



SoulSpa 3.19 • P. Terumah  
February 21, 2026 • 4 Adar 5786

ברוך אתה יהוה  
אלהינו מלך העולם  
אשר קדשנו במצוותיו  
וצונו לעסוק בדברי תורה:

Barukh Atah Adonai  
eloheinu melekh ha'olam  
asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav  
v'tzivanu la'asok b'divrei Torah.

Blessed are You, YHVH, our God,  
eternal sovereign, who sanctified us  
in God's *mitzvot* and commanded us  
to busy ourselves in words of Torah.  
SO much more detailed than anything that came before  
... God / spirituality is also in the details.

... projection by Moshe because he grew up in a palace?

BLUEPRINT FOR SPIRITUALITY: AGENCY -  
GIVE!

וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: דבר אל-  
בני ישראל ויקחו לי תרומה מאת כל-  
איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את-תרומתי:  
וזאת התרומה אשר תקחו מאתם זהב  
וכסף ונחשת: ותכלת וארגמן ותולעת  
שני ושש ועצים: שמן למאור בשמים  
לשמן המשחה ולקטרת השמים:  
אבני-שהם ואבני מלאים לאפד ולחשן:

**AGENCY!**

ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם: ככל  
אשר אני מראה אותך את תבנית  
המשכן ואת תבנית כל-כליו וכן תעשו:  
ועשו ארון עצי שטים אמתים וחצי  
ארכו ואמה וחצי רחבו ואמה וחצי  
קמתו: וצפית אותו זהב טהור מבית  
ומחוץ תצפנו ועשית עליו זר זהב קיב:  
ויצקת לו ארבע טבעות זהב ונתתה על  
ארבע פעמתיו ושתי טבעות על-צלעו  
האחת ושתי טבעות על-צלעו השנית:

ועשית בדי עצי שטים וצפית אתם זהב:  
והבאת את-הבדים בטבעת על צלעת  
הארן לשאת את-הארן בהם: בטבעת  
הארן יהיו הבדים לא יסרו ממנו: ונתת  
אל-הארן את העדת אשר אתן אליך:  
ועשית כפרת זהב טהור אמתים וחצי  
ארכה ואמה וחצי רחבה:

ועשית שנים כרבים זהב מקשה תעשה  
אתם משני קצות הכפרת: ועשה כרוב  
אחד מקצה מזה וכרוב-אחד מקצה  
מזה מן הכפרת תעשו את-הכרבים על  
שני קצותיו: והיו הכרבים פרשי כנפים  
למעלה סככים בכנפיהם על-הכפרת  
ופניהם איש אל אחיו אל-הכפרת יהיו  
פני הכרבים. ונתת את-הכפרת על-  
הארן מלמעלה ואל-הארן תתן את-  
העדת אשר אתן אליך: ונועדתי לך שם  
ודברתי אתך מעל הכפרת מבין שני  
הכרבים אשר על-ארון העדת את כל-  
אשר אצוה אותך אל-בני ישראל:

**Exodus 25:1-22**

1-7. YHVH spoke to Moshe saying: Tell the Children of Israel to give Me gifts: take **My gifts** from all who make their **heart willing**. And these are gifts you will take from them: gold, silver and copper. And blue, purple and crimson [yarn], fine linen, goat hair, tanned ram skins, dolphin skin and acacia wood. Oil for lighting, spices for oil and aromatic incense. Lapis lazuli and precious stones for the [kohen's] setting, apron and breast piece.

8-12. **They will make for Me a mikdash and I will dwell among them**. In all I show you – the pattern of the *Mishkan*, and the pattern of all its vessels – so you will make it. Make an ark of gopher wood two and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high. Overlay it with pure gold, inside and out, with a surrounding rim of gold around. Cast for it four gold rings, and put them on its four corners – two rings on one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it.

13-17. Make poles of gopher wood and overlay them with gold. Insert the poles into the rings on the side walls of the ark, for carrying the ark. The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark: they shall not be removed from it. Put in the Ark the **Witnessing** that I will give you. Make a cover of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and a cubit and a half wide.

18-22. Make two **keruvim** of gold – make them of hammered work – at the two ends of the cover. Make one *keruv* at one end and the other *keruv* at the other end; you will make the *keruvim* from one piece with the cover at its two ends. The *keruvim* will be wings-spread above, shielding the cover with their wings: they will face each other, the faces of the *keruvim* turned toward the cover. Put the cover atop the Ark, after putting in the Ark the Witnessing that I will give you. **There I will make Myself known to you, and I will tell you – from above the cover, between the two keruvim atop of the Ark of Witnessing** – all that I will command you about the Children of Israel.

i.e. give Me your finest and best?  
WHAT DOES GOD NEED WITH A STARSHIP?  
WHERE DID WE GET ALL OF THIS STUFF? -- not Ikea.

- not for God, but for us?

precursor to Golden Calf > (1st and 2nd Commandment violations) > Repair?  
\*\* SPACE IN BETWEEN =GENESIS  
testimony

Put the poles in the rings = keep moving  
Go as a community – don't leave it (anyone) behind

**AND I WILL DWELL AMONG THEM**

LOVE  
PASSOVER

**Shemot Rabbah 33:3**

ויקחו לי תרומה... פתחי לי אחותי רעיתי עד מתי אהיה מתהלך בלא בית...? אלא, עשו לי מקדש, שלא אהיה בחוץ: **mikdash HOLY**

*Take for Me gifts* – "Open for me, my sister, my friend" (Song 5:2). How long must I travel without a home? So Torah says, "Make for Me a *mikdash*" so that I need not be on the outside.

**Rashi, Ex. 25:8**

ועשו לי מקדש. ועשו לשמי בית קדשה:

*They will make for Me a mikdash* – Let them make to the glory of My Name a house of *kedushah*. One • YHVH • Truth • Love...

**Ibn Ezra, Ex. 25:8**

ועשו. נקרא מקדש בעבור היותו משכן השם הקדוש:

*Let them make* – It is called a *mikdash* since its existence is the *Mishkan* of the Holy Name. Human agency —> realize collective goal God can dwell THERE / HERE

**DWELL SHEKHINAH**

**Bamidbar Rabbah 12:3** ... Shekhinah needs us to build / be / do

בשעה שאמר לו הקב"ה: ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם, אמר משה מי יוכל לעשות לו מקדש שישרה בתוכו: הנה השמים ושמי השמים לא יכלכלוהו וגו', ואומר: הלא את השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא וגו', ואומר השמים כסאי והארץ הדם רגלי וגו'. אמר הקב"ה איני מבקש, לפי כחי אלא לפי כחך, כשאני מבקש כל העולם כלו אינו יכול להחזיק כבודי ולא שמש אחד משלי, אלא אני איני מבקש מן ה... לקד משה אמר: ישב בסתר עליון, הקב"ה שהוא יושב בסתרו של עולם הוא רואה את הכל ואינו נראה, הוא נתאנה ללון בצלנו... הוי: בצל שדי יתלונן:

When the Holy Blessed One said to [Moshe] (Ex. 25:8): "They will make for Me a *mikdash* and I will dwell among them," Moshe said: "Who can make a *Mishkan* for God in which to dwell in it? Behold (1 Kin. 8:27), 'The heavens and heavens' heaven cannot contain You,' and (Jer. 23:24), 'Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?,' and (Is. 66:1) 'The heavens are My throne, the earth My footstool.'" The Holy Blessed One said: "I do not ask according to My **potential**, but **according to their potential**. When I want, the whole world cannot hold My glory or just one of My suns. Rather, I ask of you [space you make for Me] **by your own hands**." ... Thus Moshe [called God] (Ps. 91:1) the "One dwelling in the shelter of the Most High." God dwells in the world's concealment – seeing all, yet unseen, yearning to rest in *our* shelter (Ps. 91:1): "In [that] shelter, God rests." **Tzimtzum = divine contraction into bounded space**  
**It's hard to have a relationship with the Infinite.**

**Shemot Rabbah 33:1**

משל למלך שהיה לו בת יחידה, בא אחד מן המלכים ונטלה, בקש לילך לו לארצו ולטל לאשתו. אמר ל בתי שנתתי לך יחידית היא לפרש ממנה איני יכול לומר לך אל תטלה איני יכול לפי שהיא אשתך, אלא, זו טובה עשה לי שכל מקום שאתה הולך קיטון אחד עשה לי, שאדור אצלכם, שאיני יכול להניח את בתי. כך אמר הקב"ה לישראל נתתי לכם את התורה לפרש הימנה איני יכול לומר לכם אל תטלוה איני יכול אלא בכל מקום שאתם הולכים בית אחד עשו לי שאדור בתוכו.

A parable of a king who had a daughter. Another king came to take her and go back to his land to marry her. The first king told him, "My daughter, who I give to you, is my only one. I can't bear to separate from her, but to tell you that you can't take her also is impossible since she is to be your wife. Rather, do me this favor: everywhere you go, make me a small room so I can live with you, for I can't leave my daughter." So said the Holy Blessed One to Israel: 'I gave you Torah. I can't bear to separate from her, and to tell you not to take her is also impossible. So everywhere you go, make Me a house so I can live within it.'

## Ellen Frankel, The Five Books of Miriam

Shekhinah needs us - and, in Her sense, ALL of us.

ESTHER THE HIDDEN ONE REVEALS: *Shekhinah*, the Holy-One-Who-Dwells-In-This-World, represents the mystical Community of Israel. All Israel constitutes her limbs. She is our intimate link with God-Who-Dwells-On-High and our companion as we wander in exile. As it is written, "And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25:8). Not "I will dwell below," but *among* you: just as a wanderer would. In other words, wherever Israel wanders, I will go with them and I will dwell among them, but not in a permanent place.

## The Kehot Chumash

**So that I may dwell in their midst:** Not "in *its* midst" but "in *their* midst": God told us to make a sanctuary so that He may dwell within us. There are three types of sanctuary included in this commandment: the physical [*Mishkan*] that the Jews built in the desert; the personal, inner sanctuary that each of us must construct out of our lives and our sphere of influence in the world; and finally, the world at large, which we must transform into God's home.

In all three cases, the task is possible only because we are simply revealing the hidden, true nature of reality. The world at large and everything in it exist only by virtue of the Divine energy pulsing through them – and indeed *are* nothing more than Divine energy that has assumed a material garb – so making the world into a place where Divinity is revealed is simply a matter of removing the obstructions that becloud this reality. **Similarly, the essence of every one of us is our Divine soul, so making our lives into a [*Mishkan*] is nothing more than allowing our inner essence to shine through the excess material baggage we have accumulated during our journey through life...**

## THE KERUVIM

### Exodus 25:18-19

וַעֲשִׂיתָ שְׁנַיִם כְּרֻבִים זָהָב מְקֻשָּׁה  
תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם מְשָׁנֵי קְצוֹת הַכַּפֹּרֶת:  
וַעֲשֶׂה כְרוֹב אֶחָד מִקְצֵה מִזֶּה  
וּכְרוֹב־אֶחָד מִקְצֵה מִזֶּה מִן הַכַּפֹּרֶת  
תַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הַכְּרֻבִים עַל שְׁנֵי קְצוֹתָיו:

Make two *keruvim* of gold – make them of hammered work – at the two ends of the cover. Make one *keruv* at one end and the other *keruv* at the other end; you will make the *keruvim* from one piece with the cover at its two ends.

### Genesis 3:23-24

וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִגְּנוֹ-עֵדֶן  
לְעַבְדָּ אֶת־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר לָקַח מִשָּׁם:  
וַיִּגְרֶשׁ אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיִּשְׁכֶּן מִקְדָּם  
לְגִן־עֵדֶן אֶת־הַכְּרֻבִים וְאֶת־לֶהֱטֹ  
הַחֶרֶב הַמִּתְהַפֶּקֶת לְשָׁמֵר אֶת־דֶּרֶךְ  
עַל הַחַיִּים:

YHVH, God, sent [humanity] out of the Garden of Eden, to work the ground from which it was taken. Humanity was driven out, and east of the Garden of Eden were stationed the *keruvim* and the fiery ever-turning sword, to guard the way to the Tree of Life.

LIKE A BOY?

LIKE A BIRD?

### Ellen Frankel, The Five Books of Miriam

OUR DAUGHTERS ASK: What exactly are these Cherubim? They sound suspiciously similar to graven images, whose fashioning is forbidden in the Ten Commandments that lie in the Ark right under their feet! ...

THE SAGES IN OUR OWN TIME EXPLAIN: In reality, the Israelite Cherubim were modeled on the hybrid gods of their neighbors: the Egyptian sphinx, the winged man-lion-god of Phoenicia, the winged bulls of Assyria and Babylonia.

THE RABBIS OBJECT: No, they were made according to God's precise instructions. They were to be of hammered gold, "of one piece with the cover," with "their wings spread out above, shielding the cover with their wings." (25:20) Rather than facing the priest or turning heavenward, "They shall confront each other, the faces of the Cherubim being turned toward the cover." (25:20) ...

LILITH TEASES: In a culture so repelled by idolatry, how startling to find these graven images inhabiting the innermost sanctum of holy space! And in a religion so hostile to dualism, how intriguing to find two such images embracing each other to make up!

### Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed 3:45

[Polytheists] built temples to stars and set up in those temples the image which they agreed to worship, because it was in some relation to a certain star or a portion of one of the spheres. Therefore we were commanded to build a Temple to the Name of God, and to place therein the Ark with two <sup>tablets</sup> tables of stone, on which there were written the commandments "I am YHVH," etc., and "You will have no other God before me," etc. Naturally the fundamental belief in prophecy precedes belief in [Torah], for without belief in prophecy there can be no belief in [Torah] – but a prophet only receives divine inspiration through an angel's agency, as in, "God's angel called" (Gen. 22:15), "God's angel said to her" (Gen. 16:11), and other innumerable instances. Even Moses received his first prophecy through an angel: "And an angel of God appeared to him in the flame of fire" (Ex. 3:2). It is thus clear that belief in the existence of angels precedes belief in prophecy, and the latter precedes belief in [Torah]....

From the preceding remarks it is clear that the belief in the existence of angels is connected with belief in the Existence of God; and belief in God and angels leads to belief in prophecy and [Torah's] truth. To firmly establish this creed, God commanded [Israel] to make over the Ark the form of two angels. The belief in the existence of angels is thus inculcated into the people, and this belief is in importance next to the belief in God's existence; it leads us to believe in Prophecy and [Torah], and oppose idolatry. Had there been just one figure of a *k'ruv*, the people would have been misled and mistaken it for God's image that was to be worshipped, like the heathen; or they might have assumed that the angel was also a deity, thus adopting a dualism. By making two *keruvim* and distinctly declaring "YHVH is our God, YHVH is One," Moses clearly proclaimed the theory of the existence of a number of angels: he left no room for error in considering those figures as deities, since God is one in number and created the angels, who are more than one.

## R. Lauren Grabelle Herman, "The Space In Between"

When we stray from the core principles of "v'ahavta l're'acha kamocho" "loving our neighbor as ourselves" and "seeing everyone as b'tselem elohim" — the *keruvim* face away from each other. What a powerful teaching that this is not just a literal turning away from each other — but a spiritual one. **God's voice, God's instruction cannot penetrate between those whose back turns towards the other. It is as if that "negative space" between people keeps the Divine from entering or even propels it back. ...** Taking the core idea of this teaching — that God speaks through the space between us when we face each other and cannot be present as we turn away — how can we make the Divine more manifest in our lives and in the world?

## R. David Markus, "Keruvim in the Canon" (2015)

The first cherubic function, to safeguard Gan Eden from humanity seeking eternal life, arose only after primordial humanity ate of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and precisely as a direct consequence of that ostensible "infraction."... How redemptive that *keruvim*, later adorning the Ark so God would speak from between their wings and impart spiritual knowledge, first emerged as divine response to primordial humanity obtaining knowledge ostensibly in opposition to God's command. The symbolism of *keruvim* atop the Ark – now placed without החרב המתהפכת / constantly turning sword – thus suggests that the way to Gan Eden may be closed to physical approach but is open by means of God's revelation emerging between the wings...

### WHAT DO WE KNOW, REALLY?

#### Exodus 25:22

וְנִוְעַדְתִּי לְךָ שֵׁם וְדִבַּרְתִּי אִתְּךָ מֵעַל  
הַכַּפֹּרֶת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִים אֲשֶׁר  
עַל-אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה  
אוֹתְךָ אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

There I will make Myself known to you, and I will tell you – from above the cover, between the two *keruvim* atop of the Ark of Witnessing – all that I will command you about the Children of Israel.

#### Sifra, Vayikra Dibbura Nedavah 2:12

מאהל מועד - יכול מכל הבית?  
תלמוד לומר מעל הכפורת. אי  
מעל הכפורת, יכול מעל הכפורת  
כולה? תלמוד לומר מבין שני  
הכרובים", דברי ר' עקיבא. אמר  
ר' שמעון בן עזאי אין אני כמשיב  
על דברי רבי אלא כמוסיף על  
דבריו: הכבוד שנאמר בו את  
השמים ואת הארץ אני מלא -  
ראה חבתם של ישראל להיכן  
גרמה לכבוד הזה? כביכול, דחק  
להיות מדבר מעל הכפורת מבין  
שני הכרובים. ר' דוסא אומר, הרי  
הוא אומר כי לא יראני האדם וחי  
- בחייהם אינם רואים

About the Tent of Witnessing – I might think [the Voice came] from all the house as in (Ex. 25:22), "From above the cover." If "from above the cover," then it could be from above the entire cover! Therefore it is [restrictively] written (Ex. 25:22), "From between the two *keruvim*." Those are the words of R. Akiva. R. Shimon b. Azzai said: I come not to dispute the words of the master, but to add to them. That great glory, of which it is written (Jer. 23:24), "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" — see how God's love of Israel wrought on this glory! The Eternal, as it were, contracted Godself to speak from above the cover between the two *keruvim*! R. Dosa says: It is written (Ex. 33:20), "For none will see Me and live!": in their lives they do not see [God] (Ed. – Even the angelic beings who bear the Throne of Glory do not behold the Glory.)

**BONUS TEXTS:**

**Yehuda HaLevi (1075 – 1141)**

Where might I go to find you,  
Exalted, Hidden One?  
Yet where would I not go to find You,  
Everpresent, Eternal One?