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ON VAYAKHEL PEKUDEI - 5766

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PARASHAT VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI

GUEST SICHA BY RAV YOEL BIN-NUN

Obligation and Self-Expression

Adapted by Shaul Barth

Translated by Kaeren Fish

In this week's parasha, we read about the conclusion of the construction of the Mishkan. The Torah provides a tally of the silver that was collected and a description of what it was used for; inter alia, we are told:

The money of the counting of the congregation was a hundred talents and a thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, by the shekel of the Sanctuary; a 'beka' per person – a half shekel – by the shekel of the Sanctuary, for all who passed among those who were counted, from the age of twenty years and upwards, for six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty. And the hundred talents of silver were used to cast the sockets of the Sanctuary, and the sockets of the curtain: a hundred sockets corresponding to the hundred talents; a talent per socket. (Shemot 38:25-27)

In other words, the half-shekels donated by Bnei Yisrael were used for building the basis of the Mishkan – the sockets. But we know that Bnei Yisrael donated more than what was necessary; hence, the remainder was used for other construction needs related to the Mishkan.

A contribution is usually given out of goodwill on the part of the donor; hence, he is able to bring as much as he wants, and to direct it to whichever cause he chooses. In the case of the contributions to the Mishkan, though, the situation is quite different: the Torah stipulates exactly how much every individual is to donate, and for what exact purpose the contribution is to be used. This may be a hint to us that the basis and foundation of every building, every endeavor, must start with a layer of obligation. The people involved cannot be left to do as they wish; first there must be certain rules, regulations and limitations, in order that the proposed project can be realized. It is for this reason that the contributions collected from every individual in Bnei Yisrael are used to build the sockets of the Mishkan – in other words, the basis upon which everything else stands.

This does not mean to say that there is no room for personal freedom of expression: all of the contributions beyond that which was needed for building the sockets, were used for the other components of the Mishkan. This tells us that there is certainly room for individual, personal involvement and creativity – but their turn comes after the layer of obligation, with which the work begins.

Often, people complain about the set prayers, claiming that they do not reflect the worshipper's true emotions and intentions; there are voices that question our obligation to pray three times every day just because that is what Chazal decided. But it should be noted that throughout the Amida there is room for personal expression: a person may add into any of the blessings whatever he wants to say on the subject of that blessing. In the blessing "Shome'a Tefilla," one may add requests about any subject. In truth, there is plenty of room for personal expression in prayer. So what is all the dissatisfaction about?

Apparently, the problem is the very existence of eighteen blessings that everyone must recite. But, as we have said – this is our obligation. Prayer, too – like the Mishkan – starts with a certain layer of obligation. Beyond that, every individual may express himself to his heart's content within this framework, which indeed facilitates such self-expression.

It is important to understand that the layer of obligation is necessary not only for the purposes of establishing a framework for action; it also lends the action a dimension of equality. If every individual were left to contribute whatever he wanted to the Mishkan or Temple, a situation would arise whereby a group of wealthy Jerusalemites would end up financing all the building materials and all the sacrifices – and they would do so happily and willingly. After all, what would motivate the simple folk to contribute towards the Mishkan, if there were others who were more capable of doing so - and happy to do it? Everyone else would become distanced – psychologically – from the Temple, eventually ceasing even to visit.

Thus, by obligating everyone to give a contribution, rather than leaving it all to personal initiative and generosity, the Torah establishes the principle of equality in relation to the establishment of the Mishkan. The Mishkan belongs to everyone, and everyone can and should feel personally involved in its construction and operations.

Purim presents an idea that may be related to this: we read that Haman's proposal of genocide begins with his assertion that "There is one nation, which that is scattered and divided among all of the king's provinces." In other words, the fact that the Jews are a single nation – a fact that was immediately apparent to Haman – is what makes Am Yisrael special, and it is this that preserves us in difficult times. It is precisely this concept that the Mishkan represents, by means of the principle that every person brings a contribution, such that it is built – first and foremost – upon a basis of obligation.

(This sicha was delivered on leil Shabbat Parashat Pekudei 5763 [2003].)

From: usa-weekly-owner@yatednews.com [mailto:usa-weekly-owner@yatednews.com] On Behalf Of Yated USA Sent: March 23, 2006 1:48 PM To: usa-weekly@yatednews.com Subject: YATED USA WEEKLY 03-24-06

Parashas Vayakhel: **When Extra is Just Enough Based on an address by Rabbi Fishel Schachter, Adapted for print by M. Heimowitz**

Reb Yitzchok Elchonon Spektor of Kovno was once sitting with someone when an excited young bachur burst through the door. "Rebbe," he said excitedly, "Did you hear the good news? Baruch was freed from the draft!"

Reb Yitzchok Elchonon jumped up, ran over to the bachur and embraced him. "Thank you for bringing me this wonderful news! I will always associate you with this besurah tova!"

A few minutes later, the door burst open again, and in came another bachur. "Rebbe, Rebbe, did you hear that Baruch was freed from the draft?" the excited bachur asked.

Reb Yitzchok Elchonon jumped up with the same enthusiasm he had the first time, ran over to this second bachur and embraced him the same way he had embraced the first one. "Oh, baruch Hashem! You brought me such gevaldige news. I will always associate you with this besurah tova."

This scene repeated itself again and again. Each time a bachur burst in with the good news, Reb Yitzchok Elchonon reacted the same way, giving no indication that he had already heard the news several times. He wanted each of the bachurim to have the pleasure of being the one to tell the Rosh Yeshiva the good news. They were so excited to share the news with him – why disappoint them?

In Parashas Vayakhel, all of Klal Yisroel comes running excitedly to Moshe Rabbeinu. The men, the women, the children – they were all enthusiastic about bringing whatever they had to the Mishkan. Some were carrying materials, others were donating their talents and skills. Finally, the chachomim inform Moshe Rabbeinu that Klal Yisroel have donated more than was necessary for the Mishkan, and the call goes out instructing Klal Yisroel not to bring any more donations.

In the final analysis, how much was donated? The passuk says, "VeHaMelacha hoisa dayam lechol hamelacha laasos osa vehosair" – the donations were enough for all of the work that needed to be done and extra. We already know that there was a surplus – that was why Moshe Rabbeinu had to tell Klal Yisroel to stop bringing donations. Why, then, does the Torah reiterate that Klal Yisroel brought extra? Furthermore, there appears to be a contradiction in the passuk. If there was enough, then there was not extra; if there was extra, then it was more than just enough. Was it dayam-, or was it vehosair? Was it enough, or was it too much?

The answer, explains the Ohr Hachayim HaKadosh, is both. There was extra – and it was just enough. How can that be? Klal Yisroel did bring more than was necessary, so from a purely mathematical standpoint, there was extra. However, Hashem performed a nes, and somehow, there was a need for every item that was brought.

It was a miracle that no one was told, "Another gold vessel? We already have a few hundred of them." It was a miracle that no one was told, "Really, we appreciate your artistic talent, but perhaps you should take a number. There's a waiting list for artists, you know." And it was a miracle that no one was told, "Oh, we already have far too much silver. You should have come last week."

The Ribbono Shel Olam was concerned that all of the people who brought donations to the Mishkan should feel that their contributions were appreciated. He did not want any man, woman or child to be disappointed, and He did not want any person's donation to be turned down.

"VeHaMelacha hoisa dayam" – every gift for the Mishkan fit into place miraculously, even though there really was "Vehosair" a surplus.

The Torah is teaching us that if people are excited about doing something good they should not be discouraged. Whether it's a bachur bringing good news to his Rosh Yeshiva or a craftsman offering his talents to the Mishkan, why disappoint them?

It's never a good idea to make people feel that you don't need them. First of all, you never know when you might need them in the future. If you throw cold water on them when they are excited to do something for you, they may be discouraged the next time around. Second of all, in the eyes of HaKadosh Baruch Hu no person's contribution is redundant. In shomayim everything fits into place. Regardless of whether you think there is value in someone else's avodas Hashem, Hakadosh Baruch Hu considers it vitally important and necessary.

When it comes to chinuch this lesson is a critical one. If you tell an enthusiastic child, "I don't need your help," the help may not be

forthcoming when you do need it. Say your young daughter takes out a broom to sweep a perfectly clean floor. If you tell her, "Oh, put back that broom. Can't you see the floor is clean?" you have effectively guaranteed that she won't be too thrilled to sweep the floor when you ask her to.

Never discourage a child from doing something good, even if you feel it is unnecessary. Appreciate the gesture and compliment the child for it.

Just as it is a chessed to help someone who needs it, it is often a chessed to accept someone's offer of help, especially when you don't need the help. Everyone likes to be the giver. But if you allow yourself to become the taker in order to make someone else feel good, that is real mesirus nefesh for chessed. Remember, you are following Hashem's example.

Hashem wanted Klal Yisroel to feel that their gifts to the Mishkan were needed and appreciated, so He performed a nes to ensure that no donation or donor would be turned away. However, at some point the surplus did become noticeable, and Moshe Rabbeinu had to command Klal Yisroel to stop bringing donations. This is difficult to understand. Once Hashem lifted the constraints of nature and mathematics, there should have been no limit on the amount Klal Yisroel was able to bring!

The Sfas Emes has a beautiful insight that explains what went on during the time that Klal Yisroel was bringing donations to the Mishkan. Klal Yisroel had a tremendous desire to give to the Mishkan, as evidenced by the surplus of donations. However, the tzaddikim and chachomim of the time were concerned that all of the giving should be done l'shaim shomayim, out of love for HaKadosh Baruch Hu. The moment that there was danger of members of Klal Yisroel trying to outdo one another and giving gifts with less than one-hundred percent sincerity, the giving had to be stopped immediately.

The Baal Shem Tov says that any time you do a mitzvah, you have to control your thoughts and emotions carefully. To motivate yourself to do the mitzvah, you may need to use a bit of gaavah. Tell yourself how much you will accomplish by doing the mitzvah, how great a zechus you will have, how much greater a person you will become. Avodas Hashem starts with "Vayigbah libo bedarkei Hashem" – a feeling of pride and enthusiasm. This is a legitimate and correct use of the middah of gaavah. However, after you perform the mitzvah, you have to make sure that you do not start feeling superior to others. That is misplaced gaavah. At the point that you start feeling that you are better than someone else, your motives come into question. Are you really doing this l'shaim shomayim? Or are you perhaps doing it to show everyone how righteous you are?

When the call went out to instruct Klal Yisroel to stop bringing donations to the Mishkan, it did not mean that the nes had run out. It meant, as the Sfas Emes explains, that the leaders of Klal Yisroel wanted to make sure that the giving stopped while it was still sincere – before it became a competition.

A certain rav once went to a vacation area for a rest accompanied by some of his close chassidim. There was a small Jewish community in the area, and the rav and chassidim davened in the community shul on Friday night. After davening the chassidim told their rav that they felt that the davening in the shul was not on the same level that they were accustomed to. After all, these were lay people, baalebatim. The chassidim asked the rav for permission to daven in a separate minyan. "We'll wake up early, we'll going to go the mikveh, we'll say Tehillim before davening, and we'll daven the way we usually do," the chassidim told the Rav.

"All of that is fine," the rav replied. "But after you finish davening, you're going to come upstairs and you're going to see the baalebatim already sitting down and having kiddush. If you say to yourself, 'Hah! Look at them having kiddush, and look at the way we davened' – then you will lose any madreigos you may have gained with your davening. It will be very difficult for you to avoid that thought – so I would suggest that you daven together with the rest of us."

When a yid stops and thinks, "Am I doing this sincerely, or do I have an ulterior motive?" the thought alone adds a great deal of kedushah to his performance of the mitzvah. It means that the person is not only concerned that his actions should be proper, but that he wants his machshavos to be pure as well.

When Klal Yisroel received the command to stop bringing donations to the Mishkan, they understood that it was time to put the brakes on their overwhelming desire to give for fear that their giving would cease to be sincere.

Reigning in the desire to give to the Mishkan required a tremendous amount of mesirus nefesh on the part of Klal Yisroel. Perhaps, suggests the Sfas Emes, that is why they were zoche to the nes of "VeHaMalacha hoisa dayam ... vehosair." Originally, there was a surplus, as the passuk clearly indicates. However, when Klal Yisroel demonstrated exceptional mesirus nefesh in holding themselves back from giving, then – wonder of wonders – it was discovered that nothing was superfluous. For when Hashem saw the sincerity and purity of their motives, He made sure to find a place in the Mishkan for their contributions.

When you truly want to give, it is often much harder to hold yourself back from giving than to give. This goes for all of avodas Hashem. Have you ever felt that you want to do something extra, above and beyond what you are required to do? That is a beautiful thing. But when the little bit of extra will start you thinking that you're better than someone else, seek guidance from daas Torah. Sometimes, holding yourself back is a greater mitzvah than doing extra.

If you listen to daas Torah and hold yourself back from giving or doing that little bit extra, whatever you do give will be appreciated by the Ribbono Shel Olam ever so much more. For when Hashem sees the sincerity and purity of your motives, He will make sure to find a place for your contribution.

[From last year]

From: ravfrand-owner@torah.org on behalf of Rabbi Yissocher Frand [ryfrand@torah.org] Sent: March 10, 2005 9:56 PM To: ravfrand@torah.org Subject: Rabbi Frand on Parshas Pekudei

"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Pekudei -

Lessons To Be Found In The Narration of the Mishkan's Construction
The pasuk in Parshas Vayakhel says, "See Hashem has proclaimed by name, Bezalel son of Uri son of Chur of the tribe of Yehudah" [Shmos 35:30]. Bezalel was the general contractor of the Mishkan. He was its chief designer and architect. Every time the Torah mentions Bezalel, he is mentioned with his father's name (Uri) and his grandfather's name (Chur). Chur was together with Aharon when the Jews approached them with the request to make the Golden Calf. Chur, rather than trying to buy time, as did Aharon, stood up to the people. He fought the people and he paid for it with his life. He displayed self-sacrifice (mesiras nefesh), literally, to prevent the sin of the Golden Calf. The Medrash tells us that as a reward for this self-sacrifice, G-d saw to it that his grandson would be the builder of the Mishkan. For this reason, Bezalel's lineage is always mentioned and always traced back to his grandfather for it was due to his grandfather's sanctification of the Name of Hashem, that Bezalel merited his position. The Shemen HaTov notes that we only know the story of Chur's death from a Medrash. Why, he asks, is this not given 'prime time'? Why does the Torah not explicitly tell us of the heroism of Chur and explicitly tell us that Bezalel was chosen as reward for Chur's self-sacrifice? The Shemen HaTov suggests that the Torah "censors" the story of Chur's death out of respect to the honor of Israel. It would besmirch the reputation of the Jewish people to explicitly detail the zeal with which they went about creating the Golden Calf to the extent that they murdered anyone who stood in their way. We know the unfortunate details of that incident. The Sages reveal the 'secret' in the Medrash. However, the Torah does not want to engage in such

explicit defamation of the character of the people of Israel. The honor of Klal Yisrael is important. Klal Yisrael must be treated with derech erez (manners and respect). This week's parsha contains a similar idea. The Maharil Diskin cites the pasuk "And they brought the Mishkan to Moshe, the Tent and all its implements, its hooks, its beams, its bars, and its pillars, and its sockets" [Shmos 39:33]. The Mishkan and all its pieces were very heavy. It took miraculous strength on the part of Moshe Rabbeinu to erect the Mishkan, single-handedly. Why, asks the Maharil Diskin, did they need to bring all the pieces to Moshe? Since Moshe was given miraculous strength for this endeavor, would it not make more sense, if he went around from tribe to tribe to inspect the pieces where they were manufactured and then he could bring the pieces that pass inspection to a central location for final assembly of the Mishkan? The Maharil Diskin answers, based on a puzzling Medrash Tanchuma, on this very pasuk. The Medrash states that one of the enactments the rabbis instituted because of Darkei Shalom (to promote ways of peace) was that a Kohain receives the first aliyah (is the first one called to the Torah), a Levi receives the second aliyah, and a Yisrael receives the third aliyah. The Maharil Diskin asks, why does this enactment of Darkei Shalom appear in the middle of Parshas Pekudei? What is the connection between the pasuk enumerating the items brought to Moshe Rabbeinu and the enactments made by the Rabbis to promote ways of peace? The Maharil Diskin answers that the reason Moshe Rabbeinu did not make the rounds of the tribes to inspect the parts of the Mishkan in various locations was because he would then have to decide who to inspect first. That would cause disputes among the people. Chazal went to great pains to avoid arguments. They devised a method whereby people would not get upset because they did not get the first or second aliyah. They standardized the distribution of aliyahs to avoid quarrels. A similar strategy was devised to avoid quarrels at the time of the building of the Mishkan. Hashem wished to avoid someone complaining to Moshe - why am I the nineteenth person on the list of people that you are visiting on your inspection tour? An alternate system was arranged. An announcement went out, stating that when people finish their work, they should bring the pieces to Moshe. Moshe would then inspect them by his tent, on a first come, first served basis. Kavod HaTzibbur -- the honor due to the Jewish people - and the establishment of peace among the Jewish people are values of prime importance. Every possible attempt must be made to diminish jealousy and competition. May we make those attempts and may we be successful in our efforts.

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From: Oroh_vsimchah-bounces@shemayisrael.com on behalf of Shema Yisrael Torah Network [shemalist@shemayisrael.com] Sent: March 23, 2006 5:41 AM To: oroh_vsimchah Subject: **Oroh V'Simchah** by **Zvi Akiva Fleisher** - Parshas Vayakhel/Pekudei

OROH V'SIMCHOH - MESHECH CHOCHMOH ON PARSHAS VA'YAKHEIL 5766 BS"D Ch. 35, v. 22:

"V'chol ish asher HEINIF T'NUFAS zohov laShem" - Why is the word HEINIF used specifically by the donation of gold and by no other material? The Imrei Shefer answers that the M.R. chapter 51 and the Medrash Tanchumoh chapter 9 say that the donations of gold for the Mishkon are an atonement for the gold given for the making of the golden calf. The word form HANOFOH is used by sacrifices which are an atonement. Therefore, specifically by the gold donations this word is used to indicate that the donations of gold afford atonement similar to a sacrifice. There is a difficulty with this explanation. We find the expression "U'n'choshes haT'NUFOH" in Shmos 38:29.

The MESHECH CHOCHMOH explains the reason for the word form HANOFOH used by gold and copper specifically because there is a law that items created for mundane purposes may not be used for building the Mishkon or for its vessels. We only find two materials that were personal items of the donors. They are jewellery and the copper mirrors used for the laver (kior). If an item that was created for a mundane use was changed in form it is considered a new item and may be used for the Mishkon. The golden jewellery was melted and recast. The copper mirrors were soldered together to form the laver. Each of these acts was an ELEVATION from its previous use, hence the use of the word form HANOFOH specifically by gold and copper.

Ch. 36, v. 13: "Va'yaas chamishim karsei zohov" - The MESHECH CHOCHMOH points out a difference in the order of words in our verse, which discusses the making of the golden hooks, where the number appears before the items, and verse 18, which discusses the making of the copper hooks, where the item appears before the number, "va'yaas karsei n'choshes chamishim." He adds that we find this same difference in parshas Trumoh by the command to create these items (26:6 and 26:11).

He explains that when the number is mentioned earlier, the amount is not fixed, as even more may be created. When the number is mentioned afterwards, the Torah is telling us to make exactly that amount and no more. He does not explain why the order indicates this. Perhaps, although unlikely, this goes under the ruling of "klal ufrat ein bichlal ela mah shebifrat." More likely, this can be understood with the words of the Chizkuni. He says that when an earlier part of a verse contains a thought that is not self understood, then the continuation stands by itself. Thus our verse by saying "va'yaas chamishim" is still not understood. When it continues with "karsei zohov" it stands alone, meaning that there may be as many as you wish to create. In verse 18 where it says "va'yaas karsei n'choshes," a self contained idea, the word "chamishim" that follows limits it to only 50. Thus more than 50 golden hooks may be made, while only 50 copper hooks should be made. Why this should be so can be understood with the words of the MESHECH CHOCHMOH on verse 18.

<< Ch. 36, v. 18: "Va'yaas karsei n'choshes chamishim L'CHA'BER ES HO'OHEL" - In verse 13 where it discusses the golden connecting hooks for the Mishkon coverings, the words "l'cha'ber es ho'ohel" are not mentioned. The MESHECH CHOCHMOH answers that halacha required that all items used for the Mishkon and its vessels be created specifically for the sanctity of the Mishkon, etc. The dwellings people lived in also had sheets of material used as roof coverings. It is very likely that to connect the sheets of material, inexpensive copper hooks were also used, similar to those required for the upper Mishkon covering. Therefore the Torah stresses, "l'cha'ber es ho'ohel," to emphasize that the hooks used to join the sections of the Sanctuary covering had to be created specifically for that purpose. For the bottom level, the Mishkon covering, which would be visible, the Torah required that the hooks be made of gold (verse 13). Since people would not use gold to make hooks for the roof coverings of their own homes, it was therefore not necessary to mention "l'cha'ber es ho'ohel" in verse 13.>>

It is now well understood that if extra golden hooks were to be made, there would be no fear that they would accidentally be used for one's personal needs, as gold would never be used for hooks that attach sections of roof coverings. However, the Torah was concerned that if extra copper hooks that were sanctified were left in storage, there might be the possibility that they might accidentally be confused with other copper unsanctified hooks, and be used in one's personal tent, hence the restriction to only create 50 of them.

PARSHAS PIKUDEI

Ch. 39, v. 5: "Kaa'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe" - This expression appears no less than 18 times in our parsha as pointed out by the Baal Haturim. However, it appears only by the creation of the Kohanim's apparel. Why was this expression not used by the building of the Mishkon and the crafting of its vessels in parshas Va'yakheil?

1) Even though a prophet is believed that he received a prophecy to transgress a negative command of the Torah, this is only true if it is a short term exception, such as with Eliyohu on Mount Carmel. If the prophet says that he received a prophecy from Hashem that a mitzvoh should be transgressed on a regular basis, this may not be believed. Since the materials for the priestly garments contained both linen and wool threads which constitute shaatnez, the Torah points out that the garments were made "kaa'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe," specifically because Hashem gave this command through Moshe who was trusted to transmit mitzvos even when they contradict one another, did the bnei Yisroel follow through and create the garments as commanded, even though they contained shaatnez. (MESHECH CHOCHMOH)

2) All components of the Mishkon, its vessels, and the priestly garments had to be created for the intention of being used for the Mishkon and its services. For example, one could not donate an already made sheet of material that happened to fit the requirements for a section of the roof covering. If one created a Shulchon or altar without any specific intention, we assume that it was made for the Mishkon, since there is a prohibition to make a duplicate for mundane use as per the gemara M'nochos 28b. Therefore, one need not state that he is crafting it for the Mishkon, as this is self-understood, as otherwise he would transgress. However, there is no prohibition to duplicate the priestly garments. One must therefore have specific intention to make the garments for the use of the Kohanim.

We now understand why the Torah mentioned "Kaa'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe" specifically by the creation of the priestly garments, to show that they were specifically created as a fulfillment of Hashem's command to Moshe. (MESHECH CHOCHMOH)

3) The GRI"Z, Rabbi Yitzchok Zeiv haLevi Soloveitchik zt"l raises a question on the term "V'atoh T'ZAVEH" (27:20). Why is the term "tzivuy" not used in parshas Trumoh regarding the building of the Mishkon and its vessels? Actually this is already raised by the Rashbam who answers that the term "tzivuy" means to command regarding a matter that will apply for further generations, as Rashi points out in the first verse of parshas Tzav. It is mentioned in the gemara Kidushin 29a. He says that the command to build a Mishkon and its vessels only applies as long as there was a Mishkon, but the command to prepare oil for lighting the menorah is permanent. However, the GRI"Z says that this concept should be applied to a different aspect of the Mishkon. This is the fact that the details of the Mishkon and its vessels are not for all further generations, as the dimensions of the Beis Hamikdosh and its vessels and their numbers changed later. This is in keeping with the interpretation of the Ramban on the words "v'chein taasu" (25:9) meaning to be done with alacrity, and not with Rashi who explains that it means that the Mishkon and its vessels should be copied (to an extent) for all generations. This is not the case with the priestly garments. All the details given by the Torah in their construction are to be adhered to for all generations. Therefore the Torah uses the term "tzivuy" for the

creation of the garments in parshas T'za'veh and uses no such term in parshas Trumoh since all matters discussed are not for all further generations.

This explains why the words "Kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe" is used throughout our parsha since it deals with the priestly garments, and is not used in parshas Va'yakheil which deals with the Mishkon and its vessels. The GRI"Z answers a difficulty in 39:1 with this concept. The verse says "..... ossu vigdei srod va'yaasu es bigdei hakodesh asher l'Aharon kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe." He asks why the term "asioh" is used twice. Would it not have sufficed to say "ossu vigdei srod v'es bigdei"? He answers that the "bigdei srod" were the cloth covers for the Mishkon components, used to house them when travelling. These were only needed in the desert when the bnei Yisroel traveled. In later generations the Mishkon did not travel from place to place, so there was no need for bigdei hasrod. The priestly garments mentioned in the second half of the verse were to be made in all future generations as well. The Torah therefore has to mention an "asioh" of the bigdei hasrod without the term "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe," to indicate that it is not for all future generations, and a separate "asioh" for the garments of the Kohanim with the addendum "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe," for the making of the priestly apparel.

4) Possibly, another approach can answer this question. In parshas T'za'veh the explanation of the Paa'nei'ach Rozo was given for the omission of Moshe's name from the parsha. He says that Moshe lost the opportunity to become a Kohein when he declined to do Hashem's bidding of being the agent to bring the bnei Yisroel out of Egypt. Since he lost the K'hunoh, Hashem left his name out of the parshas which deals in the main with the garments of the Kohanim.

We know that when a person is slighted by a concept he often does not deal with it in its proper capacity. An example is that a mamzeir should not write the verse "Lo yovo mamzeir bikhal Hashem" (Dvorim 23:3). We fear that a mamzeir would not write these words which are so detrimental to him with the fully required intention, "lishmoh."

In spite of Moshe's lofty character development there is a possibility that the bnei Yisroel would fear that when it came to the priestly garments, Moshe might not give over all details and minutiae properly, since he had lost the opportunity to wear them and that his name was omitted from the parsha detailing them. In this particular circumstance the bnei Yisroel had a way of checking on Moshe's accuracy. This was through B'tzal'eil. He was picked to build the Mishkon, its vessels, and craft the priestly garments because he was knowledgeable enough of the powers of the letters of the Alef Beis to be able to recreate the world. The Mishkon was a microcosm of the world, as mentioned in M.R. Breishis 3:9 and in Yalkut Shimoni Shmos remez 419. He was able to use the world as a blueprint from which to craft all that was required for the Mishkon. The bnei Yisroel had open to themselves the option of checking on Moshe by asking B'tzal'eil the details of making the bigdei K'hunoh.

This is what the verse tells us 18 times with the words "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe" regarding the making of the priestly garments. The bnei Yisroel implicitly trusted Moshe and did not check up on him. Instead they crafted the priestly garments "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe."

The point raised by the GRI"Z in 39:1 is actually answered by the three other offerings as well. According to the first insight of the MESHECH CHOCHMOH that the Torah stressed that a command from Hashem to Moshe was needed to override the prohibition of shaatnez, this was not necessary for the bigdei hasrod, which contained no linen. Therefore the Torah mentions an "asioh" without "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe," and for the crafting of the bigdei K'hunoh which contained shaatnez an "asioh" with "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe."

The second explanation of the MESHECH CHOCHMOH was that the crafting of the bigdei K'hunoh needed a specific intention, "lishmoh."

Again, the bigdei hasrod did not need this, hence no "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe," and the bigdei K'hunoh did need this intention, hence a separate "asioh" with "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe."

The final offering answers this as well. The bigdei hasrod did not encompass a failing of Moshe, hence there was no need to check up on him for accuracy and no need to mention "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe." Regarding the crafting of the bigdei K'hunoh where there was a fear that the bnei Yisroel would not fully trust Moshe the Torah mentions a separate "asioh" that was "kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe." FEEDBACK AND SUBMISSIONS ARE APPRECIATED. SHOLOM613@AOL.COM

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From: Chamishamiyodeia-bounces@shemayisrael.com on behalf of Shema Yisrael Torah Network [shemalist@shemayisrael.com] Sent: March 23, 2006 5:42 AM To: Chamishamiyodeia Subject: [Chamishamiyodeia] **Chamisha Mi Yodei'a by Zvi Akiva Fleisher** - Parshas Vayakhel/Pekudei

Attachments: ATT11323647.txt

CHAMISHOH MI YODEI'A - FIVE QUESTIONS ON THE WEEKLY SEDRAH - PARSHAS VA'YAKHEIL-P'KUDEI 5766 - BS"D

1) Ch. 35, v. 3: "Lo s'vaaru aish b'chol moshvoseichem b'yom haShabbos" - Why was the m'lochoh of kindling a fire singled out as a Shabbos restriction since there are 39 different headings of m'lochose which are forbidden? 2) Ch. 35, v. 13: "V'eis lechem haponim" - Our verses discuss the components of the Mishkon and not the offerings, as at this point the Mishkon was not functioning. If so, what does the verse mean with "v'eis lechem haponim"?

3) Ch. 38, v. 8: "B'maros ha'tzovos" - The laver was made of such highly polished copper, that it had the properties of a mirror. The laver was placed in the area between the outer altar and the Sanctuary doorway, but off to the south, beyond the entrance. This positioning allowed women to notice this highly reflective vessel. It served as a reminder that a wayward wife who was suspected of infidelity would be brought to the Mikdash to be tested by drinking of the water of the laver. (Moshav Z'keinim)

Rashi says that Moshe was reluctant to accept the copper mirrors for such a lofty purpose, since the mirrors had been used by the women to adorn themselves in order to arouse their husbands. Hashem responded that the copper mirrors were very dear to Him, as the women had used the mirrors to beautify themselves in order to revive their husbands' broken spirits in Egypt, and for the spiritual aspect of having children and keeping the Jewish people alive. This is referred to in Shir Hashirim 8:5, "Tachas hatapuach orartich."

Why did Moshe not mind using the women's "kumoz" (35:22), an abdominal plate?

P'KUDEI

4) Ch. 38, v. 22: "U'V'tzal'eil ossoh KOL asher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe" - Rashi points out that the word KOL indicates that B'tzal'eil did ALL that Hashem commanded Moshe, even that which Moshe did not command him. The gemara Brochos 55a explains that we find that Moshe advised B'tza'leil to craft the vessels of the Mishkon before he told him to build the Mishkon itself. B'tza'leil questioned this order. He asked Moshe if the order should not be switched, to create the vessels before creating the building, so that there would be a building into which the vessels could be placed. Moshe replied in the affirmative, that the Mishkon should indeed be built first.

The Tur Shulchan Oruch O.Ch. #684 brings in the name of the P'sikto that the reason we read the chapters of the N'siim (Bmidbar 7:1-8:4)

during Chanukah is because the creation of all items needed for the Mishkon was completed on the 25th day of Kisleiv, the first day of Chanukah.

The Ta"Z ad loc s.k. 1 adds that although the completion of the creation of the Mishkon, its vessels, and the priestly garments took place on the 25th of Kisleiv, the actual assembly of the Mishkon took place on the first day of Nison, as mentioned in numerous medrosim.

According to the above, even if the vessels were crafted after the creation of the Mishkon components, since the vessels were completed by the 25th of Kisleiv and the Mishkon was not assembled until the next Rosh Chodesh Nison, the vessels were completed and the Mishkon was not assembled, so there still wasn't a building into which the vessels could be placed. What was accomplished by making the vessels first?

5) Ch. 39, v. 5: "Kaas'sher tzivoh Hashem es Moshe" - This expression appears no less than 18 times in our parsha as pointed out by the Baal Haturim. However, it appears only by the creation of the Kohanim's apparel. Why was this expression not used by the building of the Mishkon and the crafting of its vessels in parshas Va'yakheil?

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From: Rabbi Goldwicht [rgoldwicht@yutorah.org] Sent: March 23, 2006 2:26 PM To: Subject: Parashat VaYakhel-Pekudei/HaChodesh 5766 **WEEKLY INSIGHTS BY RAV MEIR GOLDWICHT** Parashat VaYakhel-Pekudei/HaChodesh 5766

Parashat VaYakhel opens with the mitzvah of Shabbat and continues with the vessels of the Mishkan and the bigdei kehunah. Parashat Ki Tisa, on the other hand, is the opposite; it discusses the vessels of the Mishkan and bigdei kehunah first, followed afterwards by the mitzvah of Shabbat. Why did the Torah see fit to change the order in VaYakhel from the order of Ki Tisa?

This Shabbat we read Parashat HaChodesh, the fourth of the arba parshiot leading up to Pesach. We actually encounter this mitzvah, the mitzvah of kiddush hachodesh, for the first time much earlier, in the first Rashi on the Torah. Rashi there asks why the Torah begins with Bereishit rather than the mitzvah of "hachodesh hazeh lachem," the first mitzvah in the Torah. Rashi explains that this was done in order to show that HaKadosh Baruch Hu owns the entire world and has the authority to give the land to whomever He chooses and take it away from whomever He chooses. The difficulty with this is that it doesn't entirely explain why the Torah opened with all of Sefer Bereishit. If the Torah was only coming to teach us that HaKadosh Baruch Hu has mastery over the Universe and then to teach us the mitzvot, it would have been enough to teach ma'aseh bereishit and to then skip straight to the mitzvah of kiddush hachodesh. Rashi's question is unanswered as of yet.

The answer to these two questions is as follows: The gemara in Chagigah 12a teaches that the light HaKadosh Baruch Hu created on the first day of Creation was so bright that one could see "from one end of the world to the other." Looking ahead to the dor hapalagah and the dor hamabul, HaKadosh Baruch Hu hid it away so the wicked could not abuse it, saving it for the righteous in the future. Although He hid the light, He nevertheless left us a hint as to how to arrive at this light. This is through the creation of the luminaries on the fourth day. The average person, asked the purpose of the sun and the moon, would explain that they illuminate the world. The Torah, however, says something totally different. The primary purpose of the luminaries is to serve "for signs and for seasons and for days and for years." Illuminating the world is secondary. In other words, the primary purpose of the luminaries is to teach us that we have jurisdiction over time. We decide when Rosh Chodesh is and when the chagim will occur. This jurisdiction over time

gives us the ability to sanctify it as well, kedushat hazman. Kedushat hazman is dependent, however, on kedushat hamakom, the holiness of the location. Kiddush hachodesh and adding an extra month to the year cannot be done outside Eretz Yisrael.

If so, the words of Rashi gain new significance. Why did the Torah open with the entire Sefer Bereishit instead of skipping straight to the mitzvot after ma'aseh bereishit? Kiddush hachodesh deals with kedushat hazman, which cannot exist independently of kedushat hamakom. The Torah had to tell us not only about the Creation of the Universe, but also about the avot and imahot who walked in the way of Hashem, through which they were able to sanctify the land. Once we have affirmed the kedushat hamakom, we can now move to a discussion of kedushat hazman.

Kedushat hamakom is based in kedushat ha'adam. When a person sanctifies himself, he can then transfer this kedushah to the land and to the zman. When a person lives in this way, he can return to the light HaKadosh Baruch Hu hid for the future. This power to sanctify one's body and one's land flows from performance of Hashem's will, and it is this power that Moshe Rabbeinu revealed was deficient in Am Yisrael. When Am Yisrael contributed to the Mishkan, Moshe was sure that they were giving because of the mitzvah and would stop when he told them to. Therefore in Ki Tisa, the mishkan precedes Shabbat, which represents ceasing. When Moshe Rabbeinu later realized, after the cheit ha'eigel, that their contributions were not for Hashem, but to satisfy their own need for a physical representation – a mishkan, luchot, Moshe – through which to connect to Hashem, he wanted to fix this. He therefore changed the order of our parasha, teaching them the lesson of Shabbat – putting what you must do before what you want to do – and only then teaching of the contributions for the mishkan and bigdei kehunah, now that it could be done in its proper form. This may also be the reason why after every parasha in VaYakhel-Pekudei we find the phrase "as Hashem commanded."

As we stand at the end of Sefer Shemot, the book of Galut and Geulah, it behooves us to remember that the key to every redemption – both of the yachid and the tzibbur – is to put the commandments of Hashem before our own feelings and desires. What I must do – the will of Hashem – takes precedence over what I want to do.

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http://rabbiwein.com/modules.php?name=News&new_topic=18
NISSAN
<http://www.rabbiwein.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=2016> The month of Adar is introduced to us by the famous statement that the Jewish people are marbin b'simcha – they are bidden to increase manifestations of joy. This is certainly understandable since the month of

Adar contains within its days the great festive day of Purim and celebrates our deliverance from destruction and annihilation by the wicked Haman. If deliverance from national destruction is a cause for joy, and it certainly ought to be, then the month of Nissan should also have as its introductory note the phrase of marbin b'simcha. For the month of Nissan, with the great holiday of Pesach enshrined within it, is certainly the commemorative moment on the Jewish calendar. It contains within it our deliverance from Egyptian bondage and the seemingly inevitable destruction of the Jewish people. Therefore, if there is ever a moment of joy in the Jewish year, it certainly appears that Nissan and Pesach should occupy that role.

Yet, even in the description of the holidays of the Jewish year in our prayer services, Pesach is referred to as zman cheiruteinu – the time of our deliverance to freedom – while Succot is somehow called zman simchateinu – the time of our happiness and joy. Why is Pesach not known as zman simchateinu and why is there no recommendation for Nissan to be a time of marbin b'simcha? What greater joy can be occasioned than the deliverance from bondage and the achievement of national and personal freedom?

I am inclined to think that the answer to these questions lies in the essential differences between Purim and Pesach. Being saved from catastrophe floods us immediately with a feeling of joy and exultation. No demands are placed upon us. It is just simply that Haman is defeated and we are able to survive. Purim is a time of unbridled joy, a day when almost anything goes and is allowed. Costumes, satire, shpiels, drink and food, all of the things that are handled with restraint during the year are left unchecked on Purim. To a certain extent, Purim's joy is aimless, if not even purposeless. Ad d'lo yoda – until one can no longer distinguish between the curse of Haman and the blessing of Mordechai – is the description of the joy of Purim.

The joy of Nissan and Pesach is not only of a different degree, it is of a completely different kind. Freedom in Jewish life means responsibility, goals, restraint, vision and sacrifice. If on Purim everything goes, on Pesach almost nothing goes. The dread of chametz, the restrictions of yom tov and chol hamoed, the realization that true freedom requires enormous self-discipline and a tenacious sense of purpose, these are the hallmarks of the joy of Pesach and Nissan. This type of joy requires effort, it is not spontaneous and it demands a mindset and preparation. As such, the phrases that characterize the almost purely emotional joy of Purim are not really appropriate when applied to Nissan and Pesach.

King Solomon in Kohelet had it right when he asked ulsimcha mah zu osah – and regarding joy, what does it accomplish? A joy that does not lead to accomplishments, to positive purposes and the achievement of immortal goals, is not a very purposeful emotion. If after the emotional high of joy one is in a state of ad d'lo yoda – of spiritual and mental chaos, then the joy is short-lived and almost counter productive in the long run of life and its events. The Jewish calendar thus places Adar and Nissan, Purim and Pesach, so to speak, back-to-back. The purposeful joy and celebration of Pesach redeems the ad d'lo yoda joy of Purim. Purim would remain, lhavdil, a type of mardi gras celebration without the immediate redemptive qualities of Pesach happiness and celebration that redefine its emotion of joy. Since the freedom of Pesach now modifies and describes all times of Jewish joy, Succot can be seen as zman simchateinu, since Pesach has already defined for us the true concept of joy as being purposeful and goal-oriented. In this spirit, as Nissan now comes upon us with blessings of springtime and Pesach in its wings, we can truly add to the welcome of Nissan the phrase of marbin b'simcha as well. Not the joy of Purim, unmodified and uncontrolled, but rather the joy of Nissan and Pesach, measured, restrained, purposeful and soulful. Nissan is seen as the harbinger of the ultimate redemption of Israel. Its type of joy and commitment is certainly the means by which we may hasten that great day of final redemption.

Weekly Parsha March 24, 2006

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The reading of the book of Shemot concludes this Shabat. The entire drama of the birth of the Jewish family as a nation is contained in the narrative portion of this book. In a series of almost unimaginable events, the Jews begin a golden exile in Egypt, which eventually turns into a nightmare of persecution and slavery. At great cost and staggering losses, the Jews are miraculously redeemed and a great leader, Moshe, appears to deliver them from Egyptian bondage. Once again miraculously saved from annihilation at Yam Suf the Jews come into the desert of Sinai. There they are sustained by heavenly manna and the waters of the well of Miriam. With great drama, the Torah is given to them at Mount Sinai. But with equal fanfare, the people worship a golden calf, a sin that affects all of the balance of Jewish history. Finally, the Jews construct an elaborate structure – a mishkan – that is to be the center of spiritual revelation to them. Aharon and his sons are chosen to be the kohanim – the priests – who are to serve in the mishkan and special garments are created for them to wear during their service in the mishkan. The book of Shemot ends with the spirit of the Lord, so to speak, descending into the confines of the mishkan and thereby challenging Israel to become a holy nation and a kingdom of priests. Well, what are we to make of all of this series of bewildering and momentous events? How does this narrative affect us and guide our present and future course of action and behavior?

I think that we have here a pattern and outline of Jewish life throughout the ages. Just as the stories regarding our patriarchs and matriarchs that appeared in the book of Bereshith were seen by our rabbis as being the guideposts to all future Jewish history, so too the events of the book of Shemot are a further lesson as to the future of Israel throughout the ages. The illusion of "golden exiles," the impatience of the people of Israel with obstacles and challenges, the easy willingness to pursue golden calves and false ideals and currently popular gods, are all clearly outlined in the book of Shemot. The challenge of building a painfully difficult and intricately detailed house of spirituality is laid before us. Being the chosen people is to be seen as a constant challenge fraught with enmity from outside and weakness of spirit from within. The goal of having the presence of God's spirit, so to speak, within us individually, within our families and communities is clearly stated. The book of Shemot therefore becomes the book of all of us in all of our ages and climes, in all of our difficulties and triumphs. It is no wonder therefore that at the conclusion of our reading this book we invoke the blessing and challenge to ourselves chazak chazak vnitchezek – be strong, be strong and strengthen others with us. Only in our inner strength and steadfast devotion to the Torah and its ideals will we see again the spirit of God, so to speak, resting within our camp and our hearts.

Shabat shalom. Rabbi Berel Wein

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2006 5:37 AM To: Peninim Parsha

Peninim on the Torah
by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum
- Parshas Vayakhel/Pekudei

See Hashem has called by name. Betzalel ben Uri ben Chur, of the tribe of Yehudah. (35:30)

Moshe Rabbeinu emphasizes that Hashem did not simply call Betzalel. Instead, he says that He called him by name. Indeed, the pasuk's trop, cantillation notes, stress the words, "by name," by indicating that these words are followed by an esnachta, a note denoting a stop in the sentence, rather than being read directly in connection with the following words of "Betzalel ben Uri." The Targum Yonasan interprets "by name" to mean "good name," intimating that Hashem called Betzalel by a "good name." What is the name and what is its connection to Betzalel?

In the Midrash Tanchuma, we are taught that during an individual's lifetime, he receives three names: one from his parents, one from other people, and one is the name that he earns himself. The last name, the one that he earns, supercedes the previous two. In support of this statement, the Midrash cites Betzalel, who merited to build the Mishkan as a result of the good name that he had earned for himself.

This Midrash begs elucidation. The name one receives from people is based upon his character and conduct. If he acts respectably, he earns a good name. If he acts inappropriately, he will tarnish his reputation. What then is the difference between the name one receives from other people and the name that he acquires for himself? Are they not one and the same?

Horav Mordechai Gifter, zl, posits that one's inner qualities, which are known only to Hashem, constitute what Chazal suggest is the name that man acquires for himself. He supports this thesis with the episode in Shmuel 1, 16:7, in which Hashem instructs Shmuel HaNavi to go to Bais Lechem and anoint one of Yishai's sons as king. Hashem did not, however, specify which son. After meeting Yishai's sons, Shmuel was certain that Eliav, the oldest son, was most suited for the monarchy. He saw in him the requisite qualities and character that the melech Yisrael, Jewish king, should possess. Hashem did not agree. He said, "Do not look at his appearance or at his tall stature, for I have rejected him. For it is not as man sees; man sees what eyes behold, but Hashem sees into the heart." Despite the fact that Shmuel was a Navi and an individual whose position on the spiritual ladder was preeminent, he was still not able to discern a man's true essence. After all is said and done, he was still a human being. Only Hashem knows a man's true character. Therefore, the name that one acquires for himself - i.e. the name that Hashem gives him, transcends all others. This name is indicative of his true identity.

While others may have presented themselves as more worthy and more suitable for building the Mishkan than Betzalel, Hashem called him by name, "a good name." His reputation, as defined by the Almighty is what counted the most. Thus, he became the Mishkan's master builder.

What was this "name" that Betzalel earned? How was he more worthy than all the other great people that comprised Klal Yisrael at that point? Rav Gifter explains this by first responding to an apparent anomaly. Klal Yisrael had recently been released from hundreds of years of bitter slavery. They had been confined to brutal treatment and brute work. Certainly, fine craftsmanship and the delicate skills required to build the Mishkan were not part of their work portfolio. Therefore, how did they become master craftsmen overnight? The Ramban explains that their

desire to build the Mishkan was so intense that they simply found within themselves the talents needed to construct the Mishkan. Moreover, one individual stood out from among the entire nation. Not only did he excel in one or two crafts - he excelled in every craft and facet connected with building the Mishkan. This individual was, of course, Betzalel, so great was his desire to be the Mishkan's builder. The Ramban notes that it is rare for even the most talented craftsman to excel in more than one or two crafts. Betzalel was the master, the predominant craftsman in every field. The reason: his desire. When a man desires with his entire essence to fulfill Hashem's will, Hashem grants him the ability to do so, despite the individual's lack of natural talents. Only Hashem knew the true Betzalel, his burning desire to succeed, his passion to build His Sanctuary. This was the "good name" that Betzalel had earned for himself.

An edifice that is built with G-d-given skills emanating from a desire to please the Almighty, manifests an inherently superior level of kedushah, holiness. It is not built merely with skills that have been acquired or learned, but with skills that have been granted specifically for this endeavor. From its very genesis, the Mishkan was constructed with the purest kedushah. This is why it endured.

Parshas Pikudei

These are the reckonings of the Mishkan, the Mishkan of Testimony, which were reckoned at Moshe's bidding. (38:21)

Moshe Rabbeinu made a full accounting of all proceeds and uses of the contributions. Although all of the metals that were deposited for the Mishkan were done so under the close scrutiny and supervision of Moshe and Betzalel, men whose integrity and distinction were unquestionable, they did not rely on assumptions. Leaders must be beyond reproach, and every penny that passes through their hands must be delineated. The Midrash tells us that, indeed, this accounting was provoked by the rumblings of a group of malcontents. They insolently accused Moshe of pocketing some of the precious metals, using the proceeds to enlarge his own financial portfolio. Despite the ludicrous nature of these claims, Moshe, the consummate leader, insisted that a detailed accounting of "every penny" be made. There are other opinions in the Midrash which contend that there were no allegations leveled at Moshe. It was Moshe's idea that a complete reckoning be made to ensure the total veracity of the proceedings.

In the Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 257:2, it is stated that we do not ask charity collectors to give an account of income and expenditures. Rather, we must trust them to act according to their word. The fact that Moshe gave an accounting was to allay any suspicions. It is thus written in Bamidbar 32:22, "You shall be innocent before G-d and Yisrael." The Bach and Gra both note that Moshe acted on his own volition.

The Mishnah in Shekalim 3:2 says that the gabai, treasurer, who withdraws funds from the treasury of the Bais HaMikdash may not enter the chamber wearing a hemmed garment, shoe or sandal, Tefillin or amulet, or anything that might make people suspect that he placed some coins in a concealed place. The stated reason is that a person must please people in the same manner that he must please Hashem. The pasuk, V'hayisem nekiim, "You shall be innocent," is cited. The Mishnah adds another pasuk as support. "And find favor and good understanding in the eyes of G-d and mankind." (Mishlei 3:8) This pasuk goes further than the pasuk in Bamidbar. The first pasuk teaches us to remove well-founded suspicion, as in the case of the Shevatim who sought to remain in Trans-Jordan, thereby suggesting that they had no desire to go to Eretz Yisrael. In that case, their reputation had already been impugned. The victim of groundless allegations, however, may think that he has nothing to worry about and that there is no need to clear his reputation from aspersions cast by ignorant or even ignoble people. The pasuk in Mishlei implies otherwise. The Ksav Sofer goes so far as to say that not only must one

offer an explanation for his ostensibly suspicious actions, but he must even attempt to see that his explanation is understood and accepted.

In summary, we must make sure that all of our actions are above suspicion. There will always be those individuals who look for every reason to gossip. These people have nothing to do with their time but to undermine the efforts of others. Yet, Chazal instruct us to be wary of their tongues. This warning does not always apply. In his commentary to Megillas Rus, Horav Shlomo Alkabetz, zl, explains why Boaz married Rus, disregarding the fact that no one married an Amonis or Moavis. Was he not concerned with what people would say? He explains that the enjoinder to be above suspicion applies only with regard to what sensible, competent people might say. There is no obligation to concern oneself with the suspicions and comments of those who lack erudition, common sense and rationale. Boaz followed the halachah to the minutest detail. The fact that many people were unaware of the permissibility to marry a Moavis did not affect his decision. He was doing the right thing. Let the scoffers talk. They will do so anyway! The Sanhedrin and the Elders of Klal Yisrael were fully aware of the halachah. He was not going to concern himself with what fools might think and say. "Is there a shortage of pious Jewish girls that he is forced to marry a Moavis?" they might wonder. Once again, this critique did not hinder him, since Rus' reputation as a devout, kind, righteous eishas chayil, woman of valor, was undisputed. The obligation of V'heyisem nekiim would not be binding in this circumstance, since the people that would talk did not count. They were the scoffers, the fools, the rabble rousers.

What really, is the rationale behind this obligation? After all, if I know that what I am doing is above reproach, why should I care what others might think? Horav Yerachmiel Krom, Shlita, explains that this is all part of one's obligation to be mekadesh Shem Shomayim, sanctify the Name of Heaven, in the world. If I tarnish my reputation, I taint the reputation of the Jewish People and - by inference - Hashem. A Jew does not live in a vacuum. He is part of a great legion - Hashem's legion. What he does leaves an impression on the entire army. The Chasam Sofer, zl, views this as an awesome responsibility. He says that prior to any endeavor, one should carefully weigh the action he is about to take to be certain that "people" will view it in the proper light. It goes without saying that if there is no other way to carry out one's mission, if what one must do might not necessarily receive public acclaim, the mitzvah takes precedence. He does what he must do, and those who will talk will talk anyway.

Horav Shmuel Vosner, Shlita, interprets the pasuk of V'heyisem nekiim as a promise. If Bnei Gad and Bnei Reuven adhere to the conditions that are asked of them, they will be viewed as innocent in the eyes of Hashem and Yisrael. Their mesiras nefesh, self-sacrifice, to satisfy the demands placed upon them will guarantee their acceptability in the eyes of all. If a person goes out of his way to dispel what people might suspect - he will succeed.

For the cloud of Hashem would be on the Mishkan by day, and fire would be on it by night, before the eyes of all the House of Yisrael throughout their journeys. (40:38)

Horav Sholom Schwadron, zl, suggests that this pasuk alludes to the bitter galus, exile, that has been home to the Jewish People for the last few thousand years. The pasuk is telling us that during all of Klal Yisrael's journeys, throughout the exile following the destruction of the Bais Hamikdash, "fire" has always been burning at night to guide us through the darkness of galus. What is this fire? It is the Torah, as Yirmiyah HaNavi says: "Behold - My words are like fire - the word of Hashem." (Yirmiyah 23:29) This is a reference to the daled amos shel halachah, the four cubits of Jewish law, which illuminates the road for us as we travel through the long, harsh night of exile.

Rav Sholom cites the Ponevezer Rav, zl, who makes a powerful statement regarding these "four cubits of halachah." Chazal tell us that

since the destruction of the Bais Hamikdash, Hashem has for Himself in this world only the four cubits of halachah. The usual interpretation of this Chazal is that, until its destruction, the Bais Hamikdash was the place in which Hashem rested His Shechinah. Now that there is no longer a Bais Hamikdash, Hashem has designated a new place - the daled amos shel halachah. This is not the correct interpretation, says the Rav. Even when the Bais Hamikdash was a part of our lives and it stood in all its glory, the four cubits of halachah were still Hashem's focal point and His place of rest. He also graced His Presence in the Bais Hamikdash. Now that there is no Bais Hamikdash, the daled amos are the only place. They are all that is left. Hashem never removed His Presence from the makom Torah, place where Torah is studied.

This is how it has been throughout our exile. The Torah has been our sanctuary, our island of serenity, our place of refuge, our tower of hope. In the Torah, we have always felt that we were with Hashem. We never felt alone. The continued study of Torah was a remarkable phenomenon, especially during the Holocaust, when Jews turned bunkers, cellars or underground tunnels into batei medrash, houses of Torah study. Their persistence in studying Torah in the ghettos and concentration camps was what kept them going. Torah study was worship. It was the air that they breathed, the blood that coursed through their veins. Rav Saadia Gaon's dictum that "we are a people only by virtue of the Torah" was the operative principle for the Jews in the Holocaust. There was no point in national or individual survival if the Torah were to be abandoned. Throughout our history, our refusal to comply with decrees to forbid Torah study has kept us alive.

In the Vilna Ghetto, an entire religious school system continued while the Nazi guards were unaware that it was going on. In the Daltmorgan Camp in southern Germany, a group of yeshivah students would convene at night to study Mishnayos. This was after a day of hard labor in the clay pits. Bone tired and near starvation, covered with vermin from lack of showers, they would listen as a young student from Novardok recited chapter after chapter of Mishnayos aloud by memory, and the rest would repeat after him. Others studied the Talmud by memory as they marched for hours in the biting cold. Their bodies were cold, but their hearts were warmed by the fire of Torah. They were not alone. Hashem reposed in the daled amos shel halachah which they maintained.

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From: ZeitlinShelley@aol.com Sent: March 16, 2006 10:41 PM To: ZeitlinShelley@aol.com Subject: Another Angle to Pesach by Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss

**Another Angle to Pesach
By Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss**

Preparations bombard us as we head towards Pesach. Scouring the house to eradicate chometz, taking down the dishes, selling the chometz to the Rav, buying dresses and suits for the family; these all converge upon us at the same time. However, another aspect of Pesach preparation is also greatly important, yet we give it only fleeting attention at best. I refer to the mitzvah of Kimcha D'pischa, better known as Maos Chittin, providing matzah (and food) for the needy on Pesach.

The Sefer Hatodaah relates that on Motzei Shabbos Parshas HaChodesh (the Shabbos when we bentsh Rosh Chodesh Nissin), the Rav and the City Council met to divide all of the inhabitants of the town into two categories: those who can give and those who need to receive. (Even Talmidei Chachomim were required to give to this mitzvah although the Gemora in Baba Basra teaches that sages are exempt from most taxes.) On the very next day, they themselves went out to collect from the first group. Anytime a well-to-do person would shirk his duty saying, for example, "I'm tight," or, "I'm all given out currently," they would sternly reply that

if he wouldn't give, he would be placed on the list to receive. From embarrassment, he would give.

The Sefer Hatodaah continues that this is not regular tzedaka, for tzedaka is a normal requirement throughout the year. Rather, he explains, we are ensuring that when we say to our families at the Seder table, "Kol dichfin yeisei v'yeichol – All who are hungry, let them come and eat," the statement should not be a falsehood. Furthermore, Pesach is the holiday of freedom and redemption. When we celebrate that we are a kingdom of priestly people, we behave at the Seder with a royal air. However, we cannot feel completely royal and free if our neighbors suffer from need and want.

One might wonder why there is so much emphasis on Kimcha D'pischa, Flour for Pesach. Furthermore, why is it called Maos Chittin, Money for Wheat? Why don't we say 'Money for Pesach'? After all, there are many other needs during this time of year like wine, meat, and other elegant items for the Seder Table. I believe the name 'Maos Chittin - Money for Wheat' stems from an event dating back to the time the first matzah was baked. This was when the Angels came to visit Abraham's house.

Remember! Avraham said to Sarah, "Lushi v'asi ugos – Knead and bake wafers." The Sefer Tamei Minhogim queries why it was necessary to tell the ninety year-old, model balebustah, Sarah, to knead bread. Naturally, she was already well versed in this. But in this instance, Avraham was saying knead it consistently "L'sheim Matzas Mitzvahs!" so that it wouldn't become chometz, for the Angels came on the first day of Pesach.

This is the source of using three matzos on the night of Pesach. The Tzadik of Zhitichov asks, "Why is it that everything is four," i.e., four parshios in tefillin, four tzitzis, four species of lulav, four questions, four kosos (cups) of wine, but only three Matzas? His Rebbe cleverly answered that when the middle matzah is broken, there are four here also. But why do we start with three? The reason is because of the three soh, a Biblical dry measure, of flour that Sarah Imenu prepared for the Angels. And when we think about it in this light, we realize that the very first matzos were specially baked to be given to the needy!

The Medrash says that when Avraham was preparing the cattle to feed to the Angels, one separated from the herd and bolted. Miraculously, it sprinted all the way to the Moras HaMachpelah which, at this very moment, was revealed to Avraham as his final resting place. One must wonder why Hashem chose this very busy instant to show Avraham his burial plot. In the preceding hours he had broken off Hashem's convalescence visit, and left the three hungry Angels waiting at his home to be served their meal. Is this the proper time to inspect a future-resting place? I believe that Hashem was connecting themes, teaching Avraham (and us) that what we serve to guests, and give to others, is exactly what we are able to take with us to our graves. Perhaps this is one of the allusions to why we wear the kittel, our future shroud, on Pesach night.

Many people do not realize that on Pesach, we are judged on our tevuah, our produce, which is directly related to our parnasa. Thus, sharing with others at this season is the best way to ensure that Hashem gives us a good judgment. Consistent with this theme is the fact that the word 'matzos' is occasionally written defectively in the Torah; missing the letter 'vav.' Plus, the Mem-Suf-TZadee is an abbreviation for TZedaka Tatzil Mimaves, charity saves us from death. In the same vein, if you take out the tzadi from MaTZO'S, you're left with the word MeiS, to teach us that without tzedaka, there is only death.

The word MaTZA'h also stands for, "Mikol TZara Hatzileini – From every pain, You will save me." Thus, we find that Avraham was healed from the pain of his circumcision when he arose and began serving the Angels. Likewise, Lot and some of his family was saved when he served matzos to the Angels in Sodom.

The Zohar calls matzah, Michlah d'asvasa, Food of healing. Indeed, the Tamei Minhogim relates that even gentiles once purchased matzos in order to cure themselves of headaches.

Thus, we see giving Kimcha D'pischa promises to help us in many beneficial ways: Toward a bountiful judgment upon our produce; to keep us healthy; to save us from danger; and to propel us to success in the world to come. Therefore, it behooves us to give more attention to helping others before Pesach. Let's create a legacy by directing our families' attention to this great mitzvah.

A good way to accomplish this is, when we go to the Rav or Rosh Yeshiva, we can ask him if there is a family that can be helped with matzah and wine, and perhaps even with pairs of shoes for the children. Perhaps, the Rav would want to give it to the family in your stead, so that embarrassment can be avoided. Nevertheless, you will see how much richer you'll feel, and what a great lesson for the family this is!

In this merit, many we be zoche always to have the ability to give, and never need to take, and may we all merit the coming of the Moshiach speedily in our days.

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From: **Rabbi Kalman Packouz** [newsletterserver@aish.com] Sent: March 20, 2006 9:44 AM To: Subject: Shabbat Shalom - Vayakhel-Pekudei

Torah Portion of the Week Vayakhel-Pekudei

Moshe relays the Almighty's commands to refrain from building the Mishkan (the Tabernacle) on the Shabbat, to contribute items needed to build the Mishkan, to construct the components of the Mishkan and the appurtenances of the Cohanim. The craftsmen are selected, the work begins. The craftsmen report that there are too many donations, and for the first and probably the only time in fundraising history, the Jewish people are told to refrain from bringing additional contributions!

Pekudei includes an accounting of all the materials that went into the making of the Mishkan (the portable sanctuary) and details of the construction of the clothing of the Cohanim. The Tabernacle (another translation of Mishkan) is completed, Moses examines all of the components and gives his approval to the quality and exactness of construction, the Almighty commands to erect the Tabernacle, it's erected and the various vessels are placed in their proper place.

Dvar Torah based on

Growth Through Torah by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin

The Torah states with regard to Betzalel, the artisan in charge of creating the Mishkan (Portable Sanctuary), that the Almighty filled him with wisdom, insight and knowledge ...:

"...and to think thoughts to make with gold and with silver and with brass." (Exodus 35:32)

What can this verse teach us about our own lives?

There are two types of skillful artisans. The first type of craftsman is one who is able to picture new designs in his mind. His fertile imagination enables him to create original works of art. This, wrote Rabbi Shlomo Kluger, is what the present verse is expressing. "And to think thoughts," that is, Betzalel had the ability to visualize entirely new artistic creations.

The second type is an expert in making fancy vessels with intricate designs though he may not be creative or original. After he sees what someone else has done, he learns to make similar things - perhaps even better than the original designer.

Our lesson: Whatever abilities the Almighty has blessed you with can be utilized for the honor of the Almighty. One does not need to be a Betzalel to serve the Almighty or lead a meaningful life.

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