

Speak to the Bnei Yisrael and let them take for Me a portion, from every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion. (25:2)

One would expect that it would be incumbent upon every individual to participate in the building of the *Mishkan*. Yet, the *Torah's* standard is to take donations only "from every man whose heart motivates him." Regarding other *mitzvos*, the *Torah* places emphasis upon activity, the *ma'aseh ha'mitzvah*. Of prime importance regarding the building of the *Mishkan* is that the individual displays unequivocal *ratzon*, good will and desire to give. Imagine, had the people not exhibited pure *ratzon* to contribute towards the *Mishkan*, the *Mishkan* never would have been built! It behooves us to understand the significance of this willingness to contribute, a trait which represents the underlying motif of the *Mishkan*.

Rashi defines the word "li," for Me, as "lishmi," for My Name. This implies that it is not sufficient for the individual merely to give willingly. Rather, one must demonstrate explicit intention to contribute for the sake of Hashem's Name. He must have *kavanah*, intention, to donate towards Hashem's *Mishkan*. Without this exclusive intention, the ensuing construction is invalid. He must give the money willingly, and with intention for it to help build Hashem's *Mishkan*; otherwise it will not be the *Mishkan*. It will be an ordinary structure. Why?

Last, for certain *mitzvos*, "lishmah," intention for the *mitzvah*, is a pre-requisite. We never find this demand in effect in the preparations for the *mitzvah*. For instance, a *get*, divorce, must be written "lishmah"; that criteria, however, applies only to the actual writing. The *Torah* certainly does not demand that the quill be made *lishmah*, or that the parchment be made *lishmah* from its very beginning when the skin is flayed from the animal. Regarding the *Miskdash*, however, it would be invalid to use a stone which had not been hewed explicitly to use in the construction of the *Mikdash*. The question is glaring: Why should the *Mishkan/Mikdash* necessitate such *kavanah* for every aspect of involvement, to its culmination that each act must be performed with one intention --*l'sheim Hashem*, for Hashem's *Mishkan*?

Horav Avigdor Nebentzhal, Shlita, gives a practical, yet compelling response. The greater *kedushah*, holiness, of an object/endeavor, the greater care we must take to see to it that the entire process be replete with holiness every step of the way. Its origin, the foundation upon which it is built, must be untainted and pure. Only when the foundation is *kadosh*, holy, can the edifice be similarly holy.

In the *Talmud Kesubos 103b*, *Chazal* relate how Rabbi Chiya dedicated himself to making sure that *Torah* would never be forgotten in *Klal Yisrael*. He planted the flax seeds. He spun the flax into yarn from which he made nets. He utilized the nets to catch deer. He used the flesh of the deer to feed orphans. Finally, from the hide, he made parchment upon which he wrote the *Torah*. He then travelled to any city which did not have a *melamed tinokos*, *Torah* teacher for young children, in

order to teach them *Torah*. If we think about it, Rabbi Chiya seemed to be “carried away” with his preparations for teaching the children. He could have just as easily purchased skins or even a ready-made *Sefer Torah* from which to teach. Why did he put himself through so much trouble, spend so much time and effort preparing the scrolls?

The answer, claims *Horav* Nebentzhal, is that in order to ensure that *Torah* not be forgotten, the entire process must be pristine. It must be totally *lishmah* from its very beginning. Rabbi Chiya departed from his personal *Torah* study for many hours in order to see to it that the *Torah* he was teaching was *lishmah*--from its very beginning. He knew that if the *yesod*, foundation, is not *lishmah*, somewhere down the line that flaw would surface. Rabbi Chiya was uncompromising in his approach towards teaching *Torah*. Is there really any other effective way?