

Zera Shimshon

Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmeni zy"l, author of Sefer Zera Shimshon on Chumash and Toldos Shimshon on Pirkei Avos, who promised that all who study his words will be blessed with an abundance of good, wealth and honor, and will merit to see children and grandchildren thriving around their table.



תשפ"א Terumah

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

ט"ו אינ 125

אמרות שמשון

The Three Distinct Manners in Which the Jewish People Were Able to Donate to The Mishkan

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְחוּ לִי תְרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לָבוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת תְּרוּמָתִי: וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאֵתָם זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וְנֹחֶשֶׁת: (שמות כה א-ג)

Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying. Speak to the Children of Israel and they shall take for Me a portion, from every man whose heart will motivate him you shall take My portion. This is the portion that you shall take from them; gold, silver and copper.

We need to understand why, when asking the Jewish People to donate towards the building of the Mishkan, the Torah mentioned three times that they shall give a portion. Additionally, why does the Torah initially say that 'they shall take', which refers to each Jew on his own willingly donating a portion, while the subsequent two times it says 'you shall take', which refers to the authorities [i.e. Bais Din] compelling the Jews to donate a portion?

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The Gemara in Rosh Hashana (ו ע"א) describes the various forms of a vow through which one can accept upon himself to bring a korban. אי זהו נדר האומר הרי עלי עולה. ואי זו היא נדבה האומר הרי זו עולה. ומה בין נדר לנדבה? באחריותה - נדר מת או נגנב חייב באחריותו נדבה מתה או נגנבה אינו חייב. What is the vow that was made using the term 'neder'? One who says, "It is hereby incumbent upon me to bring a korban". What is the vow that was made using the term 'nedavah'? One who says, "This animal is hereby designated as a korban". [i.e. The neder is simply a pledge to offer a korban, while a nedavah is the designation of an animal for a korban]. And what is the Halachic difference between a neder and a nedavah? In the case of a neder-pledge, if after ultimately designating an animal with which to fulfill his pledge, the animal dies or gets stolen, he is responsible for replacing it [i.e. because the vow was a general pledge to bring a korban, and not exclusively in regard to any particular animal]. However, in the case of a nedavah-designation, if the animal died or was stolen, he is not responsible to replace it [i.e. because the vow was not a general pledge but was rather only the designation of this particular animal, and because this specific animal is no longer, the vow no longer obligates him].

The Gemara then goes ahead and discusses a third form of a vow. אמר רבא משכחת לה כגון דאמר הרי עלי עולה על מנת שאיני חייב באחריותה - Rava said: You can find a case of a nedavah where the animal was not designated [i.e. although, generally, a nedavah is a designation of a korban, nevertheless, there is a nedavah which is only a pledge to bring a

korban, similar to a neder], where one said, "It is hereby incumbent upon me to bring a korban on condition that [if after ultimately designating the animal with which to fulfill my vow] the animal will die or get stolen I will not be responsible for replacing it". In this case, although he did not designate any particular animal, it is nevertheless called a nedavah, since it resembles a nedavah insofar as he is not responsible to replace it were it to die or get stolen.

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In light of this we can understand that when the Torah mentions three times that the Jewish People should donate towards the Mishkan, it is a reference to the three manners in which one can make a vow to donate to the Mishkan. And the change of language and expression that the Torah uses, is an allusion to the unique Halachic ramifications of the different types of vows.

When the Torah says, ויקחו לי תרומה - they shall take for Me a portion, it is an allusion to those who will donate a portion of their possessions to the Mishkan without any prior commitment, and thus there will be nothing that can compel them to make this donation. This is a reference to the typical nedavah-designation, where one designates a portion to the Mishkan without having ever previously pledged to do so.

The Torah then says, מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את תרומתי - from every man whose heart will motivate him you shall take My portion, which is an allusion to one who can be compelled by Bais Din to bring a portion, as long as the specific portion that was designated for Hashem is in existence. This is a clear reference, either to someone who had previously made a nedavah-designation but had not yet brought over the designated portion, or to someone who had made a neder-pledge on condition that he will only be responsible for the ensuing designated portion as long as the portion will be in existence.

And then the Torah finally says, וזאת התרומה אשר תקחו מאתם - This is the portion that you shall take from them, which alludes to one who can be compelled by Bais Din to bring a portion, not dependent on any specific portion being in existence. This is a reference to the standard neder-pledge, where after one has pledged to donate a portion to the Mishkan, Bais Din can compel him to do so irrelevant of anything specific being in existence.

דוע שמשון פרשתנו אות ז

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The Criteria to Be Able to Donate Personal Property to the Mishkan

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְחוּ לִי תְרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לָבוֹ תִּקְחוּ אֶת תְּרוּמָתִי וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאֵתָם זָהָב וְכֶסֶף וְנֹחֶשֶׁת וְגו' (כה ב - ג)

Speak to the Children of Israel and they shall take to me a portion... This is the portion that you shall take from them: gold, silver and

copper; turquoise wool, purple wool and scarlet wool; linen, and goat hair; red-dyed ram skins, tachash skins and acacia wood; oil for the illumination and spices for the anointment oil and for the aromatic incense; shoham stones and stones for the settings, for the Ephod and the Breastplate:

Rashi points out the following: דבית כל אחד ואחד, שהתנדבו שלשה עשר דברים האמורים בענין, כולם הצרכו למלאכת המשכן או לבגדי כהונה, כשתדקדק בהם.

- The contributions of each individual, who contributed the thirteen items that are mentioned in this Passuk, were all required for the work of the Mishkan or for the priestly garments, when you examine them carefully. Why did Rashi need to preface his revelation that 'the thirteen items that are mentioned were required for the work of the Mishkan or for the priestly garments', by explaining that these thirteen items were 'the contribution of each individual'? Furthermore, what is Rashi referring to when he ends off by saying 'when you examine them carefully'; what careful 'examination' is needed to understand Rashi's statement?

And most of all, we need to resolve the discrepancy that all the commentaries mention regarding Rashi's count of thirteen items, when the Torah clearly mentions sixteen.



The Mishnah in Shekalim (פ"ד מ"א) says as follows; *Those who would watch the after-growths of the shemittah year [to prevent animals from treading on the crop that was needed for the Omer and the Two Loaves] would receive their wages from the Temple treasury. R' Yosi said: One can also volunteer as an unpaid watchman. The Sages said to R' Yosi: You, too, admit that the Omer and the Two Loaves must come from public funds.* The Sages, who argued with R' Yosi, were concerned that the watchman might take possession of the crop in order to prevent any animals from treading on it and would then transfer it to the Temple treasury, which would thus invalidate the crop from being used for the Omer and the Two Breads, as they must come from public funds and not from personal property. Therefore, the Sages felt that we must pay the watchman, so that if he were to take possession of the crop, he would be doing so as an agent of his employer and, consequentially, the crop would become property of his employer; the Temple Treasury.



Megillas Esther in Hebrew and English

The Yerushalmi in Shekalim understands the dispute between R' Yosi and the Sages to be whether transferring individually owned possessions to the public renders them fit to be used for communal offerings. The Yerushalmi goes on to say that 'they argue only concerning the item that is actually sacrificed; the animal or grain that is itself brought as the offering. But concerning those objects which are just preliminaries to the offering, such as the priestly garments and the wood that burns on the altar beneath the sacrifice, all admit that they may be transferred from private property to be used in a public offering'.



When Hashem requested; 'Speak to the Children of Israel and they shall take to me a portion' and then went on to mention sixteen items, we have no choice but to say that although all sixteen items were indeed needed for the Mishkan, the request for contributions was in fact only for thirteen of them. The reason being, because according to the Sages who argue with R' Yosi, any individually owned possession that was transferred to the public fund is unfit to be used as a communal

offering, and can only to be used as a preliminary of an offering. Therefore, the 'oil for the illumination' and the 'spices for the aromatic incense', which were the actual offering in itself, were not able to be donated from privately owned materials. The 'silver', too, although it was indeed only a 'preliminary', nevertheless it also wasn't part of the general appeal for contributions, because it came equally from all the Jews, half a shekel each, as Rashi himself explains later on.

Consequently, of the sixteen listed items, only thirteen of them

- which 'were required for the work of the Mishkan or for the priestly garments' and were thus only 'preliminaries'
- were included in the request that 'they shall take to me a portion', while the other three items, although they were definitely needed, nevertheless, Hashem did not request of the Jews to donate them.

We can now accurately explain the words of Rashi to mean as follows. Since 'the contributions were of each individual', we must say that 'they only contributed the items which were required for the work of the Mishkan or for the priestly garments', which you will realize to be thirteen when 'you examine the sixteen items carefully'.

זרע שמשון פרשתנו אות ו

מצות פורים



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Published and distributed by The International Organization to Disseminate the Works of The Zera Shimshon

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