

“ויהי ביום כלות משה להקים את המשכן” הרב בערל ווייסברד

Chazal tell us that it was not a simple matter for Moshe to put together the Mishkon. The Midrash Tanchuma in *Parshas Pekudei* relates that, in fact, no one knew how to put up the Mishkon. Klal Yisroel could not do it after all of its parts were made, nor could Betzalel and Oholiav when they were subsequently approached to do so. Klal Yisroel started to have doubts and approached Moshe Rabbeinu, asking him how it could be that after such a successful campaign in which all the materials were collected from the people in just two days and all parts were made to their exact specifications down to the last detail that the Mishkon should lie unassembled. Even building the different pieces of the Mishkon involved tremendous *nisim*, as the Ramban explains those who felt a deep desire to contribute in its building were granted the *chochma* and technical skills to do so. Moshe Rabbeinu then asked the Ribono Shel Olam why it couldn't be assembled after all the *siyata dishmaya* which it took to get to that point.

The Ribono Shel Olam answered that He was saving the assembly for Moshe himself. Moshe had no *cheilek* in contributing materials or in building the pieces of the Mishkon, and it hurt him. Therefore, the Ribono Shel Olam made it impossible for anyone to assemble it except Moshe Rabbeinu. Moshe replied that he would not be able to do it himself, to which Hashem told him that all he needed to do was to pick up his hands to try to and the Ribono Shel Olam would assemble it Himself, but it would still be said that Moshe Rabbeinu assembled it.

This is the *posuk* we have in this week's *parsha*, (במדבר ז: א) "...ויהי ביום כלות משה להקים את המשכן". Because Moshe Rabbeinu was *moser nafsho* over the entirety of the Mishkon Project to make sure every detail was executed perfectly, Hakadosh Boruch Hu gave him the credit of building the Mishkon.

This is a fascinating thing. The Midrash in *Pekudei* also states that not only did Moshe Rabbeinu not have a *cheilek* in contributing or building the Mishkon, but neither did the *Nesi'im*. We all know the famous *Chazal*, the *Nesi'im* declared that they would finish up contributing all the remaining materials needed after Klal Yisroel finished giving. They had no *hava amina* that by the next day not only would Klal Yisroel give every last bit necessary, but there was even a surplus and they had to be told to stop bringing more.

They, too, were upset about not being able to contribute. However, *Chazal* tell us that they were held accountable for not giving as swiftly as Klal Yisroel, as alluded to by the *posuk* calling them "נשיאם" instead of "נשיאים". Their title was written lacking a *yud* in order to tell Klal Yisroel *l'doros* that they were lazy in contributing to the Mishkon.

What was the difference between Moshe Rabbeinu's lack of contribution and that of the *Nesi'im*? It seems from *Chazal* that the difference lies in the *siba*. Moshe Rabbeinu would have funded and built the entire Mishkon himself but the Ribono Shel Olam told him no, that Klal Yisroel are to be commanded to do it, for various reasons. The *Nesi'im*'s intentions of not contributing were not pure. There was an underlying, subconscious *עצלות* that tainted their *cheshbon*.

We find a similar idea to this in *Megilas Rus*. Rashi explains the opening *pesukim* as follows. Elimelech was the *parnes hador* at that time for Klal Yisroel, but he left Eretz Yisroel out of "צרות עין". He was punished because "עינו צרה בעניים הבאים לדחקו". We can understand the initial part of Rashi, that Elimelech left because of stinginess. But Rashi really seems to be saying something else entirely. His *tzarus ayin* was strictly at those *aniyim* who came to him as they were being *dochek* him. What does this mean?

I would like to suggest the following: The first *posuk* in *Rus* uses an interesting, seemingly redundant *lashon* of, "ויהי בימי שפט השפטים ויהי רעב בארץ". Obviously, *Shoftim* are judges. Why then does the *posuk* need to delineate this fact? The Gemara says that this *posuk* actually means that Klal Yisroel were judging the

judges, and there was a hunger in the land. It is clear that Klal Yisroel are the ones to be judged by the *Shoftim* and not the other way around. Therefore, this was not a good thing.

I would like to suggest that Klal Yisroel held that the *Shoftim* were responsible for the hunger. Elimelech, on the other hand, maintained that the *chisaron* was really in Klal Yisroel and the fact that they were blaming the *Shoftim*. As for Elimelech himself, one does not become the *parnes hador* when stingy. So, what was going on exactly?

Really, Elimelech was a generous person who wanted to take care of Klal Yisroel. Maybe the reason he left Eretz Yisroel was to prove an outcome. As long as he stayed put, Klal Yisroel would not know who was right and who was wrong. He reasoned that if he left, one of two things would happen: If he was indeed at fault, his exit would solve Klal Yisroel's issue, but if it was on their shoulders then they would see that the hunger continued even without him. They would be forced to confront the reality that it was indeed themselves who needed to change.

We know that the hunger lasted for many more years after Elimelech left. We see then that he was correct. Furthermore, Klal Yisroel eventually came around to do *teshuva* and Hashem ended the hunger. With all this, we are left to contend with the question as to why Elimelech was punished. After all, his *cheshbon* proved out. He should have been vindicated, not stricken.

We see that people can make a seemingly perfect, crystal clear *leshem Shomayim cheshbon* and still be wrong. Like the *Nesi'im*, who thought their *cheshbon* was one hundred percent *oisgehalten* but *Chazal* inform us that it was really coming from *atzlus*, Elimelech also had a fault deep down in his *cheshbon*.

Rashi relates *Chazal* teach us that really Elimelech was operating from *tzarus ayin*. He didn't have any issue about being the *parnes hador* and giving all his resources to help Klal Yisroel, but he had a problem if they were coming "לדחוק". To come and ask him for sustenance while simultaneously blaming him for their troubles, that he could not bear.

This idea that anyone can have a fault in his erstwhile *leshem Shomayim cheshbonos* is a *mussar haskel*. *Halevai* we should have a *cheshbon* for everything we do. Yet, even a *cheshbon* needs extremely careful examination. We need to be able to pick them apart to see what the real underlying motive is in all our *cheshbonos*. Is our *cheshbon* really *leshem Shomayim*, are we really doing something for the reason which we claim to be doing it for, or is there something else going on in the back of our minds which is propelling us to do it?

Rav Dessler has a *ganse shmmuess* on the Gemara in Kesubos which talks about *negiyos*. We all have *negiyos*. Therefore, we cannot fully trust ourselves. We then need to be able to discuss our *cheshbonos* with an outside *meya'eitz* who does not have our *negiyos*. We need to have an objective outside opinion. When we are involved in any item of import we must remember to check and eradicate our *negiyos* in judgement by enlisting an outsider to audit our *cheshbonos* in order to be secure that our *cheshbon* is without *negiyos*.

When the Ribono Shel Olam sees that we are putting in our best effort to do what is right, He will give us the *siyata dishmaya* to truly see what is the correct and proper path to follow.