Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.	וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם: (שמות כה, ח)
See how much I love the lower realms that I am going down and residing between curtains made from goat's wool.	רְאוּ מָה אֲנִי מְחַבֵּב אֶת הַתַּחְתּוֹנִים, שֶׁאֲנִי יוֹרֵד וְשׁוֹכֵן בְּתוֹךְ יְרִיעוֹת עִזִּים (מדרש תנחומא)

Instructions For Teaching This Lesson:
Present to your class how much Hashem loves us and how much we love Hashem.

Step 1:
Teach the students about the משכן. Stress how Hashem's desire to dwell among us shows His great love for us.

Step 2:
Go through the different sources that explain the depth of Hashem's love for us. Discuss with the students that Hashem's love stays constant and strong even in times of הסתר פנים.

Step 3:
Explain the concept of כמים הפנים לפנים. Emphasize that just like Hashem loves us, we love Hashem. Even if we don't feel it, the love is always there.

Step 4:
Show or tell the story of Michoel Pruzansky's song "You're Watching Me"
https://chabadinfo.com/music/saved-twice-from-tragedy/?old

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

מדרש תנחומא פרשת תרומה סימן ט

אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְמֹשֶׁה: עֲשׂוּ לִי מִשְׁכָּן שֶׁאֶהְיֶה מְדַבֵּר עִמְּךָ בְּתוֹכוֹ, וְלֹא עוֹד אֶלָּא שֶׁאֲנִי מִתְאַוֶּה לִשְׁכֹּן אֵצֶל בָּנַי. כֵּיוָן שֶׁשָּׁמְעוּ מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת כָּךְ, הִתְחִילוּ אוֹמְרִים: רִבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, לָמָּה אַתָּה מַנִּיחַ לָעֶלְיוֹנִים וְיוֹרֵד לַתַּחְתּוֹנִים, ..., כָּךְ הוּא שִׁבְחֲךָ שֶׁתְּהֵא בַּשָּׁמַיִם.....אָמַר לָהֶם הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא: וּמָה אַתֶּם תְּמֵהִים עַל זוֹ, רְאוּ מָה אֲנִי מְחַבֵּב אֶת הַתַּחְתּוֹנִים, שֶׁאֲנִי יוֹרֵד וְשׁוֹכֵן בְּתוֹךְ יְרִיעוֹת עִזִּים

Hashem said to משה, “Make me a sanctuary and I will reside among you. And not only that, I crave to reside next to my children. Once the angels heard this, they began to say “Master of the universe, why are You leaving the upper realms and going down to the lower realms... this is Your praise that You are in the Heavens. Hashem responded to them, “Why are you puzzled about this? See how much I love the lower realms that I am going down and residing between curtains made from goat’s wool.” This is referring to the משכן, which had a covering made of goat’s wool that draped over the entrance.

We can derive a fascinating insight from this מדרש. The מלאכים are concerned that if Hashem resides on earth it will reduce His glory and honor. They know that Hashem is not concerned with His own honor, however, they must feel that this will lower His esteem in the eyes of people, impacting their relationship with Hashem. They therefore are puzzled; why would Hashem do this? However, Hashem responds that by lowering His glory and resting His שכינה in curtains of goats, He is expressing to כלל ישראל the extent of His love and therefore there is no question.

He loves us so much, and wants us to know it!

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

שמות רבה לד, ג

וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ, אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, אַתֶּם צֹאנִי וַאֲנִי רוֹעֶה... עֲשׂוּ דִּיר לָרוֹעֶה שֶׁיָּבוֹא וְיִרְעֶה אֶתְכֶם... אַתֶּם כֶּרֶם..., וַאֲנִי שׁוֹמֵר,... עֲשׂוּ סֻכָּה לַשּׁוֹמֵר שֶׁיִּשְׁמֹר אֶתְכֶם. אַתֶּם בָּנִים וַאֲנִי אֲבִיכֶם, ... כָּבוֹד לַבָּנִים כְּשֶׁהֵן אֵצֶל אֲבִיהֶם, וְכָבוֹד לָאָב כְּשֶׁהוּא אֵצֶל בָּנָיו.... עֲשׂוּ בַּיִת לָאָב שֶׁיָּבוֹא וְיִשְׁרֶה אֵצֶל בָּנָיו, לְכָךְ נֶאֱמַר: וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ.

Hashem said to בני ישראל: You are My flock and I am a shepherd,... Construct a pen for the Shepherd, so He will come and watch you..... You are a vineyard.... I am the Guardian... Construct a hut for the Guardian so He may guard you... You are children and I am your Father.... It is an honor for the children when they are with their Father, and an honor for the Father when He is with His children. Construct a house for the Father, so He may come and dwell among His children.

The מדרש compares בני ישראל to three different things; sheep, a vineyard, and children. Hashem is compared to their guardian. This shows Hashem's great love for כלל ישראל. But what is the significance of the three comparisons? What do they symbolize?

According to one explanation, the מדרש is talking about three different kinds of relationships Hashem had with בני ישראל:

1. When בני ישראל wandered in the desert, Hashem dwelt in the משכן which was similar to a shepherd's tent. A shepherd does not live in a fixed place. He moves along wherever his flocks pasture and sets up a tent next to his sheep in order to guard them and find food for them. Similarly, Hashem "moved along" with בני ישראל in the desert. He guarded them with the ענני הכבוד and fed them with the מן.
2. In ארץ ישראל, Shlomo Hamelech built a בית המקדש for Hashem. Just as the vineyard keeper in his hut watches over the vineyard, so did Hashem through the בית המקדש protect ארץ ישראל from its enemies. However, it is compared to a "hut" because it was not permanent.
3. When משיח comes and Hashem gives us the third בית המקדש, that בית המקדש will be compared to a "home" because it will last forever. Then all the nations will see that Hashem is our Father and we are His children. All the nations will honor Hashem and they will honor us as His children.

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

The following is the story of a father who had a precious son whom he loved more than anything:

His son was the light of his life since the day he was born over fifty years ago, and it was really hard that he now lived at the other end of the world. Missing him terribly, he could no longer take it and he decided to make the trip as soon as physically possible. At his age and state of health it would be a great ordeal, but what wouldn't he do for his son? He excitedly sent a message to his son that he would be arriving on such and such day. His heart fluttered as he watched NYC getting smaller and smaller through the window of the plane and twenty-four hours and two stopovers later, he landed in Sidney, Australia. At last, he would finally see his dear son. With the clarity of his mind clouded by his love, he strained his eyes peering through the window, maybe he would already see his son from the plane... When a young fellow offered to help him get his bags, he declined saying, "It's fine. He'll be here any minute," as if all knew who he was referring to. When the man explained that whoever would be picking him up would not be able to enter the area, he still declined thinking dreamily, "How can I need someone else's help when I'm so close to my dear son!" After waiting a while and with an excitement he hadn't felt in years, he made his way to where the crowds awaited their loved ones. However, even there his son was not in sight. After an hour and a half of waiting longingly, with fear in his heart, he took a cab to his son's house. He ran up to the front door and knocked... No answer. He knocked again harder... Still no answer. Wild eyed with fright, he banged on the door with all his might...
"Who's there?" There was no mistaking his son's voice.
"Are you alright?!" the father screamed into the door.
"Sure, I'm just fine. Who's there?"
"What do you mean who's there? It's your dear father, I told you that I was coming."
"Oh, now I remember, but, to tell you the truth, it's really not a good time right now, I just got into pajamas and lay down for the night..."
Woe, how does this father feel right now? How would this father have felt if his son came running into his arms?

The father really is Hashem, and we are the son! Hashem loves us so much and He wants to have a relationship with us! Are we always ready to let Hashem in?

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

שיר השירים ה,ב
אֲנִי יְשֵׁנָה וְלִבִּי עֵר קוֹל | דוֹדִי דוֹפֵק פִּתְחִי־לִי
I am asleep, and my heart is awake. My beloved (Hashem) knocks! "Let me in!"

Hashem loves us so much! He knocks at our door because he wants to have a relationship with us and all we have to do is open it!

טור אורח חיים קכה
בשעה שאומרים קק"ק... נותנין עיניהן למעלה.... ותגידו לבני מה שאני עושה בשעה שמקדישין ואומרים קק"ק ולמדו אותם שיהיו עיניהם נשואים למרום... אין לי הנאה בעולם כאותה שעה שעיניהם נשואות בעיני ועיני בעיניהם.
In חזרת הש"ץ of שמונה עשרה, Klal Yisrael lift their eyes towards the Heavens and recite קדוש, קדוש, קדוש, the great tribute found in קדושה. As this is happening, in the Heavens above, Hashem looks back into His children's eyes. He says, "I have no pleasure in My entire universe as I do when My children's eyes are lifted towards Mine and My eyes look into theirs." He then grabs hold of His holy throne, to the image of Yaakov engraved in it. He hugs it! He kisses it! Reiterating the promise of our ultimate גאולה, and He brings it closer.

חז"ל tell us that קדיש and קדושה are the two greatest exclamations of Hashem's praises. The תפילה of "יהא שמא רבא" although considered a most beautiful תפילה, is a source of great sadness for Hashem. "How beautiful! They are praising My Name... But what is it worth when My children are not with Me." בני ישראל are in גלות, and Hashem misses us so much that He is in pain, and He mourns. (ברכות ג.) However when we say קדושה, also considered the most beautiful of prayers, quite the opposite happens. "I have no pleasure in the entire universe as I do when My children's eyes are lifted towards Mine and My eyes are toward theirs."
The first, causes great mourning and pain on High. The second, causes the greatest pleasure above. How can this be understood?
It is apparent that Hashem's ultimate pleasure, as opposed to great sorrow, is due to the lifting of our eyes toward Him, and His looking into them, like a new mother, lovingly looking into her baby's eyes.

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

שיר השירים ח,ו
שִׂימֵנִי כַחוֹתָם עַל־לִבֶּךָ כַּחוֹתָם עַל־זְרוֹעֶךָ
Let me be a seal upon your heart, like a seal upon your arm.

רש"י: שִׂימֵנִי כַחוֹתָם. בִּשְׁבִיל אוֹתָהּ אַהֲבָה, תַּחְתְּמֵנִי עַל לִבֶּךָ, שֶׁלֹּא תִשְׁכָּחֵנִי, וְתִרְאֶה:
Set me as a seal. For the sake of that love, seal me upon Your heart, so that You do not forget me, and You will see me.

We tell Hashem, “Stamp us on your arm and heart so that you never forget us”

עין יעקב תענית א,ז
אמרה לפניו רבונו של עולם (ש״ה ח ו) שימני כחותם על לבך כחותם על זרועך אמר לה הקדוש ברוך הוא בתי את שואלת דבר שפעמים נראה ופעמים אינו נראה אבל אני אעשה לך דבר שנראה לעולם שנאמר (ישעיה מט טז) הן על כפים חקותיך:
בני ישראל said to Hashem, “Stamp me as a seal upon Your heart, as a seal upon Your arm.” Whereupon Hashem said: “My daughter, (Bnei Yisrael) You asked me to do a thing and stamp you in a place which sometimes can be seen and sometimes cannot; but I will stamp you as a seal in such a place that you will ALWAYS be seen”; as it is said, “Behold, upon the palms of my hands have I engraved you.”

Hashem says to בני ישראל, “You asked Me to put a reminder of My love for you in places that are sometimes covered. I will put it on the palms of My hands, that are always visible!”

Hashem’s love for us is always strong, even when we don’t see it. Even at a time of הסתר פנים, He is hidden from us, but we remain in Hashem’s sight every second! For we are engraved on the palms of His hands!

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

Sometimes we catch a glimpse of this love during tragedies. It reminds us that even when we are in pain and feel far from Hashem, His love for us remains constant and strong. During the recent Israeli war following October 7th, 2023, we had many such glimpses of Hashem's undying love for us.

On a very sad day, כלל ישראל was grappling with the pain of the Bibas family coming back to us not alive including their two young children who were the youngest hostages. We cried and felt so sad... Hashem wanted to show us that even though we are in גלות and painful things are happening, He has not abandoned us, and His love for us is so strong. That night in Eretz Yisroel, an unbelievable miracle happened. Three buses went up in flames and got completely destroyed, yet NO ONE WAS HURT!! The attack was planned for 9:00 am on Friday morning when the buses would be full of people, and in the middle of rush hour traffic. A mistake was made and the bombs detonated at 9:00 pm after two of the buses had finished their routes and were parked for the night so no one was hurt. The third bus, by Hashem's loving השגחה, was evacuated before it exploded. The police found two more busses that had bombs, and were able to defuse them. Hashem was saying to us, "During this difficult time, I just want to remind you of how much I love you."

<u>משלי כ"ז: י"ט</u>

כמים הפנים לפנים כן לב האדם לאדם

As a face sees its reflection in water, so does one man's heart reflect what another man feels.

When you feel something deep in your heart about another person, somehow the other person feels it and has the same feeling back about you. It's a two-way street. If Hashem loves us so much (which we know He does!) then we automatically love Him back!

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

Rebbi Akiva Eiger (ספר חוט המשולש במאמרים וחדושי אגדה) is quoted as follows:

"אנו חותמין קודם ק"ש הבוחר בעמו ישראל באהבה, ואם הוא אוהב אותנו מוכרחין אנו לאהוב אותו"
We conclude with the ברכה before קריאת שמע by saying, "the One Who chose the nation of ישראל with love." If He loves us, then we are compelled to love Him. And indeed, the first paragraph of שמע is ואהבת את ה׳.

<u>שיר השירים א, טו</u>
הִנָּךְ יָפָה רַעְיָתִי הִנָּךְ יָפָה עֵינַיִךְ יוֹנִים:
Hashem tells בני ישראל, "You are beautiful my beloved. Your eyes are like a dove's eyes."

The מדרש רבה explain that כלל ישראל's comparison to a dove is based on the dove's nature to never abandon its nest.

<u>בבא בתרא כד</u>
דְּכָל דְּמִידַּדֵּי וַהֲדַר חָזֵי לֵיהּ לְקִינֵּיהּ – מִידַּדֵּי, וְאִי לָא – לָא מִידַּדֵּי
A dove that hops and turns and sees its nest will continue to hop; but if it does not see its nest because it has gone too far, it will not hop farther.

The dove will not go too far that he loses sight of his nest.
Even when we stray from Hashem, we never go too far that we cannot return!

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

Rav Aryeh Levine was once watching Rav Chaim Berlin read שיר השירים on ערב שבת. As Rav Chaim Berlin was reading the words "Your eyes are like doves," he began to cry. Rav Aryeh asked him why this פסוק evoked such a strong emotional response. Rav Chaim Berlin responded that when he was a Rav in Moscow, in the former Soviet Union, giving a child a ברית was punishable by death. One night, a Jew came to him urgently knocking at his door asking the Rav to give his son a ברית מילה. Rav Chaim Berlin asked the man, "You're not even religious, why are you risking your life to give your son a ברית מילה?" The man answered, "I am not religious, and my son will probably never be religious, but if he ever wants to come back, I want to make sure he is part of the fold."

Rav Chaim Berlin explained to Rav Aryeh that this is an illustration of what our Sages say that כלל ישראל is like a dove. A dove never goes too far away from the nest that it can't see its way back.

Story:

There was a Yid with tattoos all over his body, however his left arm had not one tattoo. When he was asked why he left his left arm bare? He answered, "Because I may come back and become religious one day, and I want to make sure there is no חציצה/barrier between my arm and my תפילין as the הלכה requires."

Wow! No matter how far a Jew goes, he always ensures that he can get back to the nest!

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

Why would Hashem reduce his glory to live in the משכן?

_____

_____

Explain the three things that בני ישראל and Hashem's relationship are compared to and what the living place for each משל symbolizes:

1. בני ישראל are _____ and ה' is our _____

   The tent symbolizes _____

2. בני ישראל are _____ and ה' is our _____

   The hut symbolizes _____

3. בני ישראל are _____ and ה' is our _____

   The home symbolizes _____

Translate: שִׂימֵ֨נִי כַחוֹתָ֜ם עַל־לִבֶּ֗ךָ כַּחוֹתָם֙ עַל־זְרוֹעֶ֔ךָ

_____

_____

Where did Hashem stamp His love for us instead? Why?

_____

_____

Why are בני ישראל's eyes compared to the eyes of a יונה?

_____

_____

Parshas Terumah - Hashem Loves Us

Why would Hashem live in the משכן in our world if it reduces his glory?

Because He loves us so much

Explain the three things that בני ישראל and Hashem's relationship are compared to and what the living place for each משל symbolizes:

1. בני ישראל are sheep and ה' is our shepherd
   The tent symbolizes the משכן
2. בני ישראל are a vineyard and ה' is our guardian
   The hut symbolizes בית ראשון and בית שני
3. בני ישראל are children and ה' is our father
   The home symbolizes בית המקדש השלישי

Translate: שִׂימֵנִי כַחוֹתָם עַל־לִבֶּךָ כַּחוֹתָם עַל־זְרוֹעֶךָ

Let me be a stamp on Your heart and on Your arm

Where did Hashem stamp His love for us instead? Why?

On His hands so that He should see it every second of every day and it should never be covered.

Why are בני ישראל's eyes compared to the eyes of a יונה?

Just like a dove will not leave sight of his nest, a Jew will never go too far from Hashem - he will always be able to return.