

”כסף פקודי העדה” הרב אליהו חקיאן

The beginning of *Parshas Pekudei*, as its name suggests, begins by discussing the amounts of precious metals contributed for the Mishkon. We see a difference between the way the gold and copper are described in the *pesukim*, in contrast to how the silver is described; the former called ”זהב/נחשת התנופה,” whereas the latter deemed ”כסף פקודי העדה”. The gold and copper were donated by Klal Yisroel through “*nidvas leebom*,” but the silver in our *parsha* is that which was collected through the *machatzis hashekel* collection described in the beginning of *Parshas Ki Sisa*.

Another glaring difference between the gold/copper and silver is how the amounts are recorded. The Torah records the lump sum of gold and copper donated by Klal Yisroel collectively, while the silver is described by how much each individual gave. Additionally, the Torah details how much silver was used for its specific purpose (one hundred *kikar kesef* was used for one hundred *adonim*, one *kikar* per *aden*) while it merely lists the items which the gold and copper were used for.

One more observation is that, generally speaking, the *machatzis hashekel* is used for *korbanos hatzibbur*- collective, communal offerings. This is because the *korbanos hatzibbur* need to be funded by all of Klal Yisroel equally. Why was it, then, that the first *machatzis hashekel* collection went toward the *adonim* and not for *korbanos hatzibbur*? What was special about the *machatzis hashekel* that it should be used for the *adonim*?

Perhaps we might find our answer in the word “*adonim*” itself. The Torah says that the *kerashim* for the Mishkon must be made as “*atzei shitim omdim*.” Rashi explains from Chazal two *peshatim* of “*omdim*.” The first *peshat* is that they must be erected the same way they grew, “*k’derech gediloson*,” and the second *peshat* is that lest one think there is no hope and they will fall down, the Torah calls them “*omdim*.”

What is this second *peshat*, that there is always hope? *Baalei Machshovo* say that the Mishkon resembles a human being. They go through a list of how different parts of the Mishkon correspond to different parts of the human body. The *atzei shitim omdim* represent the stature of a person, what gives a person standing. A person grows upward, starting very low and constantly growing ever higher in levels of *ruchniyus*, standing tall and reaching to *shomayim* and Hakadosh Boruch Hu. He not only grows upwards physically, but spiritually as well.

A *Yid* needs to know that there is always hope. *Sheva yipol tzaddik v’kom*- a *Yid* never falls for good. There is always hope for one to get back up and move forward, to move upward. This too is “*atzei shitim omdim*.”

If we think about it, even with the *berichim* on the *kerashim*, they are too big not to fall down. Think about how hard it is to put up a *sukkah* without any supports. The *kerashim* were so tall, how did they not fall? Likewise, person cannot stand by himself. The truth is, the *kerashim* were in fact supported by the *adonim*. The *adonim* served as the foundation that supported the *kerashim*.

Perhaps the message is as follows: As one goes through life, growing physically and spiritually as well as in independence, he is obviously aware of the *siyata dishmaya* he receives and *davens* for help accordingly. At the same time, he takes credit for his hard work. Hakadosh Boruch Hu helped him accomplish everything

he has done. He poured his blood, sweat, and tears into his life, all with the Ribono Shel Olam helping him. He finished the *mesechta* with hard work. He showed up to the *daf hayomi shiur* every day and finished *Shas*, and even *chazered* it and knows it! He built his business through his very own hard work. However, there is also an external source of energy which helped him accomplish everything, even with his *siyata dishmaya*.

The Torah comes to tell us that even with all of our *hishtadlus*, we must still keep in mind all the little contributions made by everyone else along the way in our life. A person who makes a *siyum haShas* thanks all of his *rebbeim* who taught him *mesechtos*, all of his *chavrusos* who learned all the *bletter* with him, the *chaburos* he was a part of, and of course his wife who helped and encouraged him throughout the journey. But, does he stop to thank his third grade *rebbe* who taught him *teitch*? What about his kindergarten *morah* who taught him the *aleph-beis*? We tend to forget these things. Not, *chas v'shalom*, because we are trying to ignore them, but because they seem to fly under our radar and somehow get buried beneath the many layers of our life's history.

The reality is that those are the foundational levels which hold up our standing. We are products of everyone we've come into contact with, and influenced by, throughout our entire life. Everyone contributed to at least a small part of who we are.

Perhaps the Torah is teaching us that we are all "*atzei shitim omdim*" because of our *adonim* which were formed by everyone else's contributions to our life. For one to become an *adon* (אדון), he must receive support from his *aden* (אדן). One's *adonim* in all areas of his life are what provide for his *adnus* in life.

When a person realizes this and appreciates it, he will have a whole different perspective on life. He will see clearer his connection to all other *Yidden* and develop an immeasurable *ahavas Yisroel*. He will have unbelievable *hakoras hatov* to everyone in his life for helping to make him who he is.

The Chofetz Chaim asks why we make a *beracha*, "בורא נפשות רבות וחסרוני", thanking Hashem for all the deficiencies in everyone? He answers, "להחיות נפש כל חי"- in order for everyone to live. Everyone needs everyone else's contributions in their lives to fill the gaps. The butcher needs the baker, the baker needs the *rebbe*, and the *rebbe* needs the butcher, and the circle goes around. Everyone depends on everyone else.

The more profound point which I think the Chofetz Chaim is making is that no one is anything without the impact and contribution which others have had on them.

Perhaps this explains the error in Haman's *cheshbon*. Chazal tell us Haman gave Achashverosh money to supplant the 600,000 *machatzis hashekel* collected from Bnei Yisroel in the *midbar*. Haman attempted to do so by paying fifty *shekels* per person because this is the *ayrech* value of a male adult. However, we are not simply our individual valuation. We are each a *machatzis hashekel* which all blend together because we all contribute to one another. We are not merely an "*am mefuzar umeforad bein ho'amim*," we are all connected because we are all invested in each other. This is what gives us strength and the stability to stay standing upright and to never lose hope, despite the best efforts of our enemies. We are all connected and indebted to each other for the contributions which we make to one another and we always have hope no matter what happens.