

## Vayakheil - Pekudai - Rabbi Lerner - March 11, 2012

The Concept of the Hashr'as Shechina - the Installation of the Shechina

40:17: *And it was on Rosh Chodesh Nissan of the second year that the mishkan was erected.* It is nearly a year since they left Egypt. The command to build the Mishkan was given the day after Yom Kippur, and it is finally erected on Rosh Chodesh Nissan.

40:34: *The cloud covered the Ohel Moed and the shechina of Hashem to fill the Mishkan.* There was overt success in their building of the Mishkan: the cloud is the symbol that God had forgiven the people and was going to dwell amongst them.

What action ultimately was successful in bringing the shechina down to the Mishkan?

35:1-2: Moshe gathers the entire nation to talk to them about the Mishkan, but he first reminds them about the halachos of Shabbos. Then the Torah returns to the topic of the Mishkan. **Rashi**: this event happened the morning after Yom Kippur when he came down with the second Luchos. Shabbos is mentioned first to ensure that they understood that the priority was not the Mishkan; shabbos was still more important. **Kli Yakar**: something else happened the day after Yom Kippur according to **Rashi**: in 18:13 it says that the morning after Yisro arrived, Moshe judged the people from morning until evening; here Rashi says that this was the day after Yom Kippur, quoting the **Sifri**. It was the day after he came down from the mountain. The **Kli Yakar** says why did Moshe judge the people the same day he commanded them to build the Mishkan? He was concerned that even one Jew might donate something to the Mishkan that was not his; it would not be proper to build this holy house with forbidden, stolen money; it would be inappropriate that in the place of judgment there should be evil underpinnings. Therefore, he first announced that whoever has a property claim against another Jew should come forward to him first to resolve and clarify the ownership; he wanted to clear up all monetary controversies, decide who owns what, and then start accepting donations to the Mishkan. Without this, you cannot have the shechina dwell amongst them. In a similar approach, the **Oznayim LaTorah** says that the parsha of Mishpatim follows on the heels of parshas Yisro because that parsha ends with the concept of the mizbeach in the mishkan; following Mishpatim are the remainder of the commands to build the mishkan. Mishpatim is inserted in the middle of this topic because God hates stolen goods brought for korbanos; therefore, after mentioning building the mizbeach, the Torah first has to teach the laws of ownership and the civil laws. **Reb Nissan Alpert**: in 38:21 it talks about the accountings of the *Mishkan Ha'Edus* - it is the mishkan that bears testimony to the presence of God's shechina amongst the people. We need to understand why it was necessary to give this name here when the Torah lists the totals of all of the items donated to build the Mishkan? The shechina doesn't come down when the donations are made - the material needed to build the mishkan were all donated over a period of three days after Yom Kippur, in Tishrai, while the shechina first comes down in Nissan (the actual construction of all Mishkan items was completed on the 25th of Kisleiv - Hashem wanted them to await until Nissan before erecting it.) Why use this term of Mishkan Ha'Edus here when the Torah lists all of these donated items if the shechina does not come down until later? Hashem would only allow His shechina to come down because Moshe ensured that all of the donations were pure - it was a house build on justice and honesty. It is an everlasting lesson to us - had there been any theft involved with the donations, the shechina would never have come down. After gathering everything, there was a thorough accounting of everything. It is a lesson for all history, that whenever we build shuls or batei midrash, it has to be done only with honest donations.

**Kli Yakar**: There is another approach to what induced the shechina to descend. The reason Moshe gathers and judges the people at this point was in order to imbue peace into the midst of the people. There is an adage that "a man cannot live in a small cubicle with a snake" - there is no tranquility unless there is harmony. The Mishkan is the house where we all live together - a spiritual house that belongs to all of us. We cannot live together if we are at war with each other. Therefore, there had to be mishpat to get rid of all machlokes amongst Am Yisrael. It was all about unity. When there are claims and counterclaims, we cannot live together - you must first get rid of strife. This House of God represented unity; so Moshe first had to gather everyone together and end any interpersonal issues; then the shechina could descend. **Rav Yaacov Kaminetsky**: as per Rashi and others, the Mishkan was necessary only because of the sin of the Egel. The Egel was the opposite of what Torah represented. When they were to receive the Torah, the entire nation was as one (*Vayichan* Neged Hahar - they *encamped* is in the singular) - the sin of the Egel was characterized by the construction of 12 different kinds of gods - each tribe had its own idol, its own Egel; they could not come to a consensus on what to do when Moshe did not return - they felt they needed a replacement for Moshe but could not agree on what to do - they were all fractionated into different camps in total disunity. This is the reverse of what the Torah represents, with the concept of one God. Moshe had to bring them all together again, to get the Jews to again accept that there is only one God; he had to unify the people again in order for the shechina to dwell amongst the people.

36:5-7: The people brought more than was needed and were told to stop bringing more. *The work was enough for all the work to do it and there was extra.* What does this pasuk mean? **Rashi**: What was enough? Was it the work of building of the Mishkan? No - it was the work of donating - they were bringing the required objects of value to those artisans who were making the mishkan. There was a surplus of the goods needed to build the mishkan. **Ohr Hachayim**: when it says there was enough and too much, it is being contradictory? If sufficient there is no extra, and visa versa? There was a camouflaged miracle here. The Torah is telling us how much affection Hashem had for His people - because they brought excess, more of everything than was needed, Hashem felt bad - if some of these items were not going to be used, then some of the donors will be left out of the Mitzvah of the mishkan and they will feel bad; spiritually Hashem will know this, and not every Jew will have their portion used for building the mishkan; Hashem did not want any Jew to be left out in the cold. So, even though realistically it was surplus, what happened is that the work needed to be done in building the mishkan was sufficient to use everything that was given, even though it was really in excess - somehow, every item ultimately found a purpose and a place in the building of the Mishkan. Alternatively, they brought more than was needed, but when it came time to be counted it was exactly just enough - it miraculously decreased to the exact amount needed. Hashem performs miracles because of His love of His people; Hashem had to give His imprimatur on the people's actions; He loves the enthusiasm coming from Bnai Yisrael, and He made a miracle so that the donations just fit the needs. He wanted the mishkan to be the mishkan of all Jews.

Yet another approach to Hashra'as Hashechina: There is in perek 39 an inordinate amount of repetition of the phrase "as Hashem commanded Moshe" - *Ka'Asher Tzivah Hashem es Moshe*. Why does the Torah keep saying this phrase? And then in 39:42 and 43 it sums up and again says that they did everything as Hashem commanded two more times, exactly as Hashem commanded. Why was this necessary? **Bais Halevi**: if you hold like Rashi that the Mishkan was a tikun for the Chet Ha'Egel, then the tikun has to repair the sin of the Egel. Moshe was gone and the people took gold and turned it into an Egel on their own initiative. The point of the Torah is

that all of the mitzvos were given to humanity - they are not figured out by people. So, the Tikun was that every item was donated and then the Kaleim were built exactly as Hashem commanded. There was no latitude in what they were to build. This was another reason why the shechina descended.

*39:32: They completed all of the work of the Mishkan; Bnei Yisrael did everything that God commanded Moshe; so did they do.* **Ohr Hachayim**: this is where the Torah is giving us the notion of the glue that held the Jews together into one nation. You can only do a limited amount on your own. The Torah gives us different mitzvos, some that are only for Kohanim, some only for Leviyim, some only for women. No one person can fulfill all of the mitzvos, since some are not given to every Jew. The only way to fulfill all of the 613 mitzvos is not as individuals, but as a combined, unified nation; we have to love each Jew as ourselves, and what one of us cannot do, another does and we get credit because we are all unified. As a people we built the mishkan - we all had to be part of a team - it was a joint effort and each of us were strengthened by this approach.