

NOT MORE! NOT LESS. NOT EASY!

by Rabbi Label Lam

These are the numbers (pekudei- designations) of the Mishkan, the Mishkan of the Testimony, which were counted at Moshe's command; [this was] the work of the Levites under the direction of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the Kohen. (Shemos 38:21)

These are the numbers: In this Parsha, all the weights of the donations for the Mishkan were counted -[that] of silver, of gold, and of copper. And all its implements for all its work were [also] counted. (Rashi)

We are treated to a full accounting of the appropriation of the materials invested in the construction of the Tabernacle. Is there a trust issue here and everything has to spelled out for transparency sake? Is that the reason for all these myriad of details? Yes, there is a trust issue but of a different kind that is being expressed here as an all-time lesson.

The Sefas Emes reveals a secret that many in the world would be anxious to know and tap into. He spells out how to create wealth. This is not some get rich quick scheme. It really works and all according to the spiritual laws of the universe. This may be the basis to the notion that Jews somehow control wealth in the world. It just might be true but not as crudely as our detractors would imagine.

He quotes a Possuk in Mishlei mentioned in the Midrash on this week's Parsha... *"A man of Emunos-reliability will attract an abundance of Brochos-Blessings!"* These are the numbers: In this parsha, all the weights of the donations for the Mishkan were counted -[that] of silver, of gold, and of copper. And all its implements for all its work were [also] counted. These are the numbers: In this parsha, all the weights of the donations for the Mishkan were counted -[that] of silver, of gold, and of copper. And all its implements for all its work were [also] counted. These are the numbers: In this parsha, all the weights of the donations for the Mishkan were counted -[that] of silver, of gold, and of copper. And all its implements for all its work were [also] counted. He offers the following terse explanation. "HASHEM, the source of all good wants to bestow blessing on all of his creatures. If the recipient is not reliable and through the reception of wealth he will come to forget his Creator and will slip into sin, then since all of HASHEM's deeds are calculated truth for the real good of the person, then the good is withheld so he should not come to sin." The Sefas Emes continues in his explanation that the Jewish Nation here is mandated to build that Temple according to Divine specs and also to keep Shabbos!

The precise use of all the materials without any deviation or misappropriation establishes a bond of

trust that invites blessing. This is the exact cure for not getting too far from the source of the blessing. Shabbos is that Temple in time and though it's observance our Emunah is reaffirmed again and again week after week. The entirety of creation is thereby delivered to its ultimate sublime source and the channel of Brocho is opened for the whole world, not just the Jews.

That sounds easy enough. All we have to be is reliable- trustworthy not to become corrupted by wealth and it is ours to not be ours. Rabbi Avigdor Miller offers to the following scenario of a wealthy young man emptying a big bag of money on the table to be counted. Suddenly a nickel falls off the table and rolls underneath. When he climbs down on all fours to search for the missing coin, a witness to his action reminds him he is a wealthy man and wonders why he is exerting so much effort for a five cent piece. Then the wealthy young man answers that this is the money that belongs to the free lone society and not his at all. He is required to account for every penny. Then his actions are understood.

I once heard about a certain wealthy man who raised a beautiful Torah family. Someone asked one of his daughters how he managed not to spoil them with the abundance of wealth that was always available. Her answer was astonishing. "My father gave us total access to some well-endowed accounts and he told us to take whatever we needed and whenever we needed, but he cautioned that the money was designated for charity and whatever we helped ourselves to, will be deducted from whatever will be available to help Kollel couples, and make more seminars to create Ba'alei Teshvah."

This is what he was doing constantly with his moneys, and therefore they helped themselves sparingly and generously with this appreciation in mind. The money is Hekdesh... belonging to Heaven and we are just its stewards and cashiers. **Not more! Not less. Not easy!**

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