

Torah Weekly

ת"ב

February 19 - 25, 2023
28 Shevat - 4 Adar, 5783

Torah Reading:
Exodus 25:1 - 27:19
Haftarah: Kings 1 5:26 - 6:13

PARSHAT TERUMAH

Calendars

We have Jewish Calendars. If you would like one, please send us a letter and we will send you one, or ask the Rabbi/Chaplain to contact us.

Family Programs

Do you have family on the outside struggling? Please contact or have them contact our office to learn more about our family programs. You and they are not alone, we are here to help.

Grape Juice & Matzah

We offer free Grape Juice and Matzah for you to be able to make the blessings every Shabbos. Please have your chaplain / Rabbi contact us to enroll (available to all prisons).

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No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

The Structure of the Soul

The second half of the book of Exodus presents a dramatic shift from the first half of the book. Until this point, G-d was the active member in the relationship with the Jewish people. [G-d](#) brought the Ten Plagues, liberated the Jews from Egypt, split the sea, spoke the Ten Commandments and dictated Jewish civil law, while the Jews were passive recipients of all that G-d was doing. Finally, in the second half of the book, the Jewish people were called upon to take the initiative and build a home for G-d.

The sages teach that the commandment to construct a home for G-d includes the directive to construct a figurative home for G-d within every person. From this perspective, the detailed descriptions of the Temple and its furniture, which comprise almost five portions in the Torah, have a spiritual equivalence within ourselves.

The Sanctuary was built of three components. The walls were made of ten-cubit-tall wooden beams, the beams were supported by silver sockets, and the roof was composed of coverings made of wool and animal skins. To build the figurative Temple within ourselves, we need to find the beams, coverings and sockets within our soul and dedicate them to the service of G-d.

The Kabbalists explain that the ten-cubit beams represent the ten faculties, three intellectual and seven emotional, within every human soul.

The foundation of the entire structure was the silver sockets into which the beams were inserted. The spiritual equivalent of the sockets, the foundation of the soul's structure, is the capacity to be committed and devoted to someone or

something.

The curtains that served as the roof of the Tabernacle, covering the entire structure, represent a person's will and capacity for pleasure, referred to by the Kabbalists as the "encompassing powers of the soul." Will and pleasure affect and inspire all of the faculties. The sages teach us that "a person should always study where his heart desires," because the encompassing power of will triggers and awakens the specific power of understanding.

Understanding that the Temple is a symbol for the human soul explains the commandment that the Jewish people donate the materials necessary to construct the Sanctuary. In this week's Parshah, the [Torah](#) tells us that each individual donated both to the construction of the walls and to the covering of the Sanctuary in the amount they chose, according to their heart's desire:

The L-rd spoke to Moses saying: "Speak to the children of Israel, and have them take for Me an offering; from every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My offering."

Yet there was another form of donation, specifically designated for the silver sockets, where everybody was required to donate an equal amount:

This they shall give, everyone who goes through the counting: half a shekel. . . . The rich shall give no more, and the poor shall give no less than half a shekel.

There were two forms of donations, one with an equal, set amount for each person to donate, and another that was open-ended, each person donating according to his heart's desire. There are aspects where all are equal, and other aspects where each person is unique and has a distinctive contribution to make. When it comes to the specific faculties of the soul—intelligence, emotion, wisdom,

kindness, willpower—each of us is unique. Thus the contribution to create the structure is individualized. Yet the foundation of the structure, the foundation of the relationship with G-d, the power of devotion and commitment, is the same for everyone. We all are equal in our capacity to devote ourselves to G-d, yet the nature of our devotion and relationship is based on our own specific personality and is therefore unique to each individual.

By Rabbi Menachem Feldman

Go Ahead: Fake It till You Make It

Want a quick trick to become happy? Try smiling.

In the late 1980s, researchers had subjects hold pencils in their mouths in various ways to mimic smiles or frowns. They discovered that by flexing facial muscles, even without knowing why, their subjects' emotional reactions changed. Those who smiled rated things much more positively than those who frowned. Additional tests gave similar results.

The researchers concluded that though moods are accompanied by changes in the body, it works the other way as well. Make a seemingly insignificant change to your body—like flexing those smiling muscles—and your brain will notice and react accordingly.

So, "fake it till you make it" seems to have some merit.

Interestingly, we find a connection to this concept in this week's Torah portion, when we are commanded to make the ark out of wood and cover it with gold.

They shall make an ark of acacia wood . . . and you shall overlay [the ark] with pure gold,

inside and outside (Exodus 25:10–11)

boxes that were tucked into each

The ark was made out of three other. The larger, visible box was made from pure gold. Inside was placed a box of acacia wood, inside of which was placed the smallest box, also made out of gold. The tablets with the Ten Commandments were kept in this innermost box.

Like the boxes of the ark, we too are made up of layers. On the inside we are made from “pure gold,” a G-dly soul that is untainted and holy, and wants only to do what’s right and good. The next layer is our conscious self—our temperament, moods and feelings. This part of us isn’t always so pure or shiny. And finally, there is the outer box, the part of ourselves that we allow the world to see through our actions.

We might feel hypocritical to put on a golden face to the world when inside we’re feeling the opposite. Should I act outwardly giving, kind and empathetic when I’m feeling rather “wooden”? Should I present a façade of calmness when I really want to lash out in disparaging anger? Why act in a way that contradicts my true feelings?

But the construction of the ark teaches us that we can improve our feelings through our actions. It’s all right to have some “wooden” moments but outwardly act “golden.” Actions create internal change. Act the part, and you become it.

So go ahead and smile, and watch yourself become happier. Give those coins to charity, and witness your mood become more giving and forgiving. Act calmly, and your anger will begin to dissipate.

Because in truth, you aren’t really acting. Deep down, your inner self is pure gold.

By Chana Weisberg

What is Prayer?

“Love G-d and serve Him with all your heart.” Deuteronomy 11:13.

What is a service that is performed within the heart? This could only be speaking of prayer. Talmud Taanit 2a.

Prayer means that when your heart bursts with pain, pour it out to Him.

When it yearns, speak to Him about your yearnings.

When your heart is broken, ask Him to mend it.

When your heart feels empty, ask Him to fill it.

Wherever your heart is at, whatever it is being, connect that to His Being.

Make your heart His sanctuary, the place where you find Him.

Sunday, February 19, 2023 --- 28 Shevat, 5783

Hasmonean Holiday (2nd century BCE)

On Shevat 28 (134 BCE?), Antiochus V abandoned his siege of Jerusalem and his plans for the city's destruction. This day was observed as a holiday in Hasmonean times. (Talmud: Megilat Taanit)

Monday, February 20, 2023 --- 29 Shevat, 5783

Columbia Tragedy; Israeli Astronaut Perishes (2003)

On the morning of February 1, 2003, the Columbia Space Shuttle, returning from its STS-107 mission, was destroyed upon re-entry, 16 minutes before its scheduled landing. All its crew members perished, including Ilan Ramon, a combat pilot in the Israeli Air Force, who was the first Israeli astronaut. Prior to his departing to space on Space Shuttle Columbia, where his mission included the manning of a multispectral camera for recording desert aerosols, he arranged to take kosher food as well as a Kiddush cup, a Torah Scroll, and a dollar from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, of righteous memory.

Wednesday, February 22, 2023 --- 1 Adar, 5783

Ezekiel Foretells Egypt's Downfall (421 BCE)

On this date, in the year following the [Holy Temple's](#) destruction, G-d tells [Ezekiel](#) to take up a lamentation for Pharaoh, king of Egypt, foretelling his downfall in the hands of the Babylonians.

Passing of Ibn Ezra (1164)

The highly regarded Biblical commentator, Rabbi Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra (1089?-1164CE), passed away on Adar 1, 4924.

Passing of Shach (circa 1663)

Adar 1 is also the yahrtzeit (anniversary of the passing) of the great Halachist Rabbi Shabtai Hakohen Katz (1621-1663?), author of the *Sifte Cohen* commentary on Rabbi Yosef Caro's Code of Jewish Law. He is known as "Shach" -- an acronym of the name of his work, which serves to this day as a primary source of Halachah (Jewish law).

Tosfot Yomtov Appointed Rabbi of Krakow (1644)

The first of Adar (I) is celebrated by the descendants of Rabbi Yomtov Lipman Heller (1579-1654) as a day of thanksgiving, for his liberation and restoration after his imprisonment in Vienna in 1629.

Rabbi Yomtov Lipman was one of the important rabbinical figures of the early 17th century. Known as the "Tosfos Yomtov" after his commentary on the Mishnah by that name, he also authored important commentaries on the Rosh and other rabbinical works. A disciple of the famed Maharal of Prague, Rabbi Yomtov Lipman was appointed, at the tender age of 18, to serve as a dayan (rabbinical judge) in that city. He subsequently filled a number of prestigious rabbinical positions, including rabbi of Nikolsburg and of Vienna. In 1627 he was recalled to Prague to serve as the city's chief rabbi.

That position earned him powerful enemies when he refused to follow the dictates of Prague's rich and influential citizens and strove to relieve the burden imposed on the poor by the suffocating "crown taxes" imposed on the Jews. His enemies informed on him to the government, falsely accusing him of treason. In 1629, Rabbi Yomtov Lipman was arrested, tried and sentenced to death. The Jewish communities of Bohemia succeeded in having the sentence commuted and reduced to a heavy fine, and raised the funds for the payment of the first installment that secured his release. However, his enemies obtained an imperial decision that he could not officiate as rabbi in any town of the empire, leaving him homeless and destitute. It took many years for him to pay off the balance of the fine and be restored to his former position. It was only in the winter of 1644, when he settled in Krakow after being appointed chief rabbi of the city, that he felt that he could celebrate his release and restoration. Rosh Chodesh Adar (I)--the day that Rabbi Yomtov Lipman assumed the rabbinate of Krakow--was celebrated by him and his family as a day of thanksgiving to G-d. Rabbi Yomtov Lipman asked that future generations continue to mark the date, and the custom is upheld by his descendants to this day.

Thursday, February 23, 2023 --- 2 Adar, 5783

Passing of R. Yomtov Algazi (1802)

R. Yomtov Algazi was the chief rabbi of [Jerusalem](#) from 1773 until his death. During a journey to Europe to raise money for the Jewish community in Israel, he discovered a manuscript of a work of [Nachmanides](#): a compilation of the laws of the firstborn and the [separation of challah](#), styled after [R. Yitzchak Alfasi's](#) codex of Jewish law. R. Yomtov undertook to publish the manuscript, accompanied by a lengthy commentary he authored, which brought him worldwide fame as a brilliant Torah scholar.

Friday, February 24, 2023 --- 3 Adar, 5783

Passing of R. Mordechai Jaffe (the Levush) (1612)

R. Mordechai Jaffe served as the rabbi of numerous communities in Poland and Lithuania. Among his more well-known works are *Levush Malchus*, a halachic code following the order of R. Jacob ben Asher's *Arbaah Turim*, and *Levush HaOrah*, a super-commentary to R. Shlomo Yitzchaki's Torah commentary. R. Mordechai served as the head of the "Council of Four Lands," the government-sanctioned Jewish organization entrusted with dealing with Jewish communal affairs. In addition to Talmud and Jewish law, R. Mordechai was also well-versed in both Kabbalah and astronomy.