



Parashat Pikudei



English version

THINKING about ME.org

THE ART OF CARING

We just ran a campaign this week in our Yeshiva, Lev Aharon, that collected over a million dollars in two days, towards our building fund. I coached it. Together with the Rosh Yeshiva's son Yitzhak, and Charityextra, and of course, the hand of Hashem, we were able to put it together. I put the videos together, ran the back end, and the Yeshiva Staff and students, worked very hard. Although one of the things that make me feel the most successful in life, is fundraising for worthy causes, this one was not so easy for me. The night that we reached the million, I went to bed, feeling bittersweet. The only one who did not raise anything, for this great yeshiva, during the campaign, was me!

Why did not I not send out a link? Because just two weeks ago, I tried powering back on my phone after Shabbat. I put in the pin, and pressed OK on my Samsung phone screen, and it did not unlock. No matter what I tried to do, I could not open my phone. I went to the phone provider Hadran, and they said, we can just to a factory reset, which will wipe out everything on your phone. It will be like a brand-new phone. We are sure, that you have it all backed up, to your Gmail account. They did factory reset, and I lost EVERY SINGLE contact I have, from the last 10 years of fundraising, and all media, conversations, etc. of the last few

years. I don't know how this happened, but I did not have anything backed up! All my clients, all my donors, all my friends and family, all erased. I have no way to get back some of those numbers, as some were big donors that NO ONE will give you their personal numbers again. I had no contacts to send out the link to! Being that I was running the back end of the campaign, I had no time to reach out to people, and ask for numbers, either. All the other Rabbis in yeshiva, had raised whatever they raised. I was the only Rabbi, that had a big, fat, ZERO, on my team, on the yeshiva campaign page.

The next morning, when the Yeshiva had already raised \$1,120,00, I woke up with this bittersweet feeling, at 6:15 am. There are no 6:30 minyanim right next to my house. So I walked to a small shul, Rabbi Dupar's underground shul, and waited for the 6:45am. I said Great! At least I can look for something to write on, for Parashat Pekudei. The first Sefer that caught my eye, was the Sefer from Rav Heiman, Hikrei Lev. And this is the exact words that jumped out at me on the page I opened to in Parashat Pekudei:

There was one person in the whole nation who did not give anything towards the building of



the Mishkan. Moshe Rabbeinu himself! How ironic!

The Midrash Tanhuma tells us that once they finished the construction of the Mishkan, the Nation was sitting and waiting, yearning, for the Shechina to dwell in the Mishkan they built. So, what did they do? They went to the Chachmei Lev, the wise craftsmen, who built it, and said, What are you sitting around for? Set up the Mishkan, so that the Shechina will dwell amongst us!

The Chachmei Lev tried to erect it, and they did not know how! They couldn't erect it! When they tried to erect it, it would fall. They then went to ask Betzalel and Aholiav his helper, who constructed the Mishkan, but when they tried erecting it, again, it would fall. The Nation hoped, that if these two knew how to make it, maybe they would know how to erect it! But when they tried to erect it, they could not.

The Midrash asks, Why could they not erect it? It answers, that this is because Moshe felt bad that he did not take part of the construction of the Mishka. The donation was given by the Nation, the work was done with the guidance of Betzalel and Aholiav, by the Hachemei Lev. Moshe felt bad, that he did not have a part in it all , so, Hashem hid from them the way to erect the Mishkan, and they could not erect it.

All the people came to Moshe, and they said, why can't it be erected? Hashem told Moshe, "Since you felt bad that you had no part in making the Mishkan, that is why all the previous ones could not erect it." Moshe said, "Master of the world, I don't know how to erect it. He told him, make with your hands as if you are erecting it, and it will stand on its own." (Tanhuma Pikudei,11)

The Hikrey Lev (page 232) writes, that this Midrash is telling us something. Moshe did not give anything towards the Mishkan! Why not? The Yefe Toar writes that it happened by mistake. Moshe made the same mistake as the Nesiim, who thought to wait for the end, to see what was lacking, that they could fill. But in the end, everything was quickly donated by the people! There was nothing lacking!

The Hikrei Lev writes, that this is an impossibility, to say, that Moshe made such a mistake, if our Rabbis explain that there was a complaint from Heaven on the Nesiim who waited till the end. They were coined lazy by our Sages. וְהַנְּשָׂאִים הַבְּיָאוּ אֶת אֲבָנֵי הַשֹּׁהַם וְאֶת אֲבָנֵי יְהוָה וְלִהְיוֹן הַמִּלְאִים לְאִפוֹד וְלִחֹשֶׁן: Rashi writes that due to their laziness, the letter Yud was taken from the name of the Nesiim. So how could we hold Moshe accountable for such a thing?

The Hikrei Lev writes, that Moshe did not give anything of his own, because G-d told Moshe, to take from the materials from THEM , וְזָאת , הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאִתָּם זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וְנִחְשָׁת וְזָהָב וְכֶסֶף וְנִחְשָׁת , which Moshe understood, that he was not to give from his own towards it! He was to take all the donation from the Nation!

The Hikrei Lev, writes that the Mishkan was supposed to be from the money that the people took with them from Egypt, the gold and silver they borrowed from the Egyptians, or found at the shore of the Yam Suf. G-d wanted, to forever remember what the Jews went through, the pain they suffered.

Also, I thought, maybe one can say, that G-d wanted the Mishkan to be an atonement for the sin of the Golden Calf. Moshe was not there, during the sin, so he could not be held accountable for not doing anything to stop it.



So G-d wanted all the money to come only from those who needed an atonement.

We find in the Purim story, that Mordechai would ask the students what they just learned, in order for him to get an idea what message G-d is telling him. (Esther Rabba 7;13) For me, to open the Sefer, and the first thing that I see is this Dvar Torah at that hour, right when I was feeling the feelings I felt, is G-d speaking to me. There is a special power in yearning. Sometimes, you just can't do something that you respect or value, sometimes you can't be the person you aspire to be. But that inspiration, G-d does not ignore!!!!

The Zohar (Terumah 157;2) tells us, that a person needs to remember on his table, while eating a meal, the destruction of the Temple,

Building Trust

“אלה פקודי המשכן משכן העדות אשר פוקד על פי משה”... – These are the calculations of the Mishkan...which were accounted for by the command of Moshe. (Shemot 38:21)

In this week's parsha, the Torah makes an accounting of where all the gold and silver that Klal Yisrael donated for the building of the Mishkan went. Why did Moshe feel the need to make this calculation and report to Klal Yisrael about how he had used these donations?

The Midrash explains that after the construction of the Mishkan, Moshe overheard a fellow Jew poking fun at his wide neck and knees, suggesting that Moshe was gaining weight – possibly because he'd been dining a bit more lately.

A second “mocker” joined in and said, “What do you expect? I'm sure the man who took charge of building the Mishkan pocketed some of the donations for himself!”

Upon hearing this, Moshe told them, “I promise you, when we finish the Mishkan I will give you a

and the destruction of Jerusalem. Through worrying and feeling bad over the lack of the Temple, when one is sitting, and enjoying food and drink, IT IS CONSIDERED AS IF HE BUILT THE TEMPLE! This is why Ashkenazim say prior to Birkat Hamazon, the Psalm עַל נְהִירוֹתוֹ בְּכֹל הַיּוֹם and we mention the Destruction in our Birkat Hamazon. The whole story of Purim, started, when the Jews enjoyed a meal at Achashverosh's party, that the utensils of the Temple were being displayed and used!

Sometimes, all G-d wants from us, is to want. He wants us to want to be better. To want to have more Faith, more Kavana, more Torah, more Peace, more Mitzvoth. Sometimes, that is all G-d is testing us with.

detailed summary of every last penny!” And so he did, in this week's parsha.

Why was Moshe so concerned with what these “mockers” thought? And if they were interested in finding flaws in their leader, wouldn't they soon find something else to complain about even if Moshe appeased them now? After Moshe had been Hashem's messenger to bring the ten plagues, bring the Jews out of Egypt and split the sea, hadn't he already established himself as a man of integrity who kept his word?

The answer to these questions is simple, yet powerful. We are all familiar with how our bank account works – if you want to take money out, you need to first put money in. In any relationship, we must consider a different type of bank account – our “emotional bank account.” Relationships are built on honesty, kindness and integrity; for a relationship to succeed, one's “bank account” must be filled with actions which demonstrate these traits. If you make a deposit in the emotional bank



account through honesty, kindness and integrity, you build up your credit, and trust is built.

Conversely, when one shows dishonesty, ignores others or acts selfishly, he is making “withdrawals” from this account, and eventually the emotional account is overdrawn.

Every relationship has its rocky moments – these moments are like applying for a loan. If one invested enough into his account, at these moments he can use the credit from this account to save the relationship. If the account is empty and one is in “debt,” however, his dubious credit history makes fixing the relationship difficult.

The sad reality is that while it might take a lot of time and effort to build this credit, it is very easy to overdraw the account with a few careless mistakes.

Consider parenting, for example. Parents who show their children that they are concerned with the children’s best interests will have “credit” available when their children grow into teenagers. If the parents did not inculcate this feeling into the children, however, when the teenage years arrive the children probably will not consult with their parents even if the parents plead and promise the children that now they are interested in the children’s well-being(see “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” by Stephen Covey).

Moshe Rabbeinu knew the importance of building trust. Moshe knew that someday, these “mockers” would rear their heads again and question Moshe and the Torah, and he would need credit in the bank. Additionally, Moshe knew that building trust would help ensure that when he said something, Klal Yisrael would know that Moshe was saying it for their best interests, not his own.

Trust between parents and children is especially important in Torah families. One of our strongest resources for emunah – faith in G-d – is the mesora that is passed down from parent to child. Judaism is unique in its claim that over 600,000 witnesses experienced G-d speaking to His nation at Mount Sinai. This testimony has been passed from parent to child ever since then. A child is naturally receptive to this testimony and believes his parents, and is sure that a parent would never lie about such a central life issue.

Unfortunately, sometimes children lose faith in their parents, and the child is ‘at risk’. Throughout childhood, a parent must treat his or her child with the respect due to a person, as opposed to the respect one shows to an e-mail that he can ignore until he is interested at looking at and dealing with it.

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF SONNY AND IRENE GINDI A”H

