

Dvar Torah for Parshat Terumah

Based on *The Exchanged Children*

"They will build a Mishkan (Sanctuary) for Me and I will dwell among them...They will make a case [for the Torah]...You will make a cover [for the case]...You will make a table...You will make a menorah of gold..." (*Exodus* 25:8, 10, 17, 23, 31).

The ministers said [to the true prince], "Nevertheless! Even though we have seen you perform such a feat [to allow people to enter and leave the garden peacefully], you still don't deserve the kingdom. We shall give you one more test.

"The late king had a throne. The throne is very tall, and next to it stand all kinds of animals and birds carved out of wood. In front of the throne stands a bed. There is a table near the bed, and on the table is a lamp...."

[The true prince] saw that a rose was missing from the top of the throne. If the rose were in the throne, then the throne would have the same power as the box, [which produced music whenever it was placed on any animal or bird]...The rose was lying at the bottom of the throne. He would have to take it and place it at the top...[He saw that] the same was true of the bed. He understood that it had to be moved slightly from where it stood. The table also had to be moved somewhat, and the lamp likewise had to have its position adjusted. The birds and animals also had to be moved to different places...

[The true prince] gave instructions that everything be rearranged properly...[All the animals and birds] then began to sing a very wonderful melody. Each one functioned properly.

In Hebrew, bed, table, throne (chair) and lamp are *Mitah*, *Shulchan*, *Kisey* and *Ner*. The initial letters of these Hebrew words spell *MiShKaN*, the Tabernacle sanctuary.

Everyone has a home environment and, perhaps, a work environment as well. Is our environment healthy? How well is our space? If it is discordant, what can we do to create — and maintain — harmony within it? Another way of putting this question is, "How do we bring the *Shekhinah* (Divine Presence) into our environment?"

This seems to be a daunting task and, in fact it is. The proof is that the true prince had to make arrangements for the *Shekhinah*'s entry in order to assume the throne of his kingdom. Nonetheless! **DO NOT DESPAIR!** Each Jew has an inner-true prince(ss) and so is a dauntless hero(ine).

Nonetheless! Even a dauntless hero needs some tools and skills to succeed. The first tool is belief that Hashem (God) wants you back; Hashem wants your *teshuvah* (repentance). Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu that the Jews should build the Mishkan *after* the Jews had sinned by making the golden calf. Even after years of drinking and whoring, the true prince was a candidate for king.

The true prince knew he was a candidate. How did he know? He had the necessary second skill: understanding. He read between the lines: If there is a challenge facing me, I can meet the challenge.

When the tests began, the true prince did not know that he was really the true prince. Even though he was unsure of what his ultimate destiny was meant to be, how high he would climb — Nonetheless! He knew that he could grapple successfully with difficult circumstances and complex puzzles.

We have to believe that despite all our failures, up to and including the ones made just a minute ago, we are still genuine royalty and are still desired by Hashem. We have to understand that a challenge is an *invitation to greatness*. Then we can figure out what changes are necessary for bringing the Shekhinah into our environment; how much to adjust the "bed," "table," "lamp," etc.

agutn Shabbos!
Shabbat Shalom!

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