Points to Ponder

Pekudai 5779

**אֵ֣לֶּה פְקוּדֵ֤י הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ These are the accountings (38:21) – Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** noted that the accountings that a person needs to provide in his life are primarily about his life and if s/he is meeting the life goals that Hashem is expecting from him or her. Rav Moshe noted that the **Chofetz Chaim** would regularly remind people that the main issue that Hashem has with us is about the life we lead without any accounting – the time wasted and lost. The first way to combat that lost time is to make an accounting for it and study Mussar to find it.

**אֵ֣לֶּה פְקוּדֵ֤י הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ These are the accountings (38:11) – Rashi** notes that the word Mishkan appears twice in the possuk in order to tell us that Hashem had forgiven us for the Cheit HaEigel as he had allowed the Shechina to rest with us then. How did the Mishkan serve the role of atonement and how did its existence prove that there was atonement for Cheit HaEigel? **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky ztl.** explained that this is like a person who experiences a certain reversal of financial fortune. While he sells things that he does not need. He will not sell things he does – those he will mortgage instead. Similarly, the Jewish people knew that in the Midbar they did not need gold and silver. What they needed was a place for Hashraas HaShechina. Cheit HaEigel showed them of the need for Hashem in their lives. Their quick and full response to the appeal served to demonstrate that they had learned of their need for Shechina and that they knew that a cheap substitute could not replace Hashem. Thus, Hashem forgave them with the command of the Mishkan.

**וַיָּבִ֤יאוּ אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ אֶל־משֶׁ֔ה They brought the Mishkan to Moshe (39:33)** – The Midrash Tanchuma notes that Moshe felt bad that he had no hand in the building of the Mishkan and thus, Hashem made sure that only he could put it up. How could Moshe think that he had nothing to do with the establishment of the Mishkan – the Midrash notes that he would regularly check in on the artisans and teach them how to make every aspect of the Mishkan. He clearly DID give of himself for the building of the Mishkan. Why the worry? **Rav Shmuel Yaakov Borenstein Shlita** explains that we learn the value of hands-on involvement in a project. Moshe refused to accept any role in building the Mishkan that he was not 100% involved in hands-on. Since he had given that hands-on to the artisans, Hashem gave him another opportunity to have a hands-on role in the building of the Mishkan.

**כֵּ֤ן עָשׂוּ֙ בְּנֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל אֵ֖ת כָּל־הָֽעֲבֹדָֽה: Bnei Yisrael did the Avodah (39:42)** – Why is the work referred to as Avodah in regard to Bnei Yisrael but Melacha when Moshe thinks of it? **Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl Shlita** explains that Melacha refers to the thought and intent behind the work. Avodah refers to the physical labor. When considering the Mishkan everyone was able to see that the physical Avodah was completed properly but only Moshe was able to see that the intent in each step was also pure. Hence he was able to evaluate the Melacha.

**תָּקִ֕ים אֶת־מִשְׁכַּ֖ן אֹ֥הֶל מוֹעֵֽד: You shall establish the Mishkan (40:2) – Rav Schachter Shlita** would often stress that the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdash served more than as a place to bring Korbanos. The Rambam notes that when we daven we face the Makom HaMikdash as it is the central place of prayer. It is also the central place of Torah both written (as is evidenced by the Sifrei Torah Shel Azara and their authoritative status) and oral (evidenced by being the central Sanhedrin’s meeting point). This is the reason we daven and ask for the rebuilding of the Mikdash and to get out piece of Torah – the 2 go hand in hand. The Mikdash is also a place of emanation of prophesy – Yona got Nevuah when he would go to the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva. The point of the mikdash is central to us – its centrality requires constant reminder – hence the repetition of these Parshiyos.

**וַיִּקַּ֞ח וַיִּתֵּ֤ן אֶת־הָֽעֵדֻת֙ אֶל־הָ֣אָרֹ֔ן He took (40:20)** – What is the point of the word VaYikach here? If Moshe placed the Luchos in the Aron, clearly he took them from somewhere. Why add the word? **Rav Gifter ztl.** explained that the act of taking was significant in its own right. Until this point, the Luchos were in Moshe’s tent where Torah would spring forth from. Now it would come from a more public place.

**כִּֽי־שָׁכַ֥ן עָלָ֖יו הֶֽעָנָ֑ן Moshe could not enter the tent because of the cloud (40:35) – Or HaChaim** notes that elsewhere (24:58) we find Moshe able to enter a cloud of Kedusha. What does the Possuk mean here? **Rav Shmuel Barenbaum ztl** explained that when Chazal tell us that the actions of Tzaddikim are greater than the creation of heaven and earth, it means that there is a certain revelation of Hashem’s Kedusha in a place where the people choose to serve Hashem. Thus, in the Mishkan, a place of man-generated Kedusha, Moshe did not gain immediate access even if he did elsewhere.

**Haftara (Melachim Alef Perek 8) – Rav Amnon Bazak Shlita** notes that the Beis HaMikdash had many similarities to the Mishkan but that there are clear distinctions apparent to Shlomo HaMelech now that he is inaugurating the Mikdash. While both edifices are places of rendezvous with Hashem, the Mishkan was a place where Moshe spoke to Hashem face to face. He entered and Hashem spoke. In the Mikdash, the rendezvous would be different, people would enter the Mikdash and their sense would be that this is where Hashem would be best able to listen.