



Toronto Torah

Yeshiva University Torah MiTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Terumah

Rosh Chodesh Adar 1, 5774/February 1, 2014

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Le bon Die-u est dans le detail (The good G-d is in the details) R' Baruch Weintraub

Parshat Terumah, together with its twin, Vayakhel, resembles a riddle. Apart from the difficulty posed in comprehending the particulars of the items they describe, a greater, overarching question nags at us: why are these details important? We can understand the need to learn about some of the Mishkan's vessels, such as the *aron* or the *shulchan* – these vessels were used later in Beit HaMikdash, and will be used, G-d willing, in the near future. However, the whole of Shemot 26, and virtually all of Shemot 27, are devoted to a detailed survey of the Mishkan's structure. The Mishkan was a unique phenomenon for its time, and it supposedly will not repeat itself. Why, then, do we need to know so much about its dimensions or the material from which it was constructed?

"Which you are shown on the mountain"

Rashi, in a commentary based upon a talmudic passage (Menachot 29a), explains that Moshe Rabbeinu had difficulty understanding the structure of the menorah. The solution was given by G-d on Mount Sinai, showing him a menorah made out of fire. In the Talmud itself this is extended to the ark and the table as well; thus it is written, "You shall see and make according to their pattern, which you have been shown on the mountain". (Shemot 25:40)

Obviously, this begs a question: the best teacher in the world, teaching to the best student ever to exist, cannot explain to him how a lamp, a table or an ark should look, without showing him an example?

An answer might be suggested according to an idea expressed by Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik. In his *Shiurim L'zecher Abba Mari*, Rabbi Soloveitchik deals with the question of tradition: who is allowed to disagree with halachic tradition, and when?

After a long and elaborate discussion, Rabbi Soloveitchik offers the following distinction (p. 249):

"There are two types of tradition:

1. A tradition which relates entirely to learning, debate, give-and-take and intellectual instruction;
2. A practical tradition, the way the nation acts in fulfilling the mitzvot."

Rabbi Soloveitchik continues to say that "a dispute can only relate to the tradition of learning. If a halachah is transmitted via learning and understanding... and one of the sages does not accept a certain halachah, and his view opposes it, he is allowed to disagree and say: I rule differently... Regarding a practical tradition, however, where intellectual determinations are irrelevant, no dispute can exist. For example, if someone would come and say that matzah should not be made of wheat, but of rice... obviously, his words would be null and void."

It seems that the distinction between the two types of tradition offered by Rabbi Soloveitchik is parallel to two fundamental human perceptions: intellectual and sensual. Via intellect man can analyze, discern and eventually conquer his object of knowledge; via the senses a man feels, enters into direct contact with reality as it is, and must submit to its objective

reality – no intellectual argument can change the existence of things as they are.

Our meeting with the Divine word, thus, is two-fold: sometimes it is a subject to understand and master; sometimes it is an object against which neither wisdom nor understanding nor counsel can prevail (cf. Mishlei 21:30).

Showing Moshe the menorah, then, was in order to fortify its position as a factual reality and a practical tradition, one which transcends the limits of the intellect, and so to offer an opportunity to meet with the living G-d behind it.

The secret of details

I believe that the same approach can account for the Torah's detailed description of the Mishkan's structure. Yes, these details are irrelevant to our intellectual faculty; we cannot make much sense out of them. (Some have tried; see Ralbag to this chapter, and Rambam's fierce opposition to such attempts in Moreh haNevuchim 3:26.) Probably, they will not be used in order to build a second Mishkan. Their importance, therefore, is not in giving us abstract understanding, but the reverse: to enable us to try and imagine the Mishkan as it was, giving us as close to a sensual perception of G-d's dwelling place as possible, allowing us not to understand, but to feel the Divine presence.

This Shabbat, while we hear the *baal keri'ah* reading all of these details, let us close our eyes, and open our inner eyes, seeing the Mishkan in its glory, sensing the good G-d hiding in the details.

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Who is the prophet of our haftorah?

Yeshayah (Isaiah) was a prophet in the period leading up to the exile of the ten northern tribes of Yisrael by the Assyrians. He lived in the southern kingdom of Yehudah, and he prophesied during the reigns of Kings Uziyahu, Yotam, Achaz and Chizkiyahu. According to the Talmud (Sotah 10a), he was a descendant of Yehudah and Tamar.

As the Talmud (Bava Batra 15a) informs us, the book of Yeshayah was compiled by King Chizkiyahu and associates of his. The prophecies of Yeshayah may be classified in two categories, Rebuke and Redemption; the former dominates the early chapters of the book, while the latter occupies the latter portion. The split is not clean, though; portions of the former include redemption, and portions of the latter include rebuke.

What is the message of our haftorah?

Our haftorah begins with a sharp rebuke to people who think that by observing the practice of ritual sacrifice they are licensed to continue with their evil ways. Hashem promises that He will take his revenge upon these sinners. Yeshayah then continues to describe the future redemption, and the happiness of those who are now mourning for Yerushalayim.

The redemption described is not a peaceful one; as the prophet himself mentions, "those slain by Hashem shall

be many." (66:16) The death toll will also serve as a reminder for the future. As Yeshayah says in the concluding verse, people who come to bow before G-d on Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh will "go out and see the corpses of the people who rebelled against Me, for their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring for all flesh." (66:24)

What is the connection to Rosh Chodesh?

The immediate connection is the mentioning of "Chodashim" (new moons) as times when people will come to serve Hashem. Perhaps, though, another connection is in the "new heavens and new earth" that Hashem will make. (66:22) This theme is found in the beginning of our haftorah, too: "So said G-d, the heavens are My throne, and the earth is My footstool; which is the house that you will build for Me, and which is the place of My rest?" (66:1)

When Shlomo built the Beit HaMikdash, he knew well that "the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You; much less this house that I have erected." (Melachim I, 8:27) Yet, Shlomo hoped that a material house would enable people to address G-d, and HaShem would thereby "dwell upon the earth." Indeed, that is the goal of our work in this world – to connect, through limited material acts, to the Divine.

Our haftorah describes what would happen if this vision were to fail. The people come to sacrifice, but do not reach HaShem: "Whoever slaughters an ox has slain a man." (66:3) With this failure, G-d is compelled to completely eradicate the world, and to create it anew. Evil will be defeated, but not converted, and to the end of days it will remain as a witness to our failure to give Hashem a place in the physical realm.

However, there are other visions of redemption in Yeshayah, such as in Chapter 60. Due to space limitations we cannot analyze them here, but it will suffice to say that the differences between these visions stem from the ultimate question: Has man succeeded in his quest of finding G-d in our world?

Rosh Chodesh, the birth of the new moon, resembles the final redemption that will come even out of total darkness. This haftorah is a comforting promise: Even if we will fail, G-d will still redeem us.

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613 Mitzvot: #349**Stone Floors****Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner**

The Torah's list of mitzvot includes many instructions which reinforce separation from idolatry. At first glance, this seems like a goal of mitzvah #349, which prohibits bowing, even in prayer to G-d, on a stone floor. After all, the Torah's presentation of the mitzvah (Vayikra 26:1-2) explicitly links it with idolatry, "You shall not make idols for yourselves, and you shall not establish statues and monuments for yourselves, and you shall not place a stone covering in your land, on which to bow, for I am HaShem your G-d. Guard My Shabbatot and revere My Temple, I am G-d." As a consequence, Rambam (Sefer haMitzvot, Lo Taaseh 12) states that the goal of this mitzvah is "in order that our worship not resemble worship of idols, for they would use fine craftsmanship to make ornate stone before the idol, and they would bow upon it to the idol."

Sefer haChinuch also associates this mitzvah with concern for idolatry, although with a somewhat different angle. As opposed to Rambam's concern that one's worship would resemble idolatry, Sefer haChinuch sees this mitzvah as an attempt to avoid suspicion of idolatry, writing, "It is also possible that the reason is lest one appear to bow to the stone itself. Since they prepare and design it, and it is

attractive, there is room for suspicion." Of course, one might then ask that we should not bow upon any decorated surface, but Sefer haChinuch notes that stone is distinctive for its durability; one would not bow to cloth, which deteriorates relatively quickly.

With a third approach, Rashi seems to link this mitzvah with the verse which follows it in the Torah, regarding reverence for the Beit haMikdash. Per Rashi (Megilah 22b *lo*), we are not supposed to make our own prayer too close a likeness of that which is done in the Beit haMikdash, and the floor of the Beit haMikdash is stone. [See also Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Beit haBechirah 7:10.]

This mitzvah is the reason why we put down a napkin or cloth before kneeling during davening on Yom Kippur. Further, we even refrain from bowing full-length upon a covered floor, other than on Yom Kippur. (Rama Orach Chaim 131:8)

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Biography

Rabbi Mordechai Winkler

Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

Rabbi Mordechai Yehuda Leib Winkler was born in Hungary in 1844, into a rabbinic family. He studied in the central yeshiva in Pressburg, under Rabbi Avraham Shemuel Binyamin Sofer, son of the Chatam Sofer and author of *Ktav Sofer*. He served as Rabbi for a short time in Brezova, in what is today the Czech Republic; from there he went on to the community of Madd, Hungary, where he served as Rabbi for many years. Rabbi Winkler also served as Rosh Yeshiva in Madd; his students included Rabbi Mordechai Brisk, one of the major halachic authorities involved in resolving agunah situations during the Holocaust. Rabbi Winkler passed away in 1932.

Consistent with the general rabbinic trend in his milieu, Rabbi Winkler was a strong anti-Zionist. When asked regarding those who sought to purchase fields in Israel for settlement with the permission of non-Jewish authorities, Rabbi Winkler wrote in opposition, claiming that we are to wait for Mashiach. (*Levushei Mordechai Yoreh Deah III 49*) Ironically, Rabbi Winkler was one of those to confer ordination upon Rabbi Yissachar Teichtal, who went on to write *Eim haBanim Semeichah*, one of the greatest modern texts supporting religious Zionism and active settlement of the land.

Rabbi Winkler produced several books, but his major work was his *Levushei Mordechai*, a seven-volume collection of responsa on all areas of Jewish law. Another noted book was *Yashav Metzareif*, published with an appended work, *VichaTorah haZot*; these texts address the problem, already of grave concern in Hungary of his day, of the Jewish status of children born from intermarriage. He also dealt with the question of the validity of civil marriage and civil divorce, and he supported an initiative to create a registry recording those who were of known, valid halachic lineage. (<http://hebrewbooks.org/pdfpager.aspx?req=32722&st=&pgnum=41>) Rabbi Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg (*Sridei Eish* 2:31) cited Rabbi Winkler in a classic responsum permitting the conversion of a pregnant, non-Jewish woman who was already married to a Jew.

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Torah and Translation

A Seven-Branched Menorah

Levushei Mordechai Yoreh Deah II 68

Translated by Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

ע"ד המנורה בבית הכנסת של ז' קנים ו' קנים בעיגול ואחד באמצע, אם ראוי להחזיקה כמו שהוא. והביא מעכ"ת דברי הבכור שור מס' ר"ה [כ"ד ע"א ד"ה גמרא לא] שבאו דבריו לאסור באיזה תבנית שיהיה, וכדברי המהרי"ק שורש ע"ה דפסקו המחבר [יו"ד] סי' קמ"א סעי' ח' לענין שאין צריך מדת קומתה או גביעים ופרחים, דאפילו הכי אסור. וכן מסקנא בברכי יוסף סי' קמ"א [ד"ה מנורה], והעיד שכן הי' בעיה"ק ירושלם ת"ו בב"א והוסיפו קן לה להיות שמונה, דאז מותר...

והנה מה שהחמירו במהרי"ק ובכור שור, הוא משום דס"ל דיש בזה איסור דאורייתא. אבל ראיתי בתורת משה למרן החתם סופר פ' יתרו [בסוף הפרשה] שהוכיח מדברי הרמב"ם דזה אינו רק מדרבנן, שלא ישתמש בשרביטו של מלך מלכו של עולם, דהא בהל' ע"ז פ"ג [הל' י"א] הביא הרמב"ם איסור דעשיית משמשים, וסיים דאם עשה הצורות הנ"ל לוקה, ועשיית בית אכסדרה מנורה ושלחן לא הביא שם כלל, רק בפ"ז מהל' בית הבחירה [ה"י], ולא הזכיר מלקות בעשייתן, שמע מינה דזה אינה נלמד מקרא דלא תעשון [דברים יב ד], רק אסור מדרבנן כהנ"ל...

ומעתה אם המנורה היא תלויה כדרך הלאמפען ופמוטות, ודאי יש לסמוך על תשו' מהר"ח הכהן, דבזה גם הבכור שור יודה דמנורה בלא ירך ודאי מעכב, וגם אין שם מנורה עליה, אבל אם היא מנורה עומדת על ירכו, לענ"ד יש להחמיר כמ"ש בברכי יוסף [שם] להוסיף לה עוד קנה, שיהיו לה שמונה, ומותר לכי"ע. אם כי מדברי חתם סופר בתורת משה הבאתי לעיל משמע ל"י דאינה רק מדרבנן, מ"מ נראה שם דגם הוא מן המחמירים בדברי הבכור שור.

וכל זה כתבתי רק אם יסכים אתנו מרא דאתריה כבוד הגאב"ד נ"י.

Regarding a seven-branched menorah in a synagogue, with six branches arranged in a circle and one in the middle, and whether it may be maintained as is: His honour cited Bechor Shor who prohibited in any form, like the Maharik whose opinion was ruled as law in Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 141:8, saying that it need not be of the height [of the menorah of the Beit haMikdash] or with goblets and flowers, to be prohibited. And so is concluded in Birkei Yosef, who testified that there was such a menorah in Jerusalem, and they added a branch to make eighth, so that it was permitted...

The stringency of Maharik and Bechor Shor is because they consider it a biblical prohibition. However, I saw that Chatam Sofer proved from Rambam that this is rabbinic, lest one use the sceptre of the King, King of the universe. In Hilchot Avodah Zarah 3:11 Rambam cited the [biblical] prohibition against making [the likeness of] the [celestial] servants of G-d, and he concluded that one who does this is lashed, and he did not cite the issue of making a house, room, menorah or table [like those in the Beit haMikdash] at all. He only brought this in Hilchot Beit haBechirah 7:10, and he did not mention lashes regarding making these. We learn from this that the prohibition does not come from Devarim 12:4, "You shall not form," but is only a rabbinic prohibition, as stated above...

Therefore, if the menorah is suspended, like lamps and lanterns, we certainly may depend on Rabbi Chaim haKohen [who permits a menorah that does not resemble that of the Beit haMikdash in key ways]; even Bechor Shor will admit that a menorah without a central post is invalid, and is not called a menorah. However, in my humble opinion, one should be strict regarding a menorah with a central post as the Birkei Yosef wrote, to add another branch so that there will be eight, and then it will be permitted. Granted that the words of the Chatam Sofer I cited indicate that he believed it to be rabbinic, still, he appears to be among those who were strict, following the Bechor Shor.

And I have written all of this only if the authority of his land, the honourable head of the beit din, concurs.

Wednesday is the 5th of Adar 1

In the late 1930's, in an attempt to emulate London's *Evening Standard*, a man named Nachum Kumarov started then-Palestine's first evening newspaper, *Maariv*. In Adar 1 of 1948, a few months before the State of Israel was founded, *Maariv's* editor-in-chief, Dr. Azriel Carlebach, left the paper with many of its staff journalists to form a rival paper, *Yediot Maariv*. Thus began an on-going battle for circulation. For the first twenty years of its existence, *Maariv* was the most widely read newspaper in Israel. Today, *Maariv* is second in sales after *Yediot Acharonot* and third in readership, behind *Yediot Acharonot* and *HaYom*. Its market share, as of mid-2012, was 11.9 percent.

The effort to be the most widely read paper hasn't always been civil. In the 1990's, executives at *Yediot Acharonot* and *Maariv*, were criminally charged with planting wiretaps to spy on each other. Ofer Nimrodi, publisher of *Maariv*, served four months in prison. This was not the end of the

accusations, though; Nimrodi is now being investigated for conspiracy to murder his competitors at *Yediot Acharonot* and *Haaretz*, as well as to kill a police witness.

Competition is not the only controversy the paper has faced. For many years, the Nimrodi family held a controlling stake. In 2010, when the paper was cash-strapped after six straight years of losses, they sold 50 percent of the company to Zaki Rakib. Within a year, however, it was announced that another owner, Nochi Dankner, would take control. The newspaper continued to struggle financially, and an announcement was made that printing equipment would be sold to pay salaries. After Danker tried to sell the paper and failed, workers at the paper went on strike, demanding their wages and pensions be paid in full. In November 2011, the company was sold to Shlomo Ben Zvi, its current owner. Many of the staff were let go, and the paper merged with *Makor Rishon*.

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Highlights for February 1 – February 7 / 1 Adar 1 - 7 Adar 1

Time	Speaker	Topic	Location	Special Notes
SHABBAT FEB. 1				
Rosh Chodesh				
Before minchah	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Daf Yomi	BAYT	
Before minchah	Adam Frieberg	Crockpots	Shaarei Tefillah	
After minchah	R' Mordechai Torczyner	A Kosher Grasshopper	BAYT	
SUNDAY FEB. 2				
9:15 AM	R' Shalom Krell	Kuzari	Zichron Yisroel	With light breakfast
10:00 AM to 11:20 AM	Mrs. Sara Gutentberg Mrs. Sara Frieberg	Kohen and Convert Mishkan as Redemption	Bnai Torah	For Women Only With light breakfast
8:00 PM	R' Baruch Weintraub	On-line shiur in Hebrew: http://www.torontotorah.com/online		
MONDAY FEB. 3				
8:00 PM	Adam Frieberg Josh Gutentberg R' Mordechai Torczyner	Cooking on Shabbat Parshah Medical Halachah: Shabbat	Shaarei Shomayim	Community Beit Midrash Night
8:00 PM	Rav Shlomo Gemara	Prophets of Israel	Bnai Torah	
TUESDAY FEB. 4				
12:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Living Midrash	Shaarei Shomayim	
8:45 PM	Adam Frieberg	Exploring Laws of Shabbat	Shaarei Tefillah	
WED. FEB. 5				
10:00 AM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Giants of Sephardic Jewry 5	BEBY	Dona Gracia Mendes
1:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	The Book of Yehoshua	49 Michael Ct.	For women only
8:00 PM	Adam Frieberg	Kuzari	Yeshivat Or Chaim	Community Beit Midrash Night
8:00 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	Business Ethics: Lending		
9:00 PM	R' Yehoshua Weber	Responsa: Surrogacy		
8:45 PM	Josh Gutentberg	A Changing World, Week 5	BAYT	Heter Mechirah
THU. FEB. 6				
7:30 PM	R' Mordechai Torczyner	The Book of Daniel, Week 4	Kehilat Shaarei Torah	

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