

## Betzalel ben Uri ben Chur of the tribe of Yehudah, did everything as Hashem commanded Moshe. (38:22)

In a well-known exposition, *Sforno* comments that, in addition to Betzalel, all the men who occupied themselves with the construction of the *Mishkan* were men of stature, sincerity and piety. This is in contrast to the workmen who built the First and Second *Batei Mikdash*; those work forces included people from various strata of society. Basically, they did not possess the appropriate spiritual and moral characteristics that would have imbued the project with eternal values. Furthermore, the First *Bais Hamikdash* built under the leadership of *Shlomo Hamelech*, was not the same as the *Mishkan*, built by *Moshe Rabbeinu*. They were both extraordinary leaders, but as great as *Shlomo Hamelech* was – he was not *Moshe Rabbeinu*.

We derive from here that one who physically creates an entity, i.e., edifice used for spiritual purposes, has a critical role in its endurance. It depends upon who is creating it, and the process he uses. It is well-known that the *Gaon, zl, m'Vilna*, was wont to say that when a *shul* that was built solely by G-d-fearing men whose intention was *kulo l'Shem Shomayim*, totally for the sake of Heaven, he would not have any *machshavos zaros*, foreign (inappropriate) thoughts enter his mind during the *tefillah* service. [I may add that the *Gaon's* definition of foreign thoughts and our definition are quite different. His standard is much more stringent.]

*Horav Dov Povarsky, Shlita*, cites *Horav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, zl (Michtav meiEliyahu)*, who quotes *Chazal (Zohar Parashas Pinchas)* that, had *Moshe* taken *Klal Yisrael* into *Eretz Yisrael*, the *galus* would never have occurred. Furthermore, had *David Hamelech* built the *Bais Hamikdash*, it never would have been destroyed. The reason that *David* did not build the *Bais Hamikdash* was that he had blood on his hands, resulting from the wars that that he had fought for the nation. *Yalkut Shimoni (Shmuel II 145)* relates that *David* asked Hashem, "Did I spill blood lawlessly?" (He had acted in accordance with *halachah*. Why should it be held against him?) "No," replied the Almighty. "The blood that you spilled stands before Me as a *korban*." (In other words, it was acceptable and holy, so why could he not build the *Bais Hamikdash*?).

*Rav Dessler* explains that had *David* built the *Bais Hamikdash*, indeed, it would not have been destroyed, but, as a result, if a time would have come that the nation would sin to the extent that it was not worthy of having the *Bais Hamikdash*, it would be necessary for them to be punished. Someone has to take the "fall," and it could not be the *Bais Hamikdash*. Thus, it was for our sake, to our advantage, that *David* did not build it. As a result, when we sinned, we lost the *Bais Hamikdash*, but we are still here to talk about it. The reasoning behind this is: Had *David* not spilled the blood – had he acted with extraordinary compassion, then Hashem would have acted likewise with *Klal Yisrael* allowing them to live, instead of destroying the *Bais Hamikdash* to atone for their sins. *David* acted in accordance with *Din*, Strict Justice. If so, Hashem would be "compelled" to carry out Strict Justice against *Klal Yisrael*. Since (as a result of the blood on his hands) *David* did not build the *Bais Hamikdash*, it could take the place of the nation and atone for their sins.

Consequently, *Bnei Yisrael* were spared.

The lesson which we must derive from here is that we have no idea what is behind Hashem's decisions. That which on the surface does not make sense in our superficial perspective, is quite clear and sensible from the Heavenly perspective. Indeed, the mystery and transcendence of Hashem's ways are essential cornerstones of our faith. While the ways of Hashem are not immediately apparent to us, we can view them as a source of moral guidance – once we delve deeper into the various rationales which are not readily accessible (as the above explanation). Since we can never begin to grasp Hashem's thoughts, we can only encourage a lifelong commitment to learning and spiritual growth, in order to come closer to Him.