

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

PARSHAT TERUMAH

The Incredible Potential Hidden In Our Struggles

In this week's Parsha, Teruma, Hashem commanded Moshe to accept the donations that the Jewish people would bring for the construction of the Mishkan, and He listed thirteen (or fifteen) physical items that they could bring for the Mishkan: "Gold, silver, and copper..." And He continues, "They should make Me a Mikdash (a Temple), and I will dwell within them." This is a guarantee that if they will build it, He will come and dwell in the Mishkan.

Hashem is not bound to the boundaries of time and space - He is above time and space - but here He says that He will rest His presence in a physical space, a Mikdash, which is precise in its measurements. This is not only referring to the Temple that stood in Jerusalem on the Temple Mount which was stationary, but to the Mishkan that traveled with the Jewish people all over, and wherever they settled, Hashem's presence came to rest in the Mishkan.

Hashem is not bound by space; He is everywhere, as it says, "I fill the heavens and the earth." Why did Hashem say to make a particular place for His presence to rest?

I FEEL THAT THE MORE DIFFICULTIES ONE FACES AND THE DARKER THINGS SEEM, THE MORE YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH.

Mishkan and the Temple? Hashem said, "In every place that I will (allow the) mention of My name, I will come to you and bless you." Only where He allows, i.e. the Mishkan and the Temple.

The main service in the Mishkan and the Temple, physically and even spiritually, was offering sacrifices. The physical sacrifices were actual animals that were offered on the altar. The spiritual sacrifice nowadays is our prayers, as the Talmud tells us that the prayers "were established in the place of the daily sacrifices."

Both the physical and spiritual sacrifices are connected to the Mishkan and the Temple. The rule was that "Once the

Mishkan was erected, they weren't allowed to use personal altars," they were only allowed to offer their sacrifices at the Mishkan. And the same rule applied "when they came to Yerushalayim," where the Temple was built. And when we say our prayers, we face towards the Temple, "the gateway to heaven," where all our prayers ascend on high.

I understand why physical sacrifices had to be brought in the physical Temple, but prayers are a spiritual thing, why do they have to be connected to a physical place? The main thing is that we bring ourselves close to Hashem through our prayers. That is the meaning of the word korban, which we usually translate as sacrifice, it is from the word karov, which means close, to bring yourself closer to Hashem. Prayer is the service of the heart, it is totally spiritual. Even though we have to say our prayers with our lips, that helps us awaken the feelings in our hearts. However, the main thing is that we connect spiritually with Hashem. If that is the case, why do our prayers have to be connected to a physical place, the Temple?

To understand this, let's take a look at a rule in spirituality, "Anything that is higher (spiritually) falls to a lower place (physically)."

When Hashem says, "I will dwell within them," He is saying that His essence - which is higher than any physical limitations and even higher than the idea of no limitations (the infinite, which comes with its own set of limitations), wants to dwell in the physical world. Since He is higher than anything, He is revealed in the lowest, in measured physical places and objects, namely the Mishkan, the Temple, and their holy vessels.

He is above any limitations and above the idea of no limitations. Therefore, He can bring infinite and finite together. In other words, where is the essence of Hashem revealed? Where infinite and finite come together. He is the enigma of all enigmas.

And where did infinite and finite come together? In the Mishkan and Temple. In both the Mishkan and the Temple, there was a chamber called the Holy of Holies, and while the room could be measured, and the holy vessel that was there, the Ark of the Covenant, could be measured, it didn't take up any space. If you were to measure the space between the Ark and the walls of the Holy of Holies, you would end up with the exact total measurement of the whole chamber. In the Mishkan, 10 cubits by 10 cubits, and in the Temple, 20 cubits by 20 cubits. That means it took



space, and at the same time, it didn't take space, infinite and finite together, the enigma of enigmas in the physical.

That is why our prayers are connected to a physical place because it is through the physical that we encounter Hashem's essence.

In Torah, the world is divided into four kingdoms. The lowest is domem, inanimate things, like stones, earth, and water. Higher than that is tzomeach, vegetation, things that grow, like grass, plants, and trees. Then there is chai, living things, like animals, birds, and fish. And finally, there is medaber, people that have conversation.

The Mishkan was made mostly of tzomeach, vegetation, and chai, animals, like the wooden panels and the coverings and curtains, which were made of wool, linen, and animal skins. There was also domem, inanimate, but it wasn't the main part of the construct of the Mishkan.

The Temple was built of stone, domem, inanimate.

When we had the Mishkan, we were only able to reach the levels of G-dliness that were hidden in tzomeach and chai. When we built the Temple, we were able to reach the levels that were hidden in domem also.

Now that we are in exile, and we don't have our Temple, we are able to reach even lower and draw G-dliness into the lowest physical places and objects. The Temple was a place of open G-dliness, as they witnessed ten miracles there daily. Yes, it was made of the inanimate, but it was the holiest inanimate ever. We now have the lowest and darkest world, and it continuously gets darker and darker. We have the ability to draw G-dliness into the lowest possible levels; that is where Hashem wants to be, and that is where the deepest levels of His essence can be found.

Why are we able to draw and reveal Hashem's deepest essence? Because we each are a small Temple. That is the meaning of the verse, "They should make Me a Mikdash (a Temple), and I will dwell within them." Why does it say "within them" when it should say within it? Our sages tell us that it means "within each and every one" of us. Hashem wants to dwell in us. We are also the enigma of enigmas; we have a body that is the most physical, and at the same time, we have a neshama that is truly a part of Hashem.

How do we draw G-dliness into the lowest possible levels? Learning Torah and doing mitzvahs only affect the physical that is connected to our Torah study and our performance of mitzvahs. If we want to affect the lowest levels, we have to take the most mundane physical parts of our lives and make them holy too. We have to "acknowledge Him in all our ways," similar to Shabbos when even eating and sleeping are holy.

I feel that the more difficulties one faces and the darker things seem, the more you can accomplish in the world drawing Hashem's essence into the lowest place - simply because you are in a lower place. So the lower you stand and the more difficulties you face, the more you are in a position to draw G-dliness into the world and do Hashem's deepest desire, "to make Him a home in the lowest realm."

This doesn't mean that you should want to struggle, that

would be silly. But if you are already there, know that you are in a position to accomplish amazing things.

This idea keeps me positive, so much has been taken away from me, but I see the opportunity found in my struggle. I see the great light in the darkness, to lift others up with my heart, my smile, and my writing. I also see what my amazing wife Dina has done with the tremendous struggles that she has been dealt. A sick husband, who can't do husband things and fatherly things for our children. So much has fallen on her shoulders, and on top of that, she makes sure that I am taken care of. But from her difficulties and darkness, she has managed to lift the spirit of tens of thousands, with her talks and blog posts. That is truly amazing and I am inspired by her. I don't even know if she knows how incredible she is.

May we use the potential in the situation that we are dealt. It will surely make this world into a home for Hashem, and no more will we suffer because Moshiach will be here. The time has come.

This is dedicated to my wife Dina; I am truly grateful for her, and I am blessed to be her husband. She is medicine for the world.

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Mazel tov to Eli Chaim and Chava to getting engaged. We are so proud of you and Chava. You are a perfect couple.

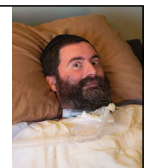
"Dear Rabbi Yitzi

I recently read an article of yours that was shared by Chabad which drew me into following. My mom was diagnosed with ALS about 6 months ago, and so finding others, especially in the Jewish community, to connect to is really important to us."

- Anonymous, New York

RABBI YITZI WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO:
(937) 770-4802 | TORAHFROMMYEYES@GMAIL.COM

Despite facing one of life's most difficult challenges, Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz continues to spread joy and faith to thousands around the globe. Diagnosed in 2012 with ALS, Rabbi Yitzi is now 95% paralyzed and no longer able to speak or breath on his own. Thanks to the miracle of technology, Rabbi Yitzi continues to spread his wisdom through his eyes, focusing on each and every letter of these Torah articles. Rabbi Yitzi, his wife Dina and their seven children are the Rebbe's Shluchim to Temecula, California.



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