

# UTTERLY ARTISTIC

by Rabbi Label Lam

*Eyla...These are the accountings of the tabernacle....(Shemos 38:21)*

So says the Holy One Blessed be He; "Bring gold for the tabernacle and atone for the gold of the golden calf...At the time you made the calf, you angered me with "eyla -this" is your G-d ..." and now that you have made the Tabernacle it is with "eyla" these that I am appeased toward you. And for that reason it is said in this exact language "eyla-these are the reckonings..." (Shemos Rabba)

Like everything that HASHEM commanded Moshe, so did the Children of Israel do all of the work. Moshe saw the entire work and behold- they had done it as HASHEM had commanded, so they had done! And Moshe blessed them. (Shemos 39:42)

The repeating theme is that the Children of Israel had done as they were told. What's so creative about that? We have somehow become accustomed to thinking about artistry and creativity as being equal with being rebellious. Maybe the Children of Israel are being praised for their obedience as opposed to their creativity or maybe not!

Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch ztl. writes about the name "ELOCHIM" from the first three words of creation. "The root "eyla" these occurs in the demonstrative pronoun "eyla"-these but the demonstrative plural these always looks at a plurality of things as being joined together to form a unit. And where as "eyla" in general points to the visible plurality of objects in the world, the name of G-d "elocha" could designate the One Whose might and will encompasses all these objects together in unity. The One through Whom all the plurality, by being related to Him, becomes one union, one whole, one world."

A certain Rebbe confronted a known heretic and told him, "You are a much greater Jew than I am!" The man was pleasantly surprised by the Rebbe's kindly admission and asked suspiciously, "How so!?" The Rebbe replied, "I wake up in the morning and say 'Modeh Ani...I acknowledge -admit ...' (morning liturgy) and immediately am arrested by questions of ... 'Who am I? What am I? How dare I open my mouth before a King?' You arise each morning and say, 'Modeh Ani...I acknowledge before you living and eternal King' ...It is then that your mind is flooded with questions, 'What King? Who King? Why do I need a King?' You go further in that daily morning declaration than I am able to."

In blessings made one hundred times a day we declare...Baruch Ata HASHEM Elocheinu... Elochim is plural. It accounts for the unity in the multiplicity of all "these" we see before our eyes. The whole world, every molecule and Malach is strictly obedient to the will of HASHEM. "There is no artist like

Elocheinu" learns the Talmud. Every brush stroke is a precision act. Only one creature has the ability to rebel and pretend to defy his Maker's will.

Yes, man can choose to be a part of the problem or the solution. When we align our minds, hearts, and actions with the rest of creation then we are being not just obedient but awesomely creative. If a single piano key would express its individual will while being touched by Mozart himself, would he have been more or less a contributor to the creative process? Is it not better to have had a role in the composition of the musical genius whose will he would be expressing?

Manifest in the Mishkan was all that is implied in "eyla" - these. With a cooperative effort by the Children of Israel, just as with the formation of the world, the symphonic signature of Creation was readily realized. Unlike the incident with the golden calf, when a few rebellious keys took too much creative license, this noble project reflected the best of human spirit and enterprise and was utterly artistic. Text Copyright &copy 2005 by Rabbi Label Lam and **Torah.org**.