

# PARSHAS TERUMAH



HARAV YISROEL BROG, SHLITA | ROSH HAYESHIVA, YESHIVAS TIFERES AVIGDOR

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IN HONOR OF OUR PARENTS  
ראובן בן רוזית  
רהל בת בילא  
ON THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY  
-THE KASSIN FAMILY-

## BUILDING A MISHKAN IN OUR HOMES

### A TECHNICAL MITZVAH WITH TREMENDOUS REWARD

This parshah begins with the mitzvah of building the Mikdash: **ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם** - and let them make a Sanctuary for Me that I may dwell among them (Shemos 25:8). After Klal Yisroel learn lessons of emunah by experiencing yetzias Mitzrayim, krias Yam Suf and kabalas haTorah, the Torah introduces us to five parshiyos that all involve binyan haMishkan.

When most of us get to the parshas of Terumah and Tetzaveh, we don't really have a connection or an appreciation for this section of Torah. We either think it's somewhat "technical" or difficult to grasp, or maybe even boring - unless you happen to be a rebbi who teaches Parshas Terumah, in which case you're forced to go into all the shitos and discover exactly what is meant by the pesukim in the Torah. For the regular person, this topic doesn't seem to be connected to the halachah lema'aseh. Let me share with you, however, the incredible and amazing words of Rabeinu Bachaye (Shemos 38:9) regarding this topic.<sup>1</sup>

You should know, Rabeinu Bachaye says, that when the Torah relates to us all the details about the Mishkan and its vessels, and when it goes into all the architectural planning, describing the length, the width and height of the Mishkan - even though the Beis Hamikdash does not physically exist anymore - it's a great mitzvah to delve into the topic. I'm not sure what he means by that statement because, seemingly, even if the Beis Hamikdash were still standing, we would be preoccupied with the Beis Hamikdash and not the Mishkan. The Beis Hamikdash wasn't built according to the parameters of the Mishkan - they were two different buildings. But still and all, he says: **מצוה גדולה היא עד שמים יגיע שכרה** - the sechar of learning and delving into its details reaches shamayim, and it's part of the Torah which we have to study and learn about.

He goes on to write that simply relating the story of Mishkan's building with one's mouth alone, brings a person sechar. The effect of doing so will be considered by Hashem, as if one personally built the Mishkan and brought a korban on the Mizbeach! Similarly, Rabeinu Bachaye says, when we talk about the inyanei haMishkan and the Mikdash, we have a tremendous zechus. We generate great sechar when we involve ourselves in discussing their details and try to understand the simple pshat - the revealed aspect of this. Certainly, this will be true to a greater extent if we'll be zocheh to understand some "inside scoop" of the Mishkan.

From here we learn that this is a **מצוה גדולה אשר עד השמים יגיע שכרם**. The sechar reaches until shamayim. But the question we have to answer is, what exactly do these parshiyos mean to us? Wherein lies instruction to us from these parshiyos?

### WHY THE BEIS HAMIKDASH?

Now the emes is that these parshiyos reflect the tremendous love of Hakadosh Baruch Hu for us. Many times people view the Torah from a harsh perspective. Hashem is definitely not someone Whose ratzon is to be taken lightly. There definitely are responsibilities that carry great consequences if we are lax in our fulfillment of the Torah. We should not take the merit to serve Hashem in the Mishkan or Mikdash for granted. But the yetzer hara sometimes goes to work on a person in telling him that, "This is too much. It's overwhelming." And he tells you that you're going to get 'burned' regardless of how much effort you make, so you might as well enjoy yourself while you can. To counter this false notion, we need to understand that these

<sup>1</sup> ודע כי הספור בענין המשכן וכליו והחקירה בתוכו צורותיו ומבואיו ושעור ארכו ורחבו וקומתו אע"פ שאין בהמ"ק קיים מצוה גדולה היא עד שמים יגיע שכרה ותורה היא וללמוד אנו צריכין. וכן הזכירו רז"ל בענין הקרבנות כי כל המתעסק בלמוד פרשיות וישא ויתן בלבו עניניהם כאלו הקריב הקרבן עצמו הוא שאמרו כל העוסק בפרשת עולה כאלו הקריב עולה בפרשת חטאת כאלו הקריב חטאת וכן כלם. הא למדת מזה על הספור בפיו בלבד שכרו אתו ופעולתו לפניו כאלו עשה המעשה והקריב קרבן על המזבח וה"ה בספור עניני המשכן והמקדש שיש לנו זכות עצומה ועקב רב כאשר נהגה בהם ונשתדל להבין פשוטן ונגליהם, עאכ"ו אם נזכה להשיג תוכם להשכיל אחד מרמזיהם והוא שהזכיר דוד על הענין הזה על הנסתר והגלה (תהילים מ"ח: י"ג-י"ד) סבו ציון והקיפוה ספרו מגדליה שיתו לבכם לחילה פסגו ארמונותיה למען תספרו לדור אחרון, ובזכות הסבור וההקפ בנגלה ובנסתר ישיב שכירתו לתוכו שנאמר (שם) כי זה אלהים אלהינו עולם ועד הוא ינהגנו על מות.

parshiyos express the great love of Hakadosh Baruch Hu to Klal Yisrael. It's mind boggling when we try to fathom that Hashem had such a strong desire to have a Beis Hamikdash and dwell with us!

In the Alshich's commentary, Rav Moshe Alshich (1508-1593) writes that in the Torah it says **ועשו לי מקדש** - and let them make for Me a Mikdash, **ושכנתי בתוכם**, and I shall dwell in them. It doesn't say "in it." It says "in them," because the main goal of the Beis Hamikdash was for Hakadosh Baruch Hu to live amongst Klal Yisrael. Try to imagine for a moment that a great desire of Hakadosh Baruch Hu is to live down below with people. It's pashut unimaginable. The Medrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 13:6) in the beginning of the Torah says:

**ביום הראשון, אמר רבי שמואל בר אבא, מהו ביום הראשון, מן היום הראשון שברא הקדוש ברוך הוא את העולם נתאוה לדור עם בריותיו בתחתונים, ראה היאך כתיב בברית יום ראשון (בראשית א, ה): ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום אחד, יום ראשון אינו אומר, אלא יום אחד, וכשם שאמר יום אחד יאמר יום שנים יום שלשה, אלא למה אמר יום אחד, שעד שהקדוש ברוך הוא היה יחידי בעולמו נתאוה לדור עם בריותיו בתחתונים, לא עשה כן אלא כיון שהוקם המשכן והשרה בו הקדוש ברוך הוא שכנתו ובאו הנשיאים להקריב, אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא יכתב שביום זה נברא העולם.**

The pasuk says **ביום הראשון** - on the first day. Says Rabbi Shmuel bar Abba what is meant by bayom harishon? Answers the Medrash, that from the first day that Hakadosh Baruch Hu created the world, He desired to live with His bryios, with the people He created. Look how the Torah writes. In the creation of yom rishon it says **ויהי ערב ויהי בקר יום אחד**. It doesn't say **יום ראשון** - on the first day, but rather it says, **יום אחד** - on the day number one. And if it says 'yom echad,' it should say afterwards 'yom shenayim' and 'yom sheloshah.' It doesn't say that. So why does it say yom echad? Because on the yom echad Hakadosh Baruch Hu was a **יחיד בעולמו**, Hashem was alone in the world, **נתאוה לדור עם בריאותיו**, and He desired to live with His bryios betachtonim. **לא עשה כן**, but He didn't do so until the Mishkan was established, His presence dwelled there, and the leaders of the Tribes brought karbanos. Hakadosh Boruch Hu said that the day when the Mishkan was established was equivalent to the day that the world was created.

This is an unbelievable thought, to contemplate that Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants to live with the tachtonim, which refers to Am Yisrael, as the the Torah says **בראשית**, and the Chazal (see Rashi Bereishis 1:1) tell us it means **בשביל ישראל** - the world was created for the sake Klal Yisroel that are called reishis.

## HOSTING YOUR REBBI

The Vilna Gaon writes that the main purpose of olam haba is that the neshamah comes back to its source and attaches itself to the Shechinah and becomes one with the Shechinah. He says it's **ובודאי**, most certainly, **יותר טוב**, much better **שהשכינה** **דבוקה למטה**, when the Shechinah is attached down here below in this world, to people, **כאשר היתה כוונת הבריאה**, since this was the intention of creating the world.<sup>2</sup>

The Vilna Gaon says that this is what the Torah says many times, such as "I will dwell among you," and "I won't detest you, etc." Hakadosh Baruch Hu's desire in the brias haolam was to have a very strong keshet with us and he wanted nothing else but to attach Himself to us.

Now the thought that the Borei Olam created us and gave us an ability to accept His malchus, and by us accepting His malchus and living according to His will, we enable Him to dwell betachtonim, is in itself a mind boggling idea. It's not the pshat Hashem could force Himself on us. That's not what He wants. He wants to dwell betachtonim in such a way that the tachtonim themselves would want Hashem to live with them. Now, you should know that this is not such a davar pashut. I was wondering if I would like my rebbi (Rav Meir Halevi Soloveichik, zt"l) to have moved in with me. I remember thinking about this a number of times, that I would have loved for him to come for a visit. That's for sure. For a visit, I could have risen to the occasion. I could have cleaned up my house. I once went through every room trying to figure out what in this room would my rebbi not like. He had very critical, very sharp eagle eyes.

We take for granted that what we have in our house is okay. People have secular books in their house, secular newspapers and magazines. People have technology, of all kinds. I always remember when a family with modern attitudes invited me to their house. The poor family must have had kinipshins when they heard I was coming, because when I came into my room, every drawer was stuffed. You couldn't open any of them! They wrapped the TV in a blanket. They put a Chanukah menorah in the room. They wanted to make sure I was going to be comfortable. I saw the drawers were stuffed with books, comic books.

<sup>2</sup> בפני הגר"א לשיר השירים (א-ו) וז"ל, הקשו הקדמונים למה לא נאמר בתורה שכל עולם הבא. וי"ל כי עיקר עולם הבא הוא להשיב נשמה למקורה לדבק בשכינה, ובודאי יותר טוב מזה שהשכינה דבוקה למטה כאשר היתה כוונת הבריאה כידוע, ושכר זה כתב כמה פעמים בתורה עד אין מספר, ושכנתי בתוכם כה ח ולא תגעל נפשי וגו' (ויקרא כו-יא)

So I was thinking, if my rebbi would come to my house, how would I feel? I would be very excited he came for a visit. But let's say he moved in. I was thinking to myself, "Do you know what that would mean?" What if he told me the following: "I would love to move in with you. I feel comfortable in your house." Let's say he didn't want to be in chutz la'arezt, but for some reason he had to be in chutz la'arezt, so he had to have a place to stay. So I would think, "My life is over!" I mean, I couldn't live my life anymore. I would think, "Could I take a Yated into my house? Is Yated Ne'eman acceptable to him?" In my Rebbi's house I never saw a Yated Ne'eman. How about Hamodia? English words, secular words. And what about the Jewish novels hanging around from your kids? I'd have to box the place up. I am serious - think about it. What would I have to get rid of that wasn't appropriate for him?

### WHAT IF HASHEM WANTS TO MOVE IN?

And here comes Hakadosh Baruch Hu and tells this to me out of love, not because He's stuck with me. Hakadosh Baruch Hu says, "I want to live with you." Now that's a tremendous demonstration of love. If anybody ever doubts that Hakadosh Baruch Hu loves them, they should just think about these parshiyos.

Now, of course, you must realize that Hashem is different from anybody else who may come to your house. When Hashem comes to your house, you could only dream about the brachah that He brings along with Him. You could only imagine the goodies that come with Hashem. Health, happiness, being 'up,' feeling accomplished, feeling alive, being in the zone. I can only imagine what it could do. A person has to realize that this is what the building of the Mishkan is about.

Chazal taught us that the initial hope of Hashem - after kabalas haTorah - was that every individual himself should serve as a Mishkan for Hashem without a "middleman," without a Mishkan, without a mizbeach; and if Klal Yisrael would not have sinned with the eigel, they would have not needed a Mishkan. They wouldn't have needed kohanim or a mizbeach.

### BUILDING A MISHKAN IN OUR HEARTS

Now, the gemara says that when Klal Yisrael received the Torah, they reached the level of Adam Harishon before his sin. They were free of sin, free of the yetzer hara; however, after they sinned with the eigel, they lost that level of purity and weren't able anymore to have the Shechinah rest upon each and every one of them directly. The only way they could have the Shechinah resting upon them was via a Mishkan. We must understand this is the reality. The reality is that we are people that are torn. We are people that have yetzer haras within us, and Hashem is aware of it. The question is: can we generate some love for Hakadosh Baruch Hu in the same way that we feel love from Hashem, and respond with love that Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants from us? With this, **בלבבי משכן אבנה**, in my heart I shall build a Mishkan for Hashem.

Now, what does "building a Mishkan for Hashem" mean? What is the meaning of that? The meaning of this is that I have a sense and a feeling that Hashem is in my life and He's integral to my life. I can't live my life independent of Hashem.

Now, for most people, as nice as they are, it's very difficult to have strangers live in their homes. A short stay, maybe in the basement, while they sleep upstairs, is probably doable. But very few people are able to have strangers occupying their house, living on the same floor with their family. It really crimps their lifestyle. Some people like to walk around in certain attire, a certain type of pajamas in their house, that you may call silly and they wouldn't like to walk around in these silly pajamas in front of their guests. At least they are on the madreigah of actually wearing pajamas. But if you have people who don't wear pajamas, they surely don't feel comfortable walking in their own houses with people around. It's embarrassing to have strangers walking around your house when you look like that.

### A VISIT FROM A STRANGE GUEST

I'll never forget this story from when I was young. We once had in our house a guest who was a really hippy-dippy type. It was back in the 60s. My father was leaving to shul and wanted to take this guest along, but the guest told him, "You go out, I'll come soon." The next thing I knew the guy was walking around the hallways in his birthday suit. It was a little shocking. I remember my mother ran to her bedroom and locked the door. The guy didn't mean anything bad. He was just chilling. They told him to "make himself at home" and he did!

But it could be very uncomfortable. It makes people nervous when they don't know what's going to happen. People are like that. You like to just act yourself.

And here, Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants us not only to accept Him in our house, but to embrace Him! Now the reason why

people have a difficult time with the idea of Hashem living in their house is because they look at Hakadosh Baruch Hu as a stranger, rachmana litzlan. They even look at a big tzaddik like a stranger, but because they think and hope that a big tzaddik is going to bring them some brachah, they'll tolerate it for a while until they get some brachah. They'll swallow their pride meanwhile.

### FEELING LIKE A GUEST IN YOUR OWN HOUSE

I know a lady who once needed brachah in her life, a couple actually, and I told them to do some extreme chessed. That's going to bring brachah in your life. A Chassidische Rebbe, a very nice man, came to town with his entourage and they asked this couple if they could move into their house for a week. The lady called me up. I said that it would be a wonderful experience and a good opportunity for the "extreme" chessed I told them to look for. There was only one problem: she wasn't allowed to cook in her house for a week. They kashered her house completely for Pesach. They brought a complete set of their own keilim, pots, pans, plates, etc. They kashered her ovens and kashered her countertops. They brought their own water urns. They basically took over her house. They said, "Whatever you need or want, just say the word and it will be cooked for you. Whenever you want - anything!" Oh, great.

She called me after two days and asked, "What's with these people? Don't they ever sleep?" She described the banging of doors with people coming in the house, out of the house, at 2 o'clock, or 3 o'clock in the morning. I said, "They must be nocturnal. They must be night people. They come to see and talk to the rebbi."

She woke up one morning, around 5:30am. It was very quiet in her house. She decided she'll go down and make herself a cup of coffee. She figured what's the big deal with a cup of coffee. She went down to her kitchen and put a kettle of hot water up and it started to whistle. Before she knew it, the rooms were opening up and people wearing tachrichim, white shrouds - white pajamas - were coming out of all the doors! They said, "Oh, you want some water? We'll give you water." She couldn't even make herself a cup of water. That was the understanding that she couldn't cook in her house for that week. So she threw them out. I told her that was a major mistake. She said, "I can't take it." I said, "But you knew. They told you up front. They were very clear with you that one week you don't cook and you accepted the deal." She couldn't take it. I understood her, because everybody likes to feel in their own home they're the king and the queen.

The next year she had a change of heart. She invited them back, and she didn't get in their way. The following year she had tremendous brachah in her life.

### DOES HASHEM FEEL WELCOMED IN YOUR HOME?

But a person has to know it works in the exact same way with Hashem. You can't do what you want in your house. The house is Hashem's. Just because you like to decorate the house in a certain fashion, you have to know: is that in accordance with the will of Hashem, or will Hashem not like the way you decorate your house? Does Hashem approve of your decorations? Maybe you like to put little buddhas in your kitchen. You think it's cute to have those little fat guys perched on a shelf. I was in a person's house and I saw that in a person's kitchen, on the counter. I said, "What is this? Is this avodah zarah?" "Nah, it's just one of those cute buddhas," he replied. I said, "That's avodah zarah." "Nah, it's not avodah zarah." I said, "Listen to me, these are real idols. That's getchkes. I don't think they belong in a Jewish home. Maybe get a little puppy or something, but don't put that up there. You can't have that in your house. That is avodah zarah." They were ba'alei teshuvah. They didn't know better until I told them.

But people think you can do what you want and how you want. It's not true. You have to know what's acceptable. You have to put the mezuzah where Hashem wants it, even though it might mess up the décor of a person's doorway. It loses the smooth, sleek look. You don't see those in the pictures, the mezuzah there. And a person has to understand that we have to embrace Hakadosh Baruch Hu and we have to take Him into our house. We have to understand that our goal is to build a Mishkan for Hashem, to make our homes 'Jewish homes' and through that to make Hashem welcome in our homes.

I remember Rav Segal, the rosh yeshivah of Manchester Yeshivah. People would call him from all over the world when they had tzaros and the first thing he would ask them was whether they had a television. They would say yes, a lot of times. "You can't have any brachah if you have a television in your home," he would tell them. They would ask why. He would say, "Because Hashem is not welcome in your home. Hashem is not going to be present in a home with a television. It's the antithesis of an invitation to Hashem."

I remember going to pick up a letter from very fine American people, fine balebatim, nice erliche balebatim in Eretz Yisrael on motzei Yom Hakippurim, and I remember going into their house. They were very welcoming and there was this television blaring in Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh. Were these people clueless? Hello? It's Motzei Yom Kippur! I mean you just spent 25 hours with Hashem. Like don't you get it? And they were people who had a shaychus. They had a shaychus. But they didn't want Hashem around. They didn't want Hashem to rain on their party.

### **MAKE A SPECIAL SUITE FOR HASHEM**

When we think of the Mishkan, Hashem says **ועשו לי מקדש**. Chazal tell us such an amazing expression of what the Mishkan is. It's like a melech who has a bas yechidah, a single daughter, an only child and he's in love with the child and some prince comes and he marries her and the prince wants to take her back to his country. The king says to the prince, "I can't stop you. She's your wife now. You're entitled. Just do me one favor. Wherever you are, have a room, have an in-law suite. Make me feel welcome. Make me feel welcome in your home." Hakadosh Baruch Hu tells us this too: "Make Me a suite. You have your own world, and you are living your own life, but make Me a suite." That's what the Mishkan represents, a suite for Hashem.

This is something that takes place in a person's mind. It starts with your mind. It's a concept we don't hear of often. Invite Hashem into your home and the shechinah will be in your home., That's what Hashem wants. That's the shechinah betachtonim. Hashem wants to be in a Jewish home.

I remember somebody whom I was trying to make frum and he said, "You know, I'm always hearing this concept: 'Jewish home, Jewish home.' What does a Jewish home mean? I understand Italians living in a home. I understand African-Americans living in a home. I understand Jewish people living in a home. I get that. But what is a Jewish home? Does the Jewish home have peyos or something?" Interesting question, isn't it?

I told him, "First of all, there are structural halachos in a Jewish home. Is your door facing another Jew's door? Do you have mezuzos on your door? Do you have a ma'akah, do you have protective railings on landings so that children or adults can't fall down? Do your windows have guards so that people can't fall out? These are Jewish homes built according to the rules of the Torah."

### **LOOK AROUND YOUR HOUSE**

What the Jewish home really means, is whether Hashem is going to be welcomed in your life and in your presence. You have a nice bar. Do you think Hashem is going to be impressed with your bar? There are a lot of homes that have nice pool tables. Do you think Hashem is going to say, "Oh, I like that! That makes Me feel very welcome." So look around your home. Maybe you have this big strange flower pot that's 6 feet tall. I was in a person's house. They had a giraffe, literally, 7-8 feet tall. I said, "Where did you get this thing from?" They said they acquired it on one of their travels. I told him that it must have cost a fortune to ship. "Don't even mention it," he said. This huge giraffe in their home - do you think that's going to make Hashem feel welcome? If they would at least have written on it **מה רבו מעשיך ה'**, that would have been different.

A person has to think honestly. You go into homes and you see sefarim. You see sefarim. You know in how many Jewish homes you can't find sefarim? You find coffee-table books. That you can find. I've been to a lot of frum homes that have coffee-table books, pictures of different landscapes, pictures of narishkeit, high mountain peaks and interesting oceans, and beautiful coffee-table books. Where's the shas? Somewhere in the basement.

### **A HOUSE WITHOUT ANY SEFARIM**

I went into one home, a heimishe house. They weren't even speaking English fluently. They were speaking Yiddish. I said, "Do you perhaps have a sefer I could have?" I looked on the entire first floor, but I couldn't find a sefer. I went to the family room, the living room and the dining room. The wife then tells me, "I think somewhere in a basement, in a closet we have in a box with some Hebrew sefurim." I said, "Do you have anything Jewish like a Tehillim, anything?" It was in an all-Jewish neighborhood, a very famous Jewish neighborhood. I remember being blown away. The lady started looking. She said, "I'm going to look for something for you." She came back to me. I mean this was mind blowing. She brought me a piece of paper from the shul with the zmanim of when minchah started, when shacharis started, when ma'ariv was, when the shekiyah was. She brought that to me. She said, "This is the only Jewish text I could find. Will that do for now?" That was it. But I was thinking, "Is this a yiddishe home?" Now, I'm sure they thought it was. But don't you put books in a Jewish home? Sefarim belong in a shil or a shul or a beit kenesset, but not in a house? It was a beautiful house, a nice modern home. Where do sefarim fit in? Goyishe

books they have no embarrassment about putting in. They even have old goyishe books, like encyclopedias. That, I've seen in people's dining rooms. Sefarim? Nothing. That means the house is missing the basics of a Jewish home.

### INVITE HASHEM INTO YOUR LIFE

The Torah wants us to be mekayem **ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם**, to create a place for Hashem. And I tell people, "Invite Hashem in your life and ask yourself, 'Where do I actually want Hashem in my life?'"

I'll give you an example of how a person could begin to work on this. A person could come home. He could sit and eat. He could make it his minhag: "I'm going to eat with Hashem." Eating is a most enjoyable pastime. Most people don't eat for their health, contrary to popular belief. People eat because it's one of the most enjoyable pastimes that everybody in the world engages in. Some people like more healthy food. That's what turns them on. Some people like less healthy food. That's what turns them on. Everybody has their particular thing. But if you sat and thought that it's such an amazing gift that Hashem inserted into a person the ability to taste foods! There are hundreds if not thousands of taste buds that taste all different foods. Enjoy the food! You don't have to speak it out. Just think about it while you are having your meal. Make a brachah. Think, "Hashem, I want to say that I appreciate this." That means you eat by a table which then becomes a mizbeach. You elevate it. Don't go nuts. Don't go wild. Don't tell your wife this tastes like Beis Hamikdash food. Just tell your wife it's delicious. "It's delicious. Really, delicious!"

My grandfather (Rav Avdiogdor Miller, zt"l) once said to his son, "I can't tell you for how many years I ate leshem shamayim. Don't tell your mother that." He wanted his wife to think that the only reason he was eating the food was because it was so delicious. That's called amazing avodas Hashem. I remember I was blown away from this. My wife should not know that, because the wife is going to think, "Oh, I'm serving the mizbeach here?! I want to serve my husband. I want my husband to enjoy my food!" That's what my zeida said. Amazing!

Every time he ate his food he ate with such joy. You can't imagine the joy that he had! He put every spoonful in his mouth, then he would put the spoon down and he would chew it and chew it and chew it. Not for health. Because he enjoyed it and became closer to Hashem. And he would contemplate how many joys he was experiencing at that moment. It was an amazing thing to see. It looked like he was eating regularly. He wasn't jumping all over the room, davening, wearing his tallis when he was eating breakfast. No. He was eating like a regular person, but he was with Hashem. That's what he did. That's how you introduce Hashem in your life.

My grandfather once gave an eitzah to somebody who was a ballebus to make his home a Jewish home, so that his children would see a Jewish home. You know what he said to him? "Instead of going to the couch with a newspaper and falling asleep, being buried by The New York Times or the Daily News, take a sefer. Put some sefarim out on the table. Open them up. Either fall asleep on the sefarim or take a sefer to the couch and put it over your head and fall asleep like that. Your child will see his father fall asleep with sefarim. It will make an impression on him. It will make an impression on Hashem, too." A guy who takes a pair of underwear and sticks it on his face and he goes to sleep on his couch like that, everybody knows the guy is an animal. The guy is a meshugene. You know what I mean? Who does things like that? If you want to take a sefer, l'havdil., it shows at least you're aware of Hashem in your life. That's what you're doing when you make your house into a Jewish home.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu should help us reach this level and enable us to embrace Hashem and fulfill **בלבבי משכן אבנה**.

#### THE BOTTOM LINE

Hashem's desire to live among Klal Yisroel and be attached to us overshadows even the purpose of Olam Haba. This is according to the Gr"a, who says that this is the purpose of the creation of the entire world! How can I generate love for Hashem and respond to Him in the way that He wants me to? How can I build a mishkan in my heart for Hashem? The answer is, by creating a deep and tangible feeling that Hashem is an integral part of my life, where He Himself "feels" welcome in my house. This is the epitome of what it means to have a Jewish home. This coming week, I will look around my home, to make sure that the sefarim I have are more prominently displayed than any of the coffee-table magazines, frum novels, art books or cookbooks that I might have lying around. As so vividly described in the story about Rav Miller, zt"l, I will also attempt to "eat with Hashem" for a few short, private moments while consciously enjoying my delicious dinner. This will help me to feel that I am embracing the presence of Hashem, who wants to attach Himself to this world, as opposed to tolerating an important guest.

