

## פרשת תרומה

A new phase of Torah begins with our Parshas Teruma and this phase continues until somewhere in the middle of Sefer Vayikro. This phase does not conclude there in the middle of Sefer Vayikro, rather it remains as a potent force throughout the entire Torah and throughout the lives of the Jewish People.

That phase is the service of HaKodosh Boruch through the offering of *Korbonos* and in the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdosh.

We know that this service was announced at the very onset of the redemption in Egypt. At the *s'neh* Hashem told Moshe (Sh'mos Perek 3/Posuk 18):

וּשְׁמַעוּ לְקוֹלִי וּבִאתִי אֲתֶיךָ וְזָקַנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם וְאָמַרְתֶּם אֵלָיו ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ... לֵקִי הָעֵבְרָיִים נִקְרָה עָלֵינוּ וְעַתָּה נֵלְכָה נָא דֶרֶךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים בְּמִדְבָּר וְנִזְבְּחָה לָהּ... לֵקִינוּ:

Israel will listen to your voice and you will come, together with the elders of Israel, to the King of Egypt and you will say to him, 'Hashem, the G-d of the Hebrews happened upon us and now we will please go for a journey of three days in the wilderness and we will make offerings to Hashem our G-d.

When the end of the exile in Egypt approaches and Par'o says he will let Israel go to serve G-d, but without their animals, Moshe Rabbenu responds (ibid. Perek 10/Posuk 26):

וְגַם מִקְנֵנוּ יֵלֶךְ עִמָּנוּ לֹא תִשָּׂא רַפְסָה כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ נִקַּח לְעֶבֶד אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֲנִחְנוּ לֹא נִדְעַ מַה נַּעֲבֹד אֶת ה' עַד בֵּאֵנוּ שָׁמָּה:

Also our cattle will go with us; not a hoof [of the cattle] will remain [in Egypt] because from it we will take to serve Hashem our G-d; we do not know how we will serve Hashem until we get there.

And, until we have reached Parshas Terumah and will continue through the building of the Mishkan and its vessels and the various *korbonos* and their requirements about which we will learn in Sefer Vayikro, we *still* do not know how we are expected to serve G-d.

Thus, our Parsha with its various components is more than one Parsha. Our Parsha is the prolegomena to an exceedingly vital pillar of our existence, as we read in Masseches Ovos (Perek 1/Mishnah 2):

שמעון הצדיק היה משירי כנסת הגדולה הוא היה אומר על שלשה דברים העולם  
עומד על התורה ועל העבודה ועל גמילות חסדים:

Shimon HaTzaddik was among the last members of the *Anshei Knesses HaGedolah*. He would say, 'The world stands upon the Torah, the Avodah, and *Gemilus Chassodim*.'

Rashi writes in explanation:

ועל העבודה. של בית המקדש כמו שמצינו בתענית אלמלא מעמדות לא נתקיימו  
שמים וארץ לכך היו קורין במעשה בראשית כל ימי השבוע:

*On the Avodah* – the service of the Beis HaMikdosh. This is as we find in Masseches Taanis: If it were not for the *Maamados*<sup>1</sup> the heavens and earth would not exist. That is why they read about *Maaseh B'reishis* all the days of that week.

Thus, we see the inherent connection between the service of the Beis HaMikdosh and very existence of the world.

Being so, we are not surprised to read that the introductory verses of Parshas Terumah are really an introduction to the Parshos which teach us how to maintain this pillar of our existence.

Parshas Teruma begins (Sh'mos Perek 25/P'sukim 1-2):

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְחוּ לִי תְרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל אִישׁ אָשֶׁר  
יִדְבְּנוּ לְבוֹתָם וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת תְּרוּמָתִי:

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<sup>1</sup> See Masseches Taanis 27 b and 31 b.

When the Beis HaMikdosh was built, Kohanim and Levi'im would go to Yerushalayim one week at a time, twice during the year, and they would offer the *Korbonos* for the period that they were there.

Kohanim were divided in twenty-four groups (*mishmaros*) and were, generally, from the same geographic area. When the Kohanim and Levi'im would go to Yerushalayim at their appointed times, the *Yisroelim* of their locale, non-Kohanim and non-Levi'im, would recite special *Tefilos* each day of the week. Included in those *Tefilos* was the Torah reading of *Maaseh B'reishis*.

Hashem spoke to Moshe saying: Speak to B'nei Yisroel that they should take for Me a raised-offering from every person whose heart motivates his generosity you should take My raised-offering.

It would appear that there is a degree of tension between the phrases of this latter verse.

The Torah first says that they should take the *terumah* for Hashem – *Take for Me* – implying that it is not His<sup>2</sup>. Then the Torah says, '*You should take My offering*'. This implies that the offering does belong to Hashem.

Secondly, since building the Beis HaMikdosh is a *Mitzvah*, why should it depend on the generosity of donors? Why not obligate everyone to contribute?

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<sup>2</sup> Although we will deal with other approaches to answer this question, it is appropriate to note at the outset that *Meishiv Dovor* says that the verse itself solves this problem with its particular choice of words.

He writes:

ויקחו לי תרומה. ולא אמר ויתנו לי. להורות שהכל שלו ואין שייך לומר ויתנו כמו שאמר דוד (דברי הימים א כט/ד) כי ממך הכל ומידך נתנו לך. על כרחך הפירוש ויקחו לי משלי:

*They should take terumah for Me* – It does not say 'they should *give* for Me'. This teaches that everything belongs to Hashem and thus it cannot say 'they should *give*'. This is in consonance with that which Dovid HaMelech wrote: "Because all is from You and from Your Hand we gave to You". Per force the explanation is: "They should *take* for Me" – from Mine.

Without mentioning *Meishiv Dovor*, Malbim rejects that interpretation. He writes: לא אמר ויתנו לי תרומה, שאז היה מצות עשה וחייב על כל אחד ליתן, וה' רצה שתרומה זו תהיה מנדבת לב ורצון חפשי לא על ידי שום הכרח, ואם היה הצווי שיתנו, היו נותנים בהכרח על ידי הצווי, לכן באר שאינו מצוה שיתנו רק שימנו גבאים לקבל ממי שירצה ליתן.

The Posuk does not say '*they will give Me terumah*' because then the implication would be that it was an obligatory positive *Mitzvah* and would be incumbent upon each individual to give and Hashem wanted that this *terumah* would be given voluntarily with complete free-will and not by any requirement. If there would have been a command that they should give, they would have then given because they were forced to by the command.

Therefore the Posuk explains that there is not a command that they should give but rather that they should appoint collectors to accept the donations from whoever wished to give.

There is a precedent for such obligatory monetary participation.

We will read in Parshas Ki Siso that there was an annual obligation for gifts of *Machatzis HaShekel*. That one-half shekel gift was used for the communal offerings for the coming year.

The P'sukim read (Sh'mos Perek 30/P'sukim 12-13):

כִּי תִשָּׂא אֶת רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְקֻדֵיהֶם וַיִּנְתְּנוּ אִישׁ כֶּפֶר נַפְשׁוֹ לַיהוָה בְּפִקְדוֹת אֲתֶם וְלֹא יְהִי בָהֶם נֶגֶף בְּפִקְדוֹת אֲתֶם: זֶה יִתְּנוּ כָּל הָעֶבֶר עַל הַפְּקֻדִים מִחֻצֵי הַשֶּׁקֶל בַּשֶּׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ עֶשְׂרִים גֵּרָה הַשֶּׁקֶל מִחֻצֵי הַשֶּׁקֶל תְּרוּמָה לַיהוָה:

When you raise the head of B'nei Yisroel to have their numbers, each person should give an atonement for his soul to Hashem when they are numbered and there should not be a plague among B'nei Yisroel when they are numbered. This is what they should give, anyone who is numbered should give a half-shekel by the weight of a sanctified shekel; the shekel is equivalent to twenty *gera*; it should be a half-shekel raised offering for Hashem.

Rashi explains there that the specific one-half shekel given at that time was used for the sockets into which the *kerashim*, upright boards fitted when the Mishkan was erected. That was a one-time gift.

Additionally, Rashi points out, there was an annual gift which is hinted to at the beginning of Sefer B'midbar. We read there (Perek 1/P'sukim 1-2):

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַר סִינַי בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד בְּאַחַד לַחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁנִי בַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית לְצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר: שָׂאוּ אֶת רֹאשׁ כָּל עַדְת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִשְׁפְּחֹתָם לְבֵית אָבֹתָם בְּמִסְפַּר שְׁמוֹת כָּל זָכָר לְגִלְגֻלְתָּם:

Hashem spoke to Moshe in the Sinai wilderness in the *Ohel Moed* on the first day of the second month in the second year from the Exodus from the Land of Egypt saying: 'Raise the head of the entire congregation of B'nei Yisroel by their families and according to their patriarchal household with the number of names of every male by the headcount.

As mandated in Parshas Ki Siso, this 'numbering' was done by a collection of half-shekolim. What was done with these *מחציות השקל*? We read in Masseches Shekolim (Perek 1/Mishnayos 1, 3):

באחד באדר משמיעין על השקלים...בחמשה עשר בו שולחנות היו יושבין במדינה  
בעשרים וחמשה ישבו במקדש

On the first of Adar they announce about the Shekel collection. On the fifteenth of the month, money changers are arranged throughout the country and on the twenty-fifth they would sit in the Mikdash perimeter.

The obligatory communal *Korbonos* of each year had to be funded from new monies collected for that purpose<sup>3</sup>. Since the new year for this purpose began with Nissan, the collection process began in the preceding month of Adar.

In light of all of the above, what are we to learn from the introductory verses of our Parshas Terumah?

Rashi teaches us:

ויקחו לי תרומה - לי לשמי:

*They should take a terumah offering for Me – For Me, for My Name.*

In his supra-commentary, Rav Eliyahu Mizrachi explains Rashi's intent with these few words. He writes:

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<sup>3</sup> This annual collection is derived from the verse in Parshas Pinchos (B'midbar Perek 28/Posuk 14):

וְנִסְכֵיהֶם חֲצִי הַהֵין יְהִי לְפָר וְשְׁלִישֵׁת הַהֵין לְאֵיל וְרִבִיעֵת הַהֵין לְכֶבֶשׂ יִין זֹאת עֹלֹת חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדֶשׁוֹ  
לְחֹדְשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה:

And the wine libations for the Rosh Chodesh Musaf *korban* was a half-*hin* for the bullock, a third-*hin* for the ram and a quarter-*hin* for the sheep; this is the burnt-offering of Rosh Chodesh in its month for the months of the year.

We learn in Masseches Rosh Hashanah (7 a):

ולתרומת שקלים. מנלן? - אמר רבי יאשיה: אמר קרא זאת עלת חדש בחדשו לחדשי השנה. אמרה תורה: חדש והבא קרבן מתרומה חדשה. וגמרי שנה, שנה מניסן, דכתיב (שמות יב/ב) ראשון הוא לכם לחדשי השנה.

How do we know that Nissan is the first month for using the gifts of [one-half] shekalim? Rabi Yoshia said, "The Torah writes, "the burnt-offering of Rosh Chodesh in its month for the months of the year". The Torah is saying, "Renew and bring a korban from the new gifts.

[We know that it is *Nissan* because] we learn a *gezeira shavah* from the word *shanah*-year. Because it says "[Nissan] should be for you the first of the months of the year".

לי לשמי. לא כסתם "לי" שבמקרא המורה להבאת דבר אל העצם, כי כתוב (תהילים נ"ב<sup>4</sup>): "אם ארעב לא אומר לך". ומזה הטעם עצמו פירש גבי (פסוק ח<sup>5</sup>) "ועשו לי מקדש - לשמי", כי כתוב (מלכים א ח/כז<sup>6</sup>): "השמים ושמי השמים לא יכללוך ואף כי הבית הזה".

*For Me-for My Name* – The use of the word לי, for Me, here is not like the usual use of the word לי – to me which means bringing something to someone. [That cannot be the case here because Hashem has no needs] because it is written, 'If I will hunger, I will not tell you.'

This is the same reason that Rashi explains regarding the building of the Mishkan where it is written, 'They shall make for Me a sanctuary' – 'for My Name'. That is because it is written, 'All of the heavens and the heavens of the heavens cannot contain You, and certainly not this house.'

Mizrachi explains that Rashi was forced to change from the expected explanation of לי that implies that something is brought to someone because having something brought to someone implies that the recipient needed the item he received. Such a statement cannot be said regarding HaKodosh Boruch Who has no needs. Thus, Rashi explained the usage of the word לי here as meaning for His Name – לשמו.

Though the reason was different, the outcome was the same when Rashi explained that the לי, for Me regarding the Mishkan cannot mean a House for G-d. Even without the words of Shlomo HaMelech in *Sefer Melachim*, and now with them, we know that the infinite Hashem cannot dwell in any place.

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<sup>4</sup> The entire verse reads:

אם ארעב לא אומר לך כי לי תבל ומלאה:

If I will hunger, I will not tell you because the world and that which fills it are Mine.

<sup>5</sup> The entire verse reads:

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם:

They shall make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst.

<sup>6</sup> The entire verse reads:

כי האמנם ישב א...לקים על הארץ הנה השמים ושמי השמים לא יכללוך אף כי הבית הזה אשר  
בניתי:

Is it true that G-d will dwell upon the land? Behold the heavens and the heavens of the heavens will not contain you, and certainly not this house?

Such is what the Yalkut Shimoni (Parshas Vayetze 117) teaches with great clarity:

הוא מקומו של עולם ואין העולם מקומו

He is the place of the world; the world is not His place.

When I think about Rashi's commentary and the words of *Mizrachi* and others who deal with Rashi's *p'shat* I am somewhat taken aback.

I think פשיטא! Isn't it obvious that the Mishkan is going to be built for Hashem's Name? Could I contemplate that there would be another purpose in its building? And if one would have to say that perhaps the purpose may be misunderstood in this instance, but with the subsequent verse that commands the building of the Mishkan directly, the verse that *Mizrachi* brought, can I imagine otherwise? Can I imagine that I am told to build a house for G-d and don't understand that it is לשמו for His Name?

Malbim tells us that the immediate response of פשיטא is inaccurate. Of course I know that my gift is for G-d, but, Malbim explains, perhaps there is an ulterior motive mixed together with my dedication to G-d.

He writes:

לי לשמי, שלא יערב ברוחו פניה חיצונית להתכבד או להתפאר בנדבתו או על מנת לקבל פרס וכדומה רק לשם ה' בלבד,

*For Me, for My Name* – there should not be mixed together with his intent an outside focus to be honored or to be feted with his generosity. It should not be 'with the intent to be rewarded', and similar motivations. His gift should be for G-d only.

In fact, when we think about our initial פשיטא and its subsequent retraction, we can also think to rewrite the sentence above which introduced the Malbim. Perhaps we should write:

Our dedication to G-d might mix in with our ulterior motives!

The Novi has told us more than once that offerings not brought for the right reasons are repulsive before Hashem.

Yeshaya wrote that at the very beginning of his Sefer (Perek 1/P'sukim 11-12):

לְמָה לִי רַב זְבַחֵיכֶם יֹאמַר ה' שְׂבַעְתִּי עֲלוֹת אֵילִים וְחֶלֶב מְרִיאִים וְדָם פְּרִים וּכְבָשִׁים  
וְעֵתוּדִים לֹא חָפְצָתִי: כִּי תָבֹאוּ לִרְאוֹת פָּנַי מִי בִקֵּשׁ זֹאת מִיְדֵיכֶם רַמֵּס חֲצָרַי:

'Why do I need an abundance of offerings?', Hashem will say. 'I am sated with the rams of your burnt-offerings, the fats of the fattened animals, the blood of the bullocks, the sheep and the goats I did not want. When you come to be seen by My Face, who asked of you to do this, trampling my courtyards.'

In his explanation of why the Torah writes 'they shall take *terumah* for Me' instead of writing, 'give *terumah* for Me', *HaKsov vHaKabboloh* relates to our question, even though the connection is nuanced.

He writes<sup>7</sup>:

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<sup>7</sup> *HaKsov vHaKabboloh* uses a Halachic subject to explain the choice of terminology in our Posuk and others that he will mention as well. an introduction to that Halachic subject will make it easier to understand what *HaKsov vHaKabboloh* wrote.

The subject is *Kiddushin* – when a man marries a woman. In order to marry her, the man must make a *kinyan*, an act of acquisition, to which the woman must agree. There are three ways that such a *kinyan* is made as we read in the first Mishnah of Masseches Kiddushin but only one way is used in common practice: כֶּסֶף, money or an article that has a minimum value.

As we all know, marriages today, and for many, many centuries, are validated when the prospective groom gives the prospective bride a ring that has a minimum value and the bride accepts the ring from him, while the entire event is observed by *kosher* witnesses.

*Davka* the man, specifying that what he is doing is to have the marriage occur, gives the ring and the woman accepts it in order for the *kinyan* to be valid because *Halachically* he is *acquiring* a wife.

Thus, the Gemara in Masseches *Kiddushin* tells us that if she gives him the ring and says 'you are married to me', nothing happened. There is no marriage.

However, there is an instance where she gives the prospective husband a gift and says that she becomes married to him by virtue of his accepting the gift and halachically they are considered married. How could that be? The Gemara there (7 a) explains:

הכא באדם חשוב עסקינן, דבההיא הנאה דקא מקבל מתנה מינה - גמרה ומקניא ליה נפשה.



ויקחו לי. כשהמקבל אדם חשוב אז נחשב הנותן כמקבל, כבקדושין נתנה היא ואמר הוא אם הוא אדם חשוב מקודשת, לכן אמר כאן ויקחו ולא אמר ויתנו. ולשון זה נאמר גם כן באברהם (בראשית יח/ה<sup>8</sup>) ואקחה פת לחם במקום ואתננה, וכן באליעזר עבד אברהם (שם כד/כב<sup>9</sup>) ויקח האיש נזם זהב ושני צמידים על ידיה, ויקח במקום ויתן, כי הנותנים האלה חשבו את עצמם כמקבלים:

*They should take for Me* – When the recipient is a person of importance then the ‘giver’ is considered as the ‘receiver’. This is like in the *Halachic* area of marriage when ‘she gives [the gift] and he says [I am marrying you with the receipt of this gift] if he is a person of importance, the marriage is validated. Therefore it says here ‘they will take’ and it does not say, ‘they will give’.

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We are dealing with a case where the prospective husband is a most important individual, one who does not accept gifts in general. However, when the prospective bride gives him a gift of a minimum value (saying that she will be married to him with his acceptance) and he accepts it, then she is uniquely grateful. The gratitude that she feels from his willingness to accept such a gift is a gift that she receives from him. Thus, his acceptance is his valuable gift to her and through that ‘gift’ she is married to him.

Thus, points out *HaKsov vHaKabboloh*, there are times when ‘receiving is giving’.

This concept is most likely not foreign to those of us who have learned Rav Dessler’s profound teachings regarding נתינה and נטילה, ‘taking and giving’ in which the value of the act is not defined by the visible action but by the intent and that which results from the action.

<sup>8</sup> The entire verse reads:

וְאָקַחְהָ פֶת לֶחֶם וְסַעְדוּ לְבָבְכֶם אַחַר תַּעֲבְרוּ כִּי עַל כֵּן עֲבַרְתֶּם עַל עַבְדְּכֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ כֵּן תַעֲשֶׂה כְּאִשֶּׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ:

I will take bread and you will feast your hearts and afterwards you can pass by because that is why you passed by your servant; they said, ‘Yes, do like you spoke’.

<sup>9</sup> The entire verse reads:

וַיְהִי כְּאִשֶּׁר כָּלוּ הַגְּמָלִים לִשְׁתוֹת וַיִּקַּח הָאִישׁ נֶזֶם זָהָב בְּקֶעַע מִשְׁקָלוֹ וּשְׁנֵי צְמִידִים עַל יְדֵיהָ עֶשְׂרֵה זָהָב מִשְׁקָלָם:

When the camels finished drinking the man took a gold ring, a half-weight and two bracelets on her hands, their weight was ten of gold.

This term of 'taking' [instead of 'giving'] was said by Avraham as well. He [was giving the bread to the guests but yet he said] 'I will *take* bread' instead of 'I will *give* bread'.

The term of 'taking' [instead of 'giving'] is found by *Eliezer eved Avraham* as well. The Posuk writes, 'The man took a gold ring and two bracelets upon her hands'. It says 'he *took*' when it should have said 'he *gave*'.

In both of these cases the explanation is that those who gave saw themselves as being recipients<sup>10</sup>.

Embedded within this commentary of HaKsov vHaKabboloh is the fact that the Torah instructs the one who is *giving* the Terumah to the Mishkan to see himself as *taking* something for himself.

One who is giving to the building of the Mishkan should be grateful that HaKodosh Boruch is willing to take a gift from flesh and blood to build a heavenly abode.

Thus, if we expand the nuances of the writings of HaKsov vHaKabboloh we have a very precise meaning of:

לי לשמי

For Me, for My Name

especially in light of Malbim's commentary. If the very act of giving is an expression of gratitude to G-d, if we are extraordinarily gratified that He accepts our gifts, then any lack of complete sincerity in giving for His Name dilutes our very *kavanah* and detracts from the very goal that we wish to reach.

In light of the above, we can also have a new insight into Rabbenu Bachye's commentary on our verse.

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<sup>10</sup> Avraham Ovinu was grateful to his guests for accepting his hospitality. Thus when they ate his food they allowed him to be the host that he so desired to be and saw himself as a recipient of their largesse. He *took* from the transaction.

Eliezer is called *Eved Avraham* for a purpose. He was dedicated to fulfill his mission upon which Avraham Ovinu sent him. He saw the mission as his own and thus when Rivka I'meinu became this candidate to be a bride for Yitzchak Ovinu, Eliezer was grateful to her for accepting the gifts. He *took* from the transaction.

He writes:

תקחו את תרומתי. אחר שהזכיר נדיבות הלב יחס התרומה אליו שאמר "תרומתי"  
כי אז יהיה רצונו דבק בהם, כי אין רצון ה' יתברך בצרי העין...

*Take My Terumah* – Since the verse mentions generosity, the Torah then associates *Terumah* with generosity and [now] writes תרומתי, *My Terumah* [unlike at first it wrote only תרומה, without 'My']. Because when Israel demonstrates generosity, His Will cleaves to them because the Will of Hashem is not with those who are stingy.

That is, the *Terumah* that they will give can remain distant from Hashem if it is given begrudgingly, with regret and a lack of happiness. When does Hashem call it “*My Terumah*”? The *Terumah* is claimed by Hashem as His when it is given willfully and happily.

Rabbenu Bachye adds an additional layer to our understanding of לשמי, for My Name. Not only is it the intellectual awareness of transferring one’s property that is necessary for the gift to be for Hashem. The emotional aspect is just as vital. If I truly think that it is for Hashem then I should be pleased by the opportunity to make my contribution. My contribution is my opportunity to dedicate myself to Him.

If my giving is marred by misgiving then it is quite evident that I do not understand what לשמי, ‘for My Name’ means.

In fact, the nature of the generosity of the donor being a prerequisite for it being לשמי is already expressed by the Novi Hoshea.

We read there (Perek 6/Posuk 6):

כִּי חֶסֶד חִפְצָתִי וְלֹא זָבַח וְדַעַת אֶלֶּלִים מַעֲלוֹת:

I Hashem want kindness and not offerings; the knowledge of G-d is greater than burnt-offerings.

Earlier we quoted the words of Shimon HaTzaddik at the beginning of Masseches Ovos and we emphasized the fact that *Avodah* is a pillar of our existence. In the B’raisa of Ovos D’Rabi Noson we find an expanded version of the words of Shimon HaTzaddik. We read there (Perek 1):

שמעון הצדיק היה משירי אנשי כנסת הגדולה הוא היה אומר על שלשה דברים העולם עומד על התורה ועל העבודה ועל גמילות חסדים:  
על התורה כיצד הרי הוא אומר כי חסד חפצתי ולא זבח ודעת א... ל'קים מעולות מכאן לעולה שהיא חביבה מזבחים מפני שהעולה כולה כליל לאישים שנאמר והקטיר הכהן את הכל המזבחה (ויקרא א/ט<sup>11</sup>) ובמקום אחר הוא אומר ויקח שמואל טלה חלב אחד ויעלה עולה כליל לה' (שמואל א ז/ט<sup>12</sup>). ותלמוד תורה חביבה לפני המקום מעולות לפי שאם אדם למד תורה יודע דעתו של מקום שנאמר אז תבין יראת ה' ודעת אלקים תמצא (משלי ב/ה<sup>13</sup>). מכאן לחכם שיושב ודורש בקהל שמעלה עליו הכתוב כאלו הקריב חלב ודם לגבי מזבח:

Shimon HaTzaddik was among the last members of the *Anshei Knesses HaGedolah*. He would say, 'The world stands upon three things the Torah, the Avodah, and *Gemilus Chassodim*.'

On Torah- How do we know that? The verse says, 'Because I desire kindness and not offerings and the knowledge of G-d more than burnt-offerings.' We see that a burnt-offering is more beloved than other *korbonos* because it is burnt completely on the fire, as it says, 'The Kohen shall burn it all to the altar'. Another verse says, 'Shmuel took one fattened lamb and offered it up as burnt-offering – totally to G-d.'

And Talmud Torah is beloved by Hashem more than burnt-offerings because if a person learns Torah he knows G-d's mind as it says, 'Then you will understand the fear of Hashem and you will find the knowledge of G-d.'

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<sup>11</sup> The entire verse reads:

וְקָרְבוֹ וְכַרְעָיו יֶרְחַץ בַּמַּיִם וְהַקְטִיר הַכֹּהֵן אֶת הַכֹּל הַמִּזְבְּחָה עֲלֵה אִשֶּׁה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַה':

Its insides and its legs you shall wash in water and the Kohen shall burn it all to the altar, a fire, a pleasant fragrance to Hashem.

<sup>12</sup> The entire verse reads:

וַיִּקַּח שְׁמוּאֵל טֹלָה חֶלֶב אֶחָד וַיַּעֲלֶהוּ עֹלָה כְּלִיל לַה' וַיִּזְעַק שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל ה' בְּעַד יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעֲנֶהוּ ה':

Shmuel took one fattened lamb and offered it up as burnt-offering – totally to G-d and Shmuel cried out to Hashem on behalf of Israel and Hashem answered him.

<sup>13</sup> Metzudos explains:

וְדַעַת אָ... ל'קים - הם רזי התורה:

*The knowledge of G-d* – this refers to the hidden parts of the Torah.

We learn from here that the Chochom who sits and teaches the congregation that the Posuk considers him as if he offered the fat and blood of a Korbon on the altar.

By teaching publicly, an act which is one of *chesed* since it allows those who are unlearned to become learned in Torah and both Torah and chesed surpass *Korbonos* in their valence, this Chochom is providing all of the three pillars upon which the world stands.

However, Yalkut Shimoni provides us with a viewpoint from a different angle, certainly not necessarily in opposition but one that is different nonetheless.

We read there (Hoshea 522):

כי חסד חפצתי ולא זבח. אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא חביב עלי חסד שאתם גומלים זה לזה יותר מכל הזבח שזבח שלמה לפני אלף עולות יעלה שלמה וכן הוא האומר, זאת התורה לעולה למנחה, זאת התורה לא עולה ולא מנחה.

*Because I desired kindness and not offerings* – Hashem said, ‘The kindness that you do to one another is beloved to Me more than all the offerings that Shlomo offered before Me as it says, ‘One thousand burnt-offerings Shlomo offered.

It similarly says, ‘This is the Torah *Lo*-for the burnt-offering, *Lo*-for the meal-offering.

This is the Torah, not the burnt-offering and not the meal-offering.

That is, the Torah could have written here, as it wrote earlier, *זאת תורה העולה*, etc. Why did the Torah change its mode of expression to write the letter *lamed* prior to these offerings? The answer is that *la* can be understood as *lo*-no. The Torah is desirous of something else more than the *Korbonos* and the verse in Hoshea tells us that it is *chesed* which is more desired.

The Midrash continues:

פעם אחת היה רבן יוחנן בן זכאי מהלך בירושלים והיה רבי יהושע מהלך אחריו ראה בית המקדש שהוא חרב אמר אוי לנו על הבית שחרב מקום שמתכפרין בו עונותינו,

אמר לו בני אל ירע לך שיש לנו כפרה אחרת שהיא כמותה ואי זה זה גמילות חסדים, לכך נאמר כי חסד חפצתי ולא זבח, ואומר (תהילים פט/ג<sup>14</sup>) אמרתי עולם חסד יבנה:

Once Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai was walking in Yerushalayim and Rabi Yehoshua was walking in back of him. Rabi Yehoshua saw the destroyed Beis HaMikdosh and said, 'Woe to us about the House that has been destroyed – the place in which our sins were atoned.'

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai said, 'My son. Do not see it so badly. There is another means of atonement that is the equal of the Beis HaMikdosh. What is that? It is *gemilus chassodim* – acts of kindness. Therefore the verse says, 'I desire kindness not offerings' and it says, 'I Hashem said, 'The world will be built with kindness.'

What is the goal of the Mishkan? What is its purpose? Why were the monies collected voluntarily from all of Israel to build the Mishkan instead of imposing a required tax that would probably only make a minor dent in the amassed riches that all of Israel took out of Egypt? All were able to contribute!

The answer is the goal that Ramban writes here, at the beginning of Parshas Terumah, a goal that will carry us through the end of this Sefer Sh'mos and until we make significant inroads into Sefer Vayikro.

Ramban writes:

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<sup>14</sup> The entire verse reads:

כִּי אָמַרְתִּי עוֹלָם חֶסֶד יִבְנֶה שָׁמַיִם תִּכְנֶן אֲמוֹנֶתְךָ בָּהֶם:

Because I said that the world will be built with kindness; in the heavens You will prepare Your faithfulness in both of them (the heaven and the earth).

Radak writes:

כי אמרתי. חשבתי כי לעולם חסד יבנה, החסד שעשה לדוד לתת לו המלכות לו ולבניו אחריו, וכמו השמים שתכין אמונתך בהם שלא תפסוק, כי פירוש אמונה - קיום, כן תכין אמונתך עם דוד ועם זרעו שלא תפסוק לאורך זמן כל ימי עד, כמו שאמר (דברים יא/כא): כימי השמים על הארץ:

*Because I said* – I thought that forever kindness will be built – the kindness that You did for Dovid, giving him the reign for him and for his sons after him. Just like You prepare the heavens with Your faithfulness that You will not cease.

The meaning of *emunah* is 'continued existence'. So will You faithfully deal with Dovid and his seed that you will not cease for a long period of time, forever as it is written, 'like the days of the heaven upon the earth'.

וּסוּד הַמִּשְׁכָּן הוּא, שִׁיְהִיָּה הַכְבוֹד אֲשֶׁר שָׁכַן עַל הַר סִינַי שׁוֹכֵן עֲלָיו בְּנִסְתֵּר. וְכִמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר שָׁם (לְעִיל כִּד טז) וַיִּשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹד ה' עַל הַר סִינַי, וְכָתִיב (דְּבָרִים ה' כ"א) הֵן הִרְאֵנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת כְּבוֹדוֹ וְאֶת גְּדֻלוֹ, כֵּן כָּתוּב בְּמִשְׁכַּן וְכְבוֹד ה' מִלֵּא אֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן (לְהִלֵּן מ' ל"ד). וְהַזְכִּיר בְּמִשְׁכַּן שְׁנֵי פְעָמִים וְכְבוֹד ה' מִלֵּא אֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן, כִּנְגִד "אֶת כְּבוֹדוֹ וְאֶת גְּדֻלוֹ". וְהִיא בְּמִשְׁכַּן תָּמִיד עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל הַכְבוֹד שֶׁנִּרְאָה לָהֶם בְּהַר סִינַי.

The underlying hidden purpose of the Mishkan is that the Glory of G-d that dwelled upon Mt. Sinai [in a revealed manner] should continue to reside upon the Mishkan in a hidden manner. This is in consonance with the earlier verse, 'The Glory of G-d dwelled upon Mt. Sinai.' It is also written, 'Behold – Hashem our G-d has shown us His Glory and His greatness.

So it is written in regards to the Mishkan: 'The Glory of G-d filled the Mishkan'.

Twice it mentions that 'The Glory of G-d filled the Mishkan', which refers to "His Glory and His greatness that appeared to them on Mt. Sinai was always with them in the Mishkan as well.

The revelation at Sinai was a one-time historical event, never to be repeated. The Glory of the Ribbono Shel Olom was 'visible to Israel.

That event, with all of its parameters, could not be repeated. But a 'shadow' of that event, with the Glory of Hashem present, but hidden, could continue the paramount events of Sinai.

But there was a condition. The condition was that the edifice that would house that ה' כְּבוֹד be totally dedicated to the Ribbono Shel Olom. The three pillars upon which the world stands had to be t

he pillars of that *Mishkan*.

At Sinai all those pillars were present. Torah was given by G-d; *korbonos* were offered by Israel and the purity of interpersonal kindness, *chesed* was realized when we were כָּאִישׁ אֶחָד בְּלֵב אֶחָד.

Those pillars had to be replicated in the Mishkan and they could only be so if the dedication to G-d in all of these aspects would imitate that dedication to G-d as it was at Sinai.

Alas, our Beis HaMikdosh was destroyed because we veered so much from the preservation of those pillars. And now we await the heavenly act of its rebuilding:

כי באש אתה הציתה ובאש אתה עתיד לבנותה

You destroyed it with fire and with fire you will build it in the future.

But though that Beis HaMikdosh was destroyed, the *Mishkan* that we seek to build in our hearts can still be erected. But that *Mishkan*, too, requires the pillars to uphold and maintain it.

We can attempt to build our personal *Mishkan* 'for His Name' and bring about His Glory into our lives despite the hiddenness of His Shechinah in our Golus.

If we strive to make our personal redemptions we can hope that the aggregate of many, many personal acts of *Geula* will bring about the *Geula* that we are promised in these very months of the year<sup>15</sup>.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Pollock

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<sup>15</sup> In Masseches Megillah (6 b) there is dispute regarding in which Adar Megillas Esther is read when there are two of those months, as occurs in a leap year.

On the one hand, we should choose the first Adar because we don't let Mitzvos pass us by – מצוה הבאה לידיך אל תחמיצנה –

But despite the force of that reason that expresses a Halachic principle, we read the Megillah in *Adar Sheini*. What is the reason? The Gemara explains:

מסמך גאולה לגאולה עדיף

Placing the redemption of Adar directly next to the redemption of the month of Nissan overrides not letting a Mitzvah pass by.

In the month of Adar the redemption was incomplete, unlike its earlier counterpart in Nissan centuries earlier.

We take the months in their order and hope that the remembrance of Adar's redemption will spur the great redemption that will take place in Nissan במהרה בימינו.