

Toronto Torah

Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Terumah

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משונכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה — When Adar enters, we increase our joy!

Cedar Wood and Emunah

Yair Manas

In the beginning of Parshat Terumah, the Torah names the materials that the Jewish people donated for the Tabernacle. One of these materials is *atzei shittim*, cedar wood; this was used to build many of the vessels, as well as the walls, of the Mishkan (Tabernacle). Rashi, quoting a midrash, wonders how the Jewish people acquired wood in the desert, a place bereft of trees. The midrash answers that Yaakov saw through *ruach haKodesh* that his descendents would build a Mishkan in the desert, and he commanded his children to take the cedar wood with them when they left Egypt (Midrash Tanchuma 9).

Rashi quotes this midrash again later in the parshah, in the passage discussing the walls of the Mishkan (Shemot 26:15). Why does Rashi repeat this midrash specifically regarding the walls? Cedar wood was also used to build the Ark, the Table, and the Altar!

The answer may lie in another midrash (Bereishit Rabbah 94:4), which elaborates upon the origins of the cedar wood. In this version, the trees were first planted by Avraham, at his *eshel* in Be'er Sheva (Bereishit 21:33). If we accept both explanations of the word *eshel* recorded in the Talmud (Sotah 10a), this site offered a sheltering orchard as well as an inn for travelers.

Here Avraham performed chesed for travelers, and here Avraham taught his guests to express gratitude for Divine aid. As the gemara (ibid 10b) explains, Avraham told his guests not to thank him for their food; rather, "You ate from the G-d of the Universe - give praise and thanks to Him." Avraham used his trees to point out the chesed that Hashem does for us - and in so doing he also taught a lesson in emunah (faith) and gratitude to G-d.

In another amplification of the saga of these trees, the midrash informs us that Yaakov did more than instruct his children to take the wood from Egypt; Yaakov brought the trees to Egypt himself, on his way down to Egypt. Yaakov's role in the story adds a dimension to the emunah-related lessons we learn from the trees, for Yaakov is credited with faith in G-d even during the darkest times, at the start of his exile. This is implicit in the Talmudic passage (Berachot 26b) which credits Yaakov with initiating evening prayer; in a time of uncertainty, Yaakov still expresses faith in G-d.

Taken in combination, Avraham and Yaakov teach us about two different expressions of emunah. Avraham educates us to act with emunah when we are prosperous, to recognize that G-d is the source of our prosperity. Yaakov

reminds us to cultivate emunah when experiencing bleak periods, trusting G-d to provide for us. Both of these types of faith are necessary; as King David sang (Psalms 92:3), we wish "To tell of Your chesed in the morning, and of Your emunah in the evening". These two poles of faith are present in the saga of the cedar wood; Avraham planted the trees, and Yaakov shepherded them along their path to the Mishkan.

To return now to our first question: Why does Rashi repeat the midrash when discussing the walls of the Mishkan? Imagine yourself a slave in Egypt, as we will at the Seder in several weeks. After working all day, the slave returns home, exhausted. He cannot retire to bed yet, though, because he must water the cedar trees in his backyard. By nurturing these trees, the slave demonstrates faith in the Redemption; for 210 years, he and his parents and his children cared for the cedar trees so that, one day, the Jews would have materials to build the Mishkan. This is the emunah that Avraham and Yaakov "planted" in their descendants.

Rashi quotes this midrash regarding the walls because these walls are the substance of the Mishkan; without walls, there is no structure. Perhaps Rashi is stressing that a structure must be very strong in order to be everlasting, and a structure based upon recognizing Hashem's chesed and developing emunah is the strongest of structures. The lesson for us, in our own day, is this: To create a Jewish home, a strong community, and ultimately rebuild the Third Temple, we must learn from our forefathers, and emulate the emunah of both Avraham and Yaakov.

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Parshah Questions

R' Mordechai Torczyner

(Answers for some of the questions are on the back page)

- What is the Tachash? (Rashi and Ibn Ezra to Shemot 25:5, Shabbat 28a)
- How is it possible that the windows of the Beit HaMikdash were both shakuf (transparent) and atum (opaque), as they are described in the Haftorah? (Rashi, Ralbag, Radak, Metzudat Dovid, and Malbim to Melachim I 6:4)
- What does G-d mean when He commands the Jews to collect for the mishkan, "for Me"? (Rashi, Sifte Chachamim, Ibn Ezra, Ba'al HaTurim to Shemot 25:2)
- For children: Who made the menorah? Why? (Rashi to Shemot 25:31)

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A *chevra kadisha* which assists families and treats the deceased in the most dignified way is one of the greatest sources of pride for a Jewish community. Nonetheless, situations do arise in which community leaders are forced to take a difficult stance and deny access to Jewish cemeteries. In recent years a number of cases have been publicized, in North America and Israel, regarding refusal to allow burial of non-Jews, and controversial acceptance of questionable burials.

When the bodies of Jews and non-Jews are found together, the Talmud (Gittin 61a) requires the community to bury all those who are found, whether Jewish or not. Rashi comments that we are obligated to assist in the burial of non-Jews, but we may not bury them with our dead. A number of sources support Rashi's assertion. Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 362:5, based on Sanhedrin 46a) records that individuals of differing levels of religious observance may not be buried side by side; this applies to two Jews who led different lives, as well as Jews and non-Jews. In addition, the exclusion of non-Jews from Jewish cemeteries is implicit in the words of Ruth, who declared that only after committing to Judaism would she live and die with her mother-in-law, Naomi.

Rabbi Yoel Sirkis, in his commentary to the Tur (Bach Yoreh Deah 151), disagrees with Rashi's reading of the Talmudic prescription. According to Rabbi Sirkis, we may not bury non-Jews in a Jewish cemetery under normal circumstances in order to build peaceful relationships, but we would permit this burial if their bodies were discovered with Jewish bodies. The only

requirement would be some separation between the Jewish and non-Jewish areas. The Bach's position has been at the centre of a heated debate in Israel regarding non-Jewish Israeli soldiers and their right to be buried with their fallen Jewish comrades.

Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook, in a responsum (Daat Kohen 201) which was not addressing a military case, explained that the Bach saw two distinct reasons for maintaining exclusively Jewish cemeteries. One reason is respect for the deceased and their stature as Torah observant people, as mentioned above. In addition, though, the cemeteries take on a certain sanctity when consecrated for Jewish burial. Rav Kook reasoned that the Bach would not generally allow bodies to be buried next to one another for the former reason, respecting the rights of the deceased. However, the sanctity of the cemetery is only rabbinic in nature and could be overridden in a situation of great need.

Taking an exclusionary stance in these matters can be quite difficult, particularly under such sensitive circumstances. Respect for the deceased and a more general sensitivity to all people should always be a priority. Our aim should be to create a Kiddush Hashem through our display of kindness to all, while ensuring a proper observance of Jewish tradition and Torah law at the same time.

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613 Mitzvot: #142-143

Leftovers

R' Mordechai Torczyner

Yes, that's right: There are mitzvot regarding leftovers! Specifically, the Torah instructs us that when we bring a *korban todah* (thanks-offering) we are supposed to eat the meat, and not leave any over. Further, when we bring any *korban* we are to burn any meat that is left over after the allotted time for its consumption.

Among the ideals taught by this pair of mitzvot is the important concept of the dignity of the Beit HaMikdash

and its *korbanot*. If we were to keep the *korban's* substance on hand in a misguided attempt to honour it, the flesh would decay and become repellent, and people would associate the *korban* and the Beit haMikdash with this repellent material. Therefore we are instructed not to leave any over, but instead to burn it.

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**Hitoriri:
Jewish Spirituality**

Get Over It

R' Mordechai Torczyner

We know they were made of gold, and we know they had wings – but beyond that, what were these *keruvim* which the Torah (Shemot 25:18-20) said to place atop the ark in the Mishkan?

Rashi, citing the gemara (Chagigah 13b), says they resembled young human beings; he links *keruvim* with the Aramaic *kiravya*, "like youths." Ibn Ezra offers another idea, based on a quirk in the book of Yechezkel: Yechezkel describes the Divine throne as including the face of an ox (Yechezkel 1:10), and then later (10:14) he omits the face of an ox and includes, instead, the face of a *keruv*. This leads Ibn Ezra to assume that *keruvim* are oxen, fitting the Aramaic verb *kruv*, which refers to plowing.

Maharal defends Rashi's view that the *keruvim* were human youths. To resolve the conflict in Yechezkel, Maharal cites a midrash (see Midrash Tanchuma Emor 23) that the Divine throne originally included an ox, but HaShem replaced it with a human form lest the Divine Throne include a visual reminder of the Golden Calf.

What is behind the debate between Ibn Ezra and Maharal? Why did Ibn Ezra reject that midrash's explanation?

Ibn Ezra explains that the Golden Calf was irrelevant by Yechezkel's day, "for the Calf was not made in his days." Maharal responds, "Ibn Ezra thought the Calf was happenstance... but the sin of the Calf represented a sin in their essence." As Maharal understands it, building the Golden Calf demonstrated a fundamental weakness in the Jewish people, and the guilt for this act was attached to the nation beyond that initial generation.

Both Ibn Ezra and Maharal offer important lessons about our reaction to our sins. As Ibn Ezra said, the Jew who wishes to grow closer to Gd must be able to forget his sins as ancient history, and not shape his self-image based upon his weaknesses of the past. On the other hand, in line with Maharal's approach, the Jew must recognize when a sin is more than a momentary error, representing a fundamental weakness which demands remembering and correction. Knowing when to forget and when to remember is a challenge, but when we master it we will be positioned for dynamic growth.

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Torah in Translation
Purim Practices

Rabbi Yaakov Moelin
Sefer Minhagim: Hilchot Purim
Translated by R' Mordechai Torczyner

3: Maharil said that one should not deliver classes in halachah to the youths on the Fast of Esther; he linked it to the verse (Esther 2), "Esther did not tell." When the Fast of Esther was observed early on Thursday he was not concerned for this, and he taught. When the Fast was on Wednesday he also taught on that day, because he would not teach on Friday, when it was Shushan Purim and there would be no time. He explained that the reason not to teach [on Taanit Esther] is because people are busy preparing for Purim. Similarly, one does not go to study on Friday, because of the need to prepare in honour of Shabbat. Where there are youths who have free time, for others are taking care of their needs, then one should not be careful about this, and teach classes in halachah on the Fast of Esther.

10: Rava said, "One is obligated *livasumei* on Purim until he does not know between *arur Haman* [cursed is Haman] and *baruch Mordechai* [blessed is Mordechai]." Rashi explained that *livasumei* means to become intoxicated. I asked Maharil whether this means one must become especially intoxicated, and he replied that Rava's statement means that *arur Haman* and *baruch Mordechai* are of the same numerical value. One can easily become so intoxicated that he errs in calculating their value; he added that this is in the Sefer Agudah as well. Maharash cited Avi ha'Ezri as saying that *livasumei* is a mitzvah, not an obligation.

15: Maharil said that the Austrian practice was to pray minchah at the earliest possible time and then eat the Purim meal in the afternoon, continuing all night. Were they to eat beforehand, they would be intoxicated during minchah, and the prayer of an intoxicated person is repellent. And so I saw in a letter from our mater R' Natan and his son R' Leizer and other scholars, that they would pray minchah first, and they would pray maariv at midnight, after the meal. Maharil also ruled that one recites Al haNisim in birkat hamazon even if his meal extends into the night, even though the Rosh wrote that one would not need to recite Al haNisim in such a case. Similarly, one whose seudah shlishit of Shabbat extends into the night recites Retzeh in birkat hamazon, so long as he did not recite maariv with Havdalah.

Rabbi Yaakov ben Moshe Levi Moelin was born c. 1365 in Mainz, Germany. Commonly known as the Maharil (an acronym for "Our Teacher, the Rabbi Yaakov Levi"), he succeeded his father as the rabbi of Mainz at the young age of 22. He passed away in 1427 in Worms.

A composer of many piyutim which are still sung today, the Maharil was a strong advocate for the sanctity of tradition and traditional melodies; many of these tunes were still used in Germany in the years leading up to the Holocaust. The Rama (R' Moshe Isserles) ruled in his glosses on the Shulchan Aruch in accordance with the Maharil, that "One many not change the custom of a community, even as to its customary melodies" (Orach Chaim 619:1). Ruling with the Maharil on this issue was not an exception; the book of the Maharil's practices, *Minhagei Maharill*, is one of the most quoted sources in the glosses of the Rama.

As the Chief Rabbi of the Rhineland, the Maharil responded to many thousands of questions. Many of these answers were collected and published posthumously by his student, R' Eliezer b. Yaakov, under the title *Shut Maharil*; more were published in the late 20th century under the title *Shut Maharil heChadashot*.

During the Maharil's time, the Hussites rebelled against the Catholic Church and the Holy Roman Empire. The Hussites, the first Europeans to use handheld gunpowder weapons in war, favoured Church reform. When the Catholics reconquered land from the Hussites, some of their soldiers took revenge upon all those who were not true Catholics - including the Jews. In the face of this danger, the Maharil proclaimed that all must fast for three consecutive days and nights. He also exhorted the community not to lose faith in Hashem, and to be prepared to sacrifice their lives for *Kiddush Hashem*. These initiatives inspired and strengthened the Jewish communities in their time of need.

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Maharil said that one should send food or drink for *mishloach manot*. Specifically, one should send cooked meat or fish, for Beit Shammai (Beitzah 14b) ruled that nothing else [meaning, nothing requiring cooking - MT] would be termed *manot*.

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Sha'alvim is a religious kibbutz. Located near the city of Modi'in-Maccabim-Re'ut, it falls under the jurisdiction of Gezer Regional Council.

The kibbutz was founded on August 13, 1951, by a Nahal group from the Ezra youth movement. It was named after a Biblical location mentioned in Tanach; see Shoftim 1:33, for example. The hill between the kibbutz and Nof Ayalon is commonly known as Tel Sha'alvim. Until the Six-Day War the kibbutz was a target of numerous attacks from the West Bank, due to its proximity to the pre-1967 "Green Line" border. According to a document captured from the Jordanian Arab Legion, Arab forces had planned to attack the village and massacre all its residents. From today's Shaalvim one can see Modi'in to the northeast and, to the south, Neveh Shalom.

Yeshivat Sha'alvim was established in 1961 as a military outpost and yeshiva. With the liberation of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria in 1967 Sha'alvim became a hesder yeshiva, where Israeli students combine intensive Torah study with active service in the Israeli Defense Forces. Currently, Rav Yechezkel Yaakovson serves as Rosh Yeshiva.

Yeshivat Sha'alvim has also taught students from outside of Israel for decades. The overseas program, re-named The Moty Hornstein Institute for Overseas Students after the tragic passing of student Moty Hornstein z"l, has provided young men from the United States, Canada, Brazil, France, England, Belgium, Switzerland, and Australia the opportunity to learn side-by-side with Israeli hesder students. Together, they develop study habits and learning skills, and shape their maturing characters in ways which stay with them throughout their lives.

A separate institution for women, named 'Sha'alvim for women', has been established in the Malcha neighborhood in Jerusalem; it is headed by Rabbi Yamin Goldsmith.

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What is the Tachash?

Rashi notes that the Aramaic for “tachash” is “sagevana”, which may be divided into two words: “sass [rejoices]” and “gevana [colours]”. He suggests that the Tachash was a multi-colored creature, which was created solely for the era of the mishkan.

In contrast, **Ibn Ezra** cites the appearance of “tachash” in Yechezkel 16:10, “And I will give you shoes of tachash,” as evidence that the tachash was a known, naturally occurring creature.

How is it possible that the windows of the Beit HaMikdash were both *shakuf* (transparent) and *atum* (opaque), as they are described in the Haftorah?

Rashi, based on **Menachot 86b**, suggests that the window openings were wide, as seen from the external side of the walls of the Beit haMikdash, but they narrowed through the thickness of the wall, such that they were only slits in the internal side of the walls. Thus the walls were transparent in letting light out of the Beit haMikdash, but opaque in letting minimal light into the Beit haMikdash, demonstrating that G-d’s Beit haMikdash has no need for external sources of light. As Malbim explains,

one who stood outside would think that the Beit haMikdash needed the light of day, but one who stood inside would recognize that the illumination came from the Shechinah’s presence.

Arguing opposite Rashi, the **Ralbag** argues that this cannot be the literal meaning of the passage, for engineers have demonstrated that such a window would actually let in greater illumination than a normal window. Indeed, **Radak** notes that the Aramaic commentary to this passage reads it in a manner diametrically opposite Rashi’s approach: The window openings were broad inside, and narrow outside.

Metzudat Dovid offers an entirely different approach. He explains that *atum* means “sealed” rather than “opaque”, and the idea expressed in this passage is that the windows were sealed with a barrier, but that the barrier was transparent.

What does G-d mean when He commands the Jews to collect for the mishkan, “for Me”?

Rashi, citing a midrash, suggests that “for Me” actually means, “in My Name”, and **Siftei Chachamim** explains that this approach is driven by the religious axiom that one cannot take something “for” G-d, since G-d is already the owner of all.

Ibn Ezra, citing similar usages elsewhere in the Torah, contends that *li* should actually be rendered as “to Me” and not “for Me”.

The **Baal haTurim** offers multiple explanations of “take a terumah for Me”, including:

- “Learn Torah in order to serve Me, and so it will be as though you had given it to Me.” He renders the word תרומה as תורה נ', meaning “Torah, which was given in 40 days”.
- Playing on the use of the word “terumah” for donations to the mishkan in our parshah, and use of the word “terumah” to refer to an agricultural tithe, the Baal haTurim makes the following observation: The terumah tithe, when given by someone who does not opt for the least or greatest tithes, is 2% of one’s produce. So, too, the space dedicated for the Mishkan was 2% of the area of Har haBayit, the Temple Mount where the Beit haMikdash would stand. HaShem instructed the Jews, “Make a sacred space for Me, in an area like the terumah tithe.”
- Continuing the wordplay: The most generous form of the terumah tithe is 2.5%, or 1/40, of one’s produce. The numerical value of the word *li* (“for Me”) is 40. Thus HaShem instructed, “Take a terumah which will be 1/40,” an offering of maximum generosity.

Schedule for Feb 25 - Mar 2 / 3 - 8 Adar

Shabbat February 25

7:45 AM R' Baruch Weintraub, Rav Kook on the Parshah, Or Chaim **not this week**

10:20 AM R' Baruch Weintraub, Parshah, Clanton Park
After Hashkama Hillel Horovitz, Parshah, Bnai Torah (English)

1 hour before minchah Yair Manas: Gemara Sukkah, Mizrachi Bayit, **not this week**

1 hour before minchah Hillel Horovitz Daf Yomi, Bnai Torah

45 minutes before minchah R' Mordechai Torczyner, Daf Yomi, BAYT

After minchah R' Mordechai Torczyner, Showing Affection: Gemara Avodah Zarah, BAYT

Sunday, February 26

8:45 AM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Medical Halachah with CME credit, Toxic Treatment During Pregnancy, BAYT

9:15 AM Hillel Horovitz, Parshah Issues, **Hebrew**, Zichron Yisroel

After maariv R' Baruch Weintraub, Halachic issues in Israel, **Hebrew**, Clanton Park, *men*

8:30 PM R' Baruch Weintraub, Halachic issues in Israel, **Hebrew**, 4 Tillingham Keep, *mixed*

Monday, February 27

8:30 PM Hillel Horovitz, Siddur: In-Depth, Clanton Park, *men*

Tuesday, February 28

1:30 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Zecharyah: The End Begins, *Mekorot*, Shaarei Shomayim

7:15 PM R' Ezra Goldschmiedt, Ramban on the Parshah, BAYT
8:00 PM Hillel Horovitz, Early Prophets 1: Introduction to Learning Tanach, Bnai Torah

8:00 PM Mrs. Elyssa Goldschmiedt, Malbim on Chumash, TCS, *women*

8:15 PM Yair Manas: Minchat Chinuch, Clanton Park

Wednesday, February 29

10:00 AM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Dramas of Jewish History: Ashkenaz, BEBY, with Melton

8:00 PM R' Dovid Zirkind, Gemara Beitzah, Shaarei Shomayim
8:00 PM Mrs. Elyssa Goldschmiedt, Biblical women who thought they were right, 17 Fraserwood Apt 4, *women*

8:30 PM R' Baruch Weintraub, Hilchot Melachim: Too many wives?, Shomrai Shabbos, *men*

Thursday, March 1

9:15 AM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Class, 36 Theodore Ct, Thornhill, *women*, **free babysitting returns March 15**

8:30 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Icons of Spanish Jewry, Week 4 of 4: Dona Gracia Mendes, Miles Nadal JCC

Friday, March 2

8:00 AM R' Dovid Zirkind, Friday Parshah Preview, Village Shul