



Sha'arei Eliyahu

Table Talk

פרשת תרומה

Take for Me Teruma [offering]

This week's parasha begins ויקחורלי תרומה take for Me Teruma [offering]. Rashi tells us that לי means לשמי [for My name]. The sefer Igra D'Kalla asks why does the pasuk say **take** instead of saying **give**? One normally **gives** an offering to ה', one doesn't **take** one for ה'. In Ta'anit page 9a it says in regards to the Mitzvah of Tzedaka [Ma'aser] עשר תעשר *A tithe shall you tithe [te'aser]* (Devarim 14:22). The Gemara continues and explains this to mean: עשר בשביל *Take a tithe [asser] so that you will become wealthy [titasher], in the merit of the mitzvah.* The Gemara there goes on to say that there is no other mitzvah in the Torah where one can come and test ה' by saying if I do mitzvah

SHABBAT SCHEDULE

Mincha	5:25 PM
Candle Lighting	5:31 PM
Shiur Shabbat	8:45 PM
Shacharit	8:30 AM
Shabbat Derasha	4:00 PM
Mincha	5:00 PM
SUNSET	5:50 PM
Aravit (Shabbat Ends)	6:31 PM
Rabbenu Tam	7:03 PM

SHORT & SWEET

“**וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשִׁכְנָתִי בְתוֹכְכֶם**” – *And they shall make Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst*. Rabbi Aharon Walkin once said that The Mishkan was built as a result of the Sin of the Golden Calf. Before the sin, the Shechina dwelled in each individual. But after the sin we tainted ourselves so we needed to build the Mishkan & Beit Hamikdash (B"H). The B"H was known to have such open Miracles that a person who started bringing a קורבן unwillingly would end up doing the קורבן willingly by the time he got through the process. The B"H & Mishkan served as a vessel to bring the Shechina to once again dwell within the individual. How was this possible? Our Hachamim say that in the month of Adar we must increase our שמחה (joy), When a person is happy he becomes a dwelling place for the Shechina. The Shechina can only be in a place of שמחה, which is an emotion that takes root in the נשמה (soul). If the נשמה is happy then G-d can dwell in that person. And how does a נשמה find happiness? Through torah and spirituality. By learning Torah we allow the Shechina to dwell in our midst.

~ Anonymous

1. Why did ה' create gold?
2. On which place was ה'’s Shechina (Devine Presence) centered in the Mishkan?
3. Why did the Aron Kodesh have gold both outside and inside it?

X [any of the 620 mitzvot] then please provide for me Y [anything that I may wish for]. But in regards to the Mitzva of Ma'aser, the Gemara continues, it is stated: *“Bring the whole tithe into the storeroom, that there may be food in My house, and test Me now by this, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing that there shall be more than sufficiency”* (Malachi 3:10).

Meaning that if one is to give Ma'aser ה' “dares” him to test ה' saying see if I will not bestow blessings beyond belief to you. This explains why the pasuk says the word take instead of give. Because by giving one activates his Mazal to receive and **take** what ה' promises in Malachi. The Kedushat Levi adds by saying that anyone who gives Tzedaka to a poor person with **happiness**, then ה' gives back to the giver 1000 times more.

Now that we know all this Tiferet Moshe explains the depth of Rashi's words when he says לי means לשמי [for My name]. He explains that in effect ה' is saying “Come and recognize My strength with the Mitzvah that you are doing. Through Tzedaka you will know My Name, My Might and My Strength.” Rashi's words explain that when one gives Tzedaka he will know My Name and My promise.

Sefer Tanna Divey Eliyahu Chapter 17 says that when the Jews were given the Torah they said **וַעֲשֵׂה וְנִשְׁמָע** - *we will do and we will hear*. Why is it that they said this? The desire to receive the Torah was so great that the Jewish People waited 40 days while משה went to get it. They longed for it so much that when ה' came to them with the Torah they said **וַעֲשֵׂה וְנִשְׁמָע**.

The Ba'al Haturim says Teruma is made of the letters מ. & תורה. Since the Jewish People showed such love for the Torah ה' said you accepted the Torah with such love and desire. Now you can **take** תרומה and build Me a Mishkan.

~ R' Yosef Akilov



1. Hashem created gold only because it was going to be used in the Mishkan and Batei Hamikdash! (Shemot Rabbba 35:1)
 2. Hashem centered His infinite Presence on the small space of an amah by an amah above the Aron Kodesh. His Shechina is also in the place where Torah law is being studied intensely! (Shemot Rabbba 34:1, Gemara Berachot 8a)
 3. The gold on all sides of the Aron teaches us the proper way of life, to which those who study Torah must adhere. Just as the Aron Kodesh is beautiful within and without, the Torah scholar's inner character must be consistent with his public appearance. One must fear G-d in public and in private. (Yoma 72b, Bamidbar Rabbba 4:12)

The Fast of Esther This Year (5777)

In the days of Mordechai and Esther, the Jewish people gathered together on the 13th of Adar to defend themselves against their hateful enemies and they were in need of great mercy from Heaven in order not to be harmed by them. Thus, they stood in prayer, supplication, and fasting on that day just as their forefather, Moshe Rabbenu, did on the day that Israel battled Amalek when he stood in prayer and fasting, and the Jewish nation was victorious. Hashem, blessed be He, G-d of our forefathers, heard their cries and graciously accepted their fasting and repentance, and on the same day the enemies of the Jewish people thought to gain control over the Jewish people, a switch occurred and the Jewish nation indeed gained control over their enemies and the Jews killed 75,000 of their enemies besides for the enemies killed in the Persian capital of Shushan. Not one Jew fell, for this war was not waged with might and power; rather, it was fought with the guidance of the spirit of Hashem. Therefore, the Jewish people customarily fast on this day every year to commemorate the miracle that was performed for them. This fast is called "The Fast of Esther."

This year, 5777, the day of the Fast of Esther coincides with this coming Shabbat. We therefore move this fast to the Thursday before (and not on Friday so as not to disrupt Shabbat preparations). Purim will be celebrated on Sunday throughout the world, and walled-cities, such as the holy city of Jerusalem, celebrate Purim on Monday.

Pregnant and nursing women are exempt from the Fast of Esther for if they are even exempt from the four fasts stated explicitly in the verse in Zecharia (8, 19) with the exclusion of Tisha B'Av, they are certainly exempt from the Fast of Esther. The Rama (Rabbenu Moshe Isserlish) also writes in his notation on the Shulchan Aruch (Chapter 686, Section 2) that pregnant and nursing women are exempt from the Fast of Esther. Maran HaShulchan Aruch did not need to write this law explicitly for it is self-understood from the rest of the fasts; however, the Rama did need to write this explicitly according to the Ashkenazi custom that pregnant and nursing women do fast on the rest of the Four Fastes unless they are suffering greatly. Therefore, the Rama felt the need to write that at least on the Fast of Esther they are exempt from fasting.

The Halachic definition of a "pregnant woman" regarding being exempt from this fast is a woman who has already passed the first three months of pregnancy. However, if a pregnant woman suffers from nausea and morning sickness, she can be lenient and not fast even before three months of pregnancy have passed, especially if forty days have elapsed from the onset of the pregnancy.

Regarding the exemption of a nursing woman, even if she is not actually nursing, as long as she is within the twenty-four month period since giving birth, if she feels weak, she may be lenient and she is not obligated to fast. However, if she feels healthy and strong like other women, it is preferable for her to be stringent and she should indeed fast.

Boys Dressing up in Girl's Clothing and Safeguarding the Sanctity of Purim

It is written in the Torah (Devarim 22): "A man's vestments shall not be on a woman and a man shall not wear a woman's clothing". We learn from here that a man may not wear women's clothing and similarly, a woman may not wear men's clothing. This is also elaborated in the Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah (Chapter 156) that a man may not do things that usually constitute beautification for women, such as looking in a mirror, for looking in a mirror is an action designated for women and men do not usually do so; therefore, it is forbidden for a man to look in a mirror. Nevertheless, the Poskim write that in a place where it is common for men to look in the mirror as well, there is no prohibition to do so, for then it is no longer considered a beautification process specific to women. Thus, nowadays, we rule leniently and it is indeed permitted for a man to look in the mirror. However, regarding actually wearing women's garments there is no room for leniency, for this is a beautification specific to women alone.

However, some Ashkenazi countries had the custom that men would wear women's clothing and vice versa on Purim. Hagaon Mahari Mintz (page 31a) writes that the reason why they would customarily be lenient about this is since on Purim everyone acts this way, therefore, on this day these articles of clothing are not specific only to men or only to women and there will not be any prohibition involved. This is similar to what we have written above regarding the permission for men to look in the mirror nowadays. He adds that since people are not doing this to transgress a prohibition, G-d forbid, rather only in the joyous spirit of Purim it is not prohibited and he brings reasoning for his opinion. The Rama, in his notation on the Shulchan Aruch, writes very similarly to this.

Nevertheless, the opinion of most Poskim is that one may not be lenient regarding any prohibition, even if it is done in the joyous spirit of Purim. Similarly, Rabbenu Eliezer MiMetz writes in his Sefer Yere'im: "Even in a temporary and joking manner, a man may not wear women's clothing and vice versa as the Torah has not differentiated between wearing them in a permanent or temporary manner. I felt the need to write this because I have seen men wear women's clothing at wedding banquets." One can infer from his words that one may not be lenient in this matter at all, even if it is done in a joyous spirit, and doing so touches on grave Torah prohibitions.

The Rambam writes similarly in one of his responses, "regarding the custom that some had that the bride would wear a man's hat and take a sword in her hand and parade this way in front of men and women amid song and dance, one should not think that just because she is a bride the Torah prohibition involved in this abominable act is any less severe, and this was even the custom in Egypt until we came and uprooted this custom and eradicated its memory. There was a similar custom where the groom would go to a female make-up artist to make him up like a woman, and this is also considered ornamentation of a woman which is forbidden for a man to do." The Bayit Chadash brings the words of the Sefer Yere'im and writes that the words of the Yere'im must certainly have been hidden from the holy eyes of the Rama and one must be stringent in this matter by a wedding banquet or on Purim day. Maran HaChida agrees to this opinion in his Sefer Shiyurei Beracha (Chapter 182) and he quotes the Rambam's response we have mentioned above. Maran Harav Ovadia Yosef ז"ל also rules this way in his Responsa Yechave Da'at, and he brings many other great Acharonim who rule this way as well and speak harshly against those who act leniently in this matter. Maran Harav ז"ל concludes his response as follows: "These words must be told over in a pleasant manner in order for people to accept them."

It seems that parents are obligated not to dress their children in clothing belonging to the opposite gender as per the Mitzvah of Chinuch (proper Torah education) just like they are obligated to distance their children from other Torah and Rabbinic prohibitions.

In general, one must be extremely careful not to act in a frivolous or immoral matter on the day of Purim, especially in a place where non-religious Jews reside. Let us now relate some interesting anecdotes regarding Hagaon Harav Avraham Yitzchak Ha'Kohen Kook ז"ל, late Chief Rabbi of Israel.

In the year 5695 (1935), many yeshiva students who studied in Jerusalem lived in Tel Aviv. On the eve of Purim of that year, Hagaon Harav Kook posted a sign at the entrance of the yeshiva which read as follows: "I hereby firmly request from all of the students of our holy yeshiva that no one go to Tel Aviv under any circumstances on the 14th and 15th of Adar to celebrate Purim."

The reason for this was because in those days, a "Purim Carnival" was held in the midst of Tel Aviv, which resembled a truly non-Jewish practice. The celebration entailed all sorts of immodest activities which were repulsive to those who feared Hashem. Although the coordinators of the event were non-observant, they nevertheless tried to preserve some semblance of modesty during this party. From the year 5687 (1927), this carnival began hosting a "Queen Esther Pageant," exactly the way the wicked King Achashverosh had done. This ceremony quickly became the main event of the annual carnival.

For this reason, Hagaon Harav Kook waged a spiritual battle against this despicable violation of Torah and modesty and forbade his students from going to Tel Aviv on the days when the party was held. Eventually though, thank-G-d, Hagaon Harav Kook's words were accepted and this disgraceful ceremony was discontinued in the year 5693 (1933).

We see how much this righteous man fought in order to restore religion and Halacha observance to the maximum and to influence even those that were far from Torah and Mitzvot observance to celebrate the holiday of Purim amid great sanctity as this extremely lofty day deserves.

Summary: Girls/women may not wear boy's/men's clothing and boys/men may not wear girl's/women's clothing even if this is done in celebration of the joy of any particular Mitzvah. The guidelines of sanctity and modesty must be safeguarded during the days of Purim. Those who heed us shall dwell securely.