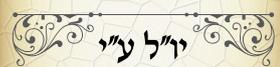


Parashas  
Terumah

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א' אדר תשפ"ה  
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קהילת שבתי בבית ד'  
בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הרה"צ  
רבי גמליאל הכהן  
רבינוביץ שליט"א

# טיב הקהילה

English edition

באנגלית

## טיב הפרשה

ערכה של עבודה דוקא כשהיא לשמה

*The value of avodah specifically when it is for the right sake*

## טיב המערכת

*You shall set up the Mishkan*

והקמת את המשכן

There is a well-known story about a woman who came to the righteous Rabbi Itzikel of Pshevorsk with a complaint: her troubles had intensified and risen above her head, and she could no longer bear them. She thought that, by mistake, she had been given too large a bundle. Therefore, she asked the Rebbe to exchange her pekele—the bundle of troubles—for another, smaller one. The righteous Rebbe did what he did, and she was brought into a room full of bundles and was asked to choose one for herself. She searched carefully and suddenly saw a small bundle in the corner of the room. She said to the tzaddik: "This is the bundle I choose!" The tzaddik answered her: "But that is your bundle!"

The Talmud Yerushalmi (Shabbos 69b) expounds on a *posuk* from our parsha: Rabbi Imi said, "And you shall erect the Mishkan according to its law—is there a law for wood? Rather, whichever plank was designated for the north shall be placed in the north, and whichever was designated for the south shall be placed in the south." That is to say, every plank in the Mishkan had a specific place where it was meant to be, and no plank stood in its position by chance; rather, everything was arranged and measured precisely. The Holy Alshich brings in our parsha the words of Chazal (Berachos 6b): "Rav Huna said, 'Whoever establishes a fixed place for his prayer, the G-d of Avraham is his help, and when he passes away, they say of him: Woe, the humble one! Woe, the pious one! A disciple of Avraham Avinu!'" The Holy Alshich explains that the HaKadosh Baruch Hu desires to cause His Shechina to dwell within the heart of every person, and in order to sanctify oneself as a dwelling place for Him, one needs purity of heart, which is dependent on the service of prayer. For through prayer, a person expresses his self-nullification and submission before HaKadosh Baruch Hu. And it may be said that because one establishes a fixed place for his prayer, he merits to be sanctified in the aspect of the Mishkan and to have the Shechina rest upon him. And where the Shechina rests—blessing is found.

Sometimes a person might think that he is in the wrong place—"I was really supposed to be somewhere else, but by mistake, I ended up here..." This could be a temporary "mistake" or even something permanent, like a place of study or work. But if even a single plank in the Mishkan did not stand randomly in its place—and certainly not by mistake—how could it be that a person, the crown of creation, is in their place by mistake? On the other hand, when a person understands that the place where they are is exactly where they are meant to be, and they "establish their place," they become worthy of the Shechina resting upon them and the abundance that comes with it.

Tiv HaTorah - Terumah

וְעָשִׂיתָ מִזְבֵּחַ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִקְשָׁה תַעֲשֶׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה יָרְכֶה וְקָנֶה לֹא (כה, לא גְבִיעֶיהָ בְּפִתְרֶיהָ וּפְרוֹחֶיהָ מִמָּנֶה יִהְיוּ: (כה, לא

**You shall make a Menorah of pure gold, beaten out shall the Menorah be made, its base, its branch, its goblets, its knobs, and its flowers shall be hammered from it. (25:31)**

Behold, the Menorah symbolizes the *light of wisdom*, as Rebbe Yitzchak states (Bava Basra 25b): "One who wishes to become wise should turn south... and your sign for this is that the Menorah was in the south." This means that through the Menorah, Israel merited wisdom and understanding. And the essence and ultimate purpose of wisdom is the knowledge and comprehension of how to serve Hashem Yisbarach. For this, one needs a deep and expansive understanding—how to fulfill this service in a manner that is entirely purified from any trace of personal interest or ulterior motive. It is possible that this is why the Menorah had to be made entirely of **pure gold**—to signify the purpose of wisdom: to purify divine service and cleanse it of any impurity or defect.

And today, when we no longer have the Menorah, a person must exert great effort to merit serving the Hashem Yisbarach with true sincerity. For we must recognize that the **true value of service lies precisely in directing it purely for the sake of Heaven**. However, since a person's soul is bound to a physical body that is entirely drawn toward its own comfort and personal benefit, it is extremely difficult to focus one's intentions solely on the service of Yisbarach. Nevertheless, a person must know that **only through this intent will they merit closeness to G-d**. One must train oneself constantly to act *for the sake of Heaven*, and through habitual practice, over time, he will eventually reach a state of true and pure intention—"for its own sake."

This obligation is also seen in *Parashas Shekalim*, which discusses the commandment to contribute **Hashem's offering** for the communal sacrifices throughout the year. The Torah commands (Shemos 30:13): **זֶה יִתְּנוּ כָל הָעֶבֶר 'עַל הַפְּקָדִים מִחֲצִית הַשֶּׁקֶל בַּשֶּׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ' - 'This shall they give—everyone who passes among the counted—half a shekel of the sacred shekel.'** This command differs from the perspective of ordinary people, who might think that

each person should give a generous contribution according to their means, as this would seemingly achieve the goal even more effectively. However, the Torah's view is that each person must give **only half a shekel**, for then one can be certain that the giving is "**in the sacred shekel**"—a donation that is truly and purely for Hashem Yisbarach.

This is why the Torah elaborates further (*posuk* 14) and states: **העשיר לא ירבה והדל לא ימעט** - **'The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less.'** One might question why this needs to be stated explicitly—since the Torah already commanded that everyone must give precisely **half a shekel**, it should be self-evident that the rich should not give more and the poor should not give less. What then is the Torah emphasizing here? It can be explained that this *posuk* provides the reasoning behind the command. There is a distinct lesson for both the wealthy and the poor in the requirement to give only half a shekel: If the **rich** were to give more, it is possible that their additional contribution would not be entirely *for the sake of Heaven*, but rather to enhance their own prestige. If the **poor** were to give less, they might feel that their contribution is insignificant and, as a result, would not attribute proper value to the mitzvah, leading them to perform it merely as an obligation rather than with sincere intent. Thus, the Torah equalized everyone's donation so that **all would direct their hearts solely toward their Father in Heaven.**

The righteous of the Lithuanian regions labored greatly to remove personal interests and ulterior motives from their service of Hashem. As testified by the holy Maggid of Mezritch regarding the holy Rebbe Shlomo of Karlin, "*This Lithuanian strives toward the ultimate point.*"

This means that through his great wisdom, he merited to direct his service **toward the absolute truth**—focusing his actions solely for the sake of Yisbarach. Indeed, his disciples, who followed in his path, also exerted immense effort in refining them-

selves in this very area.

The tzaddikim of the **holy court of Slonim**, whose spiritual roots also trace back to the holy Rebbe of Karlin, sought to illustrate what happens when a person does not **direct their intentions purely for the sake of Heaven.** They described how, after a person passes away, they will come before Hashem and **demand their reward**, claiming that in this world, they diligently studied Torah and fulfilled many mitzvos. But HaKadosh Baruch Hu will respond: "**Did you engage in Torah and divine service for My sake?! Over here, you were motivated by a desire to impress one person, and over there, you sought to gain favor in the eyes of another... If so, take your claim to them—let them be the ones to reward you!**" Upon realizing that Hashem's words are true, the person will turn to those he sought to impress. But when they present their claim, those individuals will express complete bewilderment: "**We never even thought that you were doing all this for us! It never crossed our minds to take notice of your actions at all...**"

The *Bnei Aliyah*—the few truly elevated individuals—never allowed themselves to become distracted from the pure intent of "**Lishma**" (*for the sake of Heaven*). They constantly sought to ensure that their actions were solely for Hashem and scrutinized their deeds carefully, contemplating how to remove even the slightest trace of ulterior motives. I once heard a story from someone named **Reb Mordechai**, who was close to the **holy tzaddik Rebbe Asher Freund**. Rebbe Asher felt it was important to visit Reb Mordechai's shop every morning after *davening* to strengthen and encourage him. Each day, when Rebbe Asher entered, **Reb Mordechai would immediately pull out his cigarette case from his pocket, take a cigarette for himself, and offer one to Rebbe Asher as well.** The two would then sit together, smoking their cigarettes, while discussing matters where they needed *chizuk*.

One day, Rebbe Asher appeared as

usual. As every day, Reb Mordechai extended the cigarette case towards him, but to his surprise, Rebbe Asher **refused to take a cigarette.** When Reb Mordechai asked him what had changed, Rebbe Asher replied: "**I did an accounting of my soul, and I came to the conclusion that there is an aspect of my daily visits to your shop to strengthen and encourage you that is motivated by the small pleasure I get from the cigarette I smoke at this time. In order to remove this subtle personal interest, I have decided that from today onward, I will no longer smoke. By doing so, this slight trace of ulterior motive will be eliminated, and my intention will be solely for the sake of Heaven...**"

My father, too, was diligent in directing his intentions to fulfill each mitzvah *for its own sake* (*Lishma*). Whenever boys or yeshiva students came to ask for his bracha, he would bless them to merit learning **Torah Lishma**. He also often guided the young ones to focus on performing all their actions solely for the sake of Heaven. I remember once accompanying him to a wedding. After being honored with dancing with the *chosson*, the *chosson* asked him to give a bracha. My father did indeed bless him, but not in the typical manner, where the blessing connects to the wedding, wishing a "**building for eternity.**" Instead, my father's blessing was: "**May you merit to perform all your actions for the sake of Heaven,**" explaining that even the building of a home should be done with the intent of doing it for the sake of Heaven.

I witnessed this same practice with **Rebbe Zundel Kroizer**. He used to visit my home every day, where we set up a daily learning session (*chavrusa*). Occasionally, when he noticed I was doing something that involved a mitzvah, he would encourage me to focus my intention on doing it for the sake of the mitzvah itself. These righteous individuals lived with constant self-awareness, always striving to remove any traces of personal interest and to act **only for the sake of Hashem Yisbarach.**

‘והיה מחניך קדוש’ – ‘And your camp shall be holy’

A group of young men from a yeshiva for those strengthening their faith came to hear a *sichah* from me. I did not know what topic would be best to speak about. Even the staff couldn't pinpoint a specific issue that needed strengthening for the students. As I was thinking and asking HaKadosh Baruch Hu to grant me the right words and the proper topic to speak about, I noticed that the microphone wasn't working. Speaking without a microphone in front of dozens of students would be difficult both for the speaker and the listeners. I walked around to check which wires of the sound system had disconnected. To reach the system, I had to take a detour, and right there, exactly in the area where the connections were, I saw a young man sitting—completely absorbed in the screen of his phone, with headphones tightly covering his ears...

I turned to the young man, who was shocked to see me standing before him, and asked, “**Why aren't you coming in to hear my *drasha*?**” He apologized, turned off his device, and entered for the *sichah*.

At that moment, I understood why the microphone hadn't worked! It was so that I would find this *nes-hama* and realize what topic the students needed strengthening in.

Naturally, the lecture centered around the topic of cell phones and the spiritual and physical damage they cause—to young men, older boys, and anyone, no matter who they are. **No one is safe from an unfiltered and non-kosher phone.**

The students were captivated, and by the end of the lecture, every single one of them, without exception, committed to purchasing a kosher phone. Those who already had non-kosher devices immediately disabled them, rendering them unusable, and left the broken phones with me as a lasting testimony.

The students all admitted that they truly felt that **the unfiltered phone had ruined their lives!!!**

I reflected and saw how much HaKadosh Baruch Hu speaks to us. Normally, I do not deal much with speakers and sound systems, as it is not one of my greatest talents. The person who usually handles these things had stepped out for just a few minutes, leaving me with no choice but to check what the issue was myself. It turned out that the young man, who had been using his phone, needed to charge it and had unplugged the speaker to charge his device—causing the microphone to stop working. **Everything was orchestrated by Hashem to save these souls from ruin!!!**

Moreinu HaRav shlita

*This week's Tiv Hakehillah is dedicated in honor of the yahrtzeit of our teacher, the holy gaon Rav Levi Hakohen Rabinovitch, zt"l, son of the esteemed Rav Gamliel, zt"l, who served as Rosh Yeshivah of Kishinev. Rav Levi, zt"l, was the author of the Maadanei HaShulchan series on Shulchan Aruch and the father and rav muvhak of our revered teacher, shlita. Rav Levi was a remnant of the generation of wisdom, one of the great halachic authorities, and a senior member of the elder chachamim of Yerushalayim, who was known for his refined middos and upright ways. He passed away on Shabbos, the second of Adar, 5775.*

Let us open a small window to illuminate our eyes and revive our souls with the wondrous and pleasant light of this great and righteous man. He was a man of impeccable conduct, humility, and modesty, beloved by both Hashem and man. Together, let us stroll through his delightful garden to wander among the orchards and gather roses—a small bundle of the good deeds our teacher, *shlit"l*, recounted over the years about his father. We have collected here but a drop from the sea—each piece gathered from the immense treasure that could fill a large volume, gleaned from the rich reservoir of his teachings, stories, and numerous works.

May it be the will of our Father in Heaven that we merit to attach ourselves to his holy, upright, and straightforward ways that are pleasant and gladden the hearts of both Hashem and man. As your eyes behold a small glimpse of his righteous path, may we awaken his great *zechus*, along with the *zechus* of his Torah and countless acts of righteousness performed in the holy city of Yerushalayim in general and within our sacred *kehillah*.

May he be a heavenly advocate for Yisrael and us, bringing about our *Geulah Sheleimah* swiftly and eternally, with kindness and mercy. Amen, so may be His will.

#### Revering Earlier Generations

A diligent *talmid chacham* once brought before my father and teacher, a *sefer* with *chiddushim* on Yoreh De'ah. He asked my father to examine the *sefer* and share his esteemed opinion.

My father leafed through its pages. Suddenly, he noticed that the author concluded a discussion by saying, “And all this is contrary to the opinion of the Shach.” Immediately, he recoiled, closing the *sefer* with a sense of alarm. He could not bear to look at it further. His heart and spirit were deeply shaken. How could a contemporary *talmid chacham* dare to dismiss and contradict the words of the Shach, one of the pillars of halachah upon whom the Jewish world has relied for generations? If he could not comprehend the Shach, he should have expressed himself with humility and reverence, admitting that he could not yet grasp their meaning rather than outright rejecting them with such audacity.

**When a grandchild later visited my father, he instructed him to remove the *sefer* from the house immediately, declaring that he could not keep such a *sefer* under his roof.**

Interestingly, the Shach himself exemplifies humility in his writings. In Choshen Mishpat (88:16), he states:

“Even though I could not find this statement in the Yerushalmi

available to me, they (the earlier Sages) are more knowledgeable than I, and it seems correct to rely on them.”

### **Do Not Leave the Sanctity of Eretz Yisrael**

Many decades ago, after the establishment of the city of Eilat at the southern tip of Israel, people flocked to visit, marveling at its beauty, the Gulf of Akaba, and the newly built port. I recall that my sisters once expressed interest in traveling there. However, when they brought up the idea with our father, he said:

“You should know that certain areas around Eilat are not part of Eretz Yisrael. By traveling there, you will leave the Holy Land’s sanctity. Thus, it involves the prohibition of leaving Yisrael for no justifiable reason. Why place yourselves in the impurity of lands outside the Holy Land?

“The only legitimate reason for traveling there would be *to extract precious from the worthless* (see *Yirmeyahu* 16:19)—to bring a fellow Jew back to repentance and save them from spiritual ruin. If your journey to Eilat could lead to bringing a Jewish soul closer to Hashem, then it would be permissible.” After hearing this, my sisters immediately abandoned their plans and instead chose to visit places in Israel imbued with holiness.

### **A Lesson in the Fear of Heaven**

One of my father’s *talmidim*, who had studied under him as a child when he taught as a *rebbe* at the Torah Veyirah Talmud Torah in Meah Shearim, shared the following story:

One day, my father arrived at the classroom with his hand heavily bandaged and his arm wrapped in white gauze. The children, noticing their beloved teacher’s injured arm, were filled with compassion and concern, surrounding him with a flurry of questions:

“What happened, *rebbe*? Why is your hand bandaged?”

Seeing their sincere curiosity and care, my father saw an opportunity to instill in their tender hearts a lesson in fear of Heaven. He asked them to take their seats, promising to tell them the story behind his bandaged arm.

The children quickly sat, their ears attuned, eager to understand what had happened and how much pain their teacher was enduring.

My father began his tale:

“Beloved *talmidim*, beneath these bandages lies a severe burn. I was scalded by boiling water—may such things never happen to you! The pain from such a burn is excruciating—like being engulfed in flames.

He described the incident vividly: a kettle of boiling water had overflowed unexpectedly, spilling its scalding contents directly onto his arm. He shared the unbearable heat and the intense, searing pain he endured, likening it to being burned by fire.

After detailing the physical agony, he shifted to a profound message:

“Dear children, listen to what I have to say! The terrible pain of this burn is nothing compared to the torment of the fires of *Gehinnom*. Those flames are immeasurably hotter and more agonizing. For every sin a person commits in this world, he is judged in *Gehinnom*, where the punishment is beyond comprehension. While the pain we feel from earthly fire is intense, the suffering in *Gehinnom* is infinitely greater, as described by *Chazal*.

He cited the words of the Ramban *zt”l*, in Shaar HaGemul (Introduction to *Sefer Iyov*), which state that a single hour in *Gehinnom* is far worse than all the intense suffering experienced by Iyov for over seventy years. Iyov’s unparalleled suffering lasted only twelve months, while the fire of *Gehinnom* is sixty times more severe than any earthly flame, even in its first level—and the higher levels are exponentially more dreadful.

Using his bandaged hand as a visual example, my father emphasized the seriousness of sin and the importance of fearing Heaven. His *talmidim* later testified that they could never forget this powerful lesson, vividly impressed upon them through their teacher’s heartfelt words and actions.

### **The Most Painful Hours of His Life**

The exceptional diligence and dedication of my late father *zt”l*, to Torah study are well known. Every minute of his day was devoted to learning, even during brief interludes, such as the singing of *piyutim* in *shul* on Shabbos.

I recall one Shabbos when he accidentally locked himself in the bathroom. The latch jammed, and no one could open the door. Despite numerous attempts, it took nearly two hours for a non-Jewish repairman to arrive and release him.

When he emerged, my father was visibly shaken and remarked that those two hours were some of the most painful of his life—not because of physical discomfort but because he had to prevent himself from thinking about Torah during that time. This story, alongside his other teachings, underscores his profound reverence for Torah and meticulous observance of every detail of Jewish law and life.

According to his approach, I reinterpreted

the phrase in the *tefillah*: “Grant us our portion in Your Torah.” This can be translated to mean, “Make your Torah our portion.” The Torah should truly be our portion, belonging to us and intrinsic to us as if it were a part of our very being. We should not be like mere “workers” who must come in to perform duties for the householder. Rather, the Torah should be truly ours, an essential part of who we are, because it is our life and the length of our days, the flesh of our flesh and bone of our bones, such that we cannot exist without it.

### **Calling on Hashem First**

A wonderful practice I observed and learned in the home of my righteous father, *zt”l*, was this: When a child was unwell—may such troubles not befall us—he would first withdraw to a quiet corner and sit alone with a *Sefer Tehillim* in hand, pouring out his heart for an extended time in prayer. He cried with tears and supplications before Hashem.

Only after he felt he had expressed all in his heart and poured out his soul to his Creator would he emerge, composed and calm, to plan what action was necessary, such as taking the child to a doctor or some other step.

This was his consistent approach to life’s problems, challenges, and trials. Before taking action, he would dedicate much time to deep and heartfelt prayer, connecting to the *Shechinah*, and unloading all his distress, pain, and burden. The outpouring of prayer came from the depths of his heart, like a child pleading before a parent. Only after such prayer did he consider how to invest his energy into practical steps.

This approach aligns with the sharp insight of the holy Rav Nossan David of Shidlovtsa, *zt”l*, on the *pesukim* of *Malchuyos* we recite on Rosh Hashanah (*Yeshayahu* 44:6), מִה אָמַר ה' מִלֵּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְגִבּוֹר הוּא יִבְרָא וְאֵינִי רֹאשׁוֹן וְאֵינִי אֶחָדוֹן וְיִמְבֹלְעֵנִי אֵין אֱלֹקִים - *Thus said Hashem, King of Yisrael and His Redeemer; Hashem of Hosts: I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides Me, there is no God.*

Rav Nossan David explained: “Some people turn their eyes to Heaven and pray to Hashem for help from the start. This is *I am the First*—to seek Divine assistance before human effort.

“Others, however, do not first focus on praying to Hashem but rely on their own actions. Only after seeing that their efforts do not succeed do they raise their eyes to Heaven and cry to Hashem for help in their distress. This is *I am the Last*—seeking Divine aid after human endeavor.”

“Either way, *besides Me, there is no God*. In the end, there is no other power in the world. Eventually, everyone turns to Hashem—some at the beginning and some at the end.

But the righteous, who are closely attached to the *Shechinah* and connected with unwavering faith in Hashem at all times, know and remember from the very start to lay their requests and prayers before Him, for there is none other besides Him, and no one but Him!