

The cloud covered the Ohel Moed , and the glory of Hashem filled the Mishkan...For the cloud of Hashem would be on the Mishkan by day, and the fire would be on it at night, before the eyes of all the House of Yisrael. (40:34,38)

The *Mishkan* served a unique function. As the Sanctuary in the wilderness and the forerunner of the *Bais HaMikdash*, it served as the focal point of Jewish life in the wilderness and, later, in the Promised Land. The *Mishkan* announced to the world that Hashem had forgiven *Klal Yisrael* for their participation in the sin of the Golden Calf. It declared that His Divine Presence rested among us. It was the spiritual, inspirational hub around which the life of the Jew was bound up. It was the place where the Divine Service was carried out, and it was a tent of gathering where all Jews were united in one large *Bais Yisrael*, House of *Yisrael*, where the entire Jewish communal family united together as one unit.

It is no wonder that David *Hamelech*'s dream was to build the House of G-d. It would be his greatest legacy, the achievement of a lifetime of service to G-d and the nation. He was not, however, allowed to fulfill his dream. As his son, Shlomo *Hamelech*, the one who actually built the *Bais HaMikdash* said, "Hashem said to my father, David, 'Regarding your heart's desire to build a House for My sake, you did well to have it in your heart. However, you shall not build the House, but your son who will emerge from your loins, he shall build the House for My sake.'"

Something seems to be wrong here. The Almighty praises David for his incredible desire to build for Him a Sanctuary. Yet, despite his all-consuming desire, his boundless love for Hashem, he is rejected for the "job." Instead, he is told that his son, Shlomo, was to receive the coveted position. Is this how a loyal servant is rewarded? David put in his time, his effort, his love – only to be told, "Thanks, your son will take over and carry out your dream." When one reads the words as stated in the *Navi* (*Melachim* I:8, 18, 19) it almost seems as if Hashem is telling David – specifically because of his overriding desire to build the *Bais HaMikdash*, Shlomo would be the one to complete the dream. One would think the opposite, that due to David's burning desire – he would build it, not his son.

Menachem Tzion explains that Hashem was actually giving David the ultimate blessing: he would be worthy of being the progenitor of the one who would build the *Bais HaMikdash*. Because his goals were so lofty; because his lifelong dream was so that Hashem's Name be glorified to the world; because he devoted his life to the fulfillment of this dream, he would receive the ultimate blessing: his son would build the Sanctuary. This is a parent's greatest blessing, to know that his legacy will endure; his offspring will carry on even after he has departed from this world.

What a powerful statement! What an insightful exposition of Hashem's words to David. It was not a rejection, a denouncement of his ability to carry out his dream; rather, it was the ultimate praise:

your mission will survive; it will be completed by your son. Life does not go on forever. We are here for a short visit during which we endeavor to realize our potential, to fulfill our dreams, to provide a legacy for the next generation. Our dreams are expansive, but our tenure is limited. We can hope that we have inspired our children well, so that they will carry on the banner which we have raised. If we are fortunate, if we have succeeded in planting the seeds of inspiration, then we will be worthy of the ultimate *nachas*, pleasure, of knowing that these seeds will germinate, grow tall and erect and produce luscious fruit. This is what Hashem told David. You worked for it. Your sensitivity, your self-sacrifice and love, paid off in that you can be assured that your effort will bear fruit. Shlomo, your son, will build the *Bais HaMikdash*. Can a father ask for a greater blessing than to know that his work will continue, that his legacy will endure?

The values we impart to our children are the ones which they will carry on. The Jewish home is the most significant and most crucial unit in Judaism: *Ahavas Olam Bais Yisrael amcha ahavta*, “A love for the House of *Yisrael*, Your nation, which You love.” **Horav Simchah Wasserman, zl**, observes a special relationship between Hashem and the Jewish home, as expressed by this prayer which we recite daily. There is no other unit whatsoever like the Jewish home. The relationship between husband and wife, parent and child, the *Mesorah*, tradition that is imbued within the family unit throughout the generations, is unlike any other unit. No nation – no religion or culture- can boast such a relationship which transcends and connects the generations of the past with those of the future. Every Jewish family is a link in the chain of Jewish life that heralds back to Sinai and will endure until the advent of *Moshiach Tzidkeinu*. As in all chains, however, it takes only one weak or broken link to sever the chain and render it unfit.