

And Moshe raised up the Mishkan. (40:18)

Sforno explains that Moshe did not raise up the *Mishkan* in the usual sense. He first hung up the ten *Yerios*, curtains, which essentially represent the *Mishkan*. Afterwards, he laid down the *Adanim*, sockets, and interfaced the *Kerashim*, wooden beams, with them. Apparently, Moshe either had the *Leviim* hold up the curtains until the foundation was placed beneath them, or they were suspended miraculously in mid-air. Obviously, this is why no one but Moshe *Rabbeinu* was able to raise up the *Mishkan*. The question is why Moshe found it necessary to raise up the *Mishkan* in this manner. Furthermore, if the others were unsuccessful in their attempt to raise up the *Mishkan*, it would seem to indicate that this was the manner in which Hashem originally intended it to be raised. Once again we ask why. Would it have been inappropriate to raise the *Mishkan* in the usual manner?

Horav Nissan Alpert, zl, remarks that one places the foundation of an edifice in coordination with the basis of its strength. One builds a normal building from the bottom upward, since the earth is its base. The root of the *Mishkan*, however, is in Heaven. It represents the spiritual essence of Heaven--descended to earth. Indeed, Moshe sought to demonstrate this idea to the people by first suspending the curtains and then placing the sockets for the beams on the ground. He showed them that the *Mishkan* does not need material support, but, rather, it provides support. The foundation of the *Mishkan* is *emunah*, *yiraas shomayim*, and meticulous observance of every aspect of *halachah*. Who other than Moshe, who exemplified these qualities, was better suited to raise up the *Mishkan*?

This idea similarly applies to contemporary spiritual edifices. Regrettably, we concern ourselves more with their external beauty than with their spiritual essence. The foundation of every edifice/endeavor whose purpose is to serve as a center for spiritual activity is *yiraas Shomayim*, vigilance in *mitzvah* observance, *Torah* study, and acts of loving-kindness. The beauty of the external facade only serves to enhance its internal holiness.