



Parashat Terumah

8 Adar I 5784 – February 17, 2024

This week's parashah is about giving. When the B'nei Ysrael left Egypt, they had what they needed to build the Mishkan (Tabernacle). They generously donated gold, silver, brass, copper, and other materials for its construction. The donations were so abundant that Moses had to tell the people to stop giving.

It's essential to be aware of who donates and where the donations come from. The donations given should be from capital gained honestly. In the tractate of Gemara Sanhedrin, we learn generally that professional gamblers should not (cannot) be acceptable as honest witnesses in a capital crime. They make part of their living in a manner that may be considered stealing.

If a donor of questionable integrity were to come with a large donation one is faced with the challenge of whether to accept it or not. Accepting it might appear to be “bribing one’s way into Heaven.” Not accepting may cause economic hardship.

In kashrut concerning eggs, when we crack eggs, we must check them for blood spots. If there is a blood spot, we cannot eat the egg because of the impurity. The same must be considered with donations. One must check the integrity of the donation. There may be an economic cost, however, the cost to the soul is too high a price to pay.

Wishing you a peaceful and restful Shabbat.

Rabbi Nathan W. Langer