

Parshas Terumah

In this week's Parsha, the Torah tells us of the donations required to build the vessels of the Mishkan (and subsequently that will be used for Beis Hamikdash and the Halachas of Shabbos).

In the Parsha, Hashem tells us that the donations must come from the heart and must have the correct intentions of being donated. Furthermore, one can ask what design and whose design the Mishkan and, eventually, the Beis Hamikdash would be. For that, Hashem says in the posuk that it will be evident through what I show you in the design and the style.

If Hashem is showing them what to do, why does the Posuk detain out the design and the method to manufacture the items? (I.e. hewn out of single ingots of gold or silver, copper, brass, lace fabric, etc.). Hashem said I would show it to you; then the Torah could have saved many verses detailing the minutiae of the design.

The answer is that since the Torah was given just a few Parsheos ago, Hashem made it possible for physical objects on our physical plane to hold inherent spiritual value. In the time before the giving of the Torah, while the forefathers may have kept the commandments, no residual spirituality remained in an object of a Mitzvah. For example, Yaakov put on "tefillin," that is, he wore a sign on his head and arm of some object, say a stone or stick, and wrapped it with strings, but once he was done the mitzvah the rocks and sticks remained so, and could be discarded. Whereas now, we have the

details of the laws, that the signs, known as tefillin, are to be black boxes with Parsheos written in them, and those physical items remain holy before, during and after usage, and cannot be discarded or mistreated.

When Hashem gave us the Torah and descended on Har Sinai, the spiritual world and physical world were intertwined so that our Mitzvos elevated physical objects into a higher spiritual realm, such as saying a Bracha on food to sustain us, taking the skin of an animal, and turning it into a Mezuzah or Tefillin.

Even our bodies are vessels to complete a spiritual-to-physical connection that was impossible previously. Hashem says this in our Parsha, "Vasu Li Mikdash V'shachanti Bisochem" (Make for me a temple and I will reside in them); it should have said Besocha, i.e. in it, not in them. The famous explanation (such as from Lekutai Moharan and Tanya) is that Hashem will dwell among us, wherever we are, and in our bodies, and they will be mini temples. Therefore, we must treat our bodies and places as such because Hashem doesn't reside in a singular place.

Based on the above, we can understand why Hashem also called the Torah – Eidus- testimony when referring to what is housed in the Aaron. Rashi explains that the Torah is a testimony of the relationship between Hashem and us Jews. This is in line with Hashem dwelling "in them"; that is, everything the Torah says is a witness to the truth, and because we practice the Torah, we are the bearers of the testimony and the truth. How do we accomplish this? Doing the

Mitzvos of Hashem and drawing spirituality into the physical and mundane. This is why the Torah then details the minutiae of the design of the physical vessels because all of the practice and following the laws down to the last detail is all part of the process of “dwelling in them” and bearing the testimony of the Torah in Hashem’s world.

May then all our practice merit the coming of Mashiach speedily, the release of the Hostages, and the end to the war in Israel.

Good Shabbos.