



*Yeshivat Ma'alot*

*Parashat Pikudei*

*Rav Yehoshua Weitzman shlit"a*

ישיבת מעלות

פרשת פיקודי

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Parashat Pikudei gives a detailed account of how each kli, vessel, for the Mishkan was made. At the end of each description the Torah writes "as Hashem commanded Moshe." Why did the Torah find it necessary to repeat this phrase so many times? Wouldn't it suffice to write it once at the end of the parasha?

The Or Hachaim Hakadosh, Rabbi Chaim ben Atar, expounds on this point. He explains<sup>1</sup> that the Torah goes to such great length to describe each vessel because each one has its own unique significance. Each one is worthy in and of itself to have said about it "as Hashem commanded."

The Mishnah<sup>2</sup> says: "Rebbi Chananya ben Akashya says: Hashem wanted to give merit to Yisrael. Therefore, He gave them an abundance of Torah and Mitzvot." The Rambam, in his explanation to this Mishnah, says that if someone fulfills one of the 613 mitzvot with great love, without any other ulterior motives, he will merit Olam Haba. Therefore the Mishnah states that Hashem gave an *abundance* of Torah and Mitzvot. It is impossible that a person has not, at least once in his life, fulfilled a mitzvah with his entire heart. The commentaries on the Rambam have great difficulty with his explanation. How could it be that by performing only one mitzvah, a person can merit the World to Come? The answer is that each and every mitzvah is its own complete entity, its own world<sup>3</sup>. When a person completely fulfills one mitzvah he has acquired this perfection for himself. It is because of this that he is worthy of Olam Haba.

This idea sheds light on the words of the Or Hachaim Hakadosh. Hashem's commandments are complete, and each commandment stands by itself, in its individual state of perfection. The fact that Hashem commanded Moshe to build each vessel of the Mishkan separately comes to show that each one is a unit in and of itself, its own world of perfection. The Mishkan is not comprised of different parts that make one larger, complete entity; rather each part has its own completion.

We find that Chazal give meaning to the different parts of the Mishkan. The Gemara says<sup>4</sup> that the menorah represents wisdom, the shulchan (table in the Mishkan) represents wealth and that the bigdei Kehuna, the priestly garments, come

<sup>1</sup> Or Hachaim, Shemot 40, 19

<sup>2</sup> Makkot 3, 17

<sup>3</sup> See Mitzvah Barah pp. 59

<sup>4</sup> Bava Batra 25b, Zevachim 88b

to atone for different things. This comes from the fact that each vessel of the Mishkan has its one unique wholeness. It is from these complete entities that the Mishkan, Hashem's house in this world, is built.

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There is another lesson to be learned from the phrase "as Hashem commanded Moshe." Rabbi Yehuda Halevi, in his book the Kuzari<sup>5</sup>, explains that Hashem showed Moshe the exact plans of how to build the Mishkan. Hashem showed him the ohel, chatzer, shulchan, menorah and everything else pertaining to even the finest details of the Mishkan. The way by which Bnei Yisrael were to come close to Hashem was clearly set out by Hashem himself. There was no room for human imagination or deduction, for the input of Betzalel or the other artists. Everything was exactly as Hashem commanded. This is the only way that the Shechina could dwell among Bnei Yisrael.

This was the exact point that Bnei Yisrael failed to uphold during the Chet Ha'egel. The Kuzrai<sup>6</sup> explains that the sin of the Egel Hazahav was that Bnei Yisrael tried to serve Hashem in a way which was forbidden. They did not say that Hashem was not almighty and powerful. Rather, they chose to give Godly power to a physical creation which they made with their own hands. They thought that from their own finite state of being they could choose the proper way to serve Hashem. This was their mistake, for Hashem had explicitly told them how He should be served.

The building of the Mishkan is a tikkun, a fixing, for the Egel Hazahav. Each and every aspect of the Mishkan, from the biggest object to the smallest detail, was all built "as Hashem commanded Moshe." In our own personal Avodat Hashem we must also aspire to this level. All of our actions should be the product of Hashem's commandment, and not the fruits of our own imagination. By doing so, we make it possible for the Shechinah to dwell among Am Yisrael.

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<sup>5</sup> Mamar Rishon, 99

<sup>6</sup> Mamar Rishon, 97