

Moshe gathered the entire people of Israel, and he said to them, "These are the things that God has said to do." (35:1) – Why did Moshe need to gather the people? Such gathering was only done to give the people some extra reproof or to enter them in a Bris. Why here? **Ibn Ezra** suggests that it was to collect donations. **Ramban** suggests that it was to have them enter a new Bris after the Cheit HaEigel. **Rav Aharon Lichtenstein ztl.** suggested that the message here was from Moshe who recognized that the people were likely feeling distanced from him – having been with him through their challenges and now experiencing his reaction to the Eigel as one of distance and dissociation. In order to re-encourage the relationship and perhaps restore and repair it, Moshe calls all of the people together instead of just speaking to the leaders and letting the word go forth.

Six days you shall do Melacha and on the seventh it will be Kodesh (35:2) – In Yisro it mentions both Melacha and Avodah. Why do we not mention Avodah here? Also, why not mention Lo Taavod in Yisro? **Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** noted that the only issur is not to do melacha, work is technically permitted. When one does Avoda he is unfulfilled with his actions (think Avdus not melachus). Melacha is work that is done with a purpose – and hopefully one that has a Kedusha attached to it. Vayakhel deals with the Mishkan, the Melacha described is one of purpose – and of a lofty one at that.

The men contributed in addition to the women (35:22) – **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** explained that the women came wearing their jewelry. Why is this important? Rav Moshe explains that there is a valuable lesson to be learned here – the women were not just donating the things that they did NOT want or need. They wore their adornments up until the last minute. But, they appreciated having the chance to donate the Jewelry to the Mishkan even more. Rav Moshe adds that the same is true for Limmud Hatorah – it should not just be for leisure but rather be something that is a higher purpose in our lives.

He made the Kiyor with the reflecting mirrors (38:8) – **Rashi** explains that Moshe was not comfortable accepting the mirrors in that they were used in order to entice the husbands. Hashem told Moshe that these mirrors were more precious than all the other donations. **Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky ztl.** explained that when the women told their husbands “I am prettier than you” it didn’t mean that it was a competition – it meant that my beauty comes from you—reflecting the beauty of the sanctity in the relationship and how the bond adds to the individual parts.

This is the accounting of the Mishkan (38:21) – The Midrash notes that Rav Tanchuma explained that Parshas Pekudai anything Moshe needed to account for, was blessed. **Rav Elya Sveii ztl.** explained that only Moshe was able to put together the pieces of the Mishkan as he was the one responsible for the accounting. He, explains Rav Elya, was the one who could unite the people in service to Hashem. When one considers that the Mishkan was the uniting force but it was made up with a sum total – one could be afraid that the accounting would be a divisive force. Therefore, the Torah tells us that it was Moshe alone who united the people and only he could use the accounting and actually bring them together.

As Hashem commanded Moshe () – Throughout Parshas Pekudai we find reference to this idea repeated over and over. Why? **Rav Mordechai Kamenetzsky Shlita** suggested that the message here is to teach us that not only was the entire picture one that was done, each step in the effort, the intricacies of the stones and the designs were significant and important. Each step contained such direct detail that each was done exactly as Hashem commanded Moshe.

When the cloud rose the people would move (40:36-37) - The Gemara (Bava kamma and elsewhere) learn the laws of Melachos Shabbos from the Mishkan. How do we learn the carrying laws. After all, was carrying done in the preparation of the Mishkan? **Rav Schachter Shlita** pointed out to us that the moving and traveling in the Midbar was part of the responsibilities of setting up the Mishkan. The purpose of Mishkan was to be mobile. Taking it up and putting it down – and carrying it was part of the Melacha. Hence these otherwise extra Possukim at the end of the Chumash.

For Parshas Parah – They should take for you a Parah Adumah (19:2) – For whom should the cow be taken? **Rav Gifter ztl.** suggested that it was for Moshe. In other words, Chazal seem to suggest that the Parah Adumah is an atonement for the Cheit HaEigel. Rav Gifter ztl. pointed out that the Tefillah of Moshe was that which saved them from the initial bolt of the sin of the Eigel. Hence, the post-sin purification is also credited to him -- imagine that! Forever more, all return from Tumah via Parah Adumah will be credited to Moshe Rabbeinu!

Haftorah: Son of man! The house of Israel are dwelling in their land and have defiled it like Tumas Niddah (Yechezkel 36:17) – Why is the reference to Tumas Nidda instead of Tumas Meis? **Rav Chaim BenSinor Shlita** suggested that the Tumah can be removed relatively easily with Teshuva after which one is able to achieve Geulah. In the same way that the unique status is preserved despite the Tumah with a Niddah, Hahem does not change our status even when we need to be removed from the home due to Tumah.