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LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

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 נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

RELATING TO THE WEEKLY SECTIONS OF THE TORAH AND
SPECIAL OCCASIONS IN THE JEWISH CALENDAR

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

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Volume VII: *Shmos*

•
In English rendition
by
Rabbi Eliyahu Touger

לעילוי נשמת
הו"ח אי"א נו"נ התמים
ר' שמואל יעקב
בן ר' משה ע"ה
פינק
רודף צדקה וחסד
ביתו פתוח לרווחה
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אב מסור ונתון וזכה שבניו וצאצאיו
הולכים בדרך התורה והמצוות
ודרכי החסידות אשר הורנו רבותינו נשיאנו
ה' מקושר בלב ונפש
לכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו
נפטר בשם טוב
י"ט טבת ה'תשע"ט
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
(מנוסח המצבה)
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VAYAKHEL

TWO TYPES OF DONATIONS

In *Parshas Vayakhel*, the Torah relates how all the Jews — men, women, and children¹ — donated toward the construction of the Sanctuary with unlimited generosity. Indeed, they gave more than what was required.

With regard to the gift of the half-*shekel* used for the *adonim*, the sockets which formed the Sanctuary's base, by contrast, we find the amount was limited to a half-*shekel*, and the people were warned: "The rich should not give more, nor should the poor give less."²

Similarly, there was a limit with regard to the givers. Only men participated.³ Moreover, even with regard to the men, there were restrictions. The donation was required only from those "20 years old and up."³

(Similarly, with regard to the half-*shekel* given every year for the purchase of communal offerings in the time of the *Beis HaMikdash*, and our commemoration of those half-*shekel* donations today, the obligation is incumbent only on adult males. Adults may also give on behalf of their children, but there is no obligation on the child.⁴)

This differs from donations given to the Sanctuary as a whole. Donations collected for that purpose were not limited;

1. *Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 11:1; see also the commentary of the *Or HaChayim* to the beginning of *Parshas Vayakhel*.
2. *Shmos* 30:15.
3. As reflected by the exegesis of *Shmos* 30:14, 38:25-26.
4. *Shekalim* 1:3; *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim 694)*.

לעילוי נשמת
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ר' מנחם מענדל ע"ה
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מקושר לכ"ק אדמו"ר מהוריי"צ
וכ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו מה"מ
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למד מתוך מסירת נפש בישיבת תו"ת במחתרת
שימש כשו"ב
הי' ממייסדי ושימש בתור מנהל ומשפיע
במתיבתא ובית מדרש במוסד חינוך אהלי תורה
וזכה להשפיע לאלפי תלמידים
בהתוועדויותיו הרבות
הכניס רוח חסידית ושמחה לרבים משומעיו
גידל משפחתו לחסידות ולהתקשרות
והרבה מהם שלוחים בכל קצוי תבל
נפטר בשיבה טובה ר"ח שבט ה'תשע"ח
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נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו

...And still more: those who "know what is done behind the scenes" - and are acquainted with a great many unpublicized details - realize much more the amazing wonders and miracles which occurred at this time in these days.

* * *

During the course of this year - to which the Jewish people gave the name and sign: "It will be a year of miracles [that] I will show him,"¹ and even before this, at the conclusion of the past year, designated by the Jewish people with the sign, "It will be a year of miracles"¹ - it has been emphasized many times what our Sages of blessed memory have foretold (in *Yalkut Shimoni*, *Yeshayahu*, *Remez* 499) regarding the war which would come in that part of the world, namely that thy are among the signs that the complete and true redemption through our righteous Moshiach is imminent.

And in light of the above mentioned events and miracles, one needs to strengthen awareness that this is the time to prepare immediately for the fulfillment of the promise "For sovereignty is the L-rd's"² when all people will be convinced that "there is a master to this world."³ This acknowledgment will bring them "to call all of them on the Name of G-d to serve Him together."⁴

(General letter, 25 Adar 5751)

1. [An acronym formed from the Hebrew letters used to designate the year. Translator's note.]

2. *Ovadiah* 1:21.

3. See *Bereishis Rabba*, beginning of chapter 39.

4. *Zephaniah* 3:9. And see Rambam *Hilchos Melachim* end of chapter 11.

there was no specific entity or amount that had to be given. Instead, everyone gave according to the generosity of his heart. Indeed, there was not even a limitation with regard to the total amount which was to be given. For we see that the Jews gave more than was necessary for the construction of the Sanctuary.⁵

And the donors included the entire Jewish people — men, women, and children. Indeed, as reflected by the verse:⁶ “And the men brought in addition to the women,” the donations of the men were subordinate to those of the women. And the women were first in making their donations, giving before the men did.

Moreover, the women fashioned their gifts with exquisite care, “spinning [the wool while it was] on the goats.”⁷ And this involved a gift of a higher quality, for unlike the men, who gave only inanimate matter, the women also gave live animals.

GIFTS OF ATONEMENT

Why the entire nation participated in donating to the Sanctuary can be explained as follows: The construction of the Sanctuary came in atonement for the Sin of the Golden Calf.⁸ This was a sin of a general nature, which affected even young children.⁹ (Young children are never punished for transgressions they perform, with one exception: communal idolatry. Thus with regard to an *ir hanidachas*, a city con-

5. See *Shmos* 36:5,7.

6. *Shmos* 35:22; see the commentary of the *Ramban* to the verse.

7. *Shmos* 35:26, as interpreted by *Shabbos* 74b, 79a, cited by *Rashi* in his commentary to the verse.

8. See the statements of the *Sheloh*, *Torah SheB'ksav*, *Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei* (p. 334b).

9. For this reason, this sin also had an effect on the spiritual level of the tribe of Levi, although they did not actually sin. Indeed, our Sages (*Berachos* 34a) relate that the sin caused even Moshe to undergo a spiritual descent, although at the time, he was on Mount Sinai and could not possibly have rebuked the Jews. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. 1, *Parshas Terumah*.

demned to be destroyed because of the idol worship of its inhabitants, all those living in the city, even children, are to be put to death.¹⁰) Since the sin of the Golden Calf affected the entire Jewish people, the atonement for it also had to be general in scope, including even children.¹¹

This explanation, however, raises a question: The half-*shekel* was also intended to atone for the Sin of the Golden Calf.¹² Why then was the donation of the half-*shekel* restricted to males above the age of twenty, while the entire nation donated to the Sanctuary as a whole?

We are forced to conclude that there were two elements to the atonement for the sin of the Golden Calf: a) one to be accomplished through the deeds of adult men, and b) one to be accomplished by the Divine service of the entire nation.

OUR RESPONSE TO G-D'S UNITY

The scope of the prohibition against worshipping false divinities involves more than an utter denial of G-d.¹³ On a more subtle level, the worship of false divinities can include thoughts that other powers *exist*, but are subservient to Him. And on an even more subtle level, even when one concedes that there is no source of *power* aside from G-d, if one conceives of *any other independent existence*, one is worshipping other gods, as it were.

The opposite of the worship of false divinities is the appreciation and the feeling that: "there is nothing else aside

10. See *Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Avodas Kochavim* 4:6. See also *Minchas Chinuch, Mitzvah* 464.

11. To draw a parallel to the events of the saga of Purim which is commemorated shortly before or after this Torah reading: The sin of bowing down to Haman's idol caused a decree which threatened to wipe out the entire Jewish people, "from the youth to the elders, children and women in one day" (*Esther* 3:13).

12. *Shekalim* 2:3; *Midrash Tanchuma, Ki Sissa*, sec. 10. See the *sichah* to *Parshas Ki Sissa* in this series.

13. See *Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Avodas Kochavim*, ch. 1.

BESURAS HAGEULO The Announcement Of The Redemption

17

As we come from the days of Purim - days of miracles which G-d performed "in those days at this time," and as we approach the holiday of Passover - when we celebrate the holiday of "the time of our freedom" and we thank G-d for the wonders and miracles which He performed for us at the Exodus from Egypt - now is an appropriate time to turn our complete attention to the wonders and miracles which occurred close to this year's Purim.

These were **open miracles**, not just for the Jewish people, but also for all peoples, until "all the ends of the earth saw"; everyone saw the great miracles that occurred at that time.

...According to the natural conditions of the world, in such a situation there should have been not only a declaration of war, etc., but the conflict should have involved many countries and ignited into a world war, G-d forbid; what actually happened was beyond the familiar natural order, for not only was a world war avoided, but the war that did break out ended quietly.

At the time, all the signs indicated it would be a difficult war, and therefore a huge army was mobilized, well equipped with huge caches of the most sophisticated weapons. After all the arrangements, which is the procedure when preparing oneself for a long war which must last weeks, months - the victory came in a very short time!

The victory was so remarkable that it not only avoided a blood bath between the nations of the world (as was feared at first), but it also reached the point that the enemy freed, in a fitting manner, some of the prisoners of war and even some of those captured earlier.

For every one of Moshe's commands to the Jewish people contains a promise that the command will be fulfilled.²² The Jews will surely respond with the appropriate Divine service, and this will cause "the glory of G-d to fill the Sanctuary."²³

(Adapted from *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei*, 5722)



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22. For all the commandments in the Torah serve both as commands and promises.
23. The same concepts (that ultimately the command will be fulfilled, and that it is a promise) can be applied with regard to G-d's commands which He conveyed to Moshe. Nevertheless, a distinction can be made. For the commands to the Jewish people were conveyed to them by Moshe, and that is when the dynamic of empowerment and the concept of promise took effect.

The contrast between these two stages can be compared to the ruling regarding a person's financial success which is delivered on *Rosh HaShanah*, and the ruling delivered every day (note the explanation of this concept in *Kuntres U'Mayon, maamar 19ff*).

The rationale for the power of Moshe's influence is that Moshe — and similarly, the extension of Moshe in every generation — serves as the head [*rosh*], and the nerve center for all of the Jews in that generation.

from Him."¹⁴ This is reflected in Avraham's praise of G-d¹⁵ as א-ל עולם. Were the phrase to have read: א-ל העולם, it would be translated as "L-rd of the world," implying that the world is a separate entity, over which G-d rules. א-ל עולם implies that there is no separation between G-d and the world; the world is nothing more than a radiation of G-d's power.¹⁶

This appreciation should evoke a response from the Jewish people, a resolve that "all your deeds should be for the sake of Heaven."¹⁷ Since the person appreciates that G-d is not only the Master of the world, but that the world is no more than an expression of His power, it is natural that each person desire to dedicate himself entirely to G-d's service. Not only is he willing to give up his personal concerns to fulfill G-d's will (an approach which would result from the concept of G-d as "L-rd of the world," i.e., G-d is Master over him and all his concerns), he *has* no personal concerns. From the outset, his entire life is dedicated to G-dliness.

The Alter Rebbe adds¹⁸ a further dimension, citing the verse:¹⁹ "G-d is the L-rd...; there is nothing else (אין עוד)." The world has no independent existence; it cannot even be referred to as עוד, which implies a subsidiary entity, as indicated by our Sages' rhetorical question:²⁰ "יהודה ועוד לקרא" "Does a verse [from the Torah require] any secondary support from [the custom of the Land of] *Yehudah*?" Having such an appreciation of G-d's oneness evokes a consummate commitment to Divine service, spurring a person to "Know Him in all your ways."²¹ Even his involvement in worldly

14. *Devarim* 4:35.

15. *Bereishis* 21:33.

16. See *Likkutei Torah, Parshas Ki Savo*, p. 42d, which draws a parallel to the produce which grows from the earth's power of vegetation. See also p. 43c.

17. *Avos* 2:12. See the *sichah* to *Parshas Terumah* in this series, where this concept is discussed.

18. See *Tanya, Shaar HaYichud V'haEmunah*, ch. 6.

19. *Devarim* 4:39.

20. *Kiddushin* 6a.

21. *Mishlei* 3:6.

matters becomes an expression of his Divine service. Not only will he perform an act for the sake of heaven (this implies that he is performing a secondary act for the sake of a greater purpose; in such an instance, the secondary act, though negligible when compared to the total picture, still holds some importance), his personal matters will *themselves* be expressions of holiness.²²

For this reason, the construction of the Sanctuary serves to atone for the Sin of the Golden Calf. The construction of the Sanctuary brought about the indwelling of the Divine Presence within each and every individual, as it is written:²³ “And you shall make Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell within” — “within each and every individual.”²⁴ G-d dwells within every individual through his efforts to make his personal environment a Sanctuary for G-d.

This atones for the sin of the Golden Calf, for these efforts manifest G-d’s unity in a manner which negates the possibility that other divinities even exist.

THE NEED FOR PREPARATION

In our Divine service, our progress moves from less difficult rungs to more accomplished ones. Thus we must proceed from acting “for the sake of Heaven” to “know[ing] Him in all

22. To explain the above concepts: Divine service “for the sake of heaven” springs from an awareness of the unity between the names of G-d, *Havayah* and *E-lohim*, which reflects how *tzimtzum*, the Divine process of self-confinement, is for the sake of revelation.

The Divine service of “know[ing] Him in all your ways” stems from an awareness that the *tzimtzum* itself reveals G-d’s perfection, showing that He is not limited to infinite expressions, and can manifest Himself in limitation as well (the *maamar* entitled *Vihayah Shearis Yaakov*, 5718).

The advantage of “Know[ing] Him in all your ways” over performing “all your deeds for the sake of Heaven” is explained at length in the *sichah* of *Parshas Terumah* in this series.

23. *Shmos* 25:8.

24. See *Likkutei Torah*, the beginning of *Parshas Naso*; *Reishis Chochmah* (*Shaar HaAhavah*, ch. 6) and the *Sheloh*, *Shaar HaOsios*, *Os Lamed*, *Maseches Taanis*, entry *Meilnyan HaAvodah*; *Parshas Terumah*, *Torah Or*, pgs. 325b, 326b.

A COMMAND AND A PROMISE

There is another concept that can be derived from the combination of *Parshas Vayakhel* and *Parshas Pekudei*. In between G-d’s command to Moshe to build the Sanctuary and its utensils (as related in the *parshiyos Termuah* and *Tetzaveh*) and the implementation of these commands (as related in the *parshiyos Vayakhel* and *Pekudei*), interruptions are possible (for example, the narrative of the Golden Calf, as related in *Parshas Ki Sissa*).¹⁹ But nothing comes between Moshe’s command to the Jewish people (*Parshas Vayakhel*) and their fulfillment of it (*Parshas Pekudei*). Indeed, the two are so closely connected that in most years the *parshiyos* are combined.

“We follow the majority”;²⁰ even in the exceptional instances when *Parshas Vayakhel* and *Parshas Pekudei* are read separately, alluding to an involvement by the *yetzer hora* causing a delay of several days, the initiative will not be thwarted. Nothing will interpose, and ultimately, the intent will be brought to fruition. For a concept that is revealed by Moshe — and also by “the extension of Moshe in every generation”²¹ — will surely be accomplished.

19. Appreciating the command to build a Sanctuary, its implementation, and the sin of the Golden Calf as phases in our own Divine service and not merely historical events, resolves a difficulty in the interpretation of the order of these *parshiyos*. There is an opinion (*Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 224a) which states that the donations to the Sanctuary were made before the sin of the Golden Calf. According to that opinion, it is difficult to understand why *Parshas Ki Sissa* is read before *Parshas Vayakhel*. The order of the *parshiyos*, however, is not chronological, but instead is structured to show that there can be an interruption between G-d’s command to Moshe and Moshe’s command to the Jewish people.

According to this opinion, Moshe’s command (and the donations to the Sanctuary) were separated from the actual construction of the Sanctuary by the sin of the Golden Calf. Nevertheless, even that sin did not prevent G-d’s presence from resting among the Jewish people, as it is written (*Shmos* 40:34): “And the glory of G-d filled the Sanctuary.”

20. See *Bava Basra* 23b.

21. See *Tikkunei Zohar*, *Tikkun* 69 (p. 114a). See also *Bereishis Rabbah* 56:7, and *Tanya*, ch. 42.

Pekudei, in most years, due to the pressures of time, the two *parshiyos* are coupled together. In one week, we must integrate spiritual influences which would ordinarily be expressed in two.¹⁵

This does not imply that we must rise above the concept of time entirely, for this would conflict with the purpose of the Sanctuary, which was intended to create a “dwelling [for G-d] in the lower worlds.”¹⁶ Instead, the intent is to stretch those limits, so that within a world limited by time, it becomes possible to appreciate an influence which transcends time.

A FORETASTE OF THE FUTURE

This introduction of an element of temporal transcendence, i.e., fusing the higher realms with the lower realms, is expressed in the fusion of the *parshiyos Vayakhel* and *Pekudei*. The fundamental element of *Parshas Vayakhel* is the Divine service of man, while the fundamental element of *Parshas Pekudei* is the influence from above. Fusing the two serves as a foretaste and a preparation for the revelations of the Era of the Redemption, when “I will make your windows of rubies,”¹⁷ which our Rabbis say¹⁸ refers to a fusion of the influence from above with man’s Divine service.

(Adapted from *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei*, 5721)

15. On this basis, we can appreciate the connection of these *parshiyos* to the month of Adar in which they are read. (See the *Sheloh*, *Parshas Vayeishev*, which states that holidays share a connection to the *parshiyos* of the weeks in which they are celebrated.)

The central element of the month of Adar is the holiday of Purim, a day connected with such a fusion of opposites. For Purim is always celebrated during the week, when it is permitted to perform work. (In most years, this also applies to Shushan Purim.) Nevertheless, Purim is associated with a transcendent state of soul, a commitment beyond reason, *ad d’lo yoda*.

16. Cf. *Midrash Tanchuma*, *Parshas Bechukosai* sec. 3; *Tanya*, ch. 36.

17. *Yeshayahu* 54:12.

18. See *Bava Basra* 75a, as explained in *Likkutei Torah*, *Parshas Re’eh*, the *maamar* entitled *Zeh*.

our ways,” making it possible for the Divine Presence to dwell within each of us.

Just as in an individual sense these phases of Divine service follow a sequence, so too there was a sequence in the construction of the Sanctuary. The *adonim* served as a foundation and a starting point for the construction. To cite the parallel in our daily Divine service: The *kabbalas ol*, the acceptance of G-d’s yoke, expressed through *Modeh Ani*, begins our Divine service every day. But this does not represent the true depth of our appreciation of the oneness of G-d. As such, it does not serve as complete atonement for the Sin of the Golden Calf, for it does not entirely negate the concept of existence outside G-dliness.

Before beginning these two phases of Divine service (“All your deeds shall be for the sake of Heaven” and “Know Him in all your ways”), one must ready oneself. A person must direct all his energies to the service of G-d with these two goals in mind. Moreover, he must always remember the ultimate goal: that G-d’s essence dwell within the essence of every Jew.

These preparatory efforts must stem from the essence of our souls, the point of our being which we all share equally. And it must pervade all our powers. This implies that the service must be performed by a person whose every potential is revealed, for only then can he direct them to these goals.

On this basis, it is possible to resolve the question posed at the outset: The erection of the Sanctuary began with the placement of the *adonim*. These *adonim* were made from: a) the donations given by those who were twenty²⁵ and above, who have all their potentials revealed, and b) all the donations toward the *adonim* were of an equal size.

25. This age represents a full blossoming of adulthood, at which point a man becomes obligated for military service. See *Bava Basra* 155a; *Likkutei Torah*, *Parshas Bamidbar* p. 2a.

After this preparatory stage of service was performed by the 600,000 adult males²⁶ — a number inclusive of the entire Jewish people²⁷ — it was possible for the nation as a whole: men below the age of twenty, women, and children, to bring their donations to the Sanctuary according to the generosity of their hearts.

(Adapted from *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Shemini*, 5722)



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26. We see a parallel with regard to an *ir hanidachas*, a condemned city, the counterpart to the Sanctuary in the sphere of unholiness. Although as mentioned above, in such an instance punishment is exacted from men, women, and children, the individuals who lure the city to idol worship must be adult men. If this is not the case, the city is not judged according to that paradigm (*Sanhedrin* 101b).
27. See *Tanya*, ch. 37.

For this reason, as stated in *Parshas Pekudei* (*Shmos* 38:28), those half-*shekalim* in excess of 600,000 were not used for the *adonim*.

down by designating an entity cannot be compared to the influence drawn down by the actual observance of the *mitzvah*.¹⁰

This concept is reflected in the differences between the construction and the preparation of the utensils for the Sanctuary described in *Parshas Vayakhel* and the sanctification of those utensils through anointment or through use in the sacrificial worship.¹¹ Certainly, the revelation from above which was generated by the preparation of the utensils cannot be compared to the revelation described in *Parshas Pekudei*, at which time the utensils were anointed and used.

On this basis, we can appreciate the sequence of the *parshiyos* which describe the Sanctuary and its utensils.¹² *Parshas Terumah* mentions G-d's command to build the Sanctuary and its utensils — an arousal from above which precedes and generates strength for the arousal from below. More particularly, this stage has two phases: the command to build the Sanctuary as recorded in *Parshas Terumah*, and the command to fashion the priestly garments, as recorded in *Parshas Tetzaveh*.¹³

Parshas Vayakhel relates Moshe's instructions to the Jewish people, and describes how they were fulfilled, i.e., man's endeavors and the concomitant arousal from below. And *Parshas Pekudei* refers to a higher level of arousal from above which comes after the arousal from below.¹⁴

TRANSCENDENCE IN TIME

Although the Divine influence associated with *Parshas Vayakhel* cannot be compared to that associated with *Parshas*

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10. See *Shaarei Orah*, the *maamar* entitled *Yaviu Levush Malchus*, ch. 7.
 11. See *Shavuos* 15a.
 12. See the commentary of the *Ramban* to *Shmos* 36:8.
 13. For as mentioned in note 8, there is a difference between the laws governing the Sanctuary and its utensils, and those governing the priestly garments.
 14. See *Likkutei Torah, Shir HaShirim*, p. 24a, where these concepts are explained.

The efforts of the Jewish people described in *Parshas Vayakhel* also brought about a revelation of G-dliness from above — for every one of our endeavors in Divine service evokes influence from above. Nevertheless, the Divine influence evoked by the activities described in *Parshas Vayakhel* cannot be compared to the revelation of G-dliness drawn down by the Divine service of anointing the Sanctuary and offering the sacrifices described in *Parshas Pekudei*: “G-d’s glory filled the Sanctuary.”

To cite a parallel in the realm of *halachah*: Our Sages teach:⁹ “Designation [of an article to be used for a *mitzvah*] is itself significant.” Nevertheless, the G-dly influence drawn

(*Berachos* 55a) explain that Moshe agreed to the order followed by Betzalel, telling him: “You were in the shadow of G-d...” Accordingly, it would have been possible to say “as G-d commanded Moshe” with regard to the construction of the Sanctuary and its utensils. (See also *Rashi*’s commentary, which explains that for this reason the verse says “as G-d commanded Moshe,” and not “as Moshe commanded.”)

b) Betzalel’s changes did not involve all the particulars of the Sanctuary, but rather which was to be made first, the Sanctuary or the utensils. Therefore, the expression “as G-d commanded Moshe” could rightfully have been mentioned after the completion of every particular utensil. According to the *Ramban*’s conception, it is with regard to the conclusion of the discussion of the Sanctuary and its vessels that the expression is inappropriate.

It is possible to say that the expression “as G-d commanded Moshe” was not mentioned with regard to every particular, for it does not introduce a new concept. It is obvious that there was no deviation from G-d’s instructions. But with regard to the construction of the Sanctuary in its entirety — in which regard a deviation was made from Moshe’s instructions — it was necessary to clarify that this was not a deviation from G-d’s instructions.

This is not, however, an adequate explanation, for this phrase is mentioned with regard to each of the priestly garments, although no new concept is introduced. Therefore it is still necessary to explain why this expression is not mentioned with regard to the construction of the individual elements of the Sanctuary and its utensils.

This difficulty can be resolved as follows: Although the Sanctuary and its utensils as described in *Parshas Vayakhel* were significant, they still lack a full dimension of the connection (*tzavsa* in Aramaic, which relates to the Hebrew word *tzivah*, “commanded”) to G-d which was conveyed when they were anointed with the anointing oil as described in *Parshas Pekudei*. Accordingly, it is not until this *parshah* that it is appropriate to say, “As G-d commanded...”

9. *Sanhedrin* 47b. See *Melo HaRoyim* and *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, entry *Hazmanah*.

PEKUDEI

PURPOSEFUL APPORTIONMENT

As with all the concepts in the Torah, the division of the *parshiyos* is the result of precise and purposeful choice. Every Torah reading communicates a particular concept. It is not the size of the readings that determines their division, but rather their content. Similarly, the name of the Torah reading was not selected merely because it comes at the beginning of the reading. Instead, the name communicates the theme of the reading, and for *that* reason, it features at its beginning.

The *Zohar*¹ says there are 53 (ן in Hebrew) Torah readings. This number is precise, and applies every year. Even in a year when certain Torah readings are coupled (as the reading *Vayakhel* and *Pekudei* often are), there are still 53 readings. For the *parshiyos* are divided by theme, and these themes are communicated every year. It is just that there are years when the themes of two *parshiyos* are read in separate weeks, and other years when two themes are communicated in the same week.

This concept applies with regard to the *parshiyos Vayakhel* and *Pekudei*. Even in the years when they are read on the same *Shabbos*, they communicate separate themes. Both speak about the construction of the Sanctuary and its utensils, but each has a different focus.

In this, these two *parshiyos* differ from the *parshiyos Terumah* and *Tetzaveh*. *Terumah* and *Tetzaveh* relate G-d’s

1. Vol. I, p. 104b; *Tikkunei Zohar*, *Tikkun* 13, p. 29b.

commands to build the Sanctuary. *Vayakhel* and *Pekudei*, by contrast, relate how those commands were fulfilled, and how the Sanctuary was actually built.² Just as the *parshiyos Terumah* and *Tetzaveh* communicate two different themes, as reflected in the fact that they are always read on two separate *Shabbosos*, so too, *Vayakhel* and *Pekudei* communicate different themes, although they both relate to the same general subject, the construction of the Sanctuary.

PHASES IN A SEQUENCE

The difference between the theme of *Parshas Vayakhel* and the theme of *Parshas Pekudei* can be explained as follows: *Parshas Vayakhel* relates how Moshe gathered the Jews together and told them of G-d's command to build the Sanctuary and its utensils. It also tells how the Jews willingly accepted this command and carried out G-d's will.

Parshas Pekudei relates how Moshe made a reckoning of how all the gold, silver, and other items donated toward the construction of the Sanctuary were to be used, how the Sanctuary and its utensils were to be anointed with the fragrant oil blended for this purpose, how the sacrifices were to be offered, and concludes by stating that these sacrifices aroused a response from above: "G-d's glory filled the Sanctuary."³

Thus it can be explained that *Parshas Vayakhel* centers on man's Divine service — how the Jewish people dedicated their financial resources, labor, and souls to the construction of the Sanctuary. They donated thirteen⁴ (or according to other commentaries fifteen)⁵ kinds of substances for its construction. They labored tirelessly to build it, and, moreover,

2. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. I, *Parshas Pekudei*, where this concept is explained at length.
 3. *Shmos* 40:36.
 4. *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* 4:13; *Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 148a; *Midrash Tanchuma, Terumah*, sec. 5; *Rashi*, the beginning of *Parshas Terumah*.
 5. *Rabbeinu Bachaye*; *Kli Yakar, Shmos* 25:3; see also *Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 135a.

this labor was an expression of an inner commitment as reflected in the terms used to describe their efforts: "...whose heart motivated him... whose spirit inspired him to give,"⁶ and "...wise of heart."⁷

But these endeavors, however great, represented merely the efforts of man. *Parshas Pekudei* introduces an infinitely higher dimension, the revelation of G-d's glory.⁸

6. *Shmos* 35:21.

7. *Shmos* 35:25.

8. There is a dimension of *Parshas Pekudei* which also relates to man's endeavors, as reflected in the description of the fashioning of the priestly garments. This, however, reflects a continuation of the theme of *Parshas Vayakhel*, and not the unique dimension of *Parshas Pekudei*.

Moreover, it is possible to offer an explanation based on the fact that there is no *mitzvah* to fashion the priestly garments (*Rambam, Sefer HaMitzvos*, positive *mitzvah* 33). Moreover, there are others (see *Halachos Gedolos*, and the *Hasagos* of the *Ramban*) who maintain that even wearing the priestly garments does not fulfill a *mitzvah*. It is merely that in order to carry out their service in the *Beis HaMikdash*, the priests must wear these garments.

Accordingly, since the priestly garments do not involve a *mitzvah* until the priests wear them during their service, the Torah describes how they were made in *Parshas Pekudei*, which tells about the influence from above aroused by the priests' service. This is when the priestly garments become significant.

In contrast, there is a *mitzvah* in the construction the Sanctuary and its utensils, the *menorah*, the golden table, and the altar (*Sefer HaMitzvos*, positive *mitzvah* 20). As such, the Torah attributes significance to them from the time they were fashioned, and therefore describes them in *Parshas Vayakhel*.

(This explanation is moreover necessary to explain why the Torah interposes the reckoning of the resources used for the Sanctuary between the narrative of its construction and the description of the fashioning of the priestly garments.)

The concept that the two narratives follow in sequence also explains why, with regard to the construction of the Sanctuary and its utensils in *Parshas Vayakhel*, the phrase "As G-d commanded Moshe" is not mentioned (as it is with regard to the priestly garments). Only when the entire narrative of the construction of the Sanctuary is completed, in *Parshas Pekudei*, is it written (*Shmos* 38:22): "Everything which G-d commanded Moshe."

In the *Ramban's* interpretation of this verse, he explains that this phrase was not mentioned in *Parshas Vayakhel* because Betzalel actually deviated from the instructions which Moshe gave him. This is difficult to understand because:

a) Betzalel's deviation was from the command which Moshe gave him, but not from the command which G-d gave Moshe. On the contrary, our Sages