



WORDS TO THE WISE

Rabbi Aryeh Dachs

The Mishkan Plem

There is a poignant story, a *mashal*, brought by the *Midrash* in *Beha'alo'secha*, which tells of a king who asks a beloved, simple, friend of his to prepare and host a feast for just the two of them in his friend's home. The friend of the king is of course flattered and excited. He expends significant energy sprucing his meager house to prepare for the king's arrival. He arranges his simple couch, his simple candelabra, and his simple table. When the king arrives with his entourage, the friend of the king is astounded by the regal men, and he is further dazzled by the brilliance of their accompanying gold and silver. Ashamed of what he prepared, he quickly hides his couch, table, and candelabra. The king, seeing that his beloved friend had not prepared anything for him, questions him. Despondently, the friend responds that after he had come face to face with the glory of his majesty, he was ashamed of his own simple provisions. He realizes his simple belongings were not appropriate for a king. The king comforts his friend and assures him of his friendship. "So that I can dine with you, I will remove all my trappings."

There is a similar *Midrash* in *Parshas Terumah* where Hashem commands Moshe to lead the Jewish people in the building of the *Mishkan*. The *Midrash (Pesikta Rabasi 16; Tanchuma Ki Sisa)* relates that Moshe was dumbfounded by this command; the task seemed impossible. Moshe proclaims, "How can we possibly build an edifice which can "house" the Almighty!" This same sentiment is repeated later in history. After building the First Temple, *Shlomo Hamelech* also struggles with this idea. In a public prayer where Shlomo inaugurates the Temple, he points out the ludicrous nature of the mission. The verse relates that Shlomo proclaims, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You; much less this Temple that I have erected." A place built by man which can serve to house G-d's presence is obviously a philosophical nightmare.

The *Midrash* in *Terumah* relates Hashem's reaction to Moshe's disbelief. Similar to the king in the *mashal*, Hashem tells Moshe, "I am not requiring you to build according to My magnitude, *lo lefi kochi*, rather you need to build the *Mishkan* according to your magnitude and ability, *lefi kochem*."

The paradox aside, G-d demands that the Jews build Him a resting place where His presence would reside. The understanding is that Hashem can "fit" His presence even where it shouldn't fit. He does this provided that we do our part. When we have put our best effort to make a *Mishkan*, that *Mishkan* will indeed be able to house G-d.

Although we mourn that we no longer have a Temple to house G-d, G-d still rests in our world. There is a manifestation here of His presence; the *Shechina* resides amongst us. The lesson taught to Moshe applies to any spiritual-seeking person. To become spiritual, we need to do our best. Our "best" is based on our capability. Sometimes our "best" may not seem especially worthy or significant. We may find ourselves with a similar disbelief to the beloved friend of the king. We may wonder, as did Moshe and *Shlomo Hamelech*, if our small advancements are really worthy of a connection to something as immense as the Almighty?

Hashem tells Moshe that the effort he puts into building the *Mishkan* is enough. Although our efforts may seem insignificant and distant in the terms of an infinite G-d, are our efforts any more insignificant than the efforts of the Jewish people to house G-d in a physical *Mishkan* or Temple?

FEB. 17 MOTZEI SHABBOS PARSHAS TRUMAH
A UNIQUE EVENING OF
CHIZUK, ACHDUS & SIMCHA

At the

Dachs Home

866 Howlett Dr.
11 Woodmere 11581

LIGHT
REFRESHMENTS
WILL BE SERVED

9:15 pm

FOR MEN

Divrei Torah by R' Yehuda Shmidman

Kumzitz led by Yanky Weber and friends

If you play and would like to join, contact Yanky 516 817 0675