Points to Ponder – Tetzaveh 5774

**And you should command Bnei Yisroel (27:20)** – Isn’t the word “V’ata” extra? After all, couldn’t the Torah simply state; “command Bnei Yisroel” and we would know that it is a reference to Moshe**? Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky ztl** used to note that Hu (third case) highlight responsibilities but Ata -- as a command and a pronoun-- places direct connection to the project. In essence, Hashem was telling Moshe that while Bnei Yisroel were donating of themselves to the Mishkan in order to provide the Chomer for the Mishkan and its Keilim, Ata – you will put yourself into the fashioning of the Chomer by adding your personality which will help mold the Chomer into a certain Tzurah – form.

**Ner Tamid (27:20)** **– Rashi** notes that tamid is each and every night. Thus the word Tamid denotes regularly instead of continuously without interruption. **Rav Wolbe ztl**. notes that a Masmid is not one who learns without sleep and eating but rather is one who learns with regularity and is established in his learning.

**It should be on Aharon’s Forehead and Aharon shall atone by it for the Sins of the Kodashim (28:38)** – **The Beis HaLevi** once noted that the worry about Jewish continuity affects both Rabbi and layman. The difference is that the layman is a Shomer Chinam and the Rabbi is a Shomer Sachar. His responsibilities and therefore his anxieties are greater.

**And you should place it on his right earlobe, his right thumb and his right big toe (29:20)** – Why is Aharon sprinkled in these three locations specifically**? Rav Zalman Sorotzkin ztl.** notes that when a Kohein Gadol wears the Bigdei Kehuna, they purify him from head to toe. It is only the extremities (which have no Bigdei Kehuna on them) that do not Kedushas haGuf. By sprinkling these areas, we purify Aharon’s lineage forever more.

**If there shall be anything leftover…don’t eat it for it is Kodesh (29:34)** – **The Rivivos Efraim ztl.** notes that a Jew is often compared to a Korban. Even a Korban that is “left over” that is, it is not going to be used for Mitzva, is still to be treated with respect for it is Kodesh. The same must be true for Jews who are currently non-practicing – they deserve respect simply for being Jewish.

**And you will make a Mizbeiach for the offering of the Ketores (30:1)**- Why is the Mizbach HaKetores commanded and designed only after the Torah tells us about how the entire project was done? **The Nesivos Shalom ztl**. explains that the 2 Mizbachos in the Mishkan represent the Guf (the copper one was made of earth) and the Neshama (the Mizbach HaKetores ). The Nesivos Shalom notes that one cannot have a place for Taharas HaNefesh until one fashions a place for Godliness in this world. Hence, once the place is created, there is a place for Hashraas HaShechina and ultimately for Taharas HaNefesh.

**As Hashem commanded** – The phrase appears 18 times in the parsha. Why so many reminders that Moshe did not deviate? **Rav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi Shlita** explains that when a person has a job to do, he usually does the job “more or less” but when he is a partner in the process, he is more likely to put in his own 2 cents, skewing the job’s performance. The role of Moshe and Bnei Yisroel here would not be akin to either role if it were to be successful. Thus, Hashem reminds us each time that there was no editorializing in the Mishkan building. Each step was followed meticulously.

**Haftorah: Son of man tell the house of Israel about the Beis HaMikdash so that they will be ashamed of their sins and measure the design. (Yechezkel 43:10-11)** – In the first 3 possukim of the Haftorah, the focus on the word Tzurah (form) appears 4 times. Why**? Rav Soloveitchik ztl.** noted that architecture is made up of a combination of math and aesthetics. While the chukim demonstrate the means of service to Hashem transmitted via the Chukim of the construction of the Mishkan and then the Battei Mikdash, it is the Tzurah or form that highlights the aura that serves to inspire the people that not only can they celebrate what they have already accomplished but that they can accomplish so much more.