

A PARASHA THOUGHT

Doing The Impossible

There is a puzzling *midrash* in the middle of *parshas Pekudei*. The Torah relates how *B'nei Yisrael* brought all the completed parts of the *mishkan* to Moshe, and then states, "Like all that Hashem had commanded Moshe, so did *B'nei Yisrael* perform all the labor." Upon this the *midrash* asks, "And where did Hashem command this? When Hashem said: And you shall make for Me a *mikdash* and I will dwell amongst them."

Rabbi Avraham Shmuel Binyamin Sofer, more commonly known by his *sefer K'sav Sofer*, and son of the Chassam Sofer, is bothered by the question and answer. Where did Hashem command the people to build the

mishkan? The many details of the *mishkan* were just told over the last five Torah portions, so what do you mean "where did Hashem command the people to make a *mishkan*?"

A few *pesukim* earlier, Rashi brings a *midrash* to explain why they brought all the completed parts of the *mishkan* to Moshe; they couldn't figure out how to put it up themselves. The *midrash* relates that Moshe as well did not know how he was supposed to put up the *mishkan* until Hashem told him, in essence, "you do your part and I'll do the rest." What really happened then is that the *mishkan* stood *itself* up. Says the K'sav Sofer, this episode is really representative of the entire *mishkan*-building experience. It wasn't actually possible.

To illustrate this point: In the beginning of *parshas Vayakhel*, the *pasuk* states that there were two kinds of people that came forward to contribute to the *mishkan*, those that "*n'sao libo oso*" and "*nadva rucho oso*." Ramban clarifies these two

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THE RABBI WAS ASKED ON THE PARASHA

THIS WEEK WITH
RABBI DOVID SPETNER

Q. At the end of *parshas Pekudei*, the Torah describes the erection of the *mishkan* and Hashem's *Shechina* coming to rest in the *mishkan*. Don't these events not occur until later in the Torah in *parshas Shmini*?

A. You are correct that these events chronologically belong in *parshas Shmini*. However, the Torah can be said to be "fast forwarding" in order to complete an important theme. The Ramban in his preface to *Sefer Shmos* points out that Chazal refer to *Sefer Shmos* as *Sefer Hageula* – the *Book of Redemption*. Ramban asks, how is it that it can be called the *Book of Redemption* when so much of it is dedicated to a seemingly unrelated idea – that of building the *mishkan*? The Ramban shares a very fundamental idea about the very definition of redemption. Becoming free of slavery is only the first stage of redemption. To be truly redeemed is to get back to the lofty position of your ancestors. For example, if they were kings, then only when you return to the throne are you fully redeemed. Our patriarchs were referred to as "the Chariot of the *Shechina*," meaning that they were the vehicle through which Hashem was manifest

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THE RABBI WAS ASKED ON THE PARASHA

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and perceived in the world. Only when the Jews had built the *mishkan* as a place where Hashem's *Shechina* could be felt did the Jews actually return to the esteemed position of their ancestors. Then they were truly redeemed. This is why half of the book of *Shmos* addresses the building of the *mishkan* and closes with how Hashem's *Shechina* filled it. 🕒

Something always bugged you about the upcoming parasha (or last week's)? Ask! Submit a question on the parasha by Monday at noon by emailing parasha@cincykollel.org. Questions will be selected to address at the discretion of the Rabbi who is answering that week. Questions may be edited for brevity/clarity.

A PARASHA THOUGHT

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groups: *nadva rucho oso* means that their "*ruach*" or spirit was filled with "*n'divus*" – a spirit of giving. That was the people who donated monetarily. Conversely, the other category of "*n'sius lev*," inspiration of the heart, is not just giving away, it's getting involved. These were the people that came forward with a desire to be involved in the actual work of building the *mishkan*. However, continues Ramban, everyone shared the same handicap. No one had experience in the intricate work needed to fashion all the things necessary to the *mishkan*. A miraculous thing happened. Those who had stepped forward because of

their great desire to be involved in the holy work found that they were able to identify what it was they had inborn talents for, and not only that—they found they knew how to do it! In a normal state of being this was impossible, even ludicrous. It was only possible in a world

of incredible assistance from Hashem.

So, says the K'sav Sofer, when the Torah says that Moshe saw that they had built the *mishkan*, he saw the impossible had been done. The impossible is only possible with supernatural assistance from Hashem. Thus, Moshe perceived something else as well. The *mishkan* had been built "*like Hashem commanded*" – not just in the details of how Hashem wanted everything made, but in the spirit of how Hashem wanted everything made; that is, to make a place for the glory of Hashem to inhabit and not to make a beautiful temple to exult about. It had to have been made with those pure intentions, otherwise the impossible would not have happened. On this asks the *midrash*, where did Hashem command this – not the literal details of what should be done, but the spirit of the law; where do we see what the motives of those that build it should be. Answers the *midrash*: *Make for Me a mikdash where I can dwell amongst them*. The goal has to be Hashem's presence. If that is the goal, everything else will work out too. 🕒



TRIVIA

RABBI GAVI KADISH

Tachanun omitted on the yahrtzeit of a tzaddik continued...

If I find myself in a shul which "erroneously" omits *tachanun* on the yahrtzeit of a *tzaddik*, how should I proceed? Should I protest? Should I recite *tachanun*?

The *Rivivos Ephraim* is clear that, above all, it is inappropriate to create a *machlokes* in shul over such a matter. Although the majority of *Poskim* rule that *tachanun* should be recited on the yahrtzeit of a *tzaddik*, there are those who have a *minhag* to omit it. He says that in the best case scenario one should not *daven* with such a *minyán*. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach rules that an individual doesn't need to recite *tachanun* individually after *davening* in such a shul since the congregation's omission was because of their custom and not a mistake (*Halichos Shlomo, Hilchos Tefila*, 13:5:7). Furthermore, since the appropriate time to recite *tachanun* is immediately after *Shemona Esrei*, and he wasn't able to since he must follow the congregation that omitted it, he mustn't repeat it afterwards. It is noteworthy that Rav Shlomo Zalman himself, as we previously mentioned, disagrees with the *minhag*. Nevertheless, the majority of *Poskim* (*Tefila Kihilchasa* chapter 16 footnote 37 quoting Rav Moshe Feinstein, Rav Elyashiv, and Rav Ovadia) opine that one must recite *tachanun* if the congregation "erroneously" omitted it. They emphasize that there is no concern of "*yuhara*" or haughtiness, nor of violating the prohibition of "*lo sigdodu*," which is loosely translated as creating different factions in *Klal Yisroel*. It is interesting to note that the Stiepler rules that if one is *davening* for the *amud* for a congregation that omits *tachanun* on the yahrtzeit of a *tzaddik*, he should skip *tachanun* like the *tzibbur* is accustomed to doing. 🕒