



Parshat Teruma: Pivotal Planks

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles

Summary by Channie Koplowitz Stein

Hashem informs Moshe of the position of the various beams of the Tabernacle and the materials to be used for their composition. Hashem concludes with, "You shall build the Tabernacle according to this manner, as you will have been shown on the mountain." Why repeat this last detail when we are already told that *Bnei Yisroel* did all exactly as Moshe had instructed them according to the command of Hashem?

The Tiv Hatorah explains that since Hashem had already told us that He desires a Sanctuary so that He may dwell within us, (*veshochanti betocham*), we are to understand that the Temple we build within ourselves must also be built according to His will. In other words, as the Yalkut Lekach Tov explains, your actions dedicated to Hashem's command should be the model upon which the physical structure is to be built. We must lead our lives according to His will so that it befits His presence within us and within our homes.

The Slonimer Rebbe points out that the Sanctuary had three distinct areas which corresponds to human physiology. The Holy of Holies, seat of the Ark and the Tablets of the Law, corresponds to the brain. As such, our thoughts and intentions in all our interactions must always be directed by Heaven, focusing on what He would want of us. The inner chamber where the Table of Showbread and the *Menorah* were placed corresponds to the heart, the seat of our emotions and hopes. These too should be focused toward Hashem. Finally, the outer chamber where the altar for sacrificial animals was located and which always had a fire burning corresponds to the kidneys, the seat of our physical desires and passions.

Rabbi Beyfus notes that the way to ensure that we dwell in the house of Hashem is to bring our passions and desires in alignment with Hashem's desires. Our entire orientation, must be a *Torah* orientation. We're here to build, to do, and to create that Sanctuary within ourselves so that it reflects the sanctity of the Holy Temple, so that we become a place where Hashem feels at home.

The Tiv Hatorah deduces from the ordered structure of the *Mishkan* that we too must create order in our service to Hashem. We should have a designated place where we daven, as the Sifsei Chaim points out, the Torah alludes to Yitzchak's going daily to *Be'er Lachai Roe* for his afternoon prayers, for this was a place already infused with holiness when an angel appeared there to Hagar. And, as Rav Dessler points out, a place from which previous prayers emanated would escort current prayers upward to God's throne. So too when we designate a particular area as our "prayer nook," we infuse it with the holiness of our cumulative prayers.

Letitcha Elyon cites Rabbi Reuvain Grozovsky who notes that creating a designated place refers not only to a physical area but also a mental, spiritual and emotional place where one can feel grounded, where the vicissitudes of life won't affect the basic structure.

Therefore, one will be asked at the end of his life, "Did you designate times for *Torah* study," rather than, "Did you study *Torah*?" As Rabbi Pincus writes, we are not always in the mood to learn or to do acts of kindness, but if we designate specific times for these activities, these times for prayer, for learning and for doing acts of chessed become inviolate. Just

as the entire world runs on structure or else chaos will result, so too must we invest our lives with structure, adds Rabbi Wolbe in *Aleh Shor*.

The Mishchat Shemen notes however, that the priests rotated their duties in the service in the *Beit Hamikdosh*. If order was so important, why deviate on this point? This was a means of dispelling rote performance and maintaining an element of spontaneity and enthusiasm even within the strict structure. So too must we try to recreate our original enthusiasm for each *mitzvah* on a daily basis.

We emulate Hashem by creating order and structure in the edifices of our lives, in the performance of *mitzvot* that form the daily fabric of our lives, because we recognize that Hashem is always guarding us, keeping us from harm. But we also know that Hashem's chessed is constant and ubiquitous, and we can emulate Hashem by also looking for spontaneous and constant opportunities to perform acts of loving kindness.

Rabbi M. Drucker quotes the observation of the Baal Haturim that the phrase "*Ata horaita* – you have been shown," is used only when Moshe reviews the Sinai experience, and here when Moshe instructs *Bnei Yisroel* in building the Sanctuary. Rabbi Drucker explains that you cannot build a structure of service to Hashem without faith. Whether you are building a physical sanctuary of wood and stone or the sanctuary within ourselves, you must be able to share and give of what you have, for Hashem is the One Who gives us everything. When you recognize that truth, you can imbue your life and all your actions with that belief and build a structure of commitment to Hashem that will withstand any threat.



Introduction to Request Part II

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tzipora Heller

In the fourth blessing of *shemone esrei*, we ask Hashem, "Bring us near our King to your service and bring us back in absolute repentance." What is absolute *teshuva*? Human nature is to regret a sin and begin the path to repentance. But then it's easy to get distracted. The way back isn't always simple. When we encounter difficulty, it's normal to just want to escape back to where we were. But that means not getting to where we want to go. Absolute *teshuva* means Hashem can look into the person's heart and bear witness that he will never do the sin again. We conclude the bracha, "Blessed are you Hashem who wants *teshuva*." Hashem only waits for the person to make the decision to return. Then He steps in to help us on the journey back.

The last of this series of *brachot* is asking forgiveness. Truly forgiving someone is tricky, because on a human level it's almost, but not completely impossible. Humans can't move the clock backward. Hashem in general doesn't do that either. He doesn't make

changes on the outside, but He will make changes on the inside. A person can be healed so completely to the point that it becomes as if he never made these life mistakes. This is what *selicha* is about. Although the outside reality may not change, you become a different person on the inside. This in fact is a miracle, because according to the laws of nature, time can only move forward. With *teshuva* it can move backwards.

We ask Hashem, "Forgive us Father because we've sinned." *Cheit* means an inadvertent sin. An example would be an unplanned sin. This doesn't mean that it's all ok, because what was going on in our head before the sin was not ok. "Forgive us our King because we sinned rebelliously." *Pesha* is rebellious sin. It's saying, "That's it, I've had it. I'm doing it my way." This could be between a person and Hashem or a child and his parents. People only rebel against Hashem because they believe in Him. Otherwise they wouldn't bother rebelling. People rebel against their parents because they believe they should be loving

and caring and responsive and somewhere along the way they were disappointed. Rebellion has its origin in the way you think, not in how you feel or what you do. The rationality of the thinking on both sides is that things have to be my way and now. That's not true in a spiritual or parental relationship. The *yetzer hara* is described in *Kohelet* as an old wise foolish king. He wants to rule you and he seems to be clever, but he is in fact the opposite.

We conclude the *bracha*, "Blessed are you Hashem who forgives abundantly." Human nature is to not want to forgive. Perhaps we might do so once or twice. But if the person keeps doing the same thing and apologizing, past a certain point you might just loose your cool and say, "Sorry, that's it, you need to change..." Hashem doesn't do that. He's like a loving patient Father waiting for His child to say, "Abba, now things will be different." And He's willing to hear that the hundredth time too.

Shir Shel Yom Revii Part II

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Leah Kohn

Light was created on the first day and then it was placed into the luminaries on the fourth day. Rav Tzadok Hakohen explains that these two stages of light correspond to the first day and to the giving of the *Torah*, which was also a creation of light. The spiritual light that was created on the first day is what Hashem wants us to be able to absorb and enjoy. It signifies clarity, knowledge, and the understanding we have of Him. This is meant to lead us to ultimate clarity and connection to Hashem which is what He wants us to achieve in our lifetime.

During the first 2000 years of creation people distanced themselves from the light. Then the *Avot* came and created what Rav Tzadok called *derech tzadikim* (the path of the righteous). The first chapter in *Tehilim*, tells us, "*Ki yodeah Hashem derech tzadikim*- Hashem knows the way of *tzadikim*..." *Yodeah* can also mean love. Hashem loves the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked will be destroyed. Is the way of the wicked a way? Rav Tzadok Hakohen explains

that in order to enable us to have free choice, to choose to discover the light, Hashem needed to create darkness. Just as there is a possibility to become a *tzadik* there is a possibility to become a *rasha*. Light and darkness go hand in hand in this world and it's our mission to discern the light amid the darkness. "*Yitron ha'or min hachoshech* -Our purpose is to recognize that the light is above the darkness, to reveal more and more of it, and in this way push away the darkness.

The Midrash quotes Rabbi Berechaya who said, when Hashem wanted to create the first man He saw that both righteous and wicked people would come from him. It had to be so in order to enable the possibility of free choice. Therefore, Rashi notes, Hashem added the attribute of compassion to a world that was initially created only with justice. The purpose of creation is to choose good over evil. Ultimately every person receives his just reward. Mercy doesn't mean there are no consequences. Rather it means, *erech apayim*, patience. Hashem waits for the person to repent and does not deliver punish-

ment right away.

The *Avot* began the journey to bring the light back to this world after 2000 years of people pushing it away. The *Avot* and *Imahot* paved a new path which led to the second stage, the giving of the *Torah*. The *Torah* gave us the tools necessary to follow in the footsteps of the *Avot*, to make sure we wouldn't veer off, and continue to develop and choose good.

Man feels satisfied by taking revenge and making things even, but this doesn't apply to Hashem. When we ask Hashem to take revenge what we are really asking is that He bring more of His light into this world and reveal Himself more to those who are righteous. The more revelation there is, the more spirituality Hashem bestows upon us. The wicked don't have the capacity to absorb this light. The very fact that it exists destroys them. It says, "*V'derech reshaim toveid* - the way of the wicked is destroyed. This is written in the passive form. At the moment that there's light, the wicked path is obliterated.