

TERUMAH (EXODUS 25:1-27:19)

Getting Along With Your In-Laws

2004 · Rabbi Yerachmiel Sepowitz

Moses was commanded to build a sanctuary. There was going to be a physical structure among the people of Israel that would be dedicated to G-d.

"They will make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell among them." (Exodus, 25:8)

It is interesting that G-d, Who is totally spiritual, without physical form, would require a house in which to dwell. How could G-d limit His greatness to be housed within four small walls?

There is a beautiful Midrash that illustrates G-d's love for his People and His Torah.

A king's only daughter got married. The king adored his daughter, and was terribly torn to see her go.

"My daughter is an only child," he told her new husband. "I can't bear to be separated from her. But I can't tell you not to take her. After all, I have given her to you as a wife.

"Therefore, I have a request. Wherever you move, please build a small room, adjacent to your home. That way, I can live next to you."

G-d gave His beloved Torah to Moses and the People of Israel. He would not ask Israel not to take the Torah; He had already given it to them. Therefore, he asked us to build Him a small Sanctuary, where He would be "near" His beloved Torah and His beloved People of Israel.

"They will make for Me a sanctuary, and I will dwell among them."

When our people traveled in the desert, we had a portable Tabernacle that was dismantled and reassembled each time we moved. In Israel, we had a Temple (for a while.) Today, our synagogues and even our homes serve as a place to house the Presence of G-d and His Torah. By living a Torah lifestyle, we invite G-d to "move into" our homes, and bestow His blessings upon us and our families.

For I have given you a precious gift; do not forsake My Torah. (Proverbs, 4:2)

It was a fairy-tale marriage. She was his Cinderella and he was her Prince Charming. He loved her with all his heart, and the feeling was mutual.

“Prince Charming” was a welcome addition to the family. Cinderella’s father loved him like a son. They went fishing together. His father-in-law took him into the family business. He rapidly advanced through the ranks of the company, soon becoming a vice-president. All was right with the world.

Then he met “her.” Prince Charming found another Cinderella. She was, he felt, more “his type.” She was younger and prettier. She “understood” him better; she was more “relevant” and in tune to his needs. (At least, so he thought.) His marriage was destroyed. He said good-bye to his wife.

The next day, he got in his car and drove to work. Much to his shock, he found himself locked out of his own office.

Our relationship with G-d is a two-way street. If you want to keep G-d in your life, make sure you stay married to His Torah!

Have a great Shabbos.

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