



DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OU ISRAEL
ABERMAN@OUISRAEL.ORG

Parshat Terumah is a *parsha* that fills the heart with positive emotions. *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* asks *Klal Yisrael* to donate toward something they have not yet seen: a *Mishkan* that is designed to become the spiritual center of Jewish life for them. And they give. “Gold, silver, bronze, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen...” (*Shemot* 25:3-4) - the list goes on and on, item after item. We know that *Klal Yisrael* gave so generously that the *Kohanim* hardly had anything left to contribute themselves.

When I look around at the generosity of the Jewish people today, I see that that spirit of giving, which began in the desert, has never stopped. It continues today among the Jewish people in the most beautiful way. *Ba-ruch Hashem*, every organization has its supporters, its friends, its volunteers, its board members, and the people who benefit from its work.

I don’t think people support a particular organization because they themselves will

get some benefit from it. Rather, most people give because they believe in the organization, in its vision, and in the good it is doing for the world, and many times for their own loved ones. Whether it’s somebody supporting Torah Tidbits in memory of a loved one or in celebration of major life events, or somebody supporting an OU Israel Teen Center, or NCSY, or JLIC – they see the impact and they say, “I want to be part of that.” That feeling gives us great confidence that we are continuing the *mesorah* of our forefathers and foremothers who built the first *Mishkan*. These incredible things cannot happen without *Klal Yisrael* reaching deep in their pockets and making sure that the resources are there.

One of the unique aspects of the OU is that it is such a massive organization, with so many different elements, that supporters are often interested in understanding not just what we do here in Israel, but also the broader *kashrut* operation – how the OU is constantly expanding to more factories, restaurants, and hotels, and the integrity and transparency that characterize our certification. Between Rabbi Yissachar Dov Krakowski, Rabbi Ezra Friedman, Rabbi Yonatan Korach, and so many others on our *kashrut* team here in Israel, people call our Gustave & Carol Jacobs Center for Kashrut Education and gain a deeper understanding of what is happening behind the scenes.

I have had the chance to join our *kashrut* team on visits to many OU-certified factories here in Israel and abroad. These are the days my children most enjoy coming to work with me. On my most recent visit, I toured a factory

In loving memory of
HaRav Dr. Fred S. Heuman z"l
הרַב שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן אַפְּרִים ז"ל
on his fourth yahrzeit - ג' אדר
Deeply missed by his children
Varda & Moish Deutsch
Azriel & Chaya Heuman
Sheera & Chaim Shine
Iryah Mordechai
Judy & Bruce Listhaus
grandchildren
and great-grandchildren

in Sderot that manufactures Tapuchips – the Israeli version of Lay's potato chips – as well as Doritos and Cheetos, products that are manufactured in Israel not only for the local market but also for export to the United States. Sderot holds an especially warm place in my heart, as we have an incredible OU Israel Teen Center there that works with hundreds of teens, and it is a city I love visiting, especially seeing its tremendous growth since October 7th.

Walking through the factory, I noticed differences that set it apart from factories I have visited in the United States or elsewhere. The first thing you cannot help but notice is the bomb shelters placed throughout the factory. They are clearly decorated to blend in with the décor, but the reality behind them is unmistakable. The staff are trying to do something as simple as manufacture potato chips and snacks for families and children to enjoy, yet they must have bomb shelters within arm's reach because the time from when a siren goes off in Sderot until you need to take shelter is roughly ten seconds, a reality that Sderot residents have been living with for decades.

Another thing you see in factories here in Israel but rarely anywhere else in the world: the factory has a designated *shul* with set times for *Mincha* every day, *sefarim* on the shelves, and people sitting and learning and

davening. There is even a welcoming sign outside identifying it as the *shul* of the Tapuchips factory.

The third difference is the sign for taking *terumot u'ma'asrot* (tithes) off the potatoes coming into the factory. (When Lay's potato chips are manufactured in America, the potatoes grown locally in the United States are not subject to *terumot u'ma'asrot*, because that obligation applies specifically to produce grown in *Eretz Yisrael*.)

Walking through the factory and seeing all of these elements together – the bomb shelters, the *shul*, and the *terumot u'ma'asrot* – gave a powerful feeling of what it means for a factory to operate in Israel. Yes, there are *mezuzot* on the doors, and everything is in Hebrew, but also what it means to live in Israel and live a Jewish



In loving memory of
my beloved husband
צבי מאיר בן משה יהונתן ז"ל
Harry Grunstein z"l
on his 7th yartzeit

May the Torah learning
in this issue be
לעילו נשמתו

*Tzippy Grunstein,
The Grunstein, Slepatt,
Henryson families
his children and grandchildren*

life is woven into the fabric of everyday work.

This got me thinking about something I often share when I take families and OU supporters to visit army bases, to meet alumni of our teen centers who are currently serving in the IDF. Whether we come to do a barbecue for the soldiers, bring them *simcha*, or help them out, I always ask my guests: what is the difference between the IDF and every other army in the world? People usually answer, "Because everybody's Jewish." But that's not entirely accurate – the IDF includes Druze soldiers and others who are not Jewish.

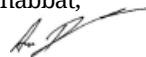
What I tell people is the following: First, on every door throughout the army there is a *mezuzah*. Then, all the food in the army is kosher. An American Jewish soldier serving in the Marines or the Navy can request kosher food, but the entire army does not operate under the assumption that all food must be kosher. Here in Israel, we have a Chief Rabbinate of the army that works closely with our *kashrut* team to ensure kosher food is provided.

Another difference is that every army base has a *shul* and a *sefer Torah*.

These differences reflect the clear essence of who we are as a people. When I think about the *terumah* we give, these donations define what is important to us. Just as we gave our *terumah* to build a *Mishkan* for *Klal Yisrael*, so too in every army base and every factory here in Israel, we make sure there is a *shul* where people can *daven* and talk to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* while at work. It is these things that bring us closer to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* and allow us to pass on the values that are important to the Jewish people – whether it is *tzedaka* and giving *terumah*, listening to the Torah and placing *mezuzot* on our doors, eating kosher, or fulfilling the biblical commandment of *v'nishmartem me'od l'nafshoteichem* (you shall guard yourselves very carefully) by making sure there is a bomb shelter inside a factory in Sderot so that workers are as safe as possible while manufacturing food for *Klal Yisrael*.

May we all continue enjoying OU kosher products, *shepping nachas* from the great programs we are running across the country, and making sure we all try to get as involved as possible – supporting, volunteering, joining boards – giving our little *terumah* to *Klal Yisrael* every single day.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Rabbi Avi Berman

Executive Director, OU Israel
aberman@ouisrael.org

May the learning
in this Torah Tidbits
be לעלוי נשמות
our beloved parents

MURRAY FISHER z"l
משה בן יהודה לב ז"ל
on his 39th yahrzeit
and

LILLIAN FISHER a"h
לאה בת שמשוון ע"ה
on her 4th yahrzeit

Deeply missed by their family
and all those who were
blessed to know them

*Susan Gopstein, Joel Fisher,
Karen Weiss and all their families*

Dr. Eliezer Rosenblum

NYS Licensed and Board Certified

Chiropractor

Offices in Jerusalem, Ramat Beit Shemesh

052-662-4658