

Dvar Torah by **Rabbi Chanoch Yeres**

to his community at

Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

Graciously shared with PhiloTorah

VAYAKHEL-P'KUDEI

"These are the reckonings of the Mishkan..." (38:21)

This reckoning of the items donated to the Mishkan interrupts between the narrative of the actual construction of the Mishkan and the fabrication of the kohanic garments like the Eifod (39:2).

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, in his sefer Darash Moshe, attributed this interruption to teach us a very important lesson. For these materials such as gold and silver to be elevated from just being used in an ordinary construction sight but rather a dwelling place for the Divine Presence, they had to be dedicated totally to holy purposes. Any diversion of these items for profane use would nullify their holiness. Therefore, before recounting the making of the Kohanic garments, the Torah makes a point of showing us that all the gold and silver, as well as all the other material, had been donated for the distinct purpose of constructing the Mishkan. Otherwise, the Kohen would not have been allowed to perform his holy services with them.

In addition, we can learn that just like in the Mishkan, they had to account for every bit of material that was donated, so too, we need to give a reckoning for all the bounty that G-d has blessed us with. Rabbi Feinstein felt that this includes the "time" we are blessed with. Do we devote that time for following the commandments of G-d or do we waste it on trivialities?

This type of thinking should be addressed to all our possessions and wealth. Do we assume that these items are ours and ours alone for our whimsical needs or are we carefully to spend it wisely and productively in helping other people who are in need?

The building of the Mishkan and the accounting, in hindsight, of all the materials donated and used for this holy purpose, sets a precedent for all future generations to give account to what we have utilized our possessions for, to ensure that they were used to fulfill G-d's will through his Torah and commandments.

We see how its not only the actual building of the Mishkan that sets it apart from all other construction but it is the method of how we kept track and accounted for all that was used in the process that also teaches us a definitive lesson in our lives today. 🏏