Points to Ponder

Terumah 5779

**וְיִקְחוּ־לִ֖י תְּרוּמָ֑ה Take a Terumah for me (25:2)** - Why “take” why not allow them to donate? The commentaries note that the more a person gives to a project, the more that he benefits from it -- if his involvement is pure. **Rav Moshe Schwab ztl. (**Mashgiach of Gateshead) explained that this is to be found in the making of the windows of the Beis HaMikdash that were narrow on the inside and wide on the outside in order to make sure that there was no doubt that the Beis HaMikdash, like the Mishkan before it, illuminated the world and not vice versa.

**שֶׁ֖מֶן לַמָּאֹ֑ר בְּשָׂמִים֙ לְשֶׁ֣מֶן הַמִּשְׁחָ֔ה Oil for lighting and spices for the anointing oil (25:6) - Daas Zekanim** asks why these items are listed if they were not needed for the building of the Mishkan but rather in its daily use? **Daas Zekanim and Chizkuni** both answer that in terms of the building, it is not functional until the lights work and the place smells nice. In other words, when building a home, you need to establish an environment of honor and beauty -- that is part of the building process. **Rav Baruch Simon Shlita** quoted from Rav Chaim Elazari that women were also obligated in donating to the Mishkan because the fact that these donations were able to be made day or night, meant it was not Zman Grama. Rav Simon added that from here we see that both men and women have an obligation to assist in creating the proper environment in a home -- in the same way that they both built the Mishkan.

**וְצִפִּיתָ֤ אֹתוֹ֙ זָהָ֣ב טָה֔וֹר מִבַּ֥יִת וּמִח֖וּץ תְּצַפֶּ֑נּוּ  You should cover it with gold inside and out (25:11)** - The Gemara tells us that Talmidei Chachamim have to dress appropriately and need Yiras Shomayim on the inside. They need to be gold both inside and out. **Rav Schachter Shlita** added that this has been an ongoing debate in Torah life for many years -- as to whether only Tocho K’Baro can enter the Yeshiva or not. Clearly Rabban Gamliel had such an opinion but when he was removed the Gemara tells us that they had to add rows and rows of seats in the Beis HaMedrash. Rav Schachter added that these rows were necessary because the Kavod HaTorah was diminished and the people sat when the shiur was given. This was not a wholly positive development. And, it is indicative of the weakening of Torah until this very day.

**עָשִׂ֧יתָ זֵֽר־זָהָ֛ב לְמִסְגַּרְתּ֖וֹ סָבִֽיב: And you shall make a golden Zer surrounding it (25:25)** - There are three Klei Mishkan that have a crown -- the Aron, Mizbach HaZahav and Shulchan. While the Aron and Mizbeiach represent Torah and Avoda and have one crown each, The Shulchan has 2 crowns (See **Rashi**). Why do we offer a crown for the utensil that symbolizes wealth? And why with a DOUBLE crown? **Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus ztl.** explains that the challenge of wealth is tremendous. One can use it as the supreme driving force in his or her life. The reason for the double crown is to speak to two different groups -- to the wealthy and the not as yet wealthy. The wealthy are to use the crown as a reminder as to where to direct the focus of using the bounty bestowed upon them toward Tzedaka projects and the like. As to the not as yet wealthy they too, are to realize that whatever wealth they have accrued, it too, should be focused to Hashem through the recitation of Berachos prior to eating and afterward and the like. Having the right focus places the proper cap on the top of the head of the person aspiring to meet his needs in life.

**וְעָשִׂ֥יתָ מְנֹרַ֖ת זָהָ֣ב טָה֑וֹר  Make a golden Menorah (25:31) - Rashi** explains that Moshe could not make the Menorah. How could it be that the man who understood the entirety of Torah could not grasp the directions as to how to make the Menorah? And if it needed to be made miraculously, why the details? What is to be learned from them? **Rav Betzalel Rudinsky shlita** explained that when it comes to Torah and getting close to it, one needs to make whatever Hishtadlus that he can in order to acquire it. Hence, even in the making of the Menorah, we need to show the effort and then Min HaShomayim, the rules of nature can be suspended in order to teach it to us.

**וְעָשִׂ֥יתָ אֶת־הַקְּרָשִׁ֖ים לַמִּשְׁכָּ֑ן   And you will make beams for the Mishkan from cedar wood (26:15) - Rashi** reminds us that the wood was from cedar trees that Yaakov had planted years before -- on his entrance in Mitzrayim and reminded the children to remember to take the wood with them in the future when they leave. **Rav Elya Meir Bloch ztl.** notes that Yaakov’s extreme preparation for this event shows us that while it is appropriate to rely on Hashem for the physical needs we will need when following him - the food and the water etc. -- it is not so when it comes to the spiritual. There Hishtadlus is appropriate and that is why Yaakov went to such length in order to make sure the Mishkan would be able to be built in the future.

**וְצִפִּיתָ֥ אֹת֖וֹ נְחֽשֶׁת: And you shall cover it in copper (27:2) - Rashi** mentions that copper was used here to atone for the punishment of Azuz - brazenness. How could such an atonement take place without any Teshuva? **Rav Wolbe ztl** quotes from the Shelah that the atonement here is for the sins of the masses -- not the individual. Since the masses are connected through the principle of Arvus, they need a Kappara when the individual sins with brazenness.

**Haftara - וַיהֹוָ֗ה נָתַ֚ן חָכְמָה֙ לִשְׁלֹמֹ֔ה  Hashem gave wisdom to Shlomo (I Kings 5:26)** - What is the reason for the mention of the Chochma of Shlomo in the Haftara? And why is it repeated so often in this section? **Rav Yosef Carmel Shlita** opined that the wisdom described here is one of science and engineering necessary for the building of the Beis Hamikdash. Shlomo sought out the STEAM knowledge of the nation of Tzor because shared science knowledge brings great advantage to collaborators and brings about a Kiddush Hashem in the process.