

THE KTM DAF PARASHA

BRINGING A TASTE OF ISRAEL TO MONTREAL



START WITH WHY

BY RAV ARI FAUST (ROSH KOLLEL)

In 2010, author and inspirational speaker Simon Sinek took the stage at a TEDx conference. In just under eighteen minutes, his talk — “How Great Leaders Inspire Action” — became one of the most viewed TED talks of all time, with nearly 70 million views.

The premise of Sinek’s talk, following the thesis of his book *Start with Why*, is that the most innovative companies - and the most successful and inspiring leaders - think differently from everyone else. While most people and organizations begin with “what” they want to do and then consider “how” to execute it, truly transformative leaders begin elsewhere. They start with “why.” It is clarity of purpose that drives them, and it is that same clarity - what Sinek describes as “why do you wake up in the morning, and why should anyone care?” - that inspires others to believe in them.

Sinek calls this model “the Golden Circle.” And it can help us understand a fascinating phenomenon regarding the construction of the Mishkan.

In our parasha, we are commanded to build the Mishkan (Shemot 25:8, 10):

וְעַשׂו לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וּשְׁכֹנֶת בְּתוֹכָם ... וְעַשׂו אָרוֹן עַצְיָ שְׁתִים ...

And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them... They shall make an ark of acacia wood...

Notably, the command to construct the Mishkan begins not with the structure itself, but with the keilim - the sacred vessels. We are first instructed to fashion the Aron and the Menorah, and only afterward are we given the detailed specifications of the edifice that will house them.

Yet when the actual construction begins, Betzalel takes an entirely different approach (36:1, 8):

וְעַשֵּׂה בְּצֶלֶל וְאַחֲלָב וְכָל אִישׁ חֲכָמָב ... וְיִשְׁעַזְבָּן עַשְׂרָב ... אַתְּה אֲמַשְׁבָּן עַשְׂרָב ... לְבָב ... אַתְּה אֲמַשְׁבָּן עַשְׂרָב ... רִירְעָת ...

Then Bezalel and Oholiav and all the skilled persons whom Hashem had endowed with wisdom... carried out all that Hashem had commanded... And all the skilled among those engaged in the work made the Mishkan...

Here, the structure precedes the vessels.

Why does Moshe begin with the keilim while Betzalel begins with the building? How could Betzalel deviate from the order presented by Moshe? And perhaps most intriguingly, when the Torah summarizes Betzalel’s work, it states (38:22):

וּבְצֶלֶל ... עַשֵּׂה אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּה ה' אֲתִי-מֶשֶׁ

Betzalel... did all that Hashem had commanded Moshe.

The wording is striking: Betzalel fulfilled what Hashem commanded Moshe - not necessarily what Moshe instructed Betzalel.

The Gemara (Berachot 55a) addresses this very issue.

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani said in the name of Rabbi Yonatan: Betzalel was called by this name because of his wisdom.

At the time when the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moshe: “Go tell Betzalel, ‘Make for Me a Mishkan, an Ark, and vessels,’” Moshe went and reversed the order and said to him: “Make an Ark and vessels and a Mishkan.”

Betzalel said to him: “Moshe Rabbeinu, it is the way of the world that a person builds a house and afterward brings vessels into it - and you are saying, ‘Make an Ark and vessels and a Mishkan?’ The vessels that I make - where shall I place them? Perhaps this is what the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to you: ‘Make a Mishkan, an Ark, and vessels?’”

Moshe said to him: “Perhaps you were in the shadow of God (בְּאֵל-אֵל) and knew?”

Indeed, the divine command followed the practical logic that Betzalel intuited. It would be impractical - even disrespectful - to construct the keilim and leave them exposed. The structure must come first.

So why did Moshe reverse the order?

Maharal MiPrague (Gur Aryeh) explains that Moshe was not merely conveying technical instructions. He was teaching priorities. The Mishkan’s physical structure is not its essence; its sanctity lies in the avodah performed within it. The keilim represent the spiritual core - the reason the Mishkan exists at all.

Practically, the structure must precede the vessels. But conceptually, the purpose precedes the framework. Moshe “starts with why.”

This perspective may also illuminate an apparent textual incongruity in the very opening verse (25:8 - quoted above). The pasuk begins in the singular - “Let them make Me a sanctuary” - but then shifts to the plural: “that I may dwell among them.” It would seem more natural to say “that I may dwell within it.”

Yet Hashem does not dwell in walls. The Mishkan is not sacred because of its architecture. The Divine



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Presence manifests through the service performed within it - and ultimately within the people themselves. “שכנתם” “בתוכם” is in the plural, Hashem dwells in the keilim and our avodah.

The structure is necessary. But the purpose gives it meaning. The keilim are the Mishkan’s “why”.

This same pattern may also help explain a shift in the description of the creation of the world in Bereishit 1 and Bereishit 2. In the first chapter of creation, the Torah presents a structured account of the universe unfolding in orderly stages - light, sky, land, luminaries - culminating in the creation of humanity. The framework comes first and concludes with Adam on the sixth day. In Bereishit 2, however, Torah focuses intimately on Adam, his purpose, his moral world, and his relationship with Hashem. Chronologically, humanity is created at the end of the process; conceptually, humanity is the reason for it all. Bereishit 1 establishes the cosmic architecture, and Bereishit 2 reveals the “why” - the human being who gives the entire creation its meaning.

Moshe Rabbeinu is not a construction project manager or an architect, he is a leader and he is a teacher. It goes without saying that the walls and roof must be built first, but this is only answering “how”. Moshe reminds us that to be inspiring and effective we must go beyond the “what” and “how”, to always remain true to the essence of who we are and what we are doing. Moshe reminds us to “start with why”.



SHABBAT'S GREATEST HITS: YA RIBON OLAM

BY EVYATAR KERNER

There are moments in life when we stand and ask: why? Why did this happen to me? Why now? We try to understand, find the logic, calculate the account. And then Shabbat arrives, and we sing a beautiful song written by Rabbi Yisrael Najara in the 16th century - who at the time was Chief Rabbi of Gaza. The song says: "רַבְבָּין עַזְקָר וַתְּקַפֵּן" - Great are Your deeds and mighty, if a person were to live two thousand years, they could not calculate Your power." Wait. "Could not calculate Your power." What does that mean? That we can't settle accounts with God?

Let's talk about real life. You got hit. Something didn't work out as planned. And immediately, your mind starts working: why? What did I do wrong? You try to understand divine logic, calculate the account. Because we love logic. We need things to make sense. We want to understand the picture, know the plan. So we start settling accounts. "If I did this, then this should happen. This isn't fair. The account doesn't add up." And we stand before the Holy One and say: explain to me. Show me the account. Where's the logic?

And here comes the song: "Great are Your deeds and mighty." The deeds of the Holy One are enormous, powerful. "You humble the proud and raise the bowed" - He can change all of reality. And us? We don't see the big picture. We see only a small piece, one moment in reality. It's like standing with

your nose pressed to a huge painting. You see a red spot, a black line, a blue dot - but you don't see the complete picture. Only when you step back, you suddenly understand: the red spot is part of a flower, the black line is part of a tree, the blue dot is part of the sky.

And then comes the amazing sentence: "If a person were to live two thousand years, they could not calculate Your power." Think about this. Even living two thousand years - seeing generations pass, empires rise and fall - even then, they couldn't calculate it. Why? Because the account is too big, too complex. There are variables we don't even know exist. And us? We live eighty, ninety years at best. We see a tiny piece. And we're trying to settle accounts?

But here's the amazing thing. Sometimes we get to see a piece of the big picture. Something happens, time passes, something else happens, and suddenly - we understand. "Ah! That's because of this!" How many times has this happened? Something seemed terrible, illogical, unfair - and then time passed, and suddenly you understood why it had to happen that way? You saw how that bad thing led to something good, how that failure led to a different success, how the closing of one door opened another? And then you say: "I didn't understand then. But now I see." And this is only a small piece of the big picture. Just one moment when we were allowed to peek. But most of the time we don't see. We need to trust.

So why do we try to settle accounts? Because

it's our way of feeling we have control. If I understand the account, I can calculate what to do to get a result. This gives us security. But the truth is we don't have control. We don't have all the information. We can't see the big picture. Trying to settle accounts with the Holy One is like a flea settling accounts with an elephant - the flea sees one leg and can't imagine there's a whole body, a trunk, enormous ears.

If we can't understand, then what? The song doesn't tell us to stop thinking. It tells us: stop trying to settle accounts. There's a huge difference between "understanding" and "settling accounts." Understanding is trying to learn, grow, see more. But settling accounts is standing before the Holy One and saying: "You owe me an explanation. The account doesn't add up." And that's where we need to stop. Because "if a person were to live two thousand years, they could not calculate Your power." You can't understand the complete account. So instead of settling accounts, instead of demanding explanations - trust. Believe there's a plan, even if you don't see it. Know there's an account, even if it's not clear. And keep walking, even when you don't know where the road leads.

Shabbat Mission:

Next time you encounter a problem, don't ask yourself "why" is it happening ask "for what" is it happening; what is it leading me towards?





HALACHIC Q&A

BY RABBI YOSEF ZVI RIMON - NASI, WORLD MIZRACHI

Question: Can I use a Kedushat Shevi'it carrot for a snowman?

Answer: Letting the carrot sit and rot on the snowman would be indirectly causing loss of Shevi'it produce. While some Acharonim are lenient (Torat Ha'aretz) with indirect loss, we are stringent in accordance with those who hold that this is prohibited (Chazon Ish, Har Tzvi). Therefore, you may use a Shevi'it carrot for a snowman on condition that you remove it after a few hours and eat it. If you have a carrot that is not Shevi'it, it is preferable to use that instead.

Question: A bike has been sitting next to our shul for over a year and has been posted in many groups in an attempt to find its owner. Are we still obligated in Hashavat Aveidah?

Answer: These are the general rules pertaining to Hashavat Aveidah: If it is an object that cannot be bought easily or is a personal item, it is forbidden to use it. If it is an object that can be bought easily, the finder may use it after a few months of attempting to locate the owner. Before using the object, he must take a picture of it or write down all of its identifying details and keep that record in a safe place. If the owner later returns, the item must be given back. If it has been damaged, the finder must purchase a replacement.

Question: We hosted girls for lunch this past Shabbat, but they were only able to come around 1:00 PM. We therefore had a smaller seudah right after tefillah and then our larger meal (technically Seudah Shlishit) at 1:00 PM. The girls who came had not yet made Kiddush, and we had no obligation of Kiddush because it was Seudah Shlishit. Who should make Kiddush in this case?

Answer: It is preferable that they make Kiddush themselves. If they do not feel comfortable doing so, you may make Kiddush for them. Even though you have already fulfilled your obligation, you may still be motzi them, especially with regard to daytime Kiddush.

Question: Couscous was cooked by the steam of a soup that contained onions fried in a meat pot. May I eat this couscous with onions that were fried in a dairy pot? (The dishes are not ben yomo, and there is not a ratio of sixty.)

Answer: Since we treat onions fried in a meat pot as having meat status, one should not eat couscous that absorbed steam from meat onions together with onions from a dairy pot.

Question: If someone is eating salad on Shabbat and does not like the onions, may they remove the onions because it is considered sha'at achilah — the time of eating?

Answer: This is not considered sha'at achilah. Sha'at achilah refers to the moment right before you put the food into your mouth (according to the Biur Halachah), or when it is already in your mouth (according to the Chazon Ish). Removing onions from the salad beforehand is a preparatory step and is therefore prohibited. At that stage, one may instead take the desirable food from the undesirable, or give the onions to someone who wants them.

Question: If someone has a saliva gland disorder and frequently suffers from a dry throat, should he make a brachah on water if he drinks solely to relieve dryness?

Answer: The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 204:7) rules that one recites a brachah on water only if drinking for thirst. The Mishnah Berurah explains that as long as one's palate derives pleasure from the water, it is considered drinking for thirst. Many Acharonim discuss similar circumstances. In practice (lema'aseh), one should not make a brachah in this case because of the principle of safek brachot lehakel (we are lenient in cases of doubt regarding blessings). If he wishes to avoid doubt, he may recite Shehakol on something sweet and thereby exempt the water.

If at any point he drinks and also experiences enjoyment, he should recite a brachah.

PARNESS HAYOM :: ADAR

2 Adar | Ruth Drazin, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her mother, Gertrude Fried z"l

4 Adar | The Gewurz Family, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his father, Judah Leib Gewurz z"l

19 Adar | Adrienne and Shlomo Drazin, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her grandfather, Henry Segal z"l

21 Adar | The Gewurz Family, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his mother, Rachel Gewurz z"l

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In Parashat Terumah, Hashem asks Bnei Yisrael to donate materials to build the Mishkan: “**וַיְקַחוּ לִי תְּרֻמָּה**”. Hashem didn’t need their gold or silver. He could have created the Mishkan Himself. So why ask the people to give?

This teaches a big lesson: When you give to something, you feel connected to it. The Mishkan wasn’t just a building — it became their Mishkan because they helped build it.