

LETS BE REAL

Chodesh Adar ~ Parshas Terumah

Simcha of Adar: The Gemara in Taanis tells us, “כשם שנכנס אב ממעטין בשמחה כך משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה”. Rashi explains that these months are days of miracles which includes Purim and Pesach.

The Sfas Emes and other meforshim ask on Rashi that according to this explanation what is the connection between the month of Av and Adar? What is the contrast of כשם that the Gemara is referring to? Another question asked is, that if the simcha is because of the miracles that happened, then why don't we find this by the month of Chanuka as well?

Sfas Emes Novel Approach: The Sfas Emes says a big chiddush. We know that as the Gemara tells us באחד באדר משמיעים על השקלים. He says that at this time they were collecting money for the Korbanos, which was a tremendous simcha by Klal Yisroel. Therefore, until today the Simcha is still going strong. He concludes that this is the idea of our reading the Parshas Shekalim.

Although the Sfas Emes doesn't specifically state it, but based on his explanation it seems to follow that the sadness of Av is due to the absence of the Korbanos and the Bais Hamikdash. The contrast to this is that in the month of Adar we are joyous that we got the Korbanos.

Question: What is still puzzling is that this is all very good in the time of the Bais Hamikdash that we celebrate during this time. But now we are missing the Korbanos and the Bais Hammikdash, so what is there to be joyous about? לשמחה מה זו עושה.

ד' פרשיות: Generally speaking we need to understand the idea of the פרשיות ד'. Yes, we read them in Shul, but the question is what should one be thinking about when we read it? Should we just listen to the Parsha and not walk away with something concrete? We need to understand what our Chachamim wanted with this takana.

Shovavim: We just went through six uplifting weeks of Shovavim. Hopefully, we have attained more kedusha and tahara within our hearts and mind. Hopefully, we attained the tikkunim to purify our soul as well.

Some opinions maintain that Shovavim period continues for another two weeks while others maintain that it's over. Based on this, there are those who think that now we can go back to “normal” R”L. This is a fatal error,

because as with every eis ratzon, we need to take the inspiration with us.

Moreover, regardless of whether these days are part of Shovavim, these two weeks [and more] are extremely special days. The whole idea of Shovavim is based on the idea that הקריאה מעוררת את הזמן. When we read about Yetziyas Mitzrayim this activates the light that allows us to tap into it to help us out of our Yetziyas mitzrayim.

Parshas Teruma: With this concept in mind, these days [and weeks] in which we are reading about the building of the Mishkan and its utensils are awesome days. This is a time that we can connect ourselves to the Mishkan, the Aron, the Mizbeiach, the Menorah and everything else. How do we connect to it?

For starters, by learning Chumash-Rashi and delving into the subject--we can get a great connection. Moreover, when we also have a great desire for the return of the Bais Hamikdash and the keilim, this gives us a very deep connection as well.

Daf Yomi: Interestingly, in the past month or so, the Daf Yomi which is learned by a large percentage of Klal Yisroel has been learning מסכת מנחות, which discusses at great length the Avoda in the Bais Hamikdash and the keilim. This gives us a tremendous connection to the Bais Hamikdash through תורה שבעל פה.

Surrounded by the Light: Yes, my friends, these days we are surrounded by the light of the Bais Hamikdash. Let us not squander such an opportune eis ratzon and beg Hashem to bring back the third and final Bais Hamikdash, so we can serve Him properly and reconnect with Hashem like never before.



Part 2

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם: In this week's parsha, Hashem tells us that we should make for Hashem a Mikdash, and Hashem will dwell in it. On these words, the Seforim teach us that every husband and wife can be a manifestation of this passuk.

It is well known that marriage and bringing up children is a roller coaster with all its ups and downs. Sometimes it can be a wild roller coaster that keeps going in all directions. Sometimes you can be upside down and sometimes it's literally going through loops and your

heart feels like it's falling out. That's the story of life, my friends.

Here's a sweet eidele bachur who graduated his turbulent teenage years, and he's sitting and learning with lots of התמדה. He can be learning in Yeshiva in America or in the pure air of Eretz Yisroel. Generally speaking he has full support from his father without any דאגות. He is literally in Gan Eden on this world.

Then he is thrust into the parsha of shidduchim, and now he is beginning to feel some level of discomfort. There is the stress that comes from the fear of rejection, then there is the rejection itself. Then there is the stress of not being able to decide, the back and forth and so on. It's no picnic for anyone.

Finally, after much deliberation and discussions with Rabbeim, he agrees to move ahead, and they break the glass. Mazel tov. Everyone is excited about it, but many times it's normal for both of them to get cold feet [as they call it].

Finally, after a few months he takes the actual plunge as he jumps onto the roller coaster that surges forward full speed into life. When that happens is that the families and friends of the Chassan and Kalla celebrate joyously and chant the song of בערי יהודה עוד ישמע.

The question is what do these words, which discuss the simcha of Moshaich, have to do with the current simcha which is happening now with the young Chassan and Kalla? Moreover, one may wonder why is there so much excitement by a marriage more than any other simcha?

Furthermore, as we are saying that if they see what a roller coaster life is, what possesses a bachur in the prime time of his life to jump in? Why not wait a few more years? What gives them the courage to make such a drastic move? After all, married life is full of challenges, and there is a fear of the unknown, who knows where life will be taking him.

נעשה ונשמע: The truth is that in Meseches Shabbos we see that the Tzedoki asked Rava a similar question, when he saw Rava bleeding while he was learning. He told Rava that you are a Nation that doesn't think before they act. Who knows what kind of mitzvos Hashem would impose on you. Perhaps it will be too difficult for you.

Rava responded to the Tzedoki, that it's true that we jumped in without knowing what we were getting

ourselves into. Yes, we were heading into the unknown, but we did it with trust that Hashem won't give us things that new cannot keep. **In fact, this is the beauty of נעשה ונשמע that made Hashem so proud of us [so to speak].**

A Modern נעשה ונשמע: We need to believe that we were all there together and we all cried out together נעשה ונשמע, and until today, I believe that all Yidden that get married are proclaiming the long time belief in Hashem of נעשה ונשמע. Yes, life is and will be a roller coaster, but we believe that Hashem will give us the strength to endure everything. We believe with all our heart that Hashem has been taking care of us until now and He will continue to orchestrate everything in our life.

Our proclamation of נעשה ונשמע was "We will do Hashem's mitzvos no matter how challenging and difficult they may be". With this mindset one jumps into marriage, which brings along the challenges that life have to offer.

The Kallah: Let's shift over to the holy Kallah. Interestingly enough, the Kallah on her part has no obligation to get married and have children. Despite that, our נשים צדקניות jump onto the roller coaster called life, because they realize and understands that this is what her Father in heaven wants, so be it. Bring it on, she is ready to face life challenges for the sake of Hashem.

She can be compared to Klal Yisroel who obligated themselves at Matan Torah when they proclaimed נעשה ונשמע, when they brought about their obligation. Klal Yisroel at that time understood that this is the best thing for them, and more importantly, this is what Hashem wants from them, so they jumped in [so to speak].

The Two Crowns: Indeed, Klal Yisroel at Har Sinai were compared to a Kallah as it says in the passuk ויהי ככלתו, and Chazal say derive from here that Klal Yisroel was compared to a Kallah. Klal Yisroel were zoche to two crowns like a Kallah who wears a crown, and now we understand why a Kallah deserves a crown. The Maharal says that when Hashem held the mountain over the Bnei Yisroel it was like a Chuppa. Many put flowers by a chuppa similar to Kabbalas Hatorah.

Building Our Own Mishkan: However, I would venture to say that there is another powerful idea that pushes our heilige bachurim to get married despite the challenges that life has to offer.

In this week's parsha it says **ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם**. Simply, we explain this to mean that Klal Yisroel has to build a Mishkan so that Hashem should dwell in our midst. The seforim tell us that the Bais Hamikdash achieved the ultimate-- that Hashem was able to dwell in the heart of every Yid.

However, the Seforim tell us that **ועשו לי מקדש** also refers to a husband and wife. Their job is to create the place for Hashem so that Hashem will rest on them, as the passuk continues **ושכנתי בתוכם**. Chazal tell us **זכר שכינה ביניהם**, the Shechina comes down when a couple get married. Their job is not to chase away the Shechina through machlokes or other reasons R"L.

I remember hearing from my grandfather Rav Moishe Handelsman Zt"l who would bring down that a Jewish home is like a Mishkan. He would then outline how the table is the מזבח, and then he would go from one room to the next and outline how it was parallel to the Mishkan.

The Chuppah: We know that at a chuppah there is a very strong presence of the Shechina, and this is one reason why many people daven very hard for their needs. Now we can understand why the Shechina is present. As explained, it's because it's a bechina of Har Sinai, as the Kalla is proclaiming **נעשה ונשמע**, and the Chassan is solidifying his pledge of **נעשה ונשמע**.

Furthermore, as we explained, when a couple get married they are bringing down the Shechina to their midst. This being the case, it is certainly appropriate for the Shechina to arrive when a couple are going under the chuppa to get married.

Therefore, when a bachur and the girl agree to get married and jump onto the roller coaster called life with all the challenges therein, they go with an understanding that they are doing something so huge. They are bringing down the Shechina to themselves and to this world. Yes, it's true that there is no Bais Hamikdash for the Shechina, but there is the Mikdash that a couple offer, which is bringing the ultimate desire of Hashem of **ושכנתי בתוכם**.

Now we can understand why a Chasuna and especially after the Chuppah, the joy is palpable as we start singing **עוד ישמע בערי יהודה**. This Chassan and Kalla just tapped in to the times of Moshiach when the Shechina

will come down to Klal Yisroel, and we are hoping that soon this will happen soon.

*I always say that if you want to tap into a small measure of the simcha of when Moshiach will come, think back when you were a chassan and kalla. Remember the excitement that you felt after the chuppa, or when you were getting ready to enter the dance floor, and the music begins with those famous words of **עוד ישמע בערי יהודה**. Relive those emotions, and multiply it by at least a hundred.*



Part 3

Current Events: An apt description of the current events that are unfolding in front of our very eyes, is as follows: "The stage is set, the lights are out, and the play is about to begin".

Let us discuss some of the background which is integral to this play that seems like it's about to begin, as the lights are dim and the spot lights are shining on different countries. The Gemara in Megilla tells us that **מלחמה** - Wars are part of the process of Geula. Furthermore, Chazal tell us unequivocally that "when one sees that countries are antagonizing each other one should anticipate the footsteps of Moshiach".

The Gemara spends at least a full Amud expounding that before Moshiach comes there will be a war between **פרס** [also known as Iran] and Edom [which represents America and the West]. The Gemara goes back and forth who will win at that [this] time.

The Stage Is Set: Now let's look at the stage before us and see if it matches. **America** has almost the entire navy in the Middle East aimed at **Iran**, with planes, missiles and even NUCLEAR missiles (just in case). China has sent sixteen ships full of weapons for Iran to defend themselves [and perhaps for offense as well R"L]. China, Russia and North Korea are talking about getting involved if America attacks.

If this war erupts, which seems to be happening any day, the West will most likely come to America's aid, and Israel will join as well. The rest of this, we can only imagine what will happen. Now we don't know anything for sure. After all, everything is totally in the hands of Hashem. However, Who do you think is the One that set up this situation? Yes, Hashem of course, and He is clearly talking to us.

Now some people may be thinking that if the stage is set, then why can't we just sit back and watch how things unfold? Why should we get active? The answer is that we cannot forget that **we** are one of the main actors. Our part in this play is crucial. It's up to us how this is going to play out, as Rav Moshe Sorotzkin is constantly reiterating.

We need to realize when we see the situation in the world is so precarious and the world powers are at the brink of war, Hashem is talking to us. What's the message here? We cannot look at this as some interesting piece of news to hock about in the coffee room.

This should mean to us that Hashem, the Chassan [kaviyachol], is waiting for His beloved Kalla. Hashem is showing us that He is waiting for us to return. However, we need to show Hashem *our* readiness and anticipation. This is called **צפית לישיעה**, which is one of the first questions they ask a person when he goes to the next world.



Part 4

Tzipisa l'yeshua: This brings us to a vital and crucial topic that is always prevalent, but even more so when we feel like we are moments away from the Geula be"H. If one would ask you why you are waiting for Moshiach, the **WRONG** answer is in order for your personal gashmiyus to improve.

There are many things we can have in mind while we are awaiting the final redemption. Here are a few examples why to anticipate the redemption.

1. **Physical illness:** There are so many people suffering from all different kinds of illness, and are confined to their beds. Whether they are in hospitals, nursing homes or even in their own homes. The bottom line is that these people are suffering and we need to be **נרשא בעול**. Yes, visiting them and cheering them up does wonders, but ultimately we should wait for them to be redeemed from their suffering.
2. **Mental illness:** There are lots and lots of our fellow yidden who are suffering from all sorts of mental illness. Whether it's depression, anxiety, trauma, and many other issues make it increasingly difficult to function in their life.

3. **Monetary issues:** Many people are struggling to pay their bills which makes their life increasingly difficult. Believe it or not, in Eretz Yisroel there are people who go hungry very often. Yes, we need to try to support them monetarily, but it's not a long term solution.
4. **Yeshivas and schools:** Many people have a hard time getting their child into a Yeshiva/school. This turns their life upside down and inside out.
5. **Chinuch crisis:** Anyone who has children understands that chinuch has taken a whole new twist as chutzpah is on a rise like never before. The way some parents treat their children today can be extremely repulsive. This is one of the consequences of being in galus for too long.
6. **The Shidduch crisis:** How this crisis came about is a whole discussion. The bottom line is that many girls and even boys are suffering and we need to feel terrible for them as they await their redemption.
7. **Tragedies:** We keep hearing tragic stories, which should move us to tears. Unfortunately, due to the deep exile our hearts have turned into stones so we almost cannot feel the pain that we should be feeling.
8. **The spiritual crisis:** This problem is worse than all the above, as we see from Chazal. In this galus of America our challenges are numerous and enormous. We don't have to go into details, but with the internet and now the newest arsenal of the satan **AI**, we have our hands full. How many of our precious Yidden have gone off the path due to their great challenges. This is something to cry about until we have no tears left.
9. **Spiritual elevation:** On the positive side, we are waiting for Moshiach to be connected to Hashem once again which will give us a tremendous connection to the Torah as well. At that time, we will sit and learn without any pain or stress.
10. **Hashem's kingdom:** The most important reason to anticipate Moshiach is that Hashem's kingdom should return to this world, which brings us to another idea that is so fundamental which is bringing Shechina to this world.

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם: Chazal tell us that Hashem's greatest desire is to have His Shechina dwell amongst His children. This is the **תכלית הבריאה**. This is the main purpose of the creation of the entire world. This is the ultimate reason for us to await Moshiach.

As we explained with the mashal with the chassan and kalla, although they may have fears or uncertainty, they overcome everything with the power of **נעשה ונשמע**.

We too can have this attitude with regards to Moshiach. Just like the chassan and kalla overcome their feelings for the sake of the Shechina, we can do the same, to put aside any feelings of uncertainty and replace it with excitement.

What now? So what should we be doing now to prepare for Moshiach? Obviously we should do whatever we can to prepare to greet Moshiach, which includes teshuva and improving our ways. However, as we started off, we can give a very practical idea that is cut out for us now.

משנכנס אדר מרבים בשמחה: As we started off, Rashi says that this is referring to Purim and Pesach, and we asked why wasn't Chanukah included as well, as it also had miracles. Says Reb Moshe Sorotzkin, Chazal say that **בניסן עתידין להגאל**. He brings from seforim that say that this includes Adar as well.

Perhaps we can add on that originally Nissan was designated for the Geula because that was the month of Yetziyas Mitzrayim. However, since Klal Yisroel were zoche to one Geula in the month of Adar, therefore, this month became a month mesugal for Geula as well.

If that's the case, we can say that since these months are mesugal for Geula, we should increase our excitement and joy as we are anticipating the Geula which will solve our problems [as discussed], and will bring the Shechina back to our midst. This is more exciting than the biggest jackpot ever! Shouldn't we be joyful at this time?

ד' פרשיות: Based on this, we understand why during these months we read the four parshiyos that are going to be applicable when Moshiach comes. These parshiyos that we are reading are supposed to give us anticipation and yearning for Moshiach to come.

Parshas Shekalim relates about getting ready to donate shekalim for the Korbanos that we will be bringing when Moshiach comes. Parshos Zachor relates about getting ready for Moshiach when we will finally wipe out Amalek, Hashem's enemy. Parshas Para is about preparing us for the Korban Pesach. Parshas Hachodesh is anticipating that we will once again have control of the creation.

Emuna and Bitachon: When we accepted the Torah it was with bitachon, as we trusted that this is the best thing for us and the world and for the Shechina. Similarly, we need to use our bitachon to realize that this is the best thing possible. Additionally, bitachon helps us

feel very joyful, which we should be doing these days in Adar and Nissan.

Conclusion: As we are saying, our job now is to feel a deep joy that Klal Yisroel will be reunited with Hashem, Hashem's Kingship will return to this world, and He will dwell with His children once again. Let the dancing begin. **משנכנס אדר מרבים בשמחה**--Joy that's full of hope and yearning that we will be redeemed at last very soon.

A Freilichen Adar and Nissan