

INTO REALITY

by Rabbi Raymond Beyda

The Torah generally is as concise as is possible. We are taught that there is not one word or even one letter that is unnecessary. Seemingly extra statements or different spellings of words derive great lessons and vital Torah laws. Therefore, one must pay close attention to the second half of the book of Shemot. 4 of the last 5 parashiyot discuss in great detail the command to build a Tabernacle and the utensils that were used in service to Hashem. The clothing of the Kohanim - the Priestly Garments - also fill page after page of our Holy Book. What makes the situation more puzzling is that the first two parashiyot - Terumah and Tesaveh - describe the instructions given to Moshe to advise the people of what to make and how to make it. The last two parashiyot - Vayakhel and Pekudey - tell of the actual construction in great detail. Why would Hashem otherwise concise Torah repeat so many details? Why would He advise of the building of every wall and every utensil and each of the garments? Wouldn't it be sufficient to state "And the people did exactly as instructed by Moshe"?

Rav Abraham Pam a'h says that there is a basic difference between the sections that command our people to build a House of G-d and the subsequent description of the actual building process. In the former the word -v aseeta - you shall make is used to introduce each commandment. In the latter, the word -va ya-as - and he made is used to describe the fact that Moshe did make the Mishkan and its utensils and priestly garments. The lesson learned from this minor change is that the planning stage was followed through to reality - the "you shall make" became "and he made".

Follow through to completion is a rare occasion. So many good projects do not happen at the end of the day. Changes in circumstances, neglect, costs and a variety of other unexpected circumstances yield a totally different product than the one that was planned for in the initial "idea" stages. And you shall make rarely turns out to be and he made.

The human being is born in a raw unfinished state. One's life's task is to grow and perfect one's body and one's soul in service to our Creator. During the High Holy Days so many of us feel the motivation and the inspiration to improve. Resolutions are made and self-improvement projects begun BUT with most it doesn't take long to revise and adjust one's lofty plans into a mundane "same old - same old" lifestyle.

Every 7years the Jewish world becomes excited and inspired by the worldwide completion of the study of the Talmud. One two-sided page per day for 2711 consecutive days. After the massive gatherings held to celebrate and to praise the program's completion many are inspired to start the 7-year commitment one day at a time. The new devotees flock to many new classes held in every

corner of the globe where Jews may be found. Unfortunately, the rigors of the program and the difficult discipline needed to complete the job decimate the participants in short order.

That is why the Torah expended so many extra verses to indicate the success of Moshe in completing the work exactly as planned. Rav Pam zt'l attributes Moshe's success to the trait of zerizoot - alacrity - zeal.

The Messilat Yesharim explains that this vital trait consists of two elements. Firstly, to begin the misvah immediately - not to push it off. Secondly, once started to stubbornly see it through to fruition. Can you think of a situation where you resolved to do something good and did not accomplish it because you delayed only slightly? Most of can recall such a situation.

When the Hafetz Hayim realized there was a need for a work that would summarize and codify the decisions of the great commentators on the book of Jewish law - The Shulhan Arukh - he approached a number of distinguished sages and requested that they undertake the project. All agreed it was necessary but each found a reason not to commit himself to the task. The Hafetz Hayim reacted by undertaking the 26 year project on his own. The result is the Mishnah Berurah - the modern day classic on the laws of daily conduct and one of the most widely used books of all of Judaic writings.

As we complete the book of Shemot with these two seemingly repetitious sections - Vayakhel and Pekudey - and as the world of Jewry begins a new cycle of the study of Talmud Bali - let us all use the zeal within to consolidate the enthusiasm to make sure we can look back and say "and he made!"

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