Points to Ponder

Terumah 5780

**וְיִקְחוּ־לִ֖י תְּרוּמָ֑ה מֵאֵ֤ת כָּל־אִישׁ֙ אֲשֶׁ֣ר יִדְּבֶ֣נּוּ לִבּ֔וֹ  You should take Terumah for me (25:2)** - Why does the Torah tell us on the one hand that Moshe should “take” the Terumah and at the same time, that the things should be donated and not coerced? **Rav Leib Chasman ztl.** compared this to a child who does not want to eat and is later convinced to eat “for his mother’s benefit.” Rav Leib noted that we think we are doing the same -- we donate thinking we are doing it for Hashem but really, we are the true beneficiaries of our actions.

**אַבְנֵי־שֹׁ֕הַם  Avnei Shoham (25:7)** - Are these stones more expensive than the Techeiles and the Argaman? **Rav Gedaliah Schorr ztl.** explained that Avnei Shoham came with desire to donate. That which comes with Ratzon are considered most important to Hashem. **Rav Chaim Shmuellevitz ztl**. added that the donation that comes from hard work is more important to Hashem.

**וְעָ֥שׂוּ לִ֖י מִקְדָּ֑שׁ You will build a Mikdash for me (25:8)** - Why did the command to donate come before the command to build the Mishkan? Should the people know what they are donating to, before making the donation? **Rav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi Shlita** says no. He notes that once the people donate to Hashem, it is the act of the donation itself that places Hashem in each of their hearts.

**שְׁנַ֥יִם כְּרֻבִ֖ים 2 Keruvim (25:18)** - The Torah identifies the word Keruvim twice. In Sefer Berashis Rashi tells us that the Keruvim are angels who cause damage, now we are told that Keruvim look like babies? How can Rashi attribute Keruvim into 2 totally differnet ideas? **Rav Moshe Mordechai Epstein ztl** explains that when you give a child a good Chinuch, you bring him closer to the Aron, and he will be as protected as a child. However, when the child is not given a good and honest Chinuch, the child is distanced from Ohel Moed and becomes like a dangerous Malach.

**מִקְשָׁה֙ תַּֽעֲשֶׂ֣ה אֹתָ֔ם From a solid piece you shall make them (25:18) -** Why do the Keruvim need to be made from one piece? Moreover, according to the Gemara (Yevamos 62b) the Keruvim must be made from a single piece of solid gold. Why? **Rav Binyamin Firer (Hegyonah Shel Torah)** explains that the Keruvim are symbolic of the Jewish people on the different ends of religious Judaism. They may differ on certain Hashkafic stresses but they all emanate from the same source and when they realize that they are more similar than dissimilar, the Shechina rests between them.

**עֲצֵ֥י שִׁטִּ֖ים עֹֽמְדִֽים Standing cedar wood (26:15)** - The Talmud (Sukkah 45b) uses this Possuk to teach us that we are to do Mitzvos in the way that they grow. Hence the Kerashim, the 4 minim and other Mitzvos are to be held and utilized in the way that they grow**. Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** learns that we are to learn that the Mitzvos are a means for us to grow and not merely things “we have to do.” **Rav Amital ztl** added that there is an additional message to be learned here -- that we are to be proud and walk upright when we do Mitzvos and not to look downcast or be embarrassed when we do them.

**מזבח הקטרת The Mizbeiach for Ketores (27:20)** - It is interesting that this Kli is NOT found in Parashas Terumah. Why? **Rav Schachter Shlita** explained in the name of **Rav Soloveitchik ztl** that the main point of building the Mishkan was not merely to have a place to bring Korbanos -- it was to have a palace for Hashem. A palace needs to have a Shulchan, Aron and Menorah. It does not need to have a Mizbeiach -- hence that is not in the original Parasha about the Mishkan.

**Haftara: הַבַּ֨יִת הַזֶּ֜ה אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּ֣ה בֹנֶ֗ה The home that you are building (Melachim I: 6:12)** - Why does the Haftara speak of the home that Shlomo “building” if at the time of the Haftara, the home was already built? **Rav Ezrachi Shlita** explains that while the structure and architecture might have been completed, a home and a Kedusha are always being built. It requires constant renewal and active work to keep the homes functional and optimal.