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A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

פרשת פקודי

וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן אֶל מֹשֶׁה וְכוּ'. אֶת אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְאֶת בְּדִיּוֹ וְאֶת הַכַּפֹּרֶת. אֶת הַשְּׁלֶחַן אֶת כָּל כְּלָיו וְכוּ'. וְאֶת מִזְבַּח הַזָּהָב וְאֶת שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וְכוּ'. אֶת מִזְבַּח הַנְּחֹשֶׁת וְאֶת מַכְבַּר הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר לוֹ אֶת בְּדִיּוֹ וְאֶת כָּל כְּלָיו.

(שמות לט, לג-לט)

They brought the Mishkan to Moshe... the Aron of Testimony and its staves, and the Cover, the Shulchan and all its utensils ... the Gold Mizbeach, the anointment oil ... the Copper Mizbeach and its copper meshwork, its staves, and all its utensils. (Shemos 39:33-39)

In this week's *Sidrah*, we learn about Moshe's accounting of the materials needed to construct the Mishkan. Once all the work was completed, everything was brought to Moshe, who inspected the efforts and confirmed that everything had been done as commanded by Hashem. Following this, Hashem instructed him to erect the Mishkan.

Upon closely examining the *pessukim* in the *parshiyos* of Terumah to Pekudei, which focus on constructing the *keilim* for the Mishkan, we can observe an interesting difference regarding the role of the staves used to carry them.

First, let us analyse the *pessukim* in Terumah that outline the commands for creating the vessels of the Mishkan. Regarding the Aron, it states (25:13-14): וַעֲשִׂיתָ בְּדֵי עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים וְכוּ' וְהִבַּאתָ אֶת הַבְּדִים: וְבָטַבְעַת, *You shall make staves of acacia wood... and insert the staves in the rings*. Similarly, concerning the Copper Mizbeach, it states (27:6-7): וְהִבַּאתָ אֶת בְּדִיּוֹ וְכוּ' וְהִבַּאתָ אֶת הַבְּדִים לְמִזְבֵּחַ הַנְּחֹשֶׁת. However, concerning the Shulchan, it only states (25:28): וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת הַבְּדִים without any command about inserting the staves into the rings. Similarly, for the Inner Mizbeach, it simply states (30:5): וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת הַבְּדִים, again with no mention of inserting the staves in the rings.

In Vayakhel, we encounter a repeating theme regarding the staves used for different vessels. The *pessukim* concerning the Aron and Copper Mizbeach (37:4-5 and 38:6-7), explicitly mention the creation of the staves and their insertion into the rings for carrying. In contrast, when it comes to the Shulchan and the Inner Mizbeach, the *pessukim* (37:15 and 37:28) only refer to the construction of the staves, without mentioning their insertion into the rings.

Additionally, in this week's *Sidrah*, Pekudei, when listing the vessels that were brought for the Mishkan after its construction, we notice a difference in the status of the staves. For the Aron and Copper Mizbeach, the *pessukim* indicate that the staves were brought along with the vessels. Conversely, for the Shulchan and the Inner Mizbeach, there is no mention at all of the staves being brought.

What is the difference between the staves of the various *keilim*? How does their role change, leading to the mention of their insertion about the Aron and the Copper Mizbeach, but not regarding the Shulchan and Inner Mizbeach? Furthermore, in Pekudei, where the Torah lists all that was brought, why are the staves of the Shulchan and Inner Mizbeach not mentioned, unlike those of the Aron and Copper Mizbeach?

The Netziv (25:14), building on the observations mentioned, concludes that the role of the staves was fundamentally different, depending on the vessel. The staves of the Aron and the Copper Mizbeach were integral components of the vessels and due to their importance are listed clearly, (similar to how the כַּפֹּרֶת of the Aron and the מִזְבֵּחַ of the Mizbeach receive individual mention). In contrast, the staves of the Shulchan and the Inner Mizbeach were not significant elements of the vessel but merely aids for transportation. Thus, they are considered כְּלֵי (its utensils) and are included when the Torah states that “all its utensils” were brought.

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*, (following the Netziv,) elaborates that this distinction symbolises the nature of each vessel and what they represent. The Aron signifies the essence of Torah. The Copper Mizbeach symbolises *tefillah*, in place of the *avodah* primarily performed on the Mizbeach. The Shulchan, adorned with its זָר, *crown*, represents the crown of Malchus, while the Inner Mizbeach, also crowned, symbolises the crown of Kehunah. Understanding the significance of each vessel clarifies the different roles of the staves, as will be explained.

Torah and *tefillah* are not restricted to fulfilment only in the land of Eretz Yisroel or at any specific point in time. Rather, these foundational aspects of Yiddishkeit must be upheld in every generation, in every land, and throughout all periods of *golus*. This is why the Aron and the Copper Mizbeach could only have true meaning when the staves were inserted, allowing them to move around freely. The staves of the Aron and Copper Mizbeach, representing the enduring commitment to Torah and *tefillah*, convey the essential nature of practising them in all situations and ages. They were not merely practical tools for transporting these vessels; instead, they were integral components that demonstrated that servitude to Hashem is not confined to any particular place or time.

On the other hand, Malchus and Kehunah are time-bound and come with many limitations, applying only under certain circumstances. The concept of kingship is relevant only when Klal Yisroel are in their land under the direct guidance of Hashem. Similarly, the role of Kehunah has various restrictions; the *avodah* could only take place in Eretz Yisroel and could only be performed by kohanim who were unblemished, adhering to standards of *kedushah* and *taharah*. This is the message conveyed by the staves of the Shulchan and Inner Mizbeach; these aspects of Yiddishkeit are limited and do not apply in all situations. Their role was simply to facilitate transport and was not essential for that which the vessel represented. While Malchus and Kehunah are ideal privileges, Yiddishkeit is viable without them, which is why their function was restricted to specific times and circumstances.

Let us reflect on the important lesson from the staves of the Aron and the Copper Mizbeach, which as vital components of these *keilim* symbolise the enduring significance of Torah and *tefillah*. Although we no longer have the Beis HaMikdash and no longer live as a nation in Eretz Yisroel, our service to Hashem remains as essential as ever. These vessels would have been incomplete without the staves, which allowed for their portability. Similarly, without a continuous and timeless steadfast commitment to Torah and *tefillah*, we too would be incomplete. May we appreciate the importance of our dedication to Torah and *tefillah* in all circumstances, and may we soon merit the return of Malchus and Kehunah!

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