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**DED**  
RESEARCH UNIT

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שבת..... *for Friday nights*..... קדש

Friday 27 February 2009 - 3 Adar 5769  
Sedra Terumah

### THE TEMPLE AT HOME

**T**HE JEWISH HOME IS CALLED “A SMALL SANCTUARY”. It has the quality of the Temple, a dwelling for G-d. This week's Sedra<sup>1</sup> describes the Sanctuary which Moses and the Jewish people were going to build. They constructed it before leaving the Sinai region and carried it with them throughout the forty years in the desert. Then they brought it into the Land of Israel. It was later replaced by the Temple built in Jerusalem.

In the command to build the Sanctuary, G-d tells Moses “They shall make for Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell in them”<sup>2</sup>.

G-d does not say “I will dwell in it”, in the Sanctuary, but “in them”. The Sages explain this means that G-d dwells in the heart of each Jewish man and woman<sup>3</sup>. Each person is sacred, and the home in which they dwell is also sacred.

The Sanctuary or Temple had three basic qualities which are potentially expressed in every Jewish home.

Firstly, it was a source of Torah knowledge: in the Holy of Holies were the Tablets with the Ten Commandments brought by Moses from Sinai. Further, when Moses completed writing the Torah Scroll, one copy of the Torah was placed in the Holy of Holies.

Second, the Temple is termed a “House of Prayer”<sup>4</sup>. It is the Gate of Heaven, for all prayers pass through it to G-d. Throughout the

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generations, in whichever country they live, Jewish people face the Temple in Jerusalem when they pray. Inside the Temple, the service carried out every day expressed utter devotion to the Divine, the essence of prayer.

Third, in the Temple was a Golden Table on which were twelve loaves of bread. This expresses the fact that G-d sends a flow of blessings into the world in order to provide every creature with its needs. This flow of blessing passes through the Temple and then radiates outwards to the world, giving food and sustenance to all.

Each of these three ideas relates in some way to the home. Let us see how.

The Jewish home today is a potential centre for Torah study, where husband, wife and children regularly take the time to explore Torah teachings. Jewish books are part of the natural furniture. Indeed, many people organise an occasional shiur or study group in their home<sup>5</sup>.

What about Prayer? Surely the main services are in the Synagogue? This is true, but there are many prayers which are said in the home: the morning prayers, blessings before and after eating, and the Shema before going to bed. And home is the ideal place to pray for those who do not attend the Synagogue, for whatever reason.

G-d pours blessings into the Temple, from which they spread to the world. The Divine blessing which pours into the Jewish home is likewise shared, through warm hospitality and acts of goodness and kindness. The Charity Box in the home expresses this concept, as do all the deeds of generosity which take place there, reaching out to others as well.

Thus the Jewish home is indeed “a small Sanctuary”. Like the Temple, it is a centre for Torah, Prayer and Kindness. There, in the home as in the Temple, the Divine Presence dwells<sup>6</sup>.

1. Exodus 25:1-27:19. 2. Exodus 25:8. 3. See the Maamar *Bati LeGani* ch.1. 4. Isaiah 56:7. 5. For help in achieving this, contact the Jewish Home Network at 07931 559 074. 6. See the Lubavitcher Rebbe's public letter 'Between 10 and 15 Shevat' 5747.

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*SEDRA TERUMAH*

**MOVING IN**

Bracha jumped up excitedly as soon as the school bell rang. Today was moving day – her family was moving into a brand new house.

As she raced down the street, breathless to catch a glimpse of her room with all of the new furnishings, Bracha thought about how pleasant it was going to be to not have to share a room with her two sisters. Bracha could not wait to see the new bed, curtain and beautiful rug that she had chosen for her new room.

“Hello, Mommy, Daddy, I’m home,” Bracha yelled out as soon as she entered the brand new house.

“Darling, I’ll be right over,” called her mother. “In the meantime, you can go on up and take a look at your new room. It looks beautiful.”

Bracha entered her new room, and nodded her head in satisfaction. “What a beautiful room this is!” Bracha said quietly as her eyes swept approvingly across the room, “Yet something is missing, it doesn’t feel quite right”.

“So Bracha, how do you like your room?” Her mother asked as she entered the room and sat down on the chair.

“It looks beautiful,” remarked Bracha, “but something just does not feel right. I can’t place what exactly is missing though.”

“Well, Darling, you have your bed, you rug, your curtains – oh I know what is missing – it is your bookcase with your Siddur, Tzedaka Box and other Jewish Books. Yes, that is definitely what is missing!”

“Mommy, I think you are right!” said Bracha excitedly, “and that is so interesting, because we are learning this week about the Holy Temple and our teacher described how beautiful it was. But the main part was that it was a holy place where Hashem could come down to dwell.”

“That is so interesting,” said Bracha’s mother. “This week the Sedra is talking about building a new, beautiful home for Hashem, and it is the same week that we are moving into our new home.”

Bracha’s mother jumped up, and pulled her phone out of her pocket and began to dial.

“Who are you calling Mommy?” asked Bracha curiously.

“Sweetie, I am calling the movers right away,” answered Bracha’s mother. “I want to make sure that they bring your bookcase, with its Jewish books and Tzedaka Box. I want your room to feel like a place which is a dwelling for Hashem.”

“Thanks Mom,” said Bracha. “That really is cool”.

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