

FIRM FOOTING

by Rabbi Shlomo Jarcaig

The building of the Mishkan (Tabernacle) was a process through which mankind used various earthly elements to create an edifice in which G-d's Divine presence would dwell. Our Sages expound upon the lessons derived from the myriad steps and details incorporated in this process. They serve as direction for the fulfillment of our ultimate mission in this world as Jews: How we create a greater awareness of G-d in the world, and how we come closer to Him.

Different components of the Mishkan were built from different types of donated materials. While most of the construction material was from voluntary donations dependant upon the will and means of the donor, there was an additional mandatory donation incumbent upon all males of 20 years and older at the time of the census. This donation demanded an identical sum from each Jew, regardless of means. "The silver of the census was one hundred talents (of 3,000 shekels each) and 1,775 shekels in the sacred shekel; a beka for every head, a half shekel in the sacred shekel for everyone who passed through the census takers...The hundred talents of silver were to cast the sockets of the Sanctuary and the sockets of the Partition; a hundred sockets for a hundred talents, a talent per socket." (Shemos/Exodus 38:25-27) The silver was used to make the sockets that held together the beams of the Mishkan's walls. These sockets essentially served the foundation of the entire Mishkan.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (1895-1986; Rosh Yeshiva/Dean of Mesivtha Tifereth Jerusalem in New York City; the leading Halachic/Jewish legal decisor and foremost leader of Torah Jewry of his time) explains that the foundation upon which our personal, internal Mishkan is built is our Emunah (faith in G-d). The use of this silver in the casting of the sockets for the foundation of the Mishkan - silver that was donated in like amounts from throughout the Jewish people - teaches that our Emunah must be employed equally in all precincts of our life experience. Emunah is not only an expression of dedication to the Divine in the synagogue or study hall, it is a statement of G-d consciousness in all activities: how we conduct our business, how we interact with our family members, how we choose to recreate.

Furthermore, each socket was the product of 6,000 donations. No part of the foundation could be the gift of one man alone; each Jew contributed an equal portion. We learn that, as Jews, we need to value the input and contributions of others. To truly accomplish and build stable structures, we need to work as a cohesive unit. If the foundation is strong in some areas but weak in others, the Mishkan will not stand. Only by helping another reach his potential can we develop the necessary foundation upon which the Mishkan can stand.

Have a Good Shabbos!

Copyright © 2003 by [Rabbi Pinchas Avruch](#) and Project Genesis, Inc.

Kol HaKollel is a publication of the Milwaukee Kollel Center for Jewish Studies 5007 West Keefe Avenue; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; 414-447-7999