

On the second day, Nesanel ben Tzuar offered, the nasi/leader of Yissachar. (7:18)

Noticeably, the tribes of Yissachar and Zevulun – representing the one who studies Torah, and his supporter – precede Reuven, the firstborn. *Horav Yaakov Hillel, Shlita*, wonders about the placement of the *klei*, vessels, of the *Mishkan*. The *Aron HaKodesh* was placed in the innermost area, the *Kodesh HaKodoshim*, of the *Mishkan*. On the other side (external) of the *Paroches*, Curtain, which separated the *Kodesh* from the *Kodesh HaKodoshim*, stood the *Menorah* on the southern corner. Opposite it, on the northern side, was placed the *Shulchan*, Table. The *Menorah* clearly symbolizes the light of Torah (*ki ner mitzvah v'Torah ohr*), “A *ner*, candle, is a *mitzvah* (represents a candle), and Torah is (gives forth) light. If so, what is the unique symbolism of the *Aron*/Torah which is kept concealed in the inner sanctum of the *Mishkan*. If the purpose of Torah is its dissemination, why is it hidden? Furthermore, why do we require two symbolisms, the *Menorah* and the *Aron*, to allude to Torah?

He explains that the *Shulchan* and the *Menorah*, which are placed outside of the *Paroches*, represent the *baal ha'bayis*, Torah layman, who spends his day in pursuit of a livelihood and is *kove'a ittim*, establishes set periods for learning Torah. These people “stand” between the *Menorah* and the *Shulchan*, which represent Torah study and material pursuits. (The *Shulchan*, upon which the showbread, *lechem ha'panim*, was placed, alludes to *parnassah*, earning a livelihood.) (The twelve breads represent the twelve months of the year during which one is engaged in *parnassah*.) The *Menorah* with its seven lamps, alluding to the seven weekdays in which one is to learn Torah, stands opposite the *Shulchan*. Thus, one who seeks to learn Torah turns southward towards the *Menorah*, while his counterpart, who is engaged in material pursuit, faces the *Menorah* in the north. Where does the *Aron HaKodesh* come into play?

The *Aron* represents the full-time learner, whose entire day/life, every waking moment, is spent engaged in deep Torah study. The *Aron* is *l'malah min ha'makom*, above the constraints of space. [The *Aron* occupied no physical dimensions in the conventional sense.] When measuring the space of the *Kodesh HaKodoshim*, the *Aron* was not included. The room was twenty *amos*, cubits, wide; yet, when measuring from each side of the *Aron* to the walls, ten *amos* still remained on each side. This demonstrated that the *Aron* existed in a dimension beyond physical constraints – a paradoxical fusion of the natural and the supernatural.] So, too, are the *bnei Torah* who devote their lives wholly to the study of our Torah. Concerning such scholars, the *Rambam (Hilchos Shemittah v'Yovel 13:13)* writes that they are sanctified like the *Aron* in the *Kodesh HaKodoshim*. They live on a different plane – both spiritual and physical.

The *Aron* had *badim*, carrying poles, that were inserted in rings on its side. These were never to be removed from the rings. The poles represent the *tomchei*, supporters, of Torah, who must never turn their backs on the *lomdei Torah*, who study Torah. In *Teshuvos Igros Moshe (Yoreh Deah 4:37; 16)*, *Horav Moshe Feinstein, zl*, writes that the reward of the supporter of Torah is equal to

that of the one who actually studies.

A Torah supporter asked *Horav Elazar M. Shach, zl*, concerning his portion in the learning of those whom he supports. The *Rosh Yeshivah* replied, “The *tomeich Torah* can come before the Heavenly Tribunal and claim his just reward. He added that his reward will be in proportion to his support. A well-known Torah supporter mentioned to *Rav Shach* that he was considering selling off his material assets and returning to full-time learning in *kollel*. *Rav Shach* told him, “If your goal in doing this is to experience the unparalleled pleasure of learning Torah – then do so. If, however, your goal is to gain the knowledge that you are missing due to your involvement in business, do not worry. Every *blatt Gemorah*, every commentary and *halachah*, that someone studies as a result of your support will be transferred to your knowledge bank. Everything that they learn will not only be viewed as if you too learned, but you will actually amass the knowledge.”

People make the mistake of thinking that *tzedakah* is all about money – the more one gives, the greater his reward. This is not the case. One of the most important aspects of *tzedakah* is having the *z'chus*, merit, to give wisely. Simply having money is not the determining factor in the impact of one's giving. It is the merit of the giver and the cause that defines the ultimate spiritual and practical success of the donation. Having wealth is a tool, but the true success of *tzedakah* lies in using that tool with wisdom and sincerity, as demonstrated by the following vignette:

The *Ponovezher Rav, zl*, traveled the world fundraising, so that he could rebuild the *yeshivos* destroyed during the Holocaust. On one of his many trips to America, he was informed that a certain well-known philanthropist was looking to immortalize his name and leave a major legacy and impact in the Holy land. The *Rav* thought to himself, “I have succeeded in rebuilding Ponovezh, but so many other institutions of higher learning, such as Grodno, Baranovitz, Rameilles and Kubrin, have no remembrance. I would ask him to endow a *yeshivah* which would also carry his name. What greater tribute exists than supporting Torah?”

The problem was – the man was hardly ever available. The *Rav* phoned for an appointment; the man was tied up. Once it was a meeting; next, he was not well, or he was out of town. It was always something. Finally, the date for his return to *Eretz Yisrael* arrived, and he had to return. He arrived at the airport, boarded the plane, and with whom does he have the good fortune to share a row? The man whom he had been trying to reach for a week. They began to speak, and the *Rav* made his pitch. “It is a shame that I did not speak with you earlier,” the man said. “I just donated a hefty sum of money to build a sports stadium in Haifa – with my name on it.”

The *Rav* said, “The man did not have the requisite merit to build a *yeshivah* in which hundreds of students would learn Torah. All their achievement would have been recorded for him. Instead, he has a stadium which, not only will not be a source of *mitzvah*, but will probably be a place where public *chillul Shabbos* will occur. He simply was not *zoche* to build a *makom Torah*.”