

PORTION OF *T'RUMAH*

Making Something Special

“Let them take for Me a portion” (*Sh'mos 25:2*)

In *Parashas T'rumah* we read that G-d told Moshe to tell the children of Israel to give gifts to build the Holy Temple. This gift is called *T'rumah*. *T'rumah* means a gift, but it has two more meanings. *T'rumah* comes from the word "*L'romem*" 'to elevate.' *T'rumah* also comes from the word "*L'havdil*" 'to separate.' On a simple level it means that if I have ten dollars and I give five dollars for the Holy Temple... I separate this five dollars from the other five dollars. As simple as it is, when I am giving for a high purpose, it means I making it high.

Imagine I am very wealthy, and everyone knows all about my riches. I give money here, I pay that insurance there. While paying my bills, I send my donation for the Holy Temple. How does this type of giving sound to you? I might be giving two million dollars for the Holy Temple on a weekly basis, but with this kind of money you can't build a Holy Temple. You can build an apartment somewhere, but not a Holy Temple because when it comes to the *Beis Hamikdash* it has to be separate. You don't knock off a telephone bill, credit card and while you're at it, some money for the Holy Temple.

Let's go one step further. Separate does not only have to do when it comes to money for the Holy Temple. Everything you do for G-d has to be separate. If you do it in the same sentence as you are doing something else, forget it. Forget it, don't waste your time, don't waste G-d's time.

You see what it is, we are in G-d's hands, and also humanly speaking, G-d is in our hands. That which happens to me is in G-d's hands, but you know what is in my hands? To make G-d high or low... that is in my hands. I can make G-d so high or I can, G-d forbid, drag G-d down so low, so meaningless, so empty. I can make G-d so non-special in my life.

There are a lot of people who believe in G-d, but the G-d they believe in is not special. There are those who stay in the Hilton in Istanbul, sometimes in the Hilton in Tel-Aviv, and when they come home it's the same thing. Then there are some people that when they open the door to their house it is always so special.

So the Ishbitzer says (*Mei Hashiloach 1, T'rumah, Veyikchu 2*), everything I do for G-d has to be separate. It cannot be the same as something else. Everything I am doing for G-d has to be so high, so special. The most beautiful thing about it is that it's up to me, it's my choice.

Now I want you to open your hearts even wider. G-d cursed the snake that the snake should eat dust, so everybody is asking the question, what is so terrible about it? In the meantime, the snake is never hungry, the snake has no trouble being full. The snake has everything it needs. Let me ask you, friends, what does it mean that the snake is eating dust? It means that everything tastes like dust. You can place the most delicious food before the snake – it also tastes like dust. Sadly enough, we have met a lot of snake people in our lives. Everything is nothing, everything is dust.

Everything is a joke. These are the snake people, these are the Tree of Knowledge people. Then there are the Tree of Life people. These are the non-snake people who don't eat dust, they know the difference between dust and a *Shabbosdika challah*. Not only do they have special moments, they become special people. A special person is somebody who has something special in their life. If you have something special in your life, everything has the chance of becoming something special.

You see, friends, G-d wanted us to build the Holy Temple, but isn't the whole world G-d's Holy Temple? It is, but it begins by building a holy little tabernacle, and from there it expands all over the world. If I have five minutes and I choose to use those five minutes to learn, I made those five minutes special. Do you know what happens after that? Whatever I do with the rest of the time becomes so holy as well, so special. The destruction of the Holy Temple means there is nothing special in life anymore, everything is the same. Going to the synagogue, going to the office, writing out a check... it's all the same. Playing baseball, playing with my children... sadly enough, it's all the same.

Making you aware of the little things

What's the difference between a holy light and an unholy light? Very simple. Imagine here I have psychedelic lights, biggest light in the world flashing like crazy. Then one person comes with a little flashlight. I say to him, "Are you crazy? I don't need it." Friends, if the great light is really holy, when someone comes with a little light, it adds so much, because the great light makes you aware of the little things. What is the difference between holy money and unholy money? Imagine if one millionaire gives two million dollars, and then Moishela the thief gives one quarter, I'll say "You're crazy, we already have two million dollars," because it's not holy. But if it's holy, you say, "Unbelievable! Your quarter is the most precious thing we ever got."

When King Solomon built the Holy Temple, he sent out messengers to collect money and jewelry for the Holy Temple. The messengers came back with gold and silver. But then King Solomon asked, "Where are the pennies of the poor?" So the messengers said, "When the poor people saw we are collecting gold and silver, they were ashamed to give their pennies." So King Solomon says, "Let's make another collection, a collection only of pennies, only pennies." Everybody knows, three walls of the holy temple were built with the gold and the jewelry, but one wall was built with pennies. The Western Wall, the wall which cannot be destroyed was built with pennies.

On Rosh Hashanah it says "*U-b'shofar gadol yitaka*" 'When the great trumpet will be blown' "*v'kol d'mama daka yishama*" 'you will hear the voice of the most inside,' which can't even be recorded (*Mussaf* High Holiday Prayers). Listen to how deep this is. I would say it's the other way around. When the great trumpet is blowing, there is so much noise, you can't hear anything. The real holy trumpet is when you hear the sound of the great trumpet, suddenly you become aware of the sounds of the deepest voice inside of you.

You see, friends, if your heart is really holy, I'm sure you can receive the little pennies, the little voices that make us most aware of what is truly important in life.

Building of Misfits

There is a passage in Psalms – “*Even ma’asu habonim ha-y’sa l’rosh pinah*” – 'The stone which was cast away by the builders,' the stone which was a misfit, 'became the crown of the building.' (*Tehillim* 118:22)

One of the rules of the building of the Holy Temple was that you couldn't cut. You couldn't cut stones, you couldn't cut anything. Sometimes I wish I could teach parents how not to cut down their children. Children are so holy, they are little Holy Temples. They are little holy stones in the *Beis Hamikdash*. You can't build a Holy Temple with cut up stones. If you ever stand by the Holy Wall, it's the strangest sight in the world. One stone is big, one stone is small. One had four corners, one has eight corners. But the great miracle is that they all fit together.

So when the people were building the *Beis Hamikdash*, they used uncut stones, and it all went very well. But there was one stone that was an absolute misfit, so the builders threw that stone away. Then they started building the Holy of Holiest, and the Holy of Holiest had a little roof. There was an opening in the roof, a strange kind of opening, and there was no stone which fit that opening. Suddenly, the builders remembered the misfit, the stone which was cast away. It was the only stone that fit the opening, the only stone which could be the crown on the building.

King David asked why this was so. And he answered, “*Me’eis HaShem ha-y’sa zos he nifla’as b’eineinu*” (*Tehillim* 118:23) – because it's G-d world, because G-d is working wonders. Only a real misfit, only someone who has been cast away by the world, can be the crown of G-d's building.

All the young people of the world today, all the holy beggars, are also so-called misfits. But on the great day when *Mashiach* comes, they will be the crown of the world. Believe me, the Messiah will not surround himself with anybody else — only with castaway stones. Only with those holy castaway stones. Do you know why? Because “*Me’eis HaShem ha-y’sa zos*” – it's G-d's world.