



Personal Parsha: Terumah Fundraiser for the Mishkan

This week's Torah reading is about the commandment to build the mishkan, the tabernacle, i.e. a sanctuary for God. How can God fit into a home? Clearly this is meant to be a symbolic representation of His dwelling in our midst. As the verse says quite clearly:

"Make for me a dwelling-place, so that I can dwell among YOU" (25:8) – not dwell IN IT !

When God tells Moses that he needs to collect gold, silver, fur and precious stones he tells him to tell Bnei Yisrael that they must "take for me a contribution" (25:2). We would expect the verb "give" or "offer" - what does "Take for me" mean?

Moses, or any fundraiser working on this project, had to explain to Bnei Yisrael that GIVING is really TAKING in this case. How so? Would you rush to give to this project/cause? Why?

How would this fundraising pitch work on you?

Possible ways to understand this formulation are:

- 1) When we give to God, we are really just taking – taking from what He's given us. Whose money is it really, after all? So, take from the money God has given you and earmark it for the construction of the mishkan He is commanding us to build.
- 2) When you give, you really take and receive. How so? We each feel good and get a high when we help others or do something positive. So the giving ultimately benefits you!
- 3) When we help build a place where we will be enabled to have a closer, deeper, and more meaningful relationship with God, we are really the recipients of the good that comes with that!

Which one of these explanations do you must relate to? Have you had an experience lately where your giving felt more like taking? Discuss and share :)