

He put the Shulchan in the Ohel Moed on the north side of the Mishkan...He placed the Menorah in the Ohel Moed...on the south side of the Mishkan. (40:22,24)

In the *Talmud Bava Basra 25b* Chazal say, "He who desires to become wise shall go south; He who desires to become wealthy shall go north. The placement of the *Shulchan* in the north and the *Menorah* in the south supports this idea. The *Shulchan* symbolized material wealth, since it was the medium through which the blessing of nourishment flowed to the world. The *Menorah* represented *Torah* wisdom, which is compared to light. The wisdom of the *Torah* illuminates the path of life before a person and guides him along the way. Consequently, the *Menorah* was placed on the right side of the entrance to the *Mishkan*. The right side is a metaphor for wisdom, alluding to its prominence. The material dimension is represented by the left side. Hence, the *Shulchan* was placed on the north, which is the left side.

There is one problem, however, with our analogy. The *Menorah* was on the right side, and the *Shulchan* on the left side only as they stood free-standing. To the individual who entered through the gates of the *Mishkan/Mikdash*, it was just the opposite, since the entrance was in the east. A person entering the *Mishkan* would find the *Shulchan* on his right, and the *Menorah* on his left.

The **Bais Ha'levi** infers a significant lesson from this *pasuk*. When a person enters into the endeavor of *avodas Hashem*, service to the Al-mighty, at the onset he is permitted to study "*shelo lishmah*," not for the sake of the *mitzvah*. One is allowed to have ulterior motives as he begins to study *Torah*, since it will ultimately lead to "*lishmah*," pure *Torah* study for the sake of the *mitzvah*. When one begins to earn a living or undertakes any endeavor for the purpose of financial gain, his intention must be purely *l'shem Shomayim*, for the sake of Heaven. No room exists for ulterior motives in the area of earning a living. An individual works because that is the means by which he sustains himself, so that he can perform *mitzvos* and study *Torah*. Material endeavor is a means, not an end. Otherwise, the pursuit of financial gain can become an obsession. It drives one to do the unspeakable in his quest for greater and more significant rewards. *Chazal* guarantee "*mitoch shelo lishmah ba lishmah*." Once one begins to study *Torah*, regardless of his motive, if he continues, he will ultimately become a student of *Torah lishmah*, for the sake of the *mitzvah*. This applies only to *Torah* study and no other endeavor.

Consequently, when one enters the *Mikdash*, the *Menorah* is on his left side, symbolizing that he may begin studying *Torah* for self-serving purposes. Regarding material endeavor, however, he must look at the *Shulchan* which is on his right--the side of strength, conviction and veracity. There may be no covert motives in earning a living. We do what we must in order to sustain ourselves for a higher purpose, service of Hashem.