



# Yesodos m' ha Sedra

LESSONS IN HASHKAFA & HALACHA FROM THE PARSHA

פ ר ש ת ו י ק ה ל

ויקהל משה את כל עדת בני ישראל וכו':

Before Moshe Rabeinu commanded k'lal Yisroel to build the mishkan and its vessels, he assembled the entire Jewish people together. This seems rather odd. There were many mitzvos relevant to everyone, and yet Moshe simply taught their halachos to Aharon and the elders of the generation. Their job, was to then go and teach everyone else. Yet when it came to constructing the Mishkan, something that most people were not involved with on a personal level, Moshe assembled everybody.

The Brisker Rav explains as follows: At the moment of matan Torah, K'lal Yisroel had achieved perfect unity. They were "k'ish echad b'lev echad" - like one man with one heart. It was only after they reached this level that they could stand at Har Sinai and accept the Torah. Shortly thereafter however, their unity collapsed. Indeed, the Yerushalmi tells us that there was not one golden calf, but rather, each shevet made their own eigel and declared it as their leader. This was the antithesis to unity. Although Moshe had interceded on K'lal Yisroel's behalf and begged their forgiveness, they were still not completely united and were far from the level they had previously achieved. When Moshe was about to instruct them to build the Mishkan - a home in which to house the Shechina, he understood that they need to strengthen their achdus in order to be worthy that Hashem should dwell amongst them. In order to do so and communicate this idea, he called the entire people together.



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We all would like to see beracha in our lives. If the Shechina is in our midst, this itself will bring beracha. However, the only way this is possible, is by promoting achdus between us.

ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי וכו':

The wording of the posuk is somewhat awkward. The words tei'aseh melacha mean that work should be done. A more natural form would be ta'aseh melacha meaning "to do work".

HaRav Eliyahu Meir Bloch zt"l contends that this variation conveys a powerful message that is fundamental in understanding avodas Hashem in our daily lives. The role of a yid in the world is quite different from that of a non-Jew. While they may both busy themselves with the same tasks and similar occupations, the underlying motivation of each is indeed very different. Most of humanity was created to produce and to build. A settled world is what Hashem desires from His creations. This is true for most of the human race. The role of K'lal Yisroel, however, is entirely different. Our main purpose in life is the pursuit of kedusha and enhancing our ruchnius. Any dealings we have in the way of parnasa or other worldly pursuits are only out of necessity and are secondary to our primary purpose. For this reason the Torah avoids the use of the word "ta'aseh" which could be understood as implying a directive to work.



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We must realize that our weekday activities stem from a need to be done “tei’aseh” and are inconsequential in and of themselves. This is ultimately the message of Shabbos.

בענין מצות צדקה וטבל האדם:

Hashem commanded Moshe Rabeinu to collect the donations for the Mishkan. This was the first of many community appeals in the history of K'lal Yisroel. In his introduction to our parsha, the Rabeinu Bachaya elaborates on the mitzvah of tzedaka and writes that naturally, man is lazy. He has a tendency to lie and cheat, work as little as possible. He hates giving to others lest he become impoverished. Intellectually however, he knows that he should work hard and that giving tzedaka is the best thing he could do with his money as it says (Mishlei 11:4) "tzedaka saves a person from death". A later posuk (ibid 11:24) tells that giving tzedaka is the key to attaining more wealth. This idea is reiterated by Shulchan Aruch (Y.D.. 247:1-2) who writes that one who avoids giving tzedaka will be the cause of great tragedies and one who gives freely will be blessed with sholom, and that no one ever became impoverished or suffered any damage on account of the tzedaka he gave. Knowing all of this might be very important but the words of the Rabeinu Bachaya, Mishlei, and Shulchan Aruch all seem to indicate that it is for these reasons that one should give. Aren't we obligated to observe the mitzvos anyway?



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HaRav Alter Henech Chanoch Leibowitz zt"l suggests the following approach: When Yaakov Avinu told Rochel and Leah that the Ribono shel Olam told him to leave Lavan's house and return to Eretz Yisroel, they agreed to go, responding that they have nothing to gain by staying anyway. This begs explanation: What if a lot of money was at stake, does it make sense to say that the imahos would not heed Hashem's command to return to Eretz Yisroel? Rather, explain the baalei mussar, Rochel and Leah were trying to diminish the nisayon, making it easier to do the right thing. This too, explains Reb Henech zt"l, was the intention. Shlomo HaMelech, Chazal, and the Shulchan Aruch are all trying to make giving tzedaka easier. As the Rabeinu Bachaya himself writes, the nature of man is to despise giving his hard-earned money to others who are less fortunate. The obligation to give does not make it any easier and therefore Chazal sought to minimize the challenges of our natural tendencies.

This is a lesson in tzedaka and chesed for sure. However, it is no less of a lesson in how to approach all mitzvos and areas of avodas Hashem. Yes, mitzvos are an ol (for lack of a better word, burden). Indeed the mitzvah of krias shema is to accept the ol of malchus shomayim twice each day. However, Torah and mitzvos are also good for us, both spiritually and physically. We are privileged to be G-d's servants. Yiras shomayim compels us to heed Hashem's every word but it is ahavas Hashem, our love of G-d that motivates us to strive for top performance. While serving Hakadosh Boruch Hu out of pure



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motivations is certainly commendable, there is nothing wrong with attempting to encourage avodas Hashem in ways that we can better connect to them and minimize the nisyonos we face. In doing so, we follow the example of the imahos and the advice of gedolei ha'dor from Shlomo HaMelech to the Shulchan Aruch.

ויאמר משה וכו' בצלאל בן אורי בן חור וכו' הוא ואהליאב בן אחיסמך למטה דו:

Who were these two people charged with the responsibility of constructing the Mishkan?

Everyone knew Betzalel as an adam chashuv. He was the great-grandson of Miriam and was part of a chashuveh mishpacha. This was in stark contrast to Ohavliav ben Achisamach who didn't share the same claim to yichus. He was part of Shevet Dan, the tribe to travel last in procession. He was a descendant of Bilhah; hardly anything striking or remarkable. He was an adam poshut, his "only" credentials being his yiras shomayim and honesty. The pairing of the two seems odd.

HaRav Shimon Schwab zt"l posits that the appointment of these two individuals conveys a very important message to k'lal Yisroel. It was essential that this job involve the concurrent supervisions of an adam gadol and adam poshut. The Mishkan is a "home" for the SHEchina. It is an undertaking that includes all of



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k'lal Yisroel. For this very reason, its construction was supervised by these two individuals who were quite different, working together l'sheim shomayim, u'l'kavod haShechina.