

RABBI GOLDBERG'S *Parsha Perspectives* FOR TODAY

Short Divrei Torah on Parshas Terumah for your Shabbos Table
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Esther Tehila bas R' Gavriel Pinchas and Yitzchok Moshe ben Aaron Yaakov Yehoshua.

DVAR TORAH FOR THE FRIDAY NIGHT MEAL

It's Supposed to be Hard

The Gemara in Masechet Menachos (29a) tells that there were three laws which Moshe Rabbenu could not properly understand, until Hashem showed him an image of the object in question. One of these three *mitzvos* was the command to build a *menorah* in the *Mishkan*. Moshe was unable to grasp the way the *menorah* was to be constructed, until God showed him a picture. The Midrash (*Tanchuma*, *Behaaloscha*), as Rashi cites in Parshas Teruma (25:31), tells that in the end, Moshe cast the piece of gold into the fire, and the *menorah* was formed on its own: ואמר לו הקב"ה: השלך את הככר לאור, והיא נעשית מאליה.

A number of commentators explain that the reason why Moshe had such trouble when it came to the *menorah* is because the *menorah* was to be made from a single block of gold: 25:31 (מקשה תיעשה המנורה). It was not made by combining the different parts together, but rather by taking a *מקשה*, a single slab of gold, and molding it into the required shape. This was an exceptionally difficult task which Moshe could not perform, and so Hashem performed a miracle, having the *menorah* take shape on its own.

Rav Zev Wolf Zicherman, in *Otzar Pelaos Ha'Torah* (Shemos, pp. 687-8), raises the question of why Moshe did not face a similar challenge when it came to the construction of the *kapores*, the piece of gold that covered the *aron*. The *kapores*, which featured two *keruvim* (cherubs), was to be formed from a single piece of gold: ועשית שנים כרובים זהב, מקשה תעשה אותם: 25:18 (משני קצות הכפרות). If the reason why the *menorah* necessitated a miracle is because it was produced from a single slab of gold, then, seemingly, a miracle should have been needed also for the *kapores*. Why

did Moshe have difficulty with the *menorah*, but not with the *kapores*?

Rav Zicherman suggests that since the *kapores* featured two *keruvim*, figures resembling young children, it could not be made the manner of והיא נעשית מאליה, on its own, through a miracle, without hard work and effort. When it comes to childrearing and education, there is no substitute, there are no shortcuts, and there is no easy way. It is difficult, and it is supposed to be difficult. God helped Moshe through a miracle when he had trouble with the *menorah*, but He did not step in to perform a miracle when he had trouble with the *kapores*. With regard to the *kapores*, the message was: "It's hard? So put in the effort and figure it out." And this is the message given to every parent – raising children is difficult, and we need to work hard and do what we can to do the job right.

It is told that Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky once met a former student of his, and he asked him how his young family was doing.

"*Baruch Hashem*," the young man replied, "we are ok and everyone is healthy, but oy, we have such צער גידול בנים!"

"Why? What's the problem?" Rav Yaakov asked, concerned.

"It's so hard to get them to come to shul, to do their homework, to get to sleep... They talk back to us with *chutzpah*... They make it so difficult for us."

"This isn't צער גידול בנים," Rav Yaakov said. "This is גידול בנים."

Raising children is supposed to be difficult. The expression צער גידול בנים – the "distress" of raising children – refers to troubles which are out of the ordinary, such as serious illness, Heaven forbid. But

the normal struggles of parenting are simply גידול בנים, the way childrearing is supposed to be. *Chinuch* will never occur in a manner of והיא נעשית מאליה, on its own. It is going to take work and effort, and it is going to be difficult.

In the *Haggadah*, we read that the phrase ואת עמלנו ("and our toil") refers to children (אלו הבנים). Raising children is difficult, and is supposed to be difficult, and we must gladly accept this challenge and work hard to do the job in the best way possible.

DVAR TORAH FOR THE SHABBOS DAY MEAL

Maintaining Our Youthful Vigor

The *aron*, the most sacred article in the *Mishkan*, was covered by the *kapores* which included two *keruvim* – images of young children.

If we would have been asked to choose which images to place above the ark, we might have chosen pictures of people like Rav Soloveitchik and Rav Moshe Feinstein, or perhaps Rav Chaim and Rebbetzin Batsheva Kanievsky. We would have assumed that the most fitting images for the covering over the *aron* would be the greatest *tzadikim*. Why did Hashem want that the holy *aron*, which was kept in the holiest place on the planet, would be covered by the images of young children, who have yet to learn or accomplish anything?

The Alter of Kelm explains that the *keruvim* over the *aron* teach us that Torah life requires the vigor, enthusiasm and energy of youth. Children are naturally driven, energetic, curious, adventurous, open to new ideas and new experiences, and eager to accomplish and do lots of different things. Adults, however, are typically more fatigued, more set in their ways, more resistant to change, more reluctant to take on something new. They usually feel that they're finished growing, and are now the final product. We are to approach Torah with the excitement and energy of children, with a sense that we are still only in the beginning, that we have so much more to accomplish, and so much more to grow. This is the symbolic meaning of the *keruvim* above the *aron*.

We have here in our shul people who are around 100 years old, but they are still youthful. They are still eager and excited to grow and to achieve. On the other hand, I have met people in their twenties who are already old. They live with fatigue, with apathy, without any drive or ambition, without excitement and without an interest in growing. Youthfulness has to do far less with age than with mindset. We can –

and should try to – be "young" at every age.

The Alter of Kelm notes in this context that we refer to a great Torah scholar not as a חכם ("wise person"), but rather as a תלמיד חכם – "wise student." The moment a scholar no longer sees himself as a תלמיד, as a student who still has so much more to learn, who is still in the beginning of his educational journey, he becomes nothing. We consider someone a חכם, an accomplished scholar, only if he still regards himself as a תלמיד, a student who is still learning and growing.

DVAR TORAH FOR SHALOSH SEUDOS

עושין רצונו של מקום

The Torah here describes the two *keruvim* as extending their wings upward – פורשי כנפיים למעלה – and facing one another – (25:20) (ופניהם איש אל אחיו).

The Gemara in Maseches Bava Basra (99a) notes that a different *pasuk*, in Sefer Divrei Hayamim (3:13), indicates that the *keruvim* were facing outward, away from one another. To reconcile these two *pesukim*, the Gemara explains that בזמן שישראל עושין רצונו של מקום, when *Am Yisrael* are fulfilling God's wishes, then *keruvim* face one another, symbolizing Hashem's love for His nation. But when *Am Yisrael* do not fulfill Hashem's wishes, the *keruvim* turn away from each other, expressing distance and tension.

The *Beis Yisrael* (the fourth Gerrer Rebbe) developed this idea further. When the Gemara speaks of *Am Yisrael* failing to fulfill Hashem's wishes – אין עושין רצונו של מקום – it means that they are turning away from one another, that they fail to care for one another, to pay attention to each other's needs, to show sensitivity and respect to their fellow Jews, as symbolized by the *keruvim*'s faces turned away from another. Jews can have their "wings" spread "heavenward," they can be very "frum," insisting on only the strictest standards of *kashrus* and reciting the longest *shemona esrei* in shul, but still be considered אין עושין רצונו של מקום, failing to fulfill Hashem's will, if they do not "face" their fellow Jew, if they do not show empathy and extend kindness to their fellow, or shower their fellow Jews with love. The *keruvim*'s faces turned toward one another when *Am Yisrael* were "facing each other," were caring for one another and treating each other respectfully – and this is רצונו של מקום, what God wants from us.