

Parshat Tetzaveh Revealing the Revealed

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles
Summary by Channie Koplowitz Stein

Parshat Tetzaveh discusses the building of the Mishkan. The B'Yam Derech asks: Hashem's presence is everywhere — how can it be “contained” within the structure of the Mishkan? And now that we no longer have a Mishkan, how can we continue to feel Hashem's presence among us?

Rashi posits that our redemption from Egypt was for the purpose of building the Mishkan. The goal of the entire process was for us to become Hashem's people and serve Him within the structure He commanded us to build. Ramban and others, however, say that the Mishkan was built for Hashem's sake, so that His glory could be manifest in the world. With either approach, an element of emunah — faith in Hashem — is essential.

Likutei Sichot Mussar notes that the more tangible an idea is, the easier it is to internalize. That is why Hashem wanted us to build Him a Mishkan. This was the final step in the redemption process. The Mishkan would remain as a reminder of all the miracles Hashem performed.

If we truly believe that Hashem is everywhere, we can create that same spiritual connection even today when we enter a shul. It is not that Hashem's presence is limited to that space; rather, He chose to concentrate some of His glory there so that we could experience it and then extend that awareness into the world beyond. The purpose of the Beit Hamikdash was to uproot haughtiness and anger — traits that stem from a lack of faith. When one realizes that everything comes from Hashem, one can be neither egotistical nor hot-tempered.

Rabbi Broide explains that there are two ways of giving. The first is giving a gift, but a deeper way is allowing others to give. How great is the gift Hashem grants us when He accepts our praises. Furthermore, when we bless and praise Hashem — especially after a meal — we create a ripple effect that inspires all living things to offer song and praise to Him. Until then, we were passive recipients of Hashem's chessed as He performed miracles for us. With the building of the Mishkan and the singing of His praises, we became active participants in our relationship with the Creator. That Hashem desires our participation is itself the greatest gift He can give us. The Mishkan and the Beit Hamikdash represented the possibility for constant reciprocity.

When Shlomo HaMelech dedicated the Beit Hamikdash, he proclaimed: If the entire world cannot contain You, how can we build a place in which You will reside? Hashem's response is the mantra that must guide our lives: “Moshe, you do your work, and then I will do Mine.” True, we cannot accomplish much on our own, but if we invest sincere effort, Hashem will help us. Moshe could not fashion the menorah or raise the massive beams of the Mishkan without Hashem's assistance. One with little faith or desire gives up easily — whether in prayer with proper focus, in learning, or in building. But a wise person begins with one small step, concentrating on a single word of prayer or learning one verse of Torah, and Hashem aids that effort.

The Tiv HaTorah writes that the Sanctuary in the desert was the prototype for the sanctuary each of us is meant to build in our hearts through the degree of emunah we possess — the deep knowledge that Hashem is always

before us. Dovid HaMelech writes that he asks one thing of Hashem: to dwell in His house all the days of his life. Obviously, that is impossible, but what is possible is to create sanctuaries within our homes, writes the Netivot Shalom. The entire purpose of creation, the redemption from Egypt, and ultimately the building of the Mishkan was for Hashem to rest His Shechinah upon mankind and the world, preparing us to accept the Torah, writes the Mishnat Yosef.

Rabbi Wolbe explains that while Hashem's presence indeed fills the world, the Mishkan was a place especially conducive to feeling His presence. Similarly, a shul fosters an environment that heightens spiritual awareness.

Letitcha Elyon records a lesson Rabbi E. Oratz heard from Rav Z. Epstein. He would advise any young man about to marry to designate one corner of his home for contemplation and introspection. In this way, he would create a small sanctuary where he could communicate with his personal God. Rav A. Weiss adds, citing Kedushat Levi, that the Jewish home may be even holier than a shul. In the shul we perform Rabbinic commandments such as prayer, while in the home we fulfill Torah commandments including mezuzah and hachnasat orchim.

In a similar vein, the Nefesh Chaya defines the glorious creation that is a woman. While a man's role is primarily external, outside the home, the woman's domain is within it. A child's first Beit Midrash is its mother's womb, and it is nurtured on its mother's Torah and spirituality. It is the woman who creates and maintains the aura of sanctity within her home.

Simcha- The Essence of Purim Part 2

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Leah Kohn

In Megillat Esther, we read how Achashveirosh elevated Haman above all his ministers. The Midrash compares this to a man who owned an older donkey, a younger donkey, and a pig. He limited the food given to the donkeys but allowed the pig to eat as much as it wanted. The younger donkey said to the older one, “We work for our master and yet

our food is restricted, while the pig does nothing and receives so much.” The older donkey replied, “The time will come when you will see that it all makes sense.”

Before the holiday, the master slaughtered the pig to prepare food for his feast. Similarly, Achashveirosh elevated Haman to greatness.

At first, the situation appeared to be a desecration of Hashem's name. Klal Yisrael faithfully served their Master yet remained downtrodden, while the wicked Haman — a descendant of Amalek — seemed to receive everything. The wise among the nation reassured the younger generation: “Wait patiently. The time will come when you will

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understand.”

Hashem.

Precisely because Haman rose to such prominence, his downfall became all the more spectacular. Had he been merely another antisemite, the outcome would have carried far less meaning. Hashem ultimately punishes the wicked and brings justice, but in hindsight we recognize that He was with us all along. Haman's sudden fall from the heights to the depths created a remarkable kiddush

The story of the Megillah unfolded over nine years. The seeds of salvation were already being planted the moment Esther entered the palace — even before Haman devised his decree to annihilate the Jews. Hashem could have nullified the decree quietly; He has countless subtle ways to act. Instead, the dramatic nature of the events served to counteract the chilul Hashem.

When Hashem helps us repair a desecration we may have caused, He sometimes reveals His Divine intervention with unmistakable clarity. This restores the awareness of His presence that may have been obscured through sin.

This is the unique message of Purim: not only that Hashem saved us, but that the very manner in which the salvation unfolded revealed His constant and guiding presence.

Megilat Esther: Returning From The Depths

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller

The Megillah tells us, “And Mordechai knew all that had occurred.” He understood not only the unfolding events, but the entire chain that led to them. His vision stretched back to the era of the First Temple — to the Jews who bowed to Nevuchadnezzar's idol — and even further, to his ancestor Binyamin, who refused to bow to Esav. Mordechai recognized how each link in history fit together and understood that he was destined to help the Jewish people rectify their past failings.

“And Mordechai tore his clothing.” We tear garments in mourning because even when a torn garment is sewn back together, it is never quite the same. So too, after loss there can be healing, but something has changed. The Jewish people had never stood closer to absolute destruction than they did before the miracle of Purim. Drawn by desire and pleasure, they attended Achashveirosh's feast and tied their identity to the physical rather than the spiritual. Mordechai therefore donned sackcloth and ashes to awaken within them a sense of mortality and humility — to help them recognize what they had become and where that path could lead.

The Megillah states that Mordechai “cried a great and bitter outcry,” language also used to describe Esav when he realized that Yaakov had received the blessings. There was a spark of Yaakov within Esav that longed for meaning, which is why he wept. Similarly, the desire for dominance — the trace of Esav within us — can either pull a person downward or be elevated toward holiness when used to uplift the world. Esav cried for the part

of himself that could never be expressed; Mordechai cried for the continuity of the Jewish people and for their ability to fulfill their mission, now in jeopardy.

The Megillah relates that Mordechai reached the king's gate but could go no further because he was clothed in mourning. Prayer, too, can ascend through the heavenly gates only when accompanied by dignity and a measure of joy. As the king's decree spread, “there was great mourning” throughout the land. The Jews recognized that they stood on the brink of annihilation and responded not with denial or political maneuvering, but with fasting and repentance. They mourned not only for themselves but for the fate of the entire nation, understanding that their destruction would leave a void impossible to fill. Mordechai sent word to Esther to approach the king and plead for mercy. Esther, a master of tzniut and tefilah, embodied an identity rooted in the inner self rather than external appearance. The deeper and more centered a person is, the fewer barriers stand in the way of their prayers. Many struggle with concentration in prayer because their identities are tied to the external; strengthening our inner world allows our tefilot to rise with greater clarity.

Yet even Esther understood that her prayers alone would not suffice. She instructed Mordechai to gather the entire nation, recognizing the immense power of collective prayer and repentance. Purim is described as Yom K'Purim — a day like Yom Kippur — centered on forgiveness, renewal, and revealing the beauty hidden beneath spiritual

blemish. The royal banquet, though not technically forbidden, proved disastrous to the people's inner identity. Esther therefore called for a three-day fast, pushing the nation to the edge of longing and self-definition — to declare, “I know who I want to be.”

From that place emerged something even greater than Yom Kippur: a return to Hashem motivated by love. True repentance is not only about looking back and acknowledging what was wrong; it is about looking forward and embracing who we can become.

At the splitting of the sea, Hashem silenced the angels, saying, “My handiwork is perishing and you are singing.” If Hashem mourned the lost potential of the Egyptians, how much more so does He grieve the loss of even a single Jew — and how greatly He rejoices when we return and affirm the purpose of creation.

We are called to see one another through Hashem's eyes, just as Esther proclaimed, “Gather all the Jews” — not only the righteous, but everyone. Each person carries limitless potential. The more we recognize our inherent greatness, the more we access the place from which teshuva me'ahava — repentance born of love — emerges.

At Sinai, the Torah was accepted יראה, with awe and fear; on Purim, it was embraced מחדש מתוך אהבה, with love. Teshuva me'ahava declares: “I seek closeness with You, Hashem. I do not want sin, desire, or exile to stand in the way.” May we merit to return to Him with love and joy.