

In this week's *Parashah*, Moshe Rabbeinu gives an accounting of the donations that *Bnei Yisrael* gave toward the construction of the *Mishkan*. *Midrash Rabbah* teaches: We read (*Mishlei* 28:20), "A man of *Emunot* / integrity (literally, 'faiths') will increase blessings, but one impatient to be rich will not be exonerated." You find, says the *Midrash*, that one who is faithful to *Hashem* has blessings channeled through him. "A man of *Emunot*" refers to Moshe, about whom it says (*Bemidbar* 12:7), "In My entire house he is *Ne'eman* / the trusted one." Thus it says, "A man of *Emunot* will increase blessings"--everything over which Moshe was the treasurer was blessed because of his integrity. The end of the verse, "But one impatient to be rich will not be exonerated," refers to Korach. He was not satisfied with being a *Levi*, and he sought to become *Kohen Gadol*. What was his end? "The earth opened its mouth and swallowed [him]" (*Bemidbar* 16:32). [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Tuvia Ha'levi z"l (Tzefat, *Eretz Yisrael*; died circa 1605) writes: Why is Moshe described as a "man of *Emunot*," using the plural form, rather than as a "*Ne'eman*"? The *Midrash* answers this question by teaching that Moshe had two qualities: he was loyal as a prophet ("In My entire house he is *Ne'eman*") and he was a trustworthy treasurer of the donations made to the *Mishkan*. Thus the *Midrash* contrasts Moshe with Korach, who was not satisfied with the wealth that he had and who also questioned Moshe's prophecy.

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Pesach

R' Yaakov bar Abba Mari Anatoli z"l (Provence, France; 1194-1256) writes: G-d's eternal love for us is demonstrated by His choosing Yaakov Avinu and his descendants to be His nation and "children"--children who will not forsake His covenant. This what our Sages of blessed memory mean when they say (*Avot* 3:18), "Beloved are *Yisrael*, for they are called 'children' to *Hashem*." We are called this because He taught us the ways of the upright, and we walk in them, thereby imitating His ways and meriting to be called His "children." Being His "children" is the ultimate redemption, as we read (*Yeshayah* 63:8), "For He said, 'Yet they are My people, children who will not be false,' and He was to them a Redeemer."

R' Yaakov continues: It is with this idea in mind that our Sages placed in the *Haggadah* the statement, "In every single generation, they rise up against us to annihilate us, but the Holy One, Blessed is He, rescues us from their hand"--as if *Hashem* feels our pain and suffers with us, as a father would feel the pain of his child. Thus the prophet continues (*Yeshayah* 63:9), "In all their troubles, *Lo tzar* / He is troubled." (R' Yaakov notes, as an aside, that "*Lo*" is spelled in this verse, "*Lamed-aleph*" (ל), meaning "not," while it is pronounced (with a subtle difference) as if it were spelled "*Lamed-vav*" (לו), meaning "to Him." This reminds us that *Hashem* feels our pain only in a metaphorical sense. In a literal sense, "He is 'not' troubled," for He does not have human feelings.)

R' Yaakov writes further: The pain of the subjugation in Egypt was the precursor to revealing His Name to the world and to informing all people that He rules over the earth. In addition, it prepared us to serve Him. Therefore, the Torah obligates us to remember our redemption forever and to perform many *Mitzvot* that translate that remembrance into action. This leads to faith that He oversees what occurs on earth and changes nature through His wonders, which, in turn, strengthens our belief in Creation.

(Quoted in *Haggadah Shel Pesach Torat Ha'Rishonim* p.19)

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in memory of his father, Yosef Noach ben Yitzchak Isaac a"h

Mrs. Elaine Taragin,

on the *yahrzeit* of her father-in-law, Asriel Taragin a"h

“They made the *Shoham* stones, encircled with gold settings, engraved like the engraving of a signet ring, with the names of the sons of Yisrael. He placed them on the shoulder straps of the *Ephod* as remembrance stones for the sons of Yisrael, as *Hashem* had commanded Moshe.” (39:6-7)

Rashi z”l (to *Shmot* 28:12) writes: “‘As remembrance’--so that the Holy One, Blessed is He, will see the names of the Tribes written before Him and He will remember their righteousness.” [Until here from *Rashi*]

Similarly, R’ Ovadiah Seforno *z”l* (1470-1550; Italy) writes: “To bring *Hashem*’s mercy upon the Jewish People in their merit”--*i.e.*, in the merit of Yisrael’s twelve sons. [Until here from the *Seforno*]

According to both of the above-mentioned commentators, the purpose of the stones is to cause *Hashem* to “remember.” R’ Meir Simcha Hakohen (1843-1926; rabbi of Dvinsk, Latvia) offers a very different interpretation. He writes: The “remembrance” is so that *Bnei Yisrael* will remember that their names are engraved on the *Ephod* before *Hashem*, and they will be ashamed to sin. Thus, the *Gemara* (*Sotah* 36b) relates that Yosef nearly gave in to Potiphar’s wife, but he saw his father’s likeness through a window, and the image said to him, “My sons’ names are destined to be written on the *Ephod*, and you are among them. Do you wish to be erased from among them?” (This demonstrates that having the names of the tribes on the *Ephod* is meant to motivate *Bnei Yisrael* to not sin.) (*Meshech Chochmah*)

“He took and placed the Testimony (*i.e.*, the *Luchot*) into the Ark...” (40:20)

Why does the Torah use seemingly redundant language: “He took and placed”? R’ Yitzchak Weiss *z”l Hy”d* (rabbi of Verbau, Slovakia; killed in the Holocaust) explains: There are some Torah scholars who study Torah but do not share their learning with others. That, however, is not the preferred way; rather, one who has merited to learn should also teach. Moshe, too, “took and placed”--he learned Torah and he taught it to others. (*Siach Yitzchak*)

From the same work:

“For the cloud of *Hashem* would be on the Tabernacle by day, and fire would be on it at night, before the eyes of all of *Bnei Yisrael* throughout their journeys.” (40:38)

R’ Weiss writes: *Sefer Shmot* begins with the words, “And these are the names,” and ends with the words, “Throughout their journeys.” Our Sages teach that *Bnei Yisrael* were careful to maintain their Jewish names even in Egypt, and that was one of the reasons why they merited to be redeemed. Likewise, the Torah is hinting, “throughout your journeys” through every exile, “these are the names,” *i.e.*, keep your Jewish names.

“These are the reckonings of the Tabernacle, the Tabernacle of Testimony, which were reckoned at Moshe’s bidding; the labor of the *Levi’im* was under the authority of Itamar, son of Aharon the *Kohen*.” (38:21)

R’ Yehonatan Eybeschütz *z”l* (Central Europe; 1690-1764) writes: The Torah tells us in this verse when Moshe gave an accounting of *Bnei Yisrael*’s donations to the *Mishkan* and why he did so. From the fact that the *Levi’im* were supervised by Aharon’s youngest son, Itamar, we can infer that Aharon’s two eldest children, Nadav and Avihu, had already died. (Their deaths occurred on the eighth and final day of the dedication of the *Mishkan*.)

Why did Moshe give an accounting at that time? R’ Eybeschütz explains: The *Halachah* is that a *Gabbai Tzedakah* / trustee of a charity fund is not required to give an accounting if he works with two other *Gabba’im*. Apparently, Moshe managed the *Mishkan* funds together with Nadav and Avihu and, once they died, he was left as the sole trustee and he was required to give an accounting. (*Tiferet Yehonatan*)

“From the turquoise, purple, and scarlet wool they made knit vestments to serve in the Sanctuary, and they made the holy vestments for Aharon, as *Hashem* had commanded Moshe.” (39:1)

R’ Chaim ben Attar *z”l* (1696-1743; Morocco, Italy and *Eretz Yisrael*) writes in his commentary, *Ohr Ha’Chaim*: The workers had to say, “We are doing this task as *Hashem* commanded Moshe.”

R’ Tzvi Abba Gorelick *z”l* (*Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshiva Gedolah Zichron Moshe in South Fallsburg, N.Y.; died 2010) explains: Regarding each of the garments of the *Kohanim*, the Torah says, “As *Hashem* had commanded Moshe.” The reason for this appears to be that Moshe himself was meant to be the *Kohen Gadol*, but *Hashem* stripped him of that role as a punishment for arguing with *Hashem* at the Burning Bush and asking that Aharon be sent in his place (see *Rashi* to *Shmot* 4:14); nevertheless, *Hashem* consoled Moshe by requiring that the Priestly Garments be made according to his “say so.” Indeed, this is why *Parashat Tetzaveh*, where the initial commands regarding the Priestly Garments were given, begins with the words, “You [Moshe] shall command.”

(*Pirkei Mikra*)

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R’ Tuvya adds: Since one who is trustworthy brings blessings to the world, it follows that one who steals deprives the world of blessings. This explains why the verse says, “But one impatient to be rich will not be exonerated.” If one’s eagerness to attain wealth leads him to act dishonestly, he cannot be exonerated completely, for even if he does *Teshuvah* for his specific sin, he cannot repay the world for the blessings of which he deprived it. (*Chen Tov*)