

FEBRUARY 28, 2020

Parashat Terumah

Exodus 25:1-27:19

Taught By:

Orli & Jonah



### SUMMARY

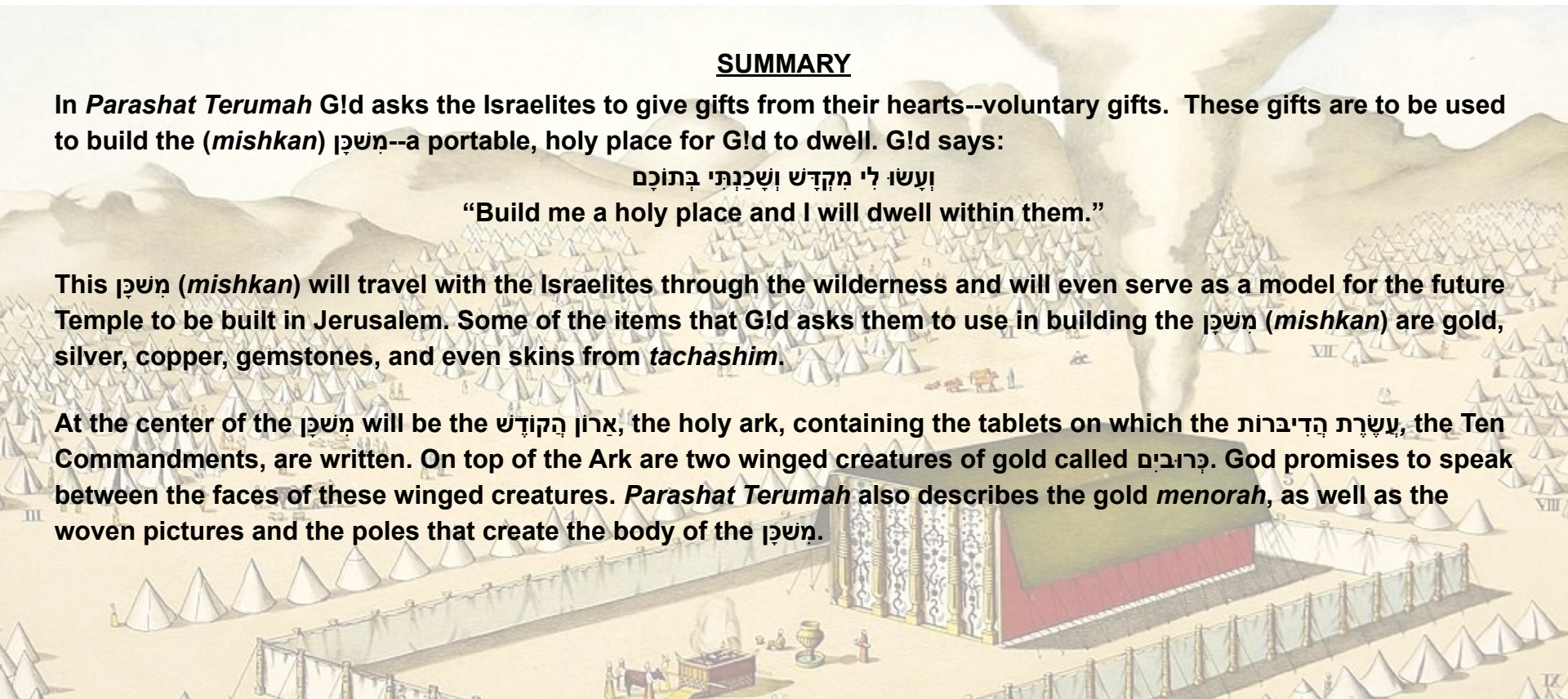
In *Parashat Terumah* G!d asks the Israelites to give gifts from their hearts--voluntary gifts. These gifts are to be used to build the (*mishkan*) מִשְׁכָּן--a portable, holy place for G!d to dwell. G!d says:

וַעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשִׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם

“Build me a holy place and I will dwell within them.”

This מִשְׁכָּן (*mishkan*) will travel with the Israelites through the wilderness and will even serve as a model for the future Temple to be built in Jerusalem. Some of the items that G!d asks them to use in building the מִשְׁכָּן (*mishkan*) are gold, silver, copper, gemstones, and even skins from *tachashim*.

At the center of the מִשְׁכָּן will be the אָרוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ, the holy ark, containing the tablets on which the עֲשׂוֹת הַדִּיבּוֹת, the Ten Commandments, are written. On top of the Ark are two winged creatures of gold called קְרוּבִים. God promises to speak between the faces of these winged creatures. *Parashat Terumah* also describes the gold *menorah*, as well as the woven pictures and the poles that create the body of the מִשְׁכָּן.



1) There are a lot of details in this *parasha*. It tells us a lot about how to build the *mishkan*--the portable desert sanctuary where G!d will live amongst the Israelites. It is specific about materials to use, about sizes of things, and about colors. Why do you think G!d would be so specific about all of these things?

2) One of the materials that G!d tells the Israelites to use to build the *mishkah* is skin from a **שׁוֹמֵן**--a dolphin, or a dugong. Dugongs, or “sea cows” are vegetarian and live in warm ocean waters. The Israelites are in the middle of a desert wilderness. Why might G!d tell them to use the skin of an underwater, vegetarian animal like this as part of building the *mishkan*?

ORL: I think it looks like a strong animal. Also, maybe G!d told them to use the skin of an animal from underwater since they're in a place without water and these skins would be seen as valuable.

JONAH Maybe G!d is a little like us. After all--we are made in G!d's image. Maybe G!d wants G!d's home to be sturdy and to look fancy and this is why G!d gave such specific directions.

ORL Maybe this is a test for the Israelites or G!d's way of building trust with the them. Maybe G!d wants to see if the Israelites will listen and do all of the things that G!d tells them to do.

3) G!d tells the Israelites that they should put *kruvim* on top of ark, then tells them that G!d will talk to them from between the **כְּרֻבִים**. *Rashi* says that they looked like babies. *Rashbam* says that they looked more like birds. Why do you think G!d would tell the Israelites to put **כְּרֻבִים** on top of the ark that would carry the 10 Commandments and from which G!d would talk to the Israelites?

JONAH: I imagine that the *kruvim* looked more like falcons and may have been placed there to show that G!d wants the Israelites to protect the 10 Commandments--like G!d protected the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve were sent out of it. After they left, G!d put a *kruv* and a sword that turns in every direction in front of the entrance to the Garden of Eden so that no one could get back in. When the Israelites look at the ark, it could remind them of a time when people were closer to G!d.

ORL: If I had something that belonged to my grandparents, when I looked at it, it would make me feel stronger and more connected to them, so maybe the *kruvim* are to remind G!d or the Israelites of something from their past. When G!d looks at the *kruvim* it can remind G!d of the story of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden and think of all of human history and how much G!d cares about people. Also it could remind the Israelites of Adam and Eve and how important it is to follow G!d's *mitzvot*.