

## Parshat Vayakhel 5779

At the beginning of this week's Parasha, Moshe Rabbeinu instructs Bnei Yisrael with the Mitzvah to bring Terumat Hamishkan - the donations required to build the Mishkan:- קחו מאתכם תרומה ליה' כל נדיב לבו יביאה את תרומת ה'. *“Take from yourselves a gift for Hashem; everyone whose heart motivates him shall bring it, a gift for Hashem”* (35:5)

This Pasuk includes a few duplications and extra pronouns which require explanation. The “it”, or the letter ה in יביאה, seems superfluous. Ibn Ezra explains that this is common style in various places in Tanach and implies extra emphasis. However, there is a greater duplication in that the Pasuk begins with *“take from yourselves a gift”,* and ends saying *“shall bring it, a gift”*.

The Seforno argues that there is no repetition in the passuk. The two references to 'Terumah' refer in fact to two different types of items given to the Mishkan - the first voluntary ("Terumah for Hashem") and the second obligatory ("terumah of Hashem"). And, by translating את as 'with', the Seforno understands the Pasuk means that the voluntary gift should be given by anyone of generous heart (כל נדיב לבו) together with the obligatory gift, namely the half-shekel from the beginning of Parashat Pekudei. This way, the ה at the end of יביאה is not superfluous, but rather it refers to the first voluntary Terumah that should be brought together *with* the second obligatory Terumah.

Though the Seforno explains the duplication in the Pasuk, the question remains as to why the Torah would apparently wish to mention these two types of Terumah together. The voluntary donations in Parashat Vayakhel and the half-Shekel of Parashat Pekudei are distinct Mitzvot after all.

Rav Yehuda Kopperman zt"l addresses this question in his sefer Pshuto shel Mikra, recently translated by Rav Immanuel Bernstein. Rav Kopperman taught

generations of students in the Michlalah Jerusalem College, and was famed as an original and insightful teacher of Tanakh. He strongly believed that the *pshat* - the direct meaning of the words of the Torah - can teach us important lessons, alongside but distinct from halachic inferences that may be made from the text.

In addressing our question regarding the double reference to Terumah in our Pasuk, via the Seforno's suggestion that there are two types of Terumah being discussed together, Rav Kopperman argues that there is a moral message here. The Torah is emphasizing that voluntary actions must always be done in addition to obligatory deeds, not instead of them. Thus the voluntary “Terumah **for** Hashem” must come together with the “Terumah **of** Hashem”, which is obligatory. Otherwise, the danger may arise that a person could regard all his Torah activities as voluntary, and forget that the ultimate grounding of Avodat Hashem is in the essence of basic obligations. Hence, the voluntary donation should be brought together with the obligatory one, and likewise we should learn about them together in the Torah. Similarly, the sense of elation that can come from doing a voluntary act can also enhance the obligatory act which could otherwise become routine.

We are familiar with the statement of Chazal that גדול המצווה ועושה ממי שאינו ועושה - greater is one who does (a mitzva) and is commanded than one who does so without being commanded. This implies that the obligatory acts are most important. But we also know that voluntary acts have their own value, and in Pirkei Avot (2:13), R' Shimon says: אל תעש תפילתך קבע - do not make your prayer fixed (or routine). Though, the obligatory prayers became most important, there is no contradiction here. The ultimate lesson from our Pasuk, which juxtaposes the two types of Terumah, is that we can best serve Hashem by combining together both obligatory and voluntary aspects of the Torah's Mitzvot.