

Terumah

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The building of the Mishkan is not the most dramatic part of the exodus story, but it should be. Even though some hold that the Mishkan was only a response to the sin of the golden calf, they just mean the physical structure itself. The concept of a Mishkan is as necessary to Creation as the Temple itself.

And how did the Jewish People actually build the Mishkan? Obviously we had to use the specified materials to manufacture and construct every part of the Mishkan and its implements. But was the money collected only the means to acquire all of it, or were the materials just the physical stand-in for the true material, the hearts of the Jewish People?

After all, what ultimately controls the actions of a person, their mind or their heart? It is possible for the mind to override the heart, but it doesn't happen often, at least not for the aver-

Dedicated in loving memory of our father,

Ya'akov *ben* Chaim, z"l.

May his *Neshamah* have *aliyah* after *aliyah*, and may he be a *meilitz yosbar* for *Klal Yisroel*

Ithiel Snyder & Family

age person. Even when it does, it is usually because the person isn't overly passionate about what their mind is telling them to pass up.

Marketing and Advertising not only know this, but they take advantage of it. Consumerism is driven by passion because people end up spending money they don't have for things they don't need but they buy anyhow because it makes them *feel* better about life.

And, of course, it is so much easier to feel passionate about things you should not feel so strongly about, and dispassionate about the things that should be important to you. People will go out of their way and spend what they have to in order to be entertained. But they'll look for ways to cut corners when it comes to things like education.

The *Sha'arei Chochmah* explains:

Regarding the matter of the *zivug* (pairing) that was revealed through the Mishkan, see what our teacher (GR"A) wrote on the verse, "*Behold, you are beautiful, my beloved, and pleasant; also our couch is leafy* (*Rashi*: Through your beauty our 'couch' is 'leafy' with our sons and with our daughters)" (*Shir HaShirim* 1:16). A couch is a place of joining, and the explanation is that *Knesses Yisroel* (a heightened state of the Jewish People) tells The Holy One, Blessed is He, "*You are beautiful, etc.*" before the sin of the calf, "*and pleasant*" even after I did the incident with the calf. [And,] "*also our couch is leafy,*" meaning that "You also made a Mishkan for us." He further wrote (Verse 17) that "*also our couch is leafy*" is talking about the Mishkan which is the joining and pairing of the worlds...The explanation of the matter is based upon what he wrote (the second explanation) on, "*Make for Me a Mikdosh and I will dwell within*

them” (*Shemos* 25:8), actually *within* them, because the dwelling of the *Shechinah* is within the hearts of the Jewish People, [and the physical structure was because] they just needed a place to gather all their hearts together. So He commanded them, “*Take for Me a gift offering, etc.*” (*Shemos* 25:2) and each one volunteered according to their heart... (*Sha'arei Chochmah, Sifra D'Tzniusa, Ch. 1, 28b*)

So, before we do a *mitzvah* thinking that act is what counts most, we should recall that it is really our hearts that we give to God. As Dovid HaMelech wrote, “*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit*” (*Tehillim* 51:19). Broken doesn't mean crushed and defeated. It means loving God more than yourself, and then the *Shechinah* has room to dwell within you.

Good Shabbos,

Pinchas Winston