

## Stoned...

אַבְנֵי-שֹהַם וְאַבְנֵי מִלּוּיִם

**"Shoham and Miluim stones..." (25:7)**

The Possuk puts the Shoham and Miluim stones last in its initial list of items donated for use in the Mishkon. Chazal explain that this was because they were donated last; having been brought by the Nesiim (princes) after everyone else had donated what they were able to. The Nesiim had expected there to be a large shortfall in donations, and had promised to fill the gap, however they were disappointed; Klal Yisroel managed to find all the items themselves. However, in response to the deep-rooted desire of the Nesiim to donate towards the building of the house of Hashem, a miracle occurred, and the Shoham stones fell to the ground alongside the Nesiim's portions of Mon. The Nesiim were then able to bring these stones as their donation.

Harav Gedaliah Schorr, mentions this opinion of Chazal, and notes an interesting repercussion. He writes that even through these stones did not belong to the Nesiim, since they were a miraculous gift, none-the-less, the Torah refers (in Parshas Pekudei) to the Nesiim as the givers of these stones. He explains that the will of the Nesiim to give, their desire to be involved in the building of the Mishkon, was of such strength and purity, that it necessitated a miracle to allow them to take part. It would appear, he writes, that the Nesiim teach a powerful lesson about the influence of a person's desire and its repercussions; that desire can override nature. This is because in reality no one is ever the master of their own destiny. No one can be sure that an action they are planning will come to fruition, since there are so many variables that can prevent a person doing whatever it was they planned to do. Rather, a human being can only begin something, and try his utmost to make it happen, but it is Hashem who sees things through to completion. It is Hashem who decides whether a person's hard work and hopes will succeed or be dashed. However, whilst this is true, the deciding factor in whether Hashem allows something to succeed is the desire of the person involved. A person receives heavenly help in direct proportion to the amount of effort that he himself puts in, and his effort will usually be a direct result of his desire to achieve whatever the action is. The Nesiim, in their desire to be a part of the building of the Mishkon, had attained such fervour that they merited divine help to enable them to complete their desire.

A similar idea, continues Harav Schorr, appears in relation to the Menorah. Moshe famously, was unsure as to how to build the Menorah. Hashem first showed him an image of the completed Menorah in fire, and then finally preformed a miracle; the Menorah appeared without any human help. The Sfas Emes asks why it had been necessary for Hashem to show Moshe a Menorah, when He knew that Moshe would still be unable to make it and a miracle would be required. However, concludes Harav Schorr, the answer to this question would appear to be a continuation of the idea expounded above; that desire for something is the catalyst for its existence. It was necessary for Moshe to first be involved in trying to make the Menorah, thereby building his desire for it, before a miracle could be performed. Furthermore, the vision of the Menorah in the fire not only spurred Moshe on, it also provided him with an exact image of what he had so far only imagined, thereby feeding his desire to make it and paving the path for the miracle that would later occur.

## It's Curtains for...

וְעָשִׂיתָ פָּרוֹכֶת

**"You shall make a Paroches." (26:31)**

The Kli Yokor notes that there were three differences between the Paroches, which separated between the Kodosh and Kodosh Kodoshim and the division that separated the main part of the Mishkon from the surrounding courtyard. One of these differences is that the Paroches is referred to as being a work of craftsmanship from a weaver, whilst the lattice division is the handiwork of an embroiderer. The Kli Yokor explains why the Torah specifically required the Paroches be מְעֻשָׂה בְּחֻשָׁב, woven.

He explains that the Kodosh Kodoshim, the holy of holies, was not a place that the Kohen could enter whenever he wished. Rather, he could only go in on Yom Kippur, the day when Klal Yisroel is viewed as having attained the level of angels. This is because Yom Kippur purges a person of physicality and allows the intellect, the spiritual strength of a person, to reign supreme. As such, the Torah required that the Paroches, the entrance to the innermost sanctuary be made as מְעֻשָׂה חֻשָׁב, "woven," since this can also mean, "Work of thought," thereby reminding the Kohen Godol of the level he must attain before entering.

## Half-Pint

וְעָשׂוּ אֲרוֹן... אֲמָתַיִם וְחֶמֶץ

**"Make the Aron... Two and a half..." (25:10)**

Harav Nosson Adler notes that all the measurements given for the Aron Hakodesh were broken, meaning they are all given as half measurements. He explains that this is intended to hint to a Talmid Chochom that he should be "broken." This means that a Talmid Chochom should recognise that irrelevant of how much he has already learned there is still so much more for him to study. As such, he should consider himself to be a, 'Half-measure,' and yearn to learn more, no matter what he has already achieved.