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## A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

### פרשת תרומה

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִקְחוּ לִי תְרוּמָה וכו'. (שמות כה, ב)

*Speak to the Children of Yisroel and let them take for Me a portion... (Shemos 25:2)*

In this week's *Sidrah*, Hashem commands Klal Yisroel to create the Mishkan. Hashem requests that the people generously provide the raw materials needed to construct the dwelling place for the Shechinah. Each individual is asked to contribute according to their ability and willingness, to play a part in building the Mishkan.

The Midrash (*Midrash Rabbah*) interprets the phrase *וְיִקְחוּ לִי תְרוּמָה* as "Let them take Me as a portion". Klal Yisroel were not asked to give a portion *for* Hashem, but rather to take Hashem *as* their portion. Unlike a regular transaction where a buyer acquires an item but does not acquire the seller, when Hashem "sold" us the Torah, we figuratively acquired Him along with it.

The Midrash illustrates this concept through a parable: Imagine a king with a beloved only daughter. She married a prince from a distant land, and when it was time for them to return to his homeland, the king was heartbroken at the thought of separating from her. However, knowing he could not demand that the prince stay, he requested a favour from the newlyweds: wherever they settled, they should build a small chamber for him so that he could remain connected to them.

In this analogy, the Torah represents Hashem's precious "daughter," which He entrusted to Klal Yisroel, her groom. Hashem said, "I have given you the Torah, which I cannot part with, but I cannot require you to keep it away from you. Wherever you go, build for Me a dwelling place, so I can be with you!" Thus, when they received the Torah at Har Sinai, they acquired Hashem along with it, and the way they maintained His presence was by constructing a Mishkan.

This Midrash is generally understood to illustrate Hashem's profound love and attachment to the Torah. Just as the king could not bear to be apart from his cherished daughter, Hashem treasures the Torah and cannot separate from it. Through the "small chamber" - the Mishkan and Beis HaMikdash - Hashem maintains a connection to the Torah. Furthermore, even when Torah is learned outside of the Beis HaMikdash, or in our present time when the Beis HaMikdash no longer exists, Hashem bestows His Shechinah upon those who engage in Torah study. As the Mishnah (*Pirkei Avos 3:6*) teaches: *עֲשֶׂרָה שְׂיֹשְׁבֵין וְעוֹסְקִין בַּתּוֹרָה, שְׂכִינָה שְׂרוּיָה בֵּינֵיהֶם*, *If ten people sit together and engage in Torah study, the Shechinah rests amongst them*. When one learns Torah, they create a space where Hashem can reside.

The Rosh Yeshivah *shlita* cites the Dubno Maggid, who explains this Midrash with an alternative approach, using a *mashal*. If someone wishes to plant an orchard with different types of flowers, plants, and herbs from around the world, they recognise that this will involve much work. The gardener cannot simply take a sapling from one climate and try to grow it in a different environment, as that will not yield any success. The only way to have a chance of success is by recreating the plant's

original environment. This means importing soil from the plant's natural habitat and replicating the conditions required for it to thrive, including temperature, sunlight, and irrigation.

Similarly, the Torah, which is fundamentally a Heavenly essence, must stay connected to its Heavenly source to thrive on earth, far from its natural spiritual habitat. For the Torah to be in a foreign setting and remain effective and cultivate the goodness it provides, it needs to remain linked to its spiritual "soil" – Hashem. Therefore, Hashem desired Klal Yisroel to create a dwelling place for His Shechinah in this world: to provide life support for the Torah so that it retains meaning and influence. The Torah is a spiritual concept, and without Hashem constantly infusing it with spirit, it would be unsustainable in this world.

We further find in Chazal that the Torah is not merely a tool for acquiring knowledge, but also a means for attaining *ruchniyus* and fear of Hashem. In the Gemara (*Shabbos* 31a), Rabbah bar Rav Huna compares someone who possesses Torah but lacks fear of Heaven to a custodian who has been given only the inner keys and not the outer ones, rendering them unable to enter the chamber. The Gemara also cites R' Yanai, who laments, "Pity on the one who does not have a dwelling place, yet still creates an entrance!"

The Rosh Yeshivah questions these two comparisons as they seem contradictory. The first analogy suggests that Torah represents the inner keys, and Yiras Shamayim symbolises the outer keys, implying that Torah is acquired through Yiras Shamayim. Conversely, R' Yanai's metaphor indicates that Torah serves as the "gateway" to access Yiras Shamayim, which is the "dwelling place." Is Torah the key to attaining Yiras Shamayim, or vice-versa?

This apparent inconsistency can be resolved through Rabbeinu Yonah's explanation. He clarifies that there are two stages in this process, and consequently, the relationship between Torah and Yiras Shamayim differs. Someone lacking any fear of Hashem is akin to someone who does not possess the inner keys; without Yiras Shamayim, true Torah becomes inaccessible. However, for an individual on their path of growth, engaging with the Torah fosters a deeper level of Yiras Shamayim. Furthermore, even in the first parable, the Torah is only described as the "keys," while the true "dwelling place" refers to complete Yiras Shamayim, as explained.

The Rosh Yeshiva cites R' Ezriel Rosenbaum *shlita*, who, according to the above concept from the Dubno Maggid, explains the Mishnah (*Pirkei Avos* 6:5) which mentions being בְּשִׂמְחָה as one of the 48 qualities necessary for genuinely acquiring Torah. Rashi (ibid) states: לְפִי שְׂאִין הַשְּׂכִינָה שׁוֹרָה אֶלָּא מִתּוֹךְ שִׂמְחָה, *for the Shechinah does not dwell unless in a state of joy*. Only if Torah is studied joyously, does Hashem allow His Shechinah to rest there, and it is through this connection with the Torah, that Hashem enables it to resonate with its profound qualities!

We must recognise that Torah is a unique spiritual entity. For it to generate greatness, it must remain constantly connected to Hashem. For the Torah to foster spiritual growth and transformation, it needs to be inextricably linked to its natural habitat. Therefore, Hashem commanded Klal Yisroel to create the Mishkan. We should appreciate that when we learn Torah, we are also connecting to Hashem, Who, to sustain its spiritual power, rests His Shechinah upon the learner of Torah!

This Devar Torah is adapted from ספר וענפיה ארזי אל and is presented by the Gateshead Yeshiva Alumni Association. To receive by email, please register your interest by sending an email to [parshasheet@gyalumni.org](mailto:parshasheet@gyalumni.org).