from each other. Take the body of a man. Without limbs there can be no body. The limbs comprise the body. But when the limbs are all connected and the current of life flows within them, the body itself now takes on an existence which is greater than the sum of its parts. And then it gives back to the limbs the power of life.

It's the same way with Torah and mitzvos. The Torah is the body which comprises the limbs - the mitzvos. Without the Torah, the mitzvos have no value, no point, for we would have no idea how to do even one mitzvah without the Torah to teach us. But, on the other hand, without mitzvos, the Torah itself loses its value, for without action, the grandeur of learning loses its greatness.

“And they shall make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell within them.” Sometimes, the Torah mentions the construction of the Mishkan before its vessels and implements, sometimes the reverse. This is to teach us that Torah and mitzvos are an indivisible team. The flow of influence is in both directions. One cannot function without the other.

(Adapted from Rabbi S. Y. Zevin, L'Torah U'I'moadim)

Haftorah: 1 Melachim 5:26-6:13

BUILT TO LAST

“This Temple that you build if you follow My decrees, perform My statutes, and observe all My commandments ” (6:12)

Just as the week's Parsha deals with the *Mishkan*, so the Haftorah describes the construction of the first *Beis Hamikdash* by *Shlomo Hamelech*. In this verse Hashem says to Shlomo: Don't think that the construction of My house is by mere material means; by the lavishing of silver and gold. All these are mere illusions -- not the real *Beis Hamikdash*. Rather, **“if you follow My decrees, and perform My statutes”** -- **this** is how the *Beis Hamikdash* is really built. And since the materials of its construction are really spiritual, so too the *Beis Hamikdash*, even after its physical destruction, even after its material components have disintegrated, continues to exist, **“I will dwell within the Bnei Yisrael, and I will not forsake my people Yisrael...”**

(Kochav MiYaakov)



Insights into the Zemiros sung at the Shabbos table throughout the generations.

Ribon Kol Hadanim
וְהוּא יְהוָה
“Master of all the Worlds...”

(Many Jews have a custom of saying this song of praise and prayer on the Sabbath eve between Shalom Aleichem and Eishes Chayil.)

“Blessed be Your sacred and pure angels who do Your will.”

Are there angels who do not do the will of Hashem and are any angels in need of our blessing? An angel, say our Sages, is created from every mitzvah which we fulfill. Our prayer is to be worthy of fulfilling many mitzvos so that the number of angels will be blessed with increase. The intention of our words then is that there be a “blessed” increase of Hashem’s “sacred and pure angels” as a result of we “who do Your will.”

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