

Candle Lighting

5:44

S"Z Kriat Shema

9:50

Sunset

6:04

Motzei
Shabbat

6:40



Parshat HaShavuah

תרומה

TERUMAH

א' אדר-א תשע"ד

ראש חודש

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Ashreinu

חלקינו מה טוב

Enriching and Enhancing Your Study of the Weekly Torah Portion

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Sponsored in memory of Lana (Leah) D. Goldberg

Parshat Terumah introduces us to a series of parshiot dedicated to the Mishkan, its vessels, its construction and the donations that were solicited in order to make the project a reality.

Our Rabbis point out an apparent inconsistency in the language that the Torah uses at the beginning of Parshat Terumah when giving the instructions to construct the various utensils used in the Mishkan.

When instructing Moshe regarding the construction of the *aron*, the ark, which housed the *Luchot*, the initial introductory command is given in the plural with the words: "*Veasu Aron Atzei Shitim*" (25:10).

When the command is given regarding the other vessels (i.e. the Menorah and the altar on which the sacrifices were brought) the command is given in the singular with the word *Veasita*.

Why the inconsistency? What message is the Torah teaching us by the fact that a different language is used to introduce the command regarding the *aron*?

Our Rabbis explain that although the other vessels in the Mishkan can be constructed by individuals, the *aron* is different because the *aron* holds the *Luchot* which represent the entire Torah. The study of Torah and performance of the mitzvot contained within is not relegated to one individual or a set of individuals.

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A TEAM EFFORT

JESSICA GRIFF ('15)

Up until this parsha, we have read about the exciting drama of the exodus from Egypt with all of its miracles and epic events. We now experience a shift from this storyline and transition into a long, meticulous, and exhausting description of the building of the Mishkan. In comparison to the length the Torah allots for the description of creation in Parshat Bereishit (a total of 34 pesukim), the description of the Mishkan is fifteen times as long (over a span of 5 parshiot).

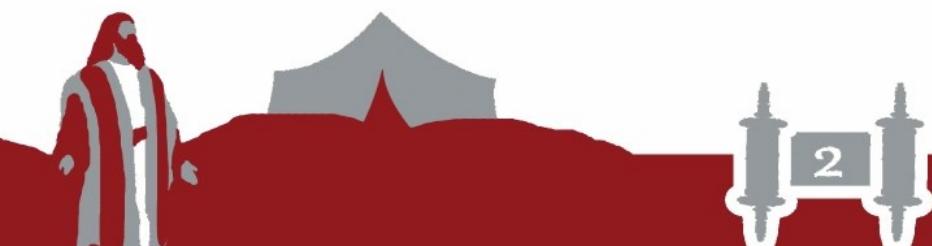
One has to question the purpose of the Torah's lengthy explanation because after all, the Mishkan is only meant as a temporary structure. It is specifically designed to be carried throughout the desert and will eventually be replaced by King Shlomo with the building of the Beit Hamikdash. So what pressing message are we supposed to learn from this construction that is not meant to endure?

From the time the Jewish people leave Egypt, they only complain. They naively assume others, mostly Hashem and Moshe, will take care of them, providing them with food and water. Hashem hopes that with miracles, He can quell the dissenters who cry to return to Egypt. Even once Hashem performs the greatest revelation in human religious experience by revealing himself to the Jews, the Jews do not remain awestruck and retain their faith. A mere 40 days later, they lose that once strong held faith and sin. The use of miracles fails to permanently transform the nation's mindset from a slave mentality to a unified people.

Unexpectedly, Hashem then instructs Moshe to command the people to distribute to the Mishkan effort. Hashem wants Moshe to galvanize the Jews to build something together—to get them to give. The people respond so positively giving gold, silver, copper, and incense that Moshe needs to stop the donations because there is an overabundance of supplies. During the building of Mishkan, there are no complainers and no dissensions. What all the wonders fail to complete, the Mishkan succeeded in doing. It has transformed the people into a cohesive group and has given them a sense of responsibility and identity.

So what is the overall purpose in the lengthy description of the building of the Mishkan? To teach us the lesson that we do not need miracles to unite as a people. All it takes is for every person to be apart of the "team," to contribute his talents in order to enhance the overall product.

As teenagers, we are constantly applying this lesson of working as team players. Whether it be on the soccer field, on the basketball court, or in the classroom, we can always learn from the Torah's description of the Mishkan and the nations' generosity to further improve our desired outcomes.





THE CENTER OF OUR FAITH

JONAH KEEHN ('16)

In this week's parsha, Moshe is commanded to organize the building of the Mishkan for Hashem. The central part of the Mishkan is the *aron* which contains the *Luchot*. That being so, the ark and *Luchot* are therefore the essential part of the entire structure and all of its components.

Logically, the *aron* should not have been built until there had been a shelter for it. In fact, Betzalel, the one who builds the Mishkan, is bothered by this same problem. The fact that he has been instructed to create the actual vessels before the underlying structure is puzzling. He asks Moshe about it, and Moshe agrees with him.

In this parsha, Moshe isn't speaking as an architect, but as a teacher of values. He speaks first about the *aron* because the word of Hashem is infinitely more important than where it is stored. The *aron* and *Luchot* are the foremost reason for the building, not vice versa. The *Luchot* represent Torah and mitzvot and the *aron* is where we place these important and essential values.

GIVE AND TAKE

EMMA HARRIS ('16)

Hashem commands the Jewish nation to build the Mishkan, so He can dwell there. Hashem asks the Jewish people to give silver, gold, and many other materials in order to construct the Mishkan. Hashem says, "Speak to the children of Israel and let them take a portion for me" (Shemot 25:2). This wording is very odd. Why does the Torah tell the Jewish people to take a portion when they are obviously supposed to give one?

In order to understand the answer, we must look at the following story:

Max and Irving go fishing on an overcast afternoon. About two hours into their expedition, a fierce storm develops. Their small rowboat is tossed and turned and finally flips over into the middle of the lake.

Max, a strong swimmer, calls to save Irving, but Max gets no reply. Irving does not respond to any plea and unfortunately drowns. Max swims to shore and breaks the terrible news to Irving's poor wife.

"What happened?" she screams. "Tell me the whole story!"

Max recounts the entire episode in full detail.

"But what did you do to try to save my Irving?" she shrieks. Max explains once again. "I kept screaming to your husband, 'Irving, give me your hand – give me your hand – Give me your hand! But Irving just gave me a blank stare and drifted away."

Continued on page 4

Harris continued

“You fool!” shouts the widow. “You said the wrong thing. You should have said, ‘take my hand.’ Irving never gave anything to anybody!”

Many times, we find ourselves doing the same thing as Irving. We are constantly taking from others and do not recognize the importance of giving. The Torah teaches us that when we truly give, we are not giving away anything.

Rather, we are taking a share for ourselves. The materialistic items that we invest in end up out of style or forgotten, but the items we give last forever. They are saved in a “bank” of our merits, and Hashem will repay our descendants for our selfless deeds.

Kaminetsky continued

Each individual has a significant role when it comes to Torah which contributes to the entirety of the Jewish people. The Torah therefore purposely gave this command in the plural form using the word *Veasu* instead of *Veasita*.

The Midrash in Parshat Naso, when discussing the contributions made by the leaders of the various tribes at the inauguration of the Mishkan, teaches us that *Shivim Panim La'torah*, there are seventy faces to the Torah.

Many interpretations are offered regarding what this actually means. On a very simple level, however, we can explain that each and every individual has a significant contribution to make when it comes to Torah study or performance of mitzvot.

Regardless of what our specific area of expertise is and where we focus our individual efforts, our contribution is significant and contributes to the larger Jewish community.

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