

CHEVRAH TORAH...5777

With HEART in MIND

MUSSAR Teaching to Transform the Text & Our Lives

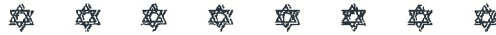
Vayak'hel-Pekudai—Exodus 35:1-5;20-29

OHFV FT HaMAKOM—*I loving God*

...Key KOSHL...

WHAT Terumah do/will you bring to help create a Sacred Space for God to dwell?

HOW is the building of the Mishkan a model of our love for God?



P'SHAT...Studying Torah—Encountering The Word—The Will—The ONE

The truly wise individual is not one who has achieved wisdom but a *talmid chacham*—a wise student...one who is constantly learning—including by observing and reflecting on what can be learned from other people.

35:1] Moses then convoked the whole Israelite community and said to them:

These are the things that the Lord has commanded you to do: 2] On six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to the Lord; whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. 3] You shall kindle no fire throughout your settlements on the Sabbath day.

4] Moses said further to the whole community of Israelites: This is what the Lord has commanded: 5] Take from among you gifts to the Lord; everyone whose heart so moves him shall bring them—gifts for the Lord: gold, silver, and copper;

20] So the whole community of the Israelites left Moses' presence. 21] And everyone who excelled in ability and everyone whose spirit moved him came, bringing to the Lord his offering for the work of the Tent of Meeting and for all its service and for the sacral vestments. 22] Men and women, all whose hearts moved them, all who would make an elevation offering of gold to the Lord, came bringing brooches, earrings, rings, and pendants—gold objects of all kinds. 23] And everyone who had in his possession blue, purple, and crimson yarns, fine linen, goats' hair, tanned ram skins, and dolphin skins, brought them as gifts for the Lord; and everyone who had in his possession acacia wood for any work of the service brought that. 25] And all the skilled women spun with their own hands, and brought what they had spun, in blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and in fine linen. 26] And all the women who excelled in that skill spun the goats' hair. 27] And the chieftains brought lapis lazuli and other stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breast-piece; 28] and spices and oil for lighting, for the anointing oil, and for the aromatic incense. 29] Thus the Israelites, all the men and women whose hearts moved them to bring anything for the work that the Lord, through Moses, had commanded to be done, brought it as a freewill offering to the Lord.

1 ויקהל משה את כל עדת בני ישראל ויאמר
אלהם אלה הדברים אשר צוה יהוה לעשות
אתם: 2 ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום
השביעי יהיה לכם קדש שבת שבתון ליהוה כל
העשה בו מלאכה יומת: 3 לא תבערו אש בכל
משבתתכם ביום השבת
4 ויאמר משה אל כל עדת בני ישראל לאמר זה
הדבר אשר צוה יהוה לאמר: 5 קחו מאתכם
תרומה ליהוה כל נדיב לבו וביאה את תרומת
יהוה זהב וכסף ונחשת: 6 ותכלת וארגמן
ותולעת שני ושש ועגים
20 ויצאו כל עדת בני ישראל מלפני משה: [שני]
21 ויבאו כל איש אשר נשאו לבו וכל אשר נדבה
רוחו אתו הביאו את תרומת יהוה למלאכת אהל
מועד ולכל עבודתו ויבגדי הקדש: 22 ויבאו
האנשים על הנשים כל נדיב לב הביאו תח ונזם
וטבעת וכומז כל כלי זהב וכל איש אשר הניף
תנופת זהב ליהוה: 23 וכל איש אשר נמצא אתו
תכלת וארגמן ותולעת שני ושש ועגים וערת
אילים מאדמים וערת תחשים הביאו: 24 כל
מרים תרומת כסף ונחשת הביאו את תרומת
יהוה וכל אשר נמצא אתו עצי שטים לכל
מלאכת העבודה הביאו: 25 וכל אישה חכמת לב
בגדיה טוו ויביאו מטוה את התכלת ואת
הארגמן את תולעת השני ואת השש: 26 וכל
הנשים אשר נשא לבן אתנה בחכמה טוו את
העגים: 27 והנשאים הביאו את אבני השלם ואת
אבני המלאים לאפוד ולחשן: 28 ואת הבשם
ואת השמן למאור ולשמן המשחה ולקטורת
הסמים: 29 כל איש ואשה אשר נדב לבם אתם
להביא לכל המלאכה אשר צוה יהוה לעשות בגד
משה הביאו בני ישראל נדבה ליהוה:

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותי וצונו לעסוק בדברי תורה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu laasok b'divrei Torah.

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to engage with words of Torah.

REMEZ...*Acquiring Torah*...When Torah penetrates our entire being, not just our *seichel/intellect*, this is the acquisition of Torah. —R' Avi Fertig

v.5...*This is what the Lord commended: Take from among you terumah for Adonai; everyone whose heart so moves him shall bring*

RASHI...Because his heart makes him generous, he is referred to as “N’div Leebo—one whose heart prompts him”

ABARVANEL... Moses does not ask for a specific minimum gift from each person, nor would collectors go from tent to tent to get the gifts. Rather, each Israelite, moved to give from the heart, would come bringing...

ETZ HAYIM... The term “terumah” comes from the root meaning “to elevate.” It originally referred to lifting up that which was being offered. It can also imply that the act of offering a gift to God elevates the donor to a higher level as well [LEVI YITSCHAK]

R’ SIMCHA of KELM... Those who brought offerings for the Mishkan should bring their hearts along as well. In giving “terumah,” it is not sufficient to bring a monetary donation. The Holy One wants the heart.

v.21...*And everyone whose spirit so moved him came, bringing the Lord’s terumah, for the work of the Tent of Meeting...*

IBN EZRA... More literally, “whose heart stirred him up...” That is, ‘whose intelligence lifted him above the rest.’ Note, as it says, in Proverbs 15:32: “He who heeds reproof gains LEV—[that is] understanding.” So, two groups of people came forward, “Everyone whose spirit moved him”—knowledgeable people, and “everyone whose heart stirred him”—generous people.

RAMBAN... “Everyone whose heart lifted him up...” This stirring of the heart implies that they rose up to undertake this work, for none of them had learnt the skills before. Each discovered a natural talent, hearts rising to meet the Divine call, as if to say: “For God, I can do it!”

MUNK... “Everyone whose spirit motivated him...” According to RAMBAN and IBN EZRA, this refers to craftsmen. As the Midrash relates, deprived of experience and professional training, due to their slavery in Egypt, the artisans had to be motivated by a holy fervor...

ALTER... “Everyone whose heart moved him and everyone whose spirit urged him...—The impulse of generosity indicated in Exod 25:2 is stated even more emphatically here. One may detect in this new emphasis a response to the golden calf episode, in which the people were quick to offer their gold for the fashioning of the molten image. Now, moved from the heart, they outdo themselves in donations for the Lord’s Sanctuary.

v.29 *Thus the Israelites, all the men & women whose hearts so moved them to bring all the things for the work of the Lord, which Adonai commanded Moses, brought free-will offerings to the Lord...*

ALSHECH... “Ndiv Leebo,” that is, true generosity of heart. Not the desire to impress his neighbor with the size of his gift...One might have otherwise thought that the credit due to donors varied in accord with the donation. Torah therefore takes pains to point out, “hey-vee’u B’nai Yisrael—the entire people Israel brought”...for it was an offering that came from the heart.

MALBIM... “kol ish v’isha asher nadav li-bam...” This is what is meant that “every man and woman who offered his/her heart...” All these gifts, important as they were to building, were not the chief thing for God...It was this unity of intention, to build the Tabernacle, no matter the gift they were bringing, that made the effort a success. It was this type of man and woman who were the real free-will offering which the Holy One was seeking.

R’ Y. KAHN... “Take from among you gifts to Adonai, everyone whose heart so moves him shall bring...” A careful reading of the original leads to a different interpretation. Exodus 35 should read: “Each one whose heart so moves him shall bring it; the gift of Adonai...” What exactly is “it” which was essential in building the Sanctuary? The SEFAS EMES taught that the gift each one brings in contributing is *the offering of heart*.

In Western imagery, the heart is the seat of emotions, while in the ancient Near East, the heart represents the intellect. For us, the heart might suggest both our passion and our intellect. But why does Torah stipulate “each one whose heart so moves him...”?...What distinguishes the offerings in VaYakhel is the orientation of the heart which precedes all else. To build the Sanctuary with the offerings of one’s heart means to seek to live according to the highest ideals and most sacred purposes...Thus a gift to build God’s Sanctuary precedes all other offerings and work to be done. Giving this gift is the continual spiritual task of the Jew in every moment. “Each one whose heart so moves him will bring it,” constructing the heart and soul, a *Mishkan* within.

D'RASH...*Helping the Heart feel what the Mind understands ...*

ALAN MORINIS... The obligation to love the Holy One is stated 9 different times in the five Books of Moses. “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...*” Yet, we have to wonder, how can we possibly love what we cannot see or touch or even conceive in our minds? Without a clearly defined and tangible other, how can we love? RAMBAM helps us out here by writing that a person can only love commensurate with the degree to which he or she knows the object of her love... The essence of love is seeking connection, and each of us is charged with responsibility to cultivate this love relationship, this connection with the Source of all. Since we are all different from one another, we each have to find our own ways to connect. Some will get there through the intellect, others through prayer, song or meditation. When you undertake to try to connect with God, and you don't lose sight of that focus during the process, the very act of seeking is the most effective means to forge that connection. [With heart in Mind, pgs 165-168]

ZORNBERG...The question about the Nature of God's forgiveness of Israel is evoked by both RAMBAN and RASHI...For RAMBAN, God commanded Moses about the *Mishkan* long before the people sinned with the Golden Calf. This is indeed the sequence of events in Torah...This portion, “the second honeymoon” allows the consummation of the marriage in the form that had always been God's design: the building of the *Mishkan* and God's Presence among the people.

For RASHI, however, “the *Mishkan* is testimony that God had forgiven their sin, for behold—God's Presence had come to dwell among them!” RASHI is here referring to the Midrash about the king and queen to whose reunion the “perfume” of God's Presence serves as testimony...It wafts about; we can smell it...For RASHI, a completely new situation is initiated after the Calf narrative, as God comes to dwell in their midst. This is not the fulfillment of an original design, but, in an important sense, a new conception of the relationship....

On this hypothesis, Moses would have no license to initiate this newly intense phase of relationship. Only the alternative view remains: that the *Mishkan* idea had never been broached before; that only after the people are forgiven for the Golden Calf, God says to Moses, “*Let them make Me a Sanctuary that I may dwell among them...*” and in that sentence, transforms the relationship between God and Israel into one of unimagined intimacy...Like perfume, it circulates to unpredictable effect. God's Presence among the people is now similarly pervasive and enigmatic. It is an expression of a new, “inordinate love,” transcending the continuity of religious structures; a new intimacy never before known... [The Particulars of Rapture, Gottlieb Zornberg, pgs 488-491]

SOD...Helping the soul-light shine...*Practice focuses on recalibrating the soul-traits that are obstructing your soul's light from shining into your l*

Rabbi LARRY KUSHNER...

"Make Me a Sanctuary that I may dwell among them"[Exod 25:8] That pretty much sums up the religious enterprise: You have to do something, so that God, who is not here, can be. The *Mishkan* is a metaphor for the religion we "construct," an exercise we perform to alter our consciousness...But how do you get to that level of awareness? It has to do with how you behave as a human being...God says, "Build Me this sacred place...Bring Me the offerings of your heart...so that I can dwell among you." Whenever you perform a religious deed, a truly sacred act, with devotion and reverence...the Sanctuary appears...

When Karen was pregnant with our second child, we lived in a little shoebox of an apartment in the town of Marlborough outside of Boston. In the dead of winter and the middle of the night, she awakened me with a confession.

"Larry, I know it sounds a little crazy, but I would give anything for a chocolate bar, especially one with almonds."

I knew at once that this was the mythic craving of a pregnant woman. Before she could even call it a request, I jumped out of bed, pulled my Levi's on over my pajamas, a sweatshirt, then my snow parka, boots, hat and gloves. "Don't worry about a thing sweetheart," I said. [After all, she'd been carrying around our child in her belly for six months now. This was the least I could do.]

When I got downstairs, I realized that it had been snowing for a few hours. The car was covered with a few inches of heavy, wet slush. But only after I managed to clean it off did it dawn on me: Where would I find a Hershey's with almonds in Marlborough, Massachusetts in the middle of the night, in a blizzard? And then it hit me: of course, at the Holiday Inn out on I-495.

The night clerk watched incredulously as a man in pajamas and snow parka skidded to a stop under the portico, ran inside, punched quarters into the candy machine, waved, and drove off into the snowstorm.

I presented my offering. Karen was a little embarrassed, but unequivocally grateful. As for me, I learned something precious...Normally, I have a well-pronounced ego, but for 45 minutes all those years ago, I did not have an ego of my own. I was only an extension of Karen Kushner's ego. Instead of doing what I wanted and remaining warm in bed, I did what she desired and drove around in the middle of the night in a blizzard looking for a chocolate bar.

And here's the amazing part. It made me happier to do what my wife wanted than to do just what I wanted...By doing what your lover wants, you transcend yourself...So it is with our most sacred offering of the heart. We give it to God, humbly offering ourselves as servants of something Greater, and in so doing, we are transformed...

[[Invisible Lines of Connection](#), L.Kushner, pgs. 102-103]

CONSIDER:

HOW will your *offering of the heart* elevate/transform you through giving it?

WHAT might it mean for you to construct a *Mishkan* within ?