



# KINDER TORAH

701

PARASHAS VAYAKHEL

## YOUR CHERISHED GIFT

“Take from yourselves a contribution for Hashem, everyone whose heart motivates him shall bring it, as the gift for Hashem: gold, silver, and copper” (Shemos 35:5). This verse apparently contradicts itself. The beginning uses the word, “take”. One person takes a contribution from another. Does the giver want to give with a full heart? Perhaps not. Taking can even be against a person’s will. The verse continues, “Everyone whose heart motivates him shall bring it.” Here, the Torah is referring to giving with a full heart – willfully, generously, and happily. That is not like taking. Which type of giving is the verse referring to?

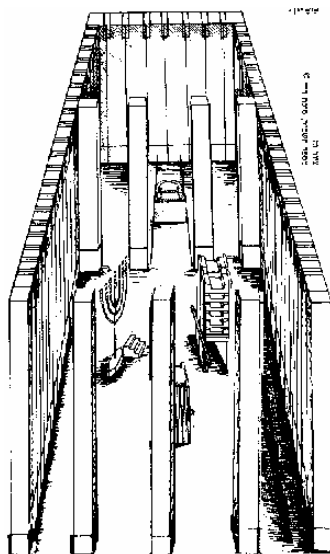
The Keli Yakar explains that there were two types of *trumos* (contributions) to the Mishkan: the obligatory ones and the voluntary ones. The beginning of the verse is referring to the obligatory contributions, which had to be given by each person. The end speaks about the voluntary donations. These were given with a free and open heart.

How did Hashem view these contributions? Let us look into a different verse. “What had been brought was enough to carry out all of the work; and there was extra” (Shemos 36:7). The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh points out that this verse also poses an apparent contradiction. Were there just enough materials for the work, as the first part of the verse implies? Or, were there an excess of donations of gold, silver, and other raw materials? If there was just enough, there was not extra. On the other hand, extra is more than just enough.

The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh answers that the donations were both enough and extra. How was this possible? The Jewish people gave with all of their hearts, as the previous verse states. They brought so much gold, silver, and other materials that there was extra – much more than was needed. Hashem then performed an astounding miracle. He downsized the materials into the size necessary to make the parts of the Mishkan. For example, if a generous hearted man donated 100 grams of gold to make a wine goblet that only weighed 50 grams, Hashem compressed the 100 grams of gold into 50 grams! He did not want any part of any Jew’s gift to go by the wayside. How much He loves Klal Yisrael – his precious children! They had taken the trouble and self-sacrifice to bring so much gold and silver! How could He not use every ounce of every gift brought by His loving children! We see how much Hashem loved them and cherished their generous gifts.

Kinderlach . . .

Our Father in Heaven loves us! He cares for us just as much today as He did in the times of the building of the Mishkan. When we work hard to bring Him a gift – a donation to a Beis HaKinesses, Yeshiva, seminary, or other institution, He cherishes every penny of it. When we generously give to a poor person, He values our caring. Every bit of self-sacrifice on our part gives Him great nachas. It is all recorded, and will all be rewarded. Kinderlach, give generously to Hashem, with a full heart. He cherishes your precious gift.



## IT IS RELEVANT

“Oy, I’m so confused.”

“What’s the matter, Moishie?”

“It’s all a blur to me. Is it twenty posts of ten *amos* (cubits) or ten posts of twenty *amos*? Why fifty loops on each curtain? Or is it forty? Is the Menorah on the left side or the right side? *Capores, paroches*, it’s all so confusing. Will I ever be able to figure out this *Mishkan* (Tabernacle), Abba?”

“Come, Moishie. Let me help you. It’s really not so difficult. We even have some illustrations to help us. Let’s look at this week’s parasha.”

“Abba, thank you so much for your help. I can always count on you. Before we begin, I have another question.”

“Go ahead, Moishie.”

“I know that we get *schar* (reward) for every letter of Torah that we learn. Every year we review these parshios about the *Mishkan*. The Torah goes into great length and detail to describe all of the vessels. Altogether 4½ parshios are devoted to this subject. We have no *Mishkan* today. Why is it necessary to learn these subjects at length? How are they

relevant?”

“Moishie, that is an excellent question. Rav Chaim Volozhin zt”l, the great Rosh Yeshiva of Volozhin, wrote a very deep sefer entitled ‘*Nefesh HaChaim*’. He answers your question.”

“Wow.”

“The *Mishkan* is a structure that was fit to receive the *Shechina* (Divine Presence). The boards, curtains, skins, altars, ark menorah, table, etc, were all part of that holy structure. However, this was only the ‘external’ *Mishkan*. Hashem desires something much more than a Tabernacle. It is only a hint to the true holiness; the true vessel that it fitting to receive the *Shechina*.”

“What is that, Abba?”

“The human being. We have the power, by purifying our thoughts and deeds, to become holy. When we do so, the *Shechina* will rest upon us. As the verse states, ‘Make a Sanctuary for me, so that I may dwell amongst you’ (Shemos 25:8). Our sages point out that the verse does not say that Hashem will dwell in the Sanctuary. Rather He will dwell among the people. Hashem wants to rest His Divine Presence in every Jew.”

“That is awesome, Abba. Hashem wants to live inside of me.”

“That is correct Moishie. He designed your body and soul. When treated properly, they are perfectly suited to house the *Shechina*. You have only one job in this world. Do not turn Hashem away.”

“*Chas veshalom* (G-d forbid). I would never do anything like that, Abba.”

“Good Moishie. Always remember who you truly are. You are capable of accomplishing the greatest thing in this world: bringing the *Shechina* down to earth. Realize this, and live with it. You will become a different person. It will become impossible to sin. How could someone who is capable of housing the *Shechina* commit a sin?”

“Impossible.”

Kinderlach . . .

Who can imagine the glory of the *Shechina* resting upon the *Mishkan*? The physical and spiritual beauty was beyond words. We yearn for it every day. We mention it in all of our prayers. Yet, we can have it right now. You are the true *Mishkan*. A Jew who keeps the Torah and Mitzvos houses the *Shechina*. That is the most beautiful sight on this earth. *Mistakes? Impossible.*

### Parasha Questions:

- Was it permitted to build the Mishkan on Shabbos? (Rashi 35:2)
- What was unique about the spinning of the wool thread for the Mishkan? (Rashi 35:26)
- Who was Chur’s mother? (Rashi 35:30)

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