



From the desk of
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Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

Religious Court of Elad * Batei Hora'ah * Religious Services * Marriage Licensing * Kashrut * Mikvaot * Eiruvim

TORAT

Parashat Pekudei

HAMELECH

Do As You're Told

Something very striking in Parashat Pekudei is the repetition of the following phrase. After each thing which Moshe did in the *mishkan*, specifically regarding the *bigdei kehuna*, the *pasuk* says: *ka'asher tziva Hashem et Moshe*, that he did it exactly as Hashem had commanded.

What do we learn from this?

The Medrash tells a story of a king who hired a builder to build for him a palace. The dedicated builder built the palace and engraved the king's name upon each significant part of the structure. When the king saw this display of honor, he invited the builder in to his inner chamber and spoke to him there.

So too, Moshe placed Hashem's name, so to speak, on every part of the *mishkan*. Hashem was pleased and invited him inside.

Ramban explains that Hashem wanted to give Moshe reward for each part of the *mishkan*. Seforno explains that Moshe made each part with the proper intent. Ohr HaChayim HaKadosh explains that the *pasuk* wants to teach us that there is much more than meets the eye. Without adding this line, it would tell us that the simple vessel or garment was made. By adding "*kasher tziva Hashem es Moshe*", that tells us that the fullest *kavanot* were involved, including many *sodot*.

Specifically the Clothing

The main message is: Do as You're Told. Some people are always looking for short-cuts and the easy-way-out. That is not for *Avodat Hashem*. *Mitzvot* are to be done according to "the book", without rounding corners or cutting off edges.

The Medrash teaches that some skeptics in that generation doubted if Moshe really followed orders to the letter in the building of the *mishkan*. So the *pasuk* makes it very clear that Moshe did each action as Hashem had commanded.

Now, if you'll notice, *kasher tziva* etc. is written more by each of the *bigdei kehuna* than by the *klei hamikdash*. Why? Sefer Meshivat Nefesh suggests that *klei hamikdash* were for everyone, so it is more understandable that they would be made exactly according to instruction. *Bigdei kehuna* were worn by the *kohanim*, so maybe there, some would think that they could bend the rules and deviate, add a variation or the like. So the Torah makes a point of stressing that each of the *bigdei kehuna* was made exactly as Hashem had commanded.

Doctor's Orders

We also find Aharon being praised regarding the set-up and lighting of the *menorah* in Parashat Beha'alotecha. The *pasuk* says, "Vaya'as kein Aharon" – and Aharon did so. Rashi stresses: This teaches that he did not deviate. What is so great about that?



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The Dubner Maggid explains with a *mashal*. There were once three sick people. They all had the same exact malady and went to the same doctor who gave all three the same prescription. Reuven considered himself smarter than the doctor, so he decided to take a different medicine. He died.

Shimon was not knowledgeable at all. He simply followed the doctor's orders and survived.

Levi did have some understanding of medicine. But he said, "I will not rely on my own understanding. If this is what the doctor prescribed, then this is what I'll do."

So he followed doctor's orders and lived. He is even more praiseworthy than Shimon, because Shimon had no reason to act differently. Levi could have tried to figure things out by himself. His greatness lies in his ability to put all of his understanding aside and to do what the doctor says.

So too, Aharon was a wise man. For anyone else to simply do a mitzvah is one thing. But for a *chacham* to do exactly as told, not allowing his own wisdom to have him act differently, that is true obedience.

Be *Tamim*

You know, we really should not have to talk about this too much. It is sort of self-explanatory. Hashem says – we do. That is what life is all about. Who could possibly think differently? Where our *seichel* stops, Hashem's *chochmah* begins.

Hashem told Avraham, "Be *tamim*." What is *tamim*? Perfect, wholesome, simple. Without crookedness. Without making your own *cheshbonot*. Loyal.

Avraham's *nisyanot*, his life-challenges revolved around this loyalty to Hashem's word. "Go to a land I will show you," without being told exactly where. He comes to the land and finds a famine. Etc. Each step of the way. His main challenge was not to question Hashem's ways. Not to think that he knows better. Go give a *brit milah* to a ninety-nine year old.

Gm. Sanhedrin 89 records a whole list of arguments presented by Satan as he tried to deter Avraham from carrying out the *Akeidat Yitzchak*. Some seemed very logical and reasonable. But Avraham was steadfast. "I am not listening to you. I will do as instructed by Hashem." That was his motto. That was the key to his greatness.

Follow the Leader

Rut went along with Na'ami. The people of Nineveh heard Yonah's prophecy and repented. These are examples of people listening to Hashem, without asking questions.

Klal Yisrael said, "We will do and we will listen." That is called *temimut*. We will do mitzvot regardless of our level of understanding. The doing comes first and is unconditional.

In a nutshell, this is the fundamental difference between Jew and non-Jew. A real Jew does what Hashem says and disregards his own thoughts or leisures. A non-Jew chooses to live life as he sees



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fit and does not want anyone else to tell him what to do.

There is a terrible line out there. Some say, "kol echad vеха'emet shelo." Everyone has his own perception of the truth. The real truth is that we must subjugate our mindset to the Torah's truths, as ordained by the Creator.

"The loyalty of the upright guides them along while the twistiness of the traitors ransacks them." (Mishlei 11:3)

Klal Yisrael are called righteous and straight because they use the Torah as their guiding light. The nations are called "traitors" because they deny Hashem's authority and take matters into their own hands.

Some think that following commands without questioning is irresponsible and indicative of weakness. We hold true that if it is the Torah's command, which is the Creator's command, there is nothing smarter than following the game plan of the One who designed it all.

The Quintessential Chok

Shlomo Hamelech was a very wise man. He wanted to understand the mitzvah of *Parah Aduma*, but he could not. He thought that he knew the reasons for certain mitzvot and he thought that those reasons did not apply to him, so he could disregard the mitzvah. Oy vey! Did he pay! That was very costly!

Of *Parah Aduma*, the Torah says: This is the *chok* of the Torah. *Parah Aduma* is the paradigm for all

mitzvot. Even mitzvot which we think we understand, we are to do them as servants following a command – because Hashem said so.

A major element of *cheit ha'eigel* was thinking that we can rely on our own *seichel* in serving Hashem. Oh, were we wrong! So along comes the *mishkan* and atones for *cheit ha'eigel*. Follow Hashem's decree down to the most minute detail. The *mishkan* and *bigdei kehuna* are full of fine, intricate details, and this is why. To teach us to be loyal servants.

The Story Behind Rav Shach

Before World War I, there was a woman in Europe who had ten children. Prior to the birth of one of them, there were complications and the doctor recommended an abortion. This Jewish woman of valor would not hear of it. She ignored doctor's orders and gave birth to Rav Eliezer Shach, the next *Gadol Hador*.

During the war, she lost eight out of ten children. Rav Shach and one sister survived. Had she listened to the doctors... Here is an example of *temimut* paying off.

Let us learn from the *parashah* the importance of simply doing *mitzvot* and leading a Torah life without adding any of our own reasoning. Let's just do as we're told, and we'll see success in all of our endeavors.

Shabbat Shalom,
Mordechai Malka