

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick
 Edited and Revised By Duvid Pinchas Rose

Parshas Teruma 5776

[year 6] 245

פרשת תרומה תשע"ו

דבר אל בני ישראל ויקחו לי תרומה: (כ"ה ב)

Speak to the children of Israel, and have them take for Me an offering. (25:2) Rashi's expansion of *לי* is *לי לשמי*, "dedicated to My name." On this, the medrash Tanna dbei Eliyahu teaches בשענה שאמרו ישראל נעשה ונשמע מיד אמר הקב"ה ויקחו לי תרומה.

"Immediately after Klal Yisroel proclaimed 'Na'aseh venishma', HaKodosh Boruch Hu delivered the mitzvah of "They shall take a terumah-offering for me." To harmonise these insights, we can study the Heiliger Ruzhiner Rebbe's explanation of a posuk from a different place in Chumash as relevant background: קדש לי כל בכור פטר כל רחם בבני ישראל:

Sanctify to Me every firstborn, every one that opens the womb among the children of Israel among man and among animals; it is Mine (Shemos 12:2) פטר: "The first divine service which a person must perform, and thereby sanctify himself" רחם: "Is the trait of rachmanus/pity", בבני ישראל: "To have pity on all Jews" Taken as a whole, these comments sharpen the message of the midrash: On the heels of the Yidden's accepting the entire Torah and vowing to fulfill it, (having said "na'aseh ve'nishma") Hashem's very first specific direction was ויקחו לי תרומה, which implies the trait of pity, tzedaka and kindness, through which one fulfills ה' (Vayikra 19:18) וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כְּמוֹד אָנִי ה' (זה כלל גדול בתורה רש"י ויקרא 19:18) That posuk concludes with אָנִי ה', meaning that through terumah, i.e. tzedaka, one comes close to the Eternal One. And that in turn is Rashi's message: "Through Terumah, which equates to tzedaka and acts of kindness, one reflects לשמי -- and draws nearer to the Eibershter". (זכר חיים ווישאורע)

Many other commentators question the word ויקחו *they shall take* when logically one would expect ויתנו *they shall give*. From our vantage point, are we not dealing with a donation, an act of *giving*? The Gemara (Rosh HaShanah 4a) teaches: "האומר סלע זו לצדקה בשביל שיחיו בני ... הרי זה צדיק גמור" One who says 'I donate this sela to charity so that my sons shall live' ... is completely righteous". When it comes to tzedaka, even if one is motivated purely by self-interest (the ultimate ulterior motive), nonetheless, he has the status of a tzaddik. Other mitzvos require that one's intentions be purely *leshem shomayim*, and for the sake of the mitzvah -- and not for personal gain of any kind. Now we understand the unique status of ויקחו. Even if one gives tzedaka, all the while fully intending to take something else back, to derive a personal salvation, still and all, it remains לשמי, says Hashem -- it

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is considered as if he acted purely לשמה, for the unadulterated sake of the mitzvah, and he remains a tzaddik. (טל השמים קאשוי)

כפתריהם וקנתם ממנה והיו בלה מקשה אחת וזהב קהור: (כ"ה ל"ו)
Their knobs and their branches shall [all] be [one piece] with it; all of it [shall be] one hammered mass of pure gold (25:36) The context is the Menorah in the Mishkan, and how it is to be fabricated. מקשה means "fabricated from one continuous piece of material, and not as a composite of different pieces." [The concept applies to the making of tefillin, where it is considered a stringency of enhancement, or 'hiddur'. [DPR]] But it also alludes to the notion of something being difficult, because it has the root קשה. There is one thing in the world which is difficult to practice, and that is to possess money, in the posuk's words, of "pure gold", i.e. money unsullied by any illegitimacy or trickery. Anyone who is untainted in this regard, embodies an aspect of the Holy Menora -- by illuminating the world with his glowing holiness. What an enviable and sublime status! (רשפי אש נעשכ"ז)

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם: (כ"ה ח)

And they shall make Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst (28:8) Why does ועשו have a connective vav? Wouldn't "Let them make Me a sanctuary" have conveyed the same message? No, explains the Divrei Chaim of Sanz זיע"א, in the context of a time-honoured question. Why did Hashem specify Mount Moriah as the Mokom HaMikdash (place to build the Beis HaMikdash), when it was Mount Sinai where the Torah was revealed? Would Sinai not have been a more fitting venue? The Sanzer Rebbe teaches that Moriah stood far out in front of Sinai for the great distinction of housing the Mikdash because it was the place where Yitzchak stretched forth his neck in willingness to be sacrificed as a korban for Hashem, with his father Avrohom ready to do the deed. That place of peerless *mesiras nefesh* for Hashem's glory made Moriah the venue of choice for the Mikdash, the place of Hashem's glory in this world, שיכנה בב"א. Now the ו which introduces our present posuk falls into place. As we saw at the beginning of Parshas Mishpatim last week, ו is מוסיף על הראשונים, i.e. it connects one topic with a previous one. Klal Yisroel was instructed to build a Mishkon, so let it be built at the holiest site in the world -- the place of the Akeidah. And it is that "floating vav" which links the Mikdash to that preexisting legacy. The place of the Akeida will be the place of ושכנתי בתוכם thanks to that one crucial letter "vav". (טל השמים קאשוי)

The "Saraf" of Magolnitza recalls how the Kozhnutzer Maggid's teaching turned a Yid's life around

HaRav Hakadosh Reb Elimelech of Grodzisk ל"צ, (author of Sefer Divrei Elimelech), and father of the Chovos HaTalmidim and Aish Kodesh, was the son of the Holy "Saraf" of Magolnitza, Rav Chaim Meir Yechiel. (The Rebbe of Magolnitza had such a fiery, glowing countenance, that he struck people as a malach; hence his sobriquet "Saraf" -- one of the seraphim.) Reb Elimelech related how the renowned philanthropist Reb Meir Shachna from Warsaw together with his fellow philanthropist, a Reb Chaim, once visited the Holy Saraf to discuss a serious business venture. "The Rebbe greeted Reb Chaim with a hearty, "Sholom Aleichem, my *machnis oyrach* (my hospitality host"). This puzzled Chaim, since he had no recollection of the Rebbe's ever having enjoyed his home hospitality, neither for a Shabbos or any other occasion. "Let me refresh your memory," said my father, the Rebbe. He recalled how, as a young man, he had walked on foot from Kozhnitz to Radoshitz, to bask in the holiness of the Tzaddik Reb Yisochar Dov of Radoshitz. It was wintertime, and my father was cold and hungry, and happened upon a small shul, where a kindly man from the town, as is common in such cases, asked him where he hailed from and where he was bound. My father recounted his route. The man asked if he had known the Holy Kozhnutzer Maggid. The Rebbe replied that not only had he known him, but that he was also a grandson of his. The man was delighted by his brush with someone of distinguished lineage, and invited my father to his home for warm food and drink and a place to thaw out his frozen bones. The host informed my father that a wealthy man from town was supposed to set off for Radoshitz in the morning, and would surely let him ride along. He took my father to the man's house and to a very cordial reception. The offer of a comfortable bed and a ride to Radoshitz soon followed, but with the proviso that the travelers would have to rise at dawn for the trip. As the Rebbe himself described what happened, "In the morning, my host recalled that he had a guest sleeping in his house and sent his wagon driver to rouse me, but owing to my exhaustion, I did not respond. The baal-ha-bayis himself then came and jabbed me in the leg so hard that I had no choice but to awaken -- from pain, but I did not complain. In the wagon, the man sat me next to him and gave me a cozy fur wrap to warm myself. He asked me if I could tell him a dvar Torah from my grandfather, the Holy Kozhnutzer Maggid. Of course, I was happy to oblige with the zeide's comment on

קהלת י"א) שלח לחמך על-פני המים, כי ברב הימים תמצאנו

Send forth your bread upon the surface of the water, for after many days you will find it. (Koheles 11:1) Don't hesitate to help out even a gentile, since you never know when it could be useful to you.' This advice seemed to strike a responsive chord in the wealthy man's heart and he thanked me for the Torah *chizuk/encouragement*".

The route to Radoshitz had to pass a river, which at that time of year turned out to be frozen solid. One had the option of risking traversing the ice or else taking a proper bridge across, which charged a toll. We chose the bridge, but soon heard screams for

help coming from the river beneath. The rich man ordered his wagon to halt so that they could render assistance. They came upon a gentile poritz (a local squire/landowner, who often tormented Jewish renters) with his family who had fallen through the ice and were close to drowning. The wagondrivers pulled them to safety. The poritz asked the rich man his name and address, so that he could send a reward for saving his life. The man told him he had plenty of money and had no need of any more. The two parted with an embrace, and went their separate ways -- the poritz to his estate, and we Yidden to Radoshitz, with me to the Rebbe and the rich man to his business affairs.

Their paths crossed again some time later. My father asked the rich man to tell him what happened after the incident at the river. Out burst a bitter wail which one could scarcely have anticipated. "When I returned from the trip to Radoshitz, I found that a ferocious fire had ravaged my home and consumed my entire estate. My family, boruch HaShem, managed to escape to the village guest house, bereft of all. I praised Hashem Yisborach with all my might for saving my family. I took a job as a lowly deliveryman just to scrape together a bare-bones subsistence. We lived in grinding poverty for eight long years. One day, the town clerk informed me that a gentile nobleman was in town, making inquiries about me, naming me as a wealthy man, and wanting me to come meet him. Everyone told him that a rich man with my name no longer lived there. In any case I was reluctant to go, since it was during my working hours. The clerk took out a whole ruble, saying it was one of ten the nobleman offered him if he located me. That jogged his memory and he remembered that I had indeed been wealthy years ago, but had lost all in the disastrous fire. I went along to meet this nobleman, and when we met, there was a joyous reunion with hugs and backslapping. He recognized me immediately as the one who had saved him and his family from a watery grave. I briefed him on my misfortune and, *bechasdei Hashem*, he replied that in the interim years, he had attained the position of provincial administrator and wanted to hire me to manage his personal estate. I pounced on the offer. He advanced me a handsome sum with which to purchase a house and outfit my family in the way we had once known. In time, I was fully back on my feet and actually regained a semblance of my prior wealth." At this point in the narrative, my father, the Holy Magolnitzer Rebbe revealed amazing secrets to his visitor, Reb Chaim (for that was who the hero of this story was.) "Now you may know that when I stayed in your house and you awakened me with a painful jab, my grandfather, the Kozhnutzer Maggid, was moved to vengeance ("kepaida") against you, and in Shomayim, it was decreed that you should endure poverty your entire life. But then, when you took me into your wagon and warmed me up with comfy furs, the decree was softened to a reduced term of only eight years." Our Reb Chaim reviewed the whole history for his companion Reb Meir Shachna and, "better late than never", begged the Rebbe's forgiveness for the painful jab, which the Rebbe duly granted. Now the Kozhnutzer Maggid's lesson from the posuk in Koheles finally hit home, since by saving the gentile poritz's life, Chaim enjoyed a life-transforming yeshua -- eight years after the fact. (Sefer Mei Hayom)

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