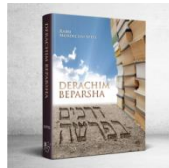


דרכים בפרשה תרומה

R' Mordechai
Appel, an alumnus
of Telz Yeshiva, is
the author of
DERACHIM
BEPARSHA.



דבר אל-בני ישראל ויקחו-לי תרומה מאת כל-איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את-תרומתי

Speak to the B'nei Yisrael and have them take for Me a terumah-offering. From every man whose heart impels him to generosity shall you take My terumah-offering

One of the *minhagim* which the Chasam Sofer zt'l was "*lihashmid uliharog*" about was the placement of the bima in the middle of the shul. The reform movement came along and moved it to the front. He would not walk into a shul that had the bimah up in the front near the *aron*.

The Mahari Assad (Yehuda Ya'ale) discusses the subconscious meaning of why it was that the Reform movement made this change:

We know that the bimah represents the *mizbayach*. In the Mishkan and the Beis Hamikdash, there were two *mizbayachos*- the *mizbayach hapnimi* (*hazahav*) which was hidden from plain view, only seen when the kohen went in to do the *avoda*. That *avodah* was only done twice a day- in the morning and afternoon when the *ketores* was brought. The second one was the *mizbayach hachitzon* (*hanechoshes*). That one was in full view. Even a non-kohen could watch that *avodah* happening. It was used all day long, constantly. All the *korbanos* being brought by the multitudes were brought there. It was the place of the main *avodah*.

The Mahari Assad suggests that the Reform moved the bimah to the front of the shul because they wanted to change the symbolism of the bimah. Instead of it representing the outer *mizbayach* which was in the center for all to see, it would now be up front near the *aron* referring to the inner *mizbayach*. This would give the new message that the *avodah* of a Jew is only for certain times, and only to be performed by the elite, hidden away from the world's view. But everyone else can, *rachmana litzlan*, do what they want, where they want and when they want it.

But we believe that it is exactly the opposite. The bimah continues to represent the *mizbayach hachitzon* which is front and center for all to see at all times and for every Yid to be involved with. The *avodah* of a Yid

is not only while in shul but actually wherever one is at all times. Even one that cannot actually perform the *avodah* can still contribute to it, witness it and be inspired by it.

The Kli Yakar writes that the *mizbayach hachitzon* represents the *guf*- the body of a person. The *mizbayach hapnimi* represents the *neshama*. Part of this idea is that serving Hashem is not just for the *neshama* but also for the *guf*.

The Midrash writes, דבר אל-בני ישראל ויקחו-לי תרומה - Speak to the B'nei Yisrael and have them take for Me a *terumah-offering*. - "ועשו לי מקדש" בשביל שאדור ביניכם - "ועשו לי מקדש" בשביל שאדור ביניכם - Hakadosh Boruch Hu tells us to take for Him *Terumah*, and to make for Him a *Mikdash*. Why? בשביל שאדור ביניכם - "so that I can live within you". The relationship that Hashem desires to have with us is not only for special occasions, but rather a constant connection of every breath and every moment. The month of Adar is a hint to this idea of בשביל שאדור ביניכם.

The *hailiger* Rizhiner Rebbe zt'l had a *chassid* that read somewhere that if one has a *tainis dibbur* for forty days, they can merit to speak with Eliyahu Hanavi, so the *chassid* tried this. After forty days, the *chassid* was dejected because the *segulah* didn't work. He went to the Rizhiner all upset, "Rebbe, I was so careful; why didn't it work?" The rebbe didn't answer him. So the *chassid* got up to leave and on his way out, he saw the horses and carriage of the rebbe waiting outside, and he stopped for a moment to admire them. Suddenly, the rebbe walked out and started to pet the horse, straining its hair. The *chassid* was shocked! "This is *avodas Hashem* of the rebbe? What is the rebbe doing?" The rebbe responded, "do you think that this just any ordinary horse? This horse has not spoke any words for forty days!" The *chassid* understood the rebbe's message. Even a horse doesn't talk *devorim betailim*. But that is not the question- it is not what we do, but rather the motivation. Are we doing this to come closer to Hashem? Are we bringing Hashem into our lives or are we remaining like the horse doing things that don't really change us and allow us to grow in our relationship?

מרדכי אפפל, Good Shabbos,