

Pekudei

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לזיכרון ולעילוי נשמת
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פקודי

Pekudei

לא:יה | 38:21

אלה פקודי המשכן משכן העדת

*These are the accounts of the Mishkan,
the Mishkan of the Testimony.*

The Collateral

Rashi notes the Torah's uncharacteristic repetition of the word *Mishkan* in this verse, and explains it based on the similarity between the word *Mishkan*, מִשְׁכָּן, and the word *mashkon*, מִשְׁכּוֹן, a security or collateral. "This [repetition] alludes to the Mikdash, the Temple," says Rashi, "which was taken as security by two destructions, due to Israel's sins." Meaning that near the conclusion of the Torah's discussion regarding the Mishkan, the verse hints to the first and second Batei Mikdash, the Holy Temples that would one day replace the Mishkan.

Notably, the verse hints not to the *construction* of the future Batei Mikdash, but to their being "taken as security"

by two destructions! Paradoxically, in doing so, the Torah highlights the permanence and endurance of the future Batei Mikdash—despite their destruction.

The purpose of a security or collateral is merely to ensure the fulfillment of a pledge or the payment of a debt, after which *the security itself* is returned. Though it changes hands for the duration of the loan, the security remains intact until it is returned eventually to its owner.

Thus, by referring to the Batei Mikdash as collateral, the Torah is emphasizing their endurance. The Batei Mikdash embodied G-d's desire for a permanent presence among the Jewish people. The destruction did not mean that the existence of the Batei Mikdash no longer fulfilled this desire, but that due to outside causes—"Israel's sins," in Rashi's words—the Jewish people's access to the Batei Mikdash was temporarily taken away. From G-d's perspective, however, He merely took the first Temple, and likewise the second, as security, intending to return them and everything they represent when the time comes. May it be soon.

—*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 11, pp. 175-178*

 לה:כא | 38:21

אלה פְּקוּדֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִשְׁפַּן הָעֵדוּת

*These are the accounts of the Mishkan,
the Mishkan of the Testimony.*

The Testimony

What is the “testimony” to which the Torah refers when calling the Mishkan “The Mishkan of the Testimony”? Rashi explains that the Divine Presence resting in the Mishkan was itself the testimony: “It served as testimony for the Jewish people that G-d forgave them for the incident of the Calf, as He caused His Shechinah to rest among them [in the Mishkan].”

A testimony makes known that which is otherwise unknown or hidden. Facts that are obvious and widely known do not require testimony; in Jewish law, even facts that are currently indefinite but will inevitably become known in the future do not need to be proven with testimony.¹

Accordingly, inherent in the name “The Mishkan of the Testimony” are the two *novelties* to which the G-dly revelation in the Mishkan bore testimony.

First: the revelation was in a material structure, built by human effort. A revelation of G-dliness is not entirely novel or unexpected in a spiritual context. A revelation of the Divine within physicality, however, constitutes a “testimony” to a truth that is otherwise existentially hidden in this context.

In addition, the Torah calls the G-dly revelation in the Mishkan a “testimony” because it was an exposé of the

1. See Talmud, Rosh Hashanah 22b.

essentially unknown. Namely, the Mishkan served as the dwelling place for the essence of G-d that transcends revelation and is not manifest in any G-dly revelation or Divine influx found even in the spiritual realms.

—*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 1, pp. 198-199*

 לח:כא | 38:21

אַלֶּה פְּקוּדֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת אֲשֶׁר פָּקַד עַל פִּי מֹשֶׁה

These are the accounts of the Mishkan, the Mishkan of the Testimony, as they were overseen by Moshe.

Mass-Energy Equivalence

The Torah records the total weight of the gold, silver and copper that Bnei Yisrael donated for the Mishkan. Notably, no mention of the value or quality of the precious metals is made, only their weight.

What is the difference between weight and worth? Whereas weight only measures an object's mass, value reflects its quality and distinct form as well.

In a spiritual sense, these two components exist in varying degrees in all our “contributions” toward “making a Mishkan”—our efforts to make a dwelling place for G-d in this world. The weight, or mass, of our contributions are our actions, such as our practical observance of a mitzvah. The quality and “character” of the contribution, on the other hand, is the intention and spirit of devotion with which we perform that mitzvah.

Now, one might assume that actions devoid of any conscious feelings or intent serve no purpose in making the Mishkan. After all, how can uninspired physical acts contribute toward making G-d manifest in our lives?

To dispel this notion, the Torah relates that Moshe specifically calculated the weight of the precious metals, meaning

that he attributed significance not only to the worth of the donations but also to their weight. For even the mass—actual deed alone—was worthy enough in Moshe’s eyes to count and record.

—*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 26, p. 279*

 לט:א | 39:1

וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר לְאַהֲרֹן כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֶת מֹשֶׁה

*They made Aharon's holy garments,
as G-d had commanded Moshe.*

It's How You Wear It

In Parshas Vayakhel, Moshe conveys G-d's instructions regarding the Mishkan to Bnei Yisrael, and the craftsmen construct all the Mishkan's components. Parshas Pekudei then relates how the finished work was brought before Moshe, who assembled the Mishkan and initiated its service, whereupon "the glory of G-d filled the Mishkan."²

An exception to this pattern, however, is the account of the *bigdei kehunah*, the garments worn by the Kohanim while serving in the Mishkan. The crafting of the *bigdei kehunah* is not recounted in Vayakhel, where the Torah describes the other work done by the Mishkan's craftsmen, but in Pekudei, where the service is set into motion.

This anomaly draws attention to the distinction that the Rambam makes in his enumeration of the 613 mitzvos, where he includes *dressing* in the *bigdei kehunah* as one of the 613, but does not include *crafting* them.³ Evidently, he views *crafting* the clothes merely as a means of facilitating the mitzvah of wearing them, but not a mitzvah of its own. Conversely, he lists *constructing* the other components of the Mishkan as a

2. Shemos 40:34.

3. See Sefer Hamitzvos, Positive Mitzvah 33.

mitzvah in and of itself,⁴ independent of the mitzvos related to using them in the Mishkan's service.

Accordingly, Parshas Vayakhel, the theme of which is the construction of the Mishkan and its parts, discusses only the components of the Mishkan whose *construction* had independent "mitzvah significance." In contrast, the theme of Parshas Pekudei is the Divine response elicited by the Mishkan and its service *after it was operational*. The Torah therefore describes the fashioning of the *bigdei kehunah* in Parshas Pekudei, rather than in Vayakhel, for the garments achieve their "mitzvah significance" only through their actual utilization—when worn by the Kohanim for their service in a fully operational Mishkan.

—*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 3, p. 934, fn. 4*

4. Ibid, Positive Mitzvah 20.



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