

Point to Ponder
VaYakhel-Pekudai/HaChodesh 5777

And Moshe gathered (35:1) – **Rashi** explains that this gathering happened on the day after Yom HaKippurim. In other words, the people were commanded to make the Mishkan right after receiving the second Luchos. Now, in regard to the building of the Beis HaMikdash, we find the stress on the building taking place AFTER the other needs of the people were taken care of (conquering and settling the land, establishing themselves in the face of their enemies etc). Why did the Mishkan get commanded right away? **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky ztl.** explained that after the Jews sinned with the Cheit HaEigel, Hashem realized that they needed a place to connect to Him. Ergo, when in the land, they were able to connect via Eretz Yisrael. However, in the desert, they needed a place and the command for the Mishkan was an immediate item to attend to.

Do not light a fire (35:3)- Of all of the 39 Avos Melachos only Haavara was stated. Why? **The Chasam Sofer ztl.** explained that one should not begin to light his spiritual fire ON Shabbos. Rather, that fire needs to burn all week long. **Rav Pinchas Friedman Shlita** adds that only if one builds the fire all week long, will it remain lit on Shabbos. This is the Kiyum of he who toils on Erev Shabbos shall eat on Shabbos (Avoda Zara 3a). Our dear friend, **Rav Abba Wagensberg Shlita** explained that the connection between the building of the Mishkan and Shabbos extends to this arena of life as well. We engage in so many projects that demand our attention. However, as we do so, we must never lose sight of the spiritual opportunities that surround us. In that manner we are building sanctuaries of time and build a Shabbos tantamount to building a Mikdash.

The men came and brought upon the women (35:22) – **Rashi** explains that the women came wearing their jewelry and then donated it. Why does the Torah need to tell us how the jewelry came? **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** explained that Hashem's will was not to take things that the people found to be worthless. Rather, he wanted them to take the things that they valued and still understood that the value of the Mishkan was even greater. The same is true for Tzedaka and for other Mitzvos – especially Limud Torah. The women showed that although they loved their Tachshitim and wore them until the last moment, they wanted these in the Mishkan for the greater purpose that it would serve there.

As Hashem commanded Moshe (38:22) – We find that the making of the Bigdei Kehuna utilized this phrase while the construction of the Mishkan did not. Why the difference? **The Brisker Rav ztl.** explained that the word Tzivah only applies to Mitzvos that apply L'Doros as opposed to a Horaas Shaah. The Bigdei Kehuna would remain while the Mishkan would later be forgone in favor of the stones of the Beis HaMikdash. **Rav Schachter Shlita** would often add that the same is true today when learning from watching a Rebbe's Hanhagos instead of learning proper actions directly. The former may constitute a Horaas Shaah while the latter provides the Rebbe's actions clearly.

Vavei HaAmudim (38:28) – A Sefer Torah is filled with the letter Vav and most columns in the Sefer Torah specifically start with a Vav. Vav is the most common letter in the Torah. Why? **Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus ztl.** explained that in other languages a sentence cannot begin with the word "And." In the Hebrew language it is quite common. The reason is that the Torah is one long connection. It begins with Berashis and carries forward until the present day. In the same way that we cannot cut out one's childhood for it made the adult who he or she is, we cannot ignore the twists and turns of each piece of the Torah – they, like each piece of the Mishkan – are connected.

And they brought the Mishkan to Moshe (39:33) – Rashi explains that it was Moshe who needed to put it together as a description of how the Shechina would attach it. Moreover, the Midrah explains that the people knew how to build the individual pieces but only Moshe was able to connect the pieces. **Rav Aharon Lichtenstein ztl.** explained that the 2 ideas apply to one's inner Mishkan as well. The inner Mishkan needs to be put together and not only the individual parts and at the same time, needs the final blows to come from Hashem even as it looks like the person is doing all of the work.

And Moshe blessed them (39:43) – Rashi explains that the Tefillah offered was a Tefillah that the Shechina should be successfully imparted through your Maaseh Yadayim. The **Midrash** offers a different blessing – Yosef Hashem Aleichem Kachem Elef Piamim. Why are these Berachos connected to the Mishkan? The **Koheles Yitzchak** explains that when one donates to a Shul or a Beis HaMedrash, merits to have many generations – especially of sons and daughters who study and dwell in Torah and Mitzvos.

Haftorah: And when the Nasi comes (Yechezkel 45) – Rav Menachem Leibtag Shlita highlights the reference change from king to Nasi and the stress on his additional Korbanos to highlight the fact that in Yechezkel's time, the monarchy had sold out the centrality of Hashem's rule in the world. In order to prevent that situation from ever re-occurring, the offering of regular Korbanos by the king and then only presenting them to the Kohanim who would take over the offering on his behalf and the demotion in title as well as the recognition that he rules only over his nachala, remind the king that he serves at the will of Hashem and it is to Him that the king and nation must direct their attention.