

Pikooday – Rabbi Yosef Y. Serebryanski

Creating space for the Divine

Divine manifestation

Divine purpose

Protection in unity and structure

Pikudei

Creating space for the Divine

The verse (Exodus 38:21) **“These are the reckonings (Pikudei) of the Tabernacle (Hamishkan,) Tabernacle of Testimony, that were counted (pookad) according to the mouth of Moses. The work of the Levites in the hand of Isamar son of Aaron the Kohen.”** The Hebrew words of this verse have a myriad of meanings.

The word pikud has both positive and negative uses; it is about memory and care. It means greatness, appoint, punish, collateral, deposit, remember, bear in mind, inspect, count, revenge, repay, seek, miss, charge, muster, command, to enflame, visitation or affliction.

The Jerusalem Talmud (Berochos 4:3) calls this portion, (Exodus 38:21 till the end of chapter 40) the **“parsha of the second mishkan.”** One reason (Pnei Moshe) could be since the verse (Exodus 38:21) uses the word Mishkan twice. Additionally (Ridbaz, Moker Boruch) the Mishkan was already described previously in the book and this is the second time.

Another aspect of it being called the second Mishkan is that one was built for the people and the second one each person has to build within their own being. In fact the prayer that we say each day called shmonei esrei (Avudraham on prayers) corresponds to the eighteen times the term “like YHVH tzivoh (commanded or connected) Moses” is mentioned in this chapter

In fact, when we spell out the names of the letters that make up the word **“Mishkan”** (mem, shin, chof, noon) the numerical value is six hundred and

forty-six the same as the numerical value of the term “chai berochos” – eighteen blessings.

According to the Midrash Rabbah (51:3) there was extra material from the building and they made a second mishkan, called mishkan hoedus. The commentaries have various perspectives of what it may have been used for. The Yefeh Toar explains that they made a miniature copy that was placed in the ark. Thus there was an internal and external mishkan.

Other commentaries (Reb Zev Wolf Einhorn and Reb Dovid Luria) write that the second mishkan was outside the camp and they kept the spares and extra vessels for when they may need them, thus it was a storage place. The Imrei Yosher writes that it was a meeting place to decided laws or for advice or guidance.

According the the Chasam Sofer (Toras Moshe, vayakhel) Moshe had asked the people with “wise hearts” to make a miniature model of what they were going to build. We do not know what happened to the miniature samples after Moshe saw them.

The Torah does not say who or what the testimony was for. The testimony could have been for Moses, the people, God, the world or for everyone. Thus there are many ways in understanding the text.

In the verse is written “**hamishkan**” – the mishkan, if we see that a person has the Divine presence resting on him/her this is a sign that he/she is fulfilling the guidance of the Creator. The bonding with the Creator cannot be direct as it would consume the person. Thus it is that we connect through various channels called mitzvos - connections.

The term mitzvah (often inappropriately translated as commandment) is a composition of the name of YHVH. The first two letters are mem and tzaddik when shifted by the system called aht bahsh (the first letter of the Hebrew letters is exchanged with the last and the second letter is exchanged with the second last, etc.) they become yood and hey. Then with the last letters VH the name is

complete. Thus it is in life that with some type of exchange and transformation within us the Divine presence is complete.

Rav Yeve (student of the Baal Shem Tov) writes that it is not only that which the Torah has written explicitly but also everything that was told to Moses at Mount Sinai as explained by Rabbi Chaim Vital at the end his book of Shaarei Kedusho. The words **“that were commanded by the mouth of Moses”** refer to the Oral Torah.

The work of the Levites is reflected in their name as Levite means joining. This needs two conditions, one being “In the hand of Itamar” meaning one who learns Torah. The second condition is that the Torah should not be for another reason but only for love. Aharon means a gift (mohar umatan) and Kohen is service, a person’s service with the Creator should be a gift of Love.

Imrei Yehuda (Avrohom Zorach Aryeh Yehuda Leibush from Brehzhon) writes; “The Creator looks to see how people behave when there is no external building or sacrifice. The Torah was prepared for such time as it written “ooneshalmoh porim sefoseinu,” that by our words we achieve the same as with sacrifice. (Before the Torah was given on Mount Sinai we could achieve in the spiritual realm but it did not remain permeated in the physical only after the revelation at Mount Sinai.)

That is why we request **“hashiveinu ovinu lesorosecho” – “return us our father to your Torah.”** If Moshe would not have said “Lomo hareoso” (why did you make it more difficult for the people) he would have gone into the land. Thus his words caused him not to go into the land.

“Eleh” (the first word of the verse in Exodus 38:21) is an acronym for hashiveinu ovinu lesorosecho. Moses was not allowed into the land because of pikudei (an expression of something lacking) in the mishkan. There is lacking the mishkan hoedus. It was lacking through the mouth of Moshe.”

The power of Moses was through his mouth, prayer. The first letter of the Hebrew words of the verse Eleh pikudie hamishkan mishkan hoedus is numerically the

same one hundred and thirty-one the same as anovoh – humbleness. The last letter of the same words equal five hundred and fifteen the same as tefillah – prayer.

The Hebrew words tefillah (prayer) and anovoh (humbleness) are numerically six hundred and forty-six, the same as the term mishkan as previously mentioned. Twice the word mishkan is one thousand two hundred and ninety-two the same as (Psalms 91) “prayer of Moses man of Elohim.”

(Numbers 12:3) **“And the man Moses was very humble, more than all people on the face of the earth”** Through the prayer of such a person a mishkan is created for the Divine presence to rest. The ability for future generations to do this comes from Moses who achieved intense heights and bonding. This is another meaning of the words **“Asher pookad by the mouth of Moses.”**

The second letter of the Hebrew words, **“hamishkan mishkan hoedoos”** is shma. Shma (Hear Israel .. God is one) is the same numerical value as mishkan.

(Ezekiel 11:16) **“So says the name, I have distanced them among the nations, and so they are spread out in the lands, and I will be for them a miniature sanctuary in the lands that they came to.”** The Talmud (Megillah 29) writes that this means that while the building in Jerusalem is destroyed we can make a mishkan and sanctuary for God. Through praying with humility and humbleness we draw the Divine presence. This is the verse (Isaiah 57:15) **“I abide in exaltedness and Holiness, but I am with the despondent and lowly of spirit.”**

We as individuals no matter how down we feel, we can build a space for the Divine presence wherever we are. As the verse states, “In every place that my name is mentioned I will come there and bless you.”

Divine Manifestation

Mankind believes in a Creator, yet as individuals we have different understandings of what the Creator is. Some identify with Creator and creation through the physical while others do so through spiritual associations.

Within the spiritual world there are multitudes of power sources. Connecting with a power source gives a person the sense of being connected. Yet, the fact that one connects to some form of energy does not necessarily mean that they have achieved a direct connection with the Creator of all existence.

Many people think or feel that they must connect through an intermediary in order to protect themselves from extreme exposure. In the wilderness the Israelites insisted on using Moses as an intermediary. There are souls today that are supposed to utilize the appropriate intermediary in order to help them complete their connection with the Creator.

There is a difference between the worship of powers in the creation and the worship of the Creator of all existence. The worship of powers in creation is an indirect way of serving the Creator. It is important that one not become “stuck” onto that power and forget its true source.

Only by being cognitive of the entire picture can each soul pursue its true placement and importance within the existence. It cannot be stressed enough that we are each here to play our role and ignoring that role affects everything. While there are others who will “pick up your slack,” in the clearing of a path to the future, each person should attempt to complete his/her task.

Moses is accepted as the greatest prophet in history. The reason for this is that he had an open relationship with his soul and its essential bond with the Creator beyond that of any other prophet. This means that what he channeled was the highest vibration of connection with the Creator that anyone has been able to bring into this world.

(Exodus 35-40) In forming a physical manifestation of the spiritual realms of creation, the people were told that the physical work had to come from the heart (connection.) In other words, without the connection, just doing the work would not bring about the proper Divine manifestation through the physical.

After completion of all of the preparations, the materials were brought to Moses, who then put everything in place and built the Tabernacle. Even though many people were inspired and their hearts were in the right place, the connection with

the Divine that was achieved by Moses was required to create the proper balance for Divine exposure through the structure.

Jewish tradition teaches that in each generation exists a living Moses. That person holds the vibration of connection with the Divine for the entire world. He/she does not necessarily have to “perform any miracles.” The requirement may just be that person’s existence and vibration at this time and in this space.

While many people believe in the existence of such a person, many are convinced that the person must be a follower of a specific sect of people, or have a name that for them represents the essence of the divine connection. Instead of becoming obsessed with the idea of identification, people should simply concern themselves on a daily basis with the act of bringing their hearts in earnest to serve the Creator (and then Moses can put it all together for them.) If people are stuck on insisting on identifying specific powers it blocks the “Moses” of the generation from doing the job that he is (waiting) here to do.

There are people of varying faiths who have their hearts (and souls) in the right place. There are others who have made idols of their beliefs that block their acceptance of the flow of all energies as being directed by the Creator. These people do not seek to support the Creator’s system. Instead they spend their lives in the pursuit of forcing others to “cave” into their way of life and worship. They act as though they champion the work of the Creator, but in effect do not understand that just as all people were created by One source, the function of each being is not identical to that of others. This applies to people of all belief systems.

If you spend your life demanding that others act as you do, you are simply demonstrating the fact that you require the belief of others to strengthen your own. Being secure in your own relationship with the Creator and sharing that relationship with others, opens the possibility that others who are supposed to conduct themselves in similar fashion will hear and respond to your message. Forcing it upon them will turn off many who might otherwise be open to receiving a message, and result in a missed opportunity.

Giving gentle guidance may contrast sharply with methods of threat or fear of reprisals for failure to comply. However, in these days of uncertainty, gentle guidance achieves more genuine response. More than that, it allows people to serve with the heart, which is what the Torah asks of us. Only when we start from this point do we warrant the building of the tabernacle and the sanctuary.

Worshipping out of fear or hatred, forms a bond with idols and “other gods.” This is not to say that adherence to structure is not important.

In the book of Exodus we see that indeed the formation of precise structure is of utmost importance. Yet it can only be completed following dedication of the heart to pursuing the job to which we are each assigned.

It is no wonder that The Israelites were given the task to hold onto the existence of One creator for all existence since that is something that most people seem to have a blockage from as the oneness they believe in some type of definition.

The highest form of connection is needed to transmit the frequency of the oneness. Moses did that and gave the people a written form called the five books of Moses for that essence to have a base through which people can connect with it.

Talmud Berachot 22a states that “The Torah speaks in human terms.” Tanya chapter 22 explains that in speech there are words that are understood in a way that is opposite to the intention of the speaker. Even more so with words that are written and interpreted many years later when they never heard or saw the speaker. But the internal and real intention of the speaker is only with those who truly comprehend the speaker’s words. Those who use the words in an opposite way from the speaker is idol worship or worship of other gods. It denies or blocks the true oneness of Creator. It has an ego that says “me and nothing besides me.” The Talmud (Sotah 4b) considers arrogance as idolatry.

The Hebrew word for other gods is Elohim acherim. “Other” is “achor” which also means “behind” or “after.” These forces come behind or after the creation and appear to people as the force of creation.

Tanya Chapter 23 explains that the directives in the Torah are the inner desire of the Creator. The physical act is the clothing for the Supreme Will. The thought and speech in Torah is at one with the source and all the letters of the Tanach draw the Creators wisdom within them. Even if we do not see or experience, study of the Torah is the Creators desire and it is our guidance for having a direct connection.

Divine purpose

As we watch world news unfold we recognize more acutely the fact that those whose job it is to deal with world crises are severely lacking in ability to do so. Failure on their part often leads to presumptuous conclusions on the part of armchair idealists who give opinions to the world based solely on what supports their own agenda. When we utilize presumptions instead of historical facts for a lens, the results of our deductions have a greater possibility of being misguided. All of this allows for aggressive forces to capitalize on the weaknesses bred upon hope without just cause, or beliefs not based upon reality.

In fact, how much of this truly matters, one must wonder? If we seek true clarity in the face of disaster, are we better or worse off? Many of us have been programmed to believe that if we always seek the truth, we will never be disappointed. That is simply not true. If we seek the truth, we will often be hurt or shocked. However, in that case we will not be building upon false hopes that engender far more damaging results.

Additionally, we will find out that, to quote an old phrase, the truth WILL set us free. It will allow us the freedom of pursuing only the directives associated with the one true source of life. All else is irrelevant in the bigger picture. History will unfold exactly as it should. While this does not negate the desire for mankind's participation, it takes into account the "human factor."

We know this is so because all of mankind's edifices and plans can be wiped out in a millisecond by any number of predictable or unpredictable happenings. Quite simply stated, WE may think that WE are in charge. People who accomplish much

tend to think that they are and will always be capable of achieving success. They forget or ignore what it is to which they owe their triumphs as well as their failures.

One cannot ignore the balances that exist in the world as they were created to protect and extend life here. When one contributes and accomplishes his or her purpose, a greater equalizing energy is promoted. The contrary is true when people ignore that purpose. We have the ability to, and thus should, transcend the limited systems and look beyond. Look for the proper responses that resonate with our inner soul and heart.

What is our purpose in this world? In this world we need to clear a space for our perception and connection with the source of life. Only then can we “hear” and do what it takes to “count” in the mix. The Mishkan (Tabernacle in the desert and later the Temple in Jerusalem) is a reminder of that purpose. Without the Mishkan it is easy to lose sight of our purpose unless we internalize it.

(Exodus 38:21) **“These are the countings of the mishkan, the mishkan of testimony that were counted according to the mouth of Moshe (Moses), the work of the Levites in the hand of Esomor son of Aharon the priest.”**

The word for counting – pikooday - פקודי also refers to purpose – tafkid – תפקיד. When we combine those two thoughts, they relate to the accounting we take of our soul’s responsibilities. Without the counting, or accounting, we are, for all intensive purposes, not really here. Thus, this sentence has another way of being translated and understood.

“These are the purposes of forming a resting place (a space of full awareness) for the Divine, the resting place is a reflection, whose purposes were transmitted through Moshe, the effort of connection performed through speech expressed from the depth of compassion.” (more on this verse is in volume one Pikooday)

According to the Midrash Rabbah, this verse talks about faith and trust. The person through whom the task is transmitted is one who is complete in faith and trust. Not everyone can handle such purity and clarity in the present. Moses represents a person who is open to a full flow of life force that directly connects to his unique

personal flow of life. In the future all people will be open to their unique individual source of life. As that is not the current state of affairs, the work is presently being done by those who are in the flow.

(Exodus 40:36) **“And when the cloud rises from the resting place the children of Israel travel, in all their journeys.”** The resting place is also part of the journey. From that time until now, even when they are encamped, there is always a cloud. Consider the fact that no matter how fervently or animatedly we live, life is overshadowed by clouds. They either surround us totally, or appear as a form of guidance to all who take note of their importance.

The minds and hearts of people are clouded by a variety of factors. Relationships take us in and out of clouds. The clouds guided the Jews in their relationship with the Divine for forty years. “Clouds” may suppress certain actions in order to keep individuals in a certain place or space at a particular time. Yet the movement of those clouds will guide them onward. That movement, even when slightly perceptible, will lift just enough to allow them to grow and move forward when the time for any type of action arrives. When that cloud is of the Divine, it rises and brings clarity to the journey. If we allow our eyes to truly be windows to our souls, we may merit the ability to “see” that Divinity in all that occurs.

A cloud can spirit people from one temporary stopover to the next. Although you are where the Divine wants you to be, realize that the arrangement is only for the moment. Look at the short stopover we make on this planet. No one thing that we do or decide to experiment with is in any way permanent. Yet people often become stuck in the temporary parts of the journey. This seriously inhibits their ability to totally be “in the flow.”

The limitations caused when we are “stuck” extend beyond those things to which they become attached. While the importance of those stuck priorities increases within the individual, the ability to hear and flow with the Creator’s purpose becomes damaged. It is a practice that serves little purpose other than temporary and meaningless solace, as it will fade along with that individual’s existence, leaving no spectacular marker of accomplishment.

Many wonder and/or worry about the “good” and “bad” in life. They fail to look beyond to understand that everything is guided by the Divine. From a deep spirit perspective, it is not a matter of good or bad. Instead, it is all a matter of Divine flow and direction of balance and imbalance.

Regurgitating the words of previous generations does not guarantee a connection. Knowing what issues to stress, quantified by the origin of those words is essential to establishing the connection. People often choose to be attached to those who guide and teach them without taking personal charge of their own connection.

Consider the things we entrust to others. We would not ask someone to buy our wardrobe and sustenance’s based upon what little they know of us. Why do we trust them with our soul responsibilities? Each person is responsible to learn and find that which best resonates within in order to gain true direction.

Although a guide is able to be of assistance, one is not absolved of personal responsibility to the degree that each one of us is capable. If your spiritual teacher cannot help you to figure out a way to connect, then all of the teachings are of little use to you. Copying behavior may be of merit in some cases. Yet, if you are taught in a way that does not allow you to ascend in your actions, then you must ask yourself what you are doing.

If the focus is not one that allows you to gain spiritual content as it resonates within you, then you must seek further to gain truthful connection. One cannot blame his/her inaction on the part of anyone else as long as he/she is capable of achieving the goal on his/her own.

Believing in an agenda of someone else is not going to grant you anything. Although it may be difficult seek the truth. Make that accounting within yourself. It is the only way you will know who you are. Someone else’s journey of growth may be helpful as a learning tool, albeit not precisely your direction for movement.

True leaders are few in each generation. May we all be blessed to gain the ability to recognize the Divine purpose of why we are here. Let us learn to embrace our

journey while we comprehend and embrace the purpose of the rest of the journey of the world that surrounds us.

Protection in unity and structure

The focus of our mind and heart allows us to define who we are. Focusing on the Creator's objectives allows us to sustain a strong connection and gives us the potential for added protection and blessings for all that we undertake.

We must understand, however, that in society this is a partnership of spirit that demands hard work and sacrifice of us in order to maintain an environment that is conducive to success in our endeavors. It is natural to desire a feeling of protection and safety, yet there are no guarantees for our security. Rather, it is up to us to do our personal best, bond ourselves with, and leave the rest to, the discretion of the Creator. Apart from that there are defined boundaries that each person needs to respect and uphold in order to keep him/herself safe.

Inner quiet allows a person to listen and then blend with the force of creation. It creates personal space that welcomes the flow of creator energy within. This prevents a person from being negatively affected as shifts occur within and around us, and generates a feeling of wholeness and security within our private space. There are issues that require our input, and those that will simply resolve themselves in due course at the time designated for that purpose.

“For six days let the work be done and then on the seventh day it will be a real rest of Sabbath” (Exodus 35:2). Let the work be done and not to allow the work to take over our minds and hearts. When we let our expectations or temptations direct us, the resulting imbalances cause us some loss of protection. Afterwards as we fruitlessly search to understand why we have not gained our objective, the energy of that push often blocks us from the answer.

Unity within oneself and amongst people creates great protective energy. However, unity of purpose does not necessarily insure that the purpose itself is without flaws, no matter how noble the cause may seem to be. Nonetheless, unity for the greater good may foster positive behavior, but

should not be mistaken as being a final and unbending objective. If behavior in of itself excludes others, then it is wrong on all sides of the spectrum. Certainly each side will equally invite the other “as long as” they comply with behaviors that satisfy their definitions. Thus, each side is exclusive and wrong.

The better route is to incorporate and engender respect on all sides of the spectrum without violating or causing hurt to the inner sanctum of others. This type of respect differs from giving only when receiving. It is a constant ability to relegate one’s personal desires as being secondary to the wishes of others, without looking to see if that is returned in kind. Unless outreach is of this nature then you are simply creating a group of people with like beliefs, and shutting out others based upon their differences. This will not generate unity, as it will further polarize well meaning groups of people from each other. In the next conflict of determination, we can be sure that without the input of all possible positive forces, we will not survive the enslavement.

Without recognizing that, we are our own worst enemy. There are many elements that block people but when people are truly united nothing can stop them. After all, that we have been through and all the blockages we still have the ability to be together. This is because intrinsically all existence is of one source and element.

The fire of rage, anger, jealousy, and other thoughts, emotions or actions can destroy a person. It states in the book of Exodus, “do not cause fire on the Sabbath day.” To have a period of rest a person must not cause such a fire. “Gathering” one’s being into oneself is an ideal state of preparation for entering Shabbos. Peace and tranquility invites the presence of the Creator to dwell among us. Shabbos, with its lack of weekday hustle and bustle focuses on peace and tranquility. This removes the blockages and thus opens our space to be able to experience the company of higher presence.

Negative energy is caused when you do not give yourself the time to reconnect on a steady basis. Yet simply taking the time to connect is not enough to prevent a person’s rage from destroying him/herself and the love that surrounds them. Rather, one with a weakness for anger must strive to constantly “remember the Sabbath day,” and the prohibition to cause fire, as anger is the opposing force of the tranquility that we so require to balance our existence.

Human beings were created with a propensity for mistakes and shortcomings. On our journey it is incumbent upon us to collect the personal elements as well as maintaining the essentials that are crucial to our survival. Remembering to bow, acknowledge and give thanks is an important part of the flow of life. Balancing with this knowledge will further enhance our ability to have constant focus on the source of life while allowing us internal personal recognition in tandem with our connection.

The Creator force is everywhere and there is no way to disconnect. So why do people talk about coming back to God if God is everywhere? Simply stated, when we feel disconnected we do not see that God is still connected. When we realize that the Creator, who does not depend upon our perception, is everywhere and that we are always in His presence, we can always go forth and continue our journey.

Pikudei

“What goes around comes around” is a saying that has been going around for as long as the words could be expressed in a world that is round. The world is round because it comes from a Creator that has no beginning and no end.

The last chapters of Exodus speak about the accounting that Moses gives for the Tabernacle that he had built in the desert. For this project, people donated freely, without any accounting. Now an accounting is given. Some commentaries state that this is to show that Moses did not steal anything. What does this say about the people who give such a reason? Often the way a person looks at something or explains it, is telling us something about that person.

In life, people, individuals or communities come to a stage when it is time to take in-depth personal accountings. The work that precipitates this accounting may be the external reason for a deeper internal examination. Moses taught people that an accounting is important even when no one asks for it.

When you take an in-depth accounting, you become more aware that external physical elements are an integral part of the Creator’s personal

communication with us. It then becomes a way to see a deeper purpose for all the physical materials and craftsmanship. The purpose is to create a space for the Divine life force to reveal itself in this plane of existence. This is for people in general as we are each part of the whole and for each individual as a unique expression of the whole.

Here is a small story to illustrate that everything works together.

In the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire a few boys were playing, throwing stones. It just so happened that the prince was riding by in a carriage and was hit by a stone. The boy that threw the stone was Naftoli. He was sentenced to die by public hanging for treason.

A guard escorted Naftoli to the capital. The weather was stormy and the guard stopped by an inn to rest. The innkeeper was Jewish and at that time his son's were studying Talmud. They came to a question for which they could find no explanation. Naftoli, overhearing the problem, told them the answer.

When the innkeeper saw this, he asked Naftoli why he was under arrest. After hearing the story, he asked the guard, "What would happen if the prisoner was to die on the way to the capital?"

The guard responded that he would need is a certificate signed by the local authorities to prove that the boy was dead.

The innkeeper used his connections to get a signed certificate, gave the guard some money and sent him on his way. Naftoli was left with the innkeeper who raised him as his own son.

When the boy was of marriageable age the innkeeper set a date for Naftoli to marry his daughter.

Shortly thereafter one night, as the innkeeper was passing the boys room he heard him talking. When he looked through the keyhole, he saw the boy lying on the floor saying, "What can I do, these people saved my life?"

Later on the innkeeper asked Naftoli whom he had been speaking with. Naftoli replied that his parents kept appearing to him, telling him that this girl was not to be his intended wife.

The innkeeper told Naftoli that he should listen to his parents and was free to go. Before Naftoli left, he requested that the innkeeper give him a written accounting of the money paid on his behalf to bribe the guard many years ago.

The innkeeper did not want to; saying that he had done God's will and did not want payment. However, the boy insisted, and finally the innkeeper gave the boy a paper stating the sum of money that he paid to the guard.

The boy left. He later married and became famous as Rabbi Naftoli of the city of Posen.

Meanwhile the innkeeper's daughter married a storekeeper, and settled in a town near Posen. One night as she was walking home from the store, a wealthy landowner picked her up and took her back to his estate to fulfill his sexual needs. She maintained her composure despite the imminent danger she was in. She told the landowner that she would go along with his wishes if he would first go into town and buy her some fine liquor.

While he was gone she looked for a way to escape. The only possibility for escape would be to jump from a high window, which was very dangerous. While looking around for something to cushion her fall, she found his heavy lambskin overcoat and wrapped herself in it. She then said a prayer and jumped. Thank God, she was not hurt and ran home with the coat.

The husband was very thankful for his wife's escape and went to tell the Rabbi about the incident.

Rabbi Naftoli told the husband, "Your wife is a righteous woman and her level-headedness is admirable. God is truly with her. Open the seam of the coat and you will find money that belongs to you and your wife."

A few days later the landowner came into the husband's store to buy something. He also complained about a Jewish woman who had outwitted him and managed to steal his overcoat that had a large sum of money

sewn inside it. The husband went back to the Rabbi and told him what the landowner had said.

Rabbi Naftoli replied, "This concludes a longer story." He then told the husband about his arrest many years before and about the ransom paid for his release. "That landowner is the guard who escorted me. The amount of money in the coat is the sum that your father-in-law paid for my release. See, here is the paper on which he wrote the exact amount that he paid."

(Exodus 38:21) These are the accountings of the Mishkan, the Tabernacle (Mishkan) of testimony, which was accounted for by the mouth of Moses (Moshe), the work of the Levites in the hand of Esomor (also pronounced Itamar) the son of Aharon the priest (Kohain).

Why does it say Mishkan twice?

Why does it say, "By the mouth of Moshe" when saying by Moshe is sufficient?

Why is the work of the Levites mentioned here?

Why does it mention by the hand of Esomor and not Elazar?

What is the testimony?

"These" is a plural expression and so is "accountings." Thus, they reflect separation and many varieties of elements.

It can also refer to our times and all the separation that seems to exist; yet we can still see the power of the Creator in all matter. Mishkan means resting place and each person is a place for the expression of the Divine presence.

The word pickood translated as accounting also means lacking or joining. It is interesting to note that the letters of the word when rearranged read dofek, which means pulse. So the tabernacle also reflected the pulse of the people.

The Hebrew alphabet has twenty-two letters with special five letters written only at the end of a word, together they have a numerical value of 1775. This is the amount of the hooks used for the pillars (Exodus 35:28).

Why the double expression of accounting or, as the word also means, to remember? This double expression refers to the future as we see in Genesis (50:25) and in Exodus (3:16) that the double expression of “pokod pokadeti” refers to the future.

Therefore, it also says here “by the mouth” which creates, as well as the name Esomor, which also means speech. This can all refer to the Messianic times when we will create simply by speech. The name Levi also means a connection or joining.

(Exodus 39:33) “And they brought the Mishkan to Moses.”

The Midrash tells us that the pillars were too big and heavy for the people to erect. Thus God told Moses to move his hand, which would cause the pillars to stand up. Upon seeing Moses do this, the Levites understood what they had to do, and had the ability to do so during the rest of the travels.

An interesting thought is that if the Creator fills all creation (Jeremiah 23:24) then why is a specific place i.e. the Mishkan needed?

It is because the Creator is not limited to space. Thus the way that the creation is filled with the Creator’s presence is also in a manner that is beyond the object being viewed.

How do we reveal the Creator?

It is through transformation, usually of our perspective, which then takes us beyond the limitation of where we come from. This is another aspect of the word “These” (sentence 21) and not those, which separates us from the past.

For example, to take a negative thing and see the positive or to see the Creator’s purpose in it, transforms the energy. With our mind we can also transform the energy of what we eat, and so in everything.

Another way is to do things that the Creator wants us to do, which we are taught is the purpose of the Torah (Bible - though not the way people who judge or have an agenda teach it). This makes a connection even though we may not see the connection. We wait for the time in the near future when all people will see that the presence of the Creator fills all creation.

Those people who have a natural spiritual openness and think that that is where everyone should be are also limited. It is the transformation that seems to be the ultimate expression of our being here. Through the transformation we are able to connect with that which is beyond our own spiritual limitation or level. The length of time that we are in the darkness adds to how much we can transform. The world has been in darkness for thousands of years in order to transform more negative energy to expressing ultimately a more intense connection with the Creator.

From the sentence of, "And you shall make for me a sanctuary" (Exodus 25:8), till "And Moses did according everything according to that which God commanded him, so he did" (Exodus 40:16) there are two hundred and forty-eight actions done for the work of the Tabernacle. This can reflect the 248 limbs in the human body or 248 positive actions that the Torah (Bible) says to do.

An additional fascinating element is the tradition of counting the sentences in each portion and then using a word or two, which has the numerical value equal to that amount. At the end of this portion there is no mention of the number. Here there are ninety-two sentences and the one numerical word that spells 92 is "Tzov" mentioned in Numbers (7:3) where it speaks about Moses finishing to set up the Tabernacle.

Also there are ninety-two days from when the Jews left Egypt till the sin of the Golden Calf. It is written that one purpose for the tabernacle was to fix that sin. In some very old books it says in Hebrew "Blee Kol" which means without anything, so the printers left it out not realizing that the numerical value of those words is ninety-two. It seems that after looking at the portion, in order to fully transform you have to leave the previous level without anything dragging you back. Therefore, the words reflect the transforming element of this portion.

