



# Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



## TIFERET HASHABBAT

### *This Week in Tiferet*

Our students spent this past Shabbat in the **Old City of Yerushalayim**, where we were privileged to hear from great speakers such as Rav Motti Berger, Mrs. Sara Riegler and Rav David Aaron, to tour the hidden treasures of the Old City and to daven and dance at the Kotel Hamaaravi.

At the same time, our alumnae gathered in Tiferet for our annual **Alumnae Shabbaton**. As always, the Seudot Shabbat were shared by Tiferet alumnae and faculty. In addition, shiurim and discussions were organized specifically for our alumnae.

On Sunday night, the alumnae returned the favor and shared their experiences in university with our current students in a panel discussion.

On Wednesday night, we held a special **Tu B'shvat Seder**, which highlighted the spiritual lessons of the natural world.

## תורת תפארת

### Continuity and Eternity

Rav Azriel Rosner ([arosner@tiferetcenter.com](mailto:arosner@tiferetcenter.com))

#### Parashat Yitro

The aseret hadibrot, listed in this week's parasha, were the only mitzvot which G-d chose to tell Bnei Yisrael at Maamad Har Sinai, when the Torah was first given to Bnei Yisrael. So even more than usually, we should be cautious about every single word and phrasing in these psukim.

The well-known fifth of the dibrot is the mitzvah of honoring one's parents,

"כבד את אביך ואת אמך למען יאריכון ימיך על האדמה אשר ה' אלקיך נותן לך" (שמות פרק כ פסוק יב)

"Honor your father and your mother so that your days will be lengthened on the land that Hashem, your G-d, gave to you." (Shemot 20: 12)

The Ohr Hachaim notes an interesting and unexpected grammatical phrasing in this pasuk, when it describes the reward for honoring one's parents. The Torah does not say, "Honor your parents so that I (meaning G-d) will lengthen your days," rather it says "so that your days will be lengthened." The Ohr Hachaim explains,

אולי שירצה לומר כי מצוה זו סגולתה היא אריכות ימים מלבד שכרה מה', כי יש מצות שיש בהם סגולות מפלאות מלבד שכר אשר קבע להם ה'

The Ohr Hachaim is saying that there are two types of "rewards" to mitzvot – the classic reward from G-d for the good deed one has done, and the natural consequence of one's actions. For example, a child can study hard for a test because her parents have promised her a present if she studies, and one can study hard because she wants to improve her grades.

According to the Ohr Hachaim, the "length of days" that is promised for Kibud Av Va'em is not an external reward, but rather a natural result of one's actions. This is why the phrasing is "so that your days will be lengthened," and not "so that G-d will lengthen your days."

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## תורת תפארת (המשך)

But this explanation begs the next question – why is long life a natural consequence of honoring one's parents? There are so many valuable mitzvot – why does the phrasing למען יאריכון ימיך specifically appear here?

Perhaps we can suggest the pasuk does not refer to literal life, but to a broader sense of eternity. Recently, a close relative of mine passed away, and when I heard her daughter speaking at the funeral about what she had learned from her mother, I could not help but thinking that this relative was still alive, in a very significant sense. Her midot, her values and her wisdom are all very much alive in her children.

Perhaps this is what the aseret hadibrot are referring to – the eternity that comes from continuity. By honoring our parents, we keep their lessons alive, and ensure that when we are gone, our children will keep us alive as well.

## Unlimited Limits Zahava Zimmerman (5770, 5771)

Hashem is our father and King who created us and fashioned us with our human abilities and limitations alike. He is the one who understands us and knows our fullest potential. We were given the Torah as a guidebook for life, and therefore we can assume that we are capable of doing everything written within it. Parshat Yisro contains the Aseres Hadibros, the fundamental building blocks and commandments in the Torah. Within the Aseres Hadibros, all the other mitzvos are contained.

When examining Matan Torah, we learn that Moshe Rabbeinu was commanded by HKBH to create a restricted area around Har Sinai, in which no one could enter. Rabbi Moshe Reiss explains that this restriction was revealing of the agreement Klal Yisroel would have with HKBH. We find that with many of the mitzvos, the Torah restricts our speech, emotions, or actions. These boundaries are found countless times throughout the Torah, and they are very often restrictions on our natural human inclination.

What was Hashem's purpose in establishing these boundaries? The Talmud teaches us that when Moshe Rabbeinu went up to receive the Torah, the angels complained to HKBH that He was giving away His precious Torah to mortal beings, and not keeping it in the heavens. Moshe answered back questioning if the information relayed in the Torah had applied to them. However, were the angels not aware of the Torah's design? What was the point of the whole interrogation period between Moshe Rabbeinu and the angels?

There are two facets to the Torah as explained by Rabbi Yisroel Belsky. One facet is the downward direction of holiness from HKBH and the upper worlds, to the physical world down below. Torah exists to reveal a Godly perspective to us mortal men in this world. When we learn Torah, we can often come to see the world from the perspective of G-d. The malachim would therefore do a much better job at this, because they have no physical limitations blocking them from achieving such greatness. The Gemara says that the angels used this line of reasoning when complaining to Hashem about giving the Torah to Klal Yisroel.

The second facet, however, is holiness sparked by the efforts of those in the physical world below, flowing upwards towards the heavens. Torah and mitzvos enable something less Godly to become more Godly. We as humans are the only ones who can change ourselves. Learning Torah allows this change to come about. Moshe Rabbeinu presented these attributes to the malachim.

With this new look on the Torah, we can understand that the restrictions and boundaries that we find are put in place not to limit us, but rather to free us. Contrary to what we think, these limitations free us to become more Godly. When we live by the Torah, we are greater than the malachim because we are changing and becoming greater in the process. With this new perspective, may we all be able to realize that what we view as restricting in our lives, is really a catalyst to our growth and becoming more similar to HKBH.

Based on Torah Tapestries, by Rebbetzin Shira Smiles