

**YESHIVAT HAR ETZION
ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)**

**"Whoever is of a Willing Heart"
By Rav Shimon Klein**

"Take from yourselves an offering"

Moshe spoke to all the congregation of *Bnei Yisrael*, saying, "This is the matter which God has commanded, saying: Take from among you an offering to God; whoever is of a willing heart will bring it, an offering of God: gold and silver and brass and blue and purple and scarlet, and fine linen and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and *tachash* skins, and *shittim* wood, and oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense, and *shoham* stones, and stones to be set for the *efod* and for the breastplate." (*Shemot* 35:4-9)

This announcement by Moshe is the first practical step on the road to building the *Mishkan*. Its headline is, "Take from yourselves an offering; whoever is of a willing heart will bring it." The content is a long list of materials to be brought as an offering to God. Later, *Bnei Yisrael* are described as opening their hearts and contributing generously.

Why an "offering"? Why not a tax? Does the specification of an "offering" reflect a requirement or a value? The *parasha* describes a significant awakening and response among the nation, and the question that arises is: what prompts the people to display such enthusiastic generosity in contributing to the *Mishkan*?

The origin of this command concerning the *Mishkan* is to be found in the original Divine command in *Parashat Teruma*:

God spoke to Moshe, saying, "Speak to *Bnei Yisrael*, that they bring Me an offering; of every man whose heart prompts him to give you shall take My offering. And this is the offering which you shall take of them: gold and silver and brass and blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen and goats' hair and rams' skins dyed red, and *tachash* skins, and *shittim* wood; oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense, *shoham* stones and stones to be set in the *efod* and in the breastplate. And let them make Me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst." (*Shemot* 25:1-8)

This command sets forth the idea of the *Mishkan* for the first time. It follows an orderly structure: First, mention is made of a contribution for God, with the specification that this be prompted by the heart, followed by a list of the various materials to be given. Finally, we reach the point of this project: "Let them

make Me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst." This is odd: it would seem more logical to present first the ultimate goal – "Let them make Me a Sanctuary...", followed by the ramifications arising from it: the instruction to bring a contribution in all its forms.

The structure as it stands has the effect of presenting the offering and the generosity of heart as a significant subject in its own right, rather than a means, a matter subservient to the *Mishkan*.

This message arises from the command in *Parashat Teruma*, but even more so from the verses in our *parasha*, which describe its implementation. The nation hears about the idea of the *Mishkan* for the first time – and it seems obvious that this goal should be stated at the outset. Instead, Moshe starts by talking about the contribution in different forms (following God's example from *Parashat Teruma*). In fact, he goes even further, omitting altogether what would seem to be the most important message: "Let them make Me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst." Moshe addresses himself to the "wise of heart," who are called upon to engage in their artisanship, and it is only indirectly, through the description of their task, that the nation comes to understand that a *Mishkan* is to be built:

"And all who are wise of heart among you shall come and make all that God has commanded: the *Mishkan*, its tent, its covering, its clasps and its boards, its bars, its pillars and its sockets..." (*Shemot* 35:10-11)

The *Mishkan* is the purpose, the goal, but it is preceded by the "contribution" and the "generosity of heart" – not as auxiliary elements, not as mere means, but as essential matters in and of themselves.

This idea is maintained and even amplified in the verses that follow.

Command vs. action

And they came – everyone whose heart **stirred him** (*nesa'o libo*), and everyone whose **spirit made him willing** (*nadva rucho*), and they brought **God's offering** (*terumat Hashem*) for the work of the Tent of Meeting, and for all its service, and for the holy garments. And they came – men as well as women, **all who had a willing heart** (*kol nediv lev*), and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and bracelets, all jewels of gold; and every man that had **offered** (*henif*) an offering of gold to God. And every man who **had with him** (*nimtza ito*) blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen and goats' hair and red skins of rams and *tachash* skins brought them. Everyone who **offered** (*merim*) an offering of silver and brass brought **God's offering** (*terumat Hashem*), and every man who had *shittim* wood with him, for any work of the service, brought it... *Bnei Yisrael* brought a willing offering to God – every man and woman whose

heart made them willing (*nadav libam otam*) to bring, for all manner of work which God had commanded by the hand of Moshe to be made. (35:21-29)

After the command to the nation concerning the taking of the offering (4-9), the text now goes on to document the implementation – that is, how it all actually happened. We would expect the details here to correspond to the sections of the command, but starting from the very first verse there is an obvious difference. In contrast to the command, in which the "contribution" and "generosity of heart" are mentioned only once each, followed by a listing of the materials contributed, here the issue of contributing, and correspondingly the focus on the contributors, becomes the focus:

"And they came – everyone **whose heart stirred him** (*nesao libo*)..." In contrast to the introduction to the command, which spoke of an impersonal "bringing" of the contribution, the text now describes the contributors themselves, with great personal involvement: "whose heart stirred him" (literally, "lifted him") – to a high place. It is the heart that catalyzes action, lifting and elevating man. This lofty spiritual position comes about only now; it had not existed in Moshe's description.

"And everyone whose **spirit made him willing** (*nadva rucho*)" – A more outward circle is described as comprising those whose movement of spirit is "willingness."

"They brought **God's offering** (*terumat Hashem*) for the work of the Tent of Meeting and for all its service, and for the holy garments" – Only after the two-tiered description of the inner position of these two types of people does the text go on to describe the contribution for God, towards all aspects of service of the *Mishkan*.

In the next verses, the implementation of the "contributions campaign" continues, but in contrast to the list of materials set forth in Moshe's command (4-9), the focus is now on the people and the forms that their generosity took – the actions and the inner movements accompanying their giving.¹

Moreover, the generosity of the people "overflows" – to the point where those appointed over the work make a sort of emergency appeal to Moshe: "And they spoke to Moshe, saying, 'The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which God has commanded to do'" (*Shemot* 36:5). Moshe understands and responds: "And Moshe commanded, and they made a proclamation throughout the camp, saying, 'Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the Sanctuary'" (6). As a result: "So the people were

¹ Note the different expressions highlighted in the excerpt above (35:21-29) – "whose heart stirred him"; "whose spirit made him willing"; "God's offering"; "all who had a willing heart," etc.

restrained from bringing" (ibid.) The people had a strong inner need to continue contributing, and the only way to prevent more and more materials accumulating was by applying a sort of "restraint."

An additional perspective on the "contributions of the willing heart" for the construction of the *Mishkan* arises from the next source that we will examine.

Contributions in preparation for the Temple built by Shlomo

Towards the end of his life, David prepares the infrastructure for the building of the Temple, and in addressing the people, he describes his own contribution to this end:

"Now I have prepared with all my might for the House of my God – gold for the things to be made of gold, and silver for the things to be made of silver, and brass for things of brass, and iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; *shoham* stones and stones to be set, glistening stones and colored stones, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stone in abundance." (*Divrei Ha-Yamim I 29:2*)

To complement his own giving, he arouses the heart of the people to contribute, and they accede:

Then the chief of the fathers' houses and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly, and gave for the service of the house of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold and ten thousand talents of silver and eighteen thousand talents of brass, and one hundred thousand talents of iron... (ibid. 6-8)

There is an outpouring of generosity on the part of the people, and it is accompanied with joy:

And the people rejoiced for having offered willingly, because with a perfect heart they offered willingly to God; and David, the king, also rejoiced with great joy. (ibid. 9)

Beyond the joy, it is also difficult to hold back the giving:

"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly in this way, for all is from You, and it is of Yours that we have given to You." (ibid. 29:14)

David then goes on to describe the intentions that had prompted him:

"I know also my God, that You try the heart, and have pleasure in

uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these things, and now I have seen Your people, who are present here, offering joyfully to You. Lord, God of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yisrael our fathers – keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of Your people, and direct their hearts to You." (17-18)

Uprightness of heart accompanied with joy, the positive intentions behind the people's willing offering for the Temple – this is what David asks that God will keep and remember forever.

This description, like those in *Sefer Shemot*, places the contribution and the willingness of heart as the essence of the matter – not as a need and not as a secondary value. This serves to amplify our question: what is it that is entailed, involved, and represented in this giving?

"Let them make a Sanctuary for Me"

The meaning of this voluntary giving appears to be dependent on a more basic question – what is a Sanctuary?

The biblical answer to this question changes from one *Chumash* to the next.² In *Sefer Shemot*, the *Mikdash* (in this case, *Mishkan*) is described as a place that is created by *Bnei Yisrael*, a place embodying the center of their spiritual life. If they are worthy, this "work of their hands" will be "inhabited," as it were.³ This fact has many ramifications, and it would seem that the "willingness of heart" is one of them. The *Mikdash* exists because *Am Yisrael* desires it. A person gives of himself, and this is a sign of his part, his portion, in the

² This distinction rests upon a view that identifies the division between the various books of the Torah as inherently meaningful. Each *Chumash* has its own "conceptual sphere," distinguishing it from the others. This has ramifications in many different areas, including the different conceptual systems, literary elements (words that occur in one *Chumash* but do not appear in the others), and the fact that a unit that repeats itself in different *Chumashim* is actually not repeated, since the differences between the various occurrences are substantial and significant. The key to understanding them lies, to a considerable extent, on an understanding of the unique nature of the *Chumash* in question.

³ "Let them make for Me a Sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst" (*Shemot* 25:8). The role of the nation in creating the *Mishkan* is a major topic that is reflected in many descriptions of the construction of the *Mishkan* over the course of the *sefer*. A similar view is presented in *Sefer Devarim*, but there the emphasis is not on the actual building of the *Mishkan*, but rather on its future, alluding to a multi-stage process that the nation will undergo before achieving the goal of a *Mikdash*: "When you **cross over the Jordan** and **dwell** in the land which the Lord your God causes you to **inherit**, and when He **gives you rest** from all your enemies round about, and you **dwell in safety**, then **there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose** to cause His Name to dwell there; there you shall bring all that I command you..." (*Devarim* 12:10-13). The focus is on *Am Yisrael* and the historical process that they will undergo. At the pinnacle of this upward climb is the Temple, where, if the nation is worthy, God will choose to rest His Presence. The concept of "which God will choose," repeated over and over in *Sefer Devarim*, means "which God will choose to cause His Presence to rest there."

Sanctuary. When the Divine Presence eventually comes to rest in this place, it is as though it comes into the world of the individual and of the nation. Giving as an obligation would create a place based upon law and necessity that are forced upon a person. Willingness of the heart creates a place in which one's own dreams and desires are embedded.

In *Sefer Vayikra*, on the other hand, the *Mishkan* is portrayed as a domain inhabited by God. Nowhere in the entire *sefer* is there any mention of the fact that the *Mishkan* is a human creation.⁴ Instead, the *Mishkan* is a fait accompli, an independent entity with sacred status.⁵

As noted, the willing voluntarism in an offering for the *Mikdash* is symbolic of the giver giving of himself and taking an active and personal part in it. We will now examine different aspects of this idea.

Insights and ramifications

- a. There are two pillars upon which the *Mishkan* is founded. There are

⁴ Even the dedication of an animal for the sacrificial service is derived from verses in *Sefer Devarim*, rather than from *Vayikra* ("Our Sages taught: 'That which emerges from your lips...' - this is a positive commandment; 'shall you observe' - this is a negative commandment; 'and do' - this is a warning to the *beit din* to cause the person to carry out; 'as you have vowed' - the vow; 'to the Lord your God' - these are the sin offerings and guilt offerings, burnt offerings and peace offerings; 'a freewill offering' - meant literally; 'of which you have spoken' - this refers to that which is [dedicated and] sanctified for the upkeep of the Temple; 'with your mouth' - this refers to charity" (*Rosh Ha-Shana* 6a, based on *Devarim* 23:24).

⁵ At the beginning of *Sefer Vayikra*, God is present in the Tent of Meeting, and it is from there that He calls to Moshe, from the sacred place: "And God called to Moshe, and He spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying..." (1:1). The *sefer* records one Divine "speech" after another, with almost no real-life context. Descriptions from God's "perspective" perceive the wholeness, the Divinity with which He imbued the world. Human creativity and initiative in this *sefer* is extremely limited; there is no historical dating of events, nor any description of where the nation is encamped in the desert. The reason for this is that the events and commandments conveyed in this *sefer* are not dependent on time and place. The principal vessel - the altar - embodies the Divine domain, the Higher authority; temporal life is nullified upon it, and *chametz* is forbidden all year round (as *chametz* embodies human creativity, whose processes are facilitated through time). The sources in this *sefer* are Divine speech from the Tent of Meeting or at Sinai. The land belongs to God: "According to the years after the *Yovel* (Jubilee) shall you buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of the fruits shall he sell to you. According to the multitude of years shall you increase its price, and according to the fewness of years shall you diminish its price, for what he sells to you is a number of years of produce... The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is Mine, for you are strangers and sojourners with Me" (*Vayikra* 25:16-23). This means that the land belongs to the family and the tribe for whom God intended that portion. You therefore have no right or authority to decide who the owner of the land will be. The festivals, too, are "God's festivals": "The festivals of God, which you shall proclaim as holy gatherings - these are My festivals... it is a Shabbat unto God in all your dwellings. These are the festivals of God, holy gatherings, which you shall proclaim in their seasons: ... Pesach unto God... the festival of *matzot* unto God... And on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of your land, you shall observe a festival unto God for seven days; on the first day shall be a *shabbaton*, and on the eighth day shall be a *shabbaton*" (*Vayikra* 23). This is time that symbolizes the Higher authority.

the willing givers, who donate materials and resources, and there are the artisans, who engage in the actual building and fashioning of the *Mishkan* and its vessels. The first group has already been described; the text now goes on to describe the role of the second group.

The chief artisan is Betzalel: "Moshe said to *Bnei Yisrael*, 'See, God has called by name Betzalel, son of Uri, son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehuda'" (35:30). God singles him out by name, "Betzalel," and by doing so, He indicates his unique essence, an expression of the Divine spark within him. Following this personal empowerment, there is more: "He has filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship" (ibid. 31). This is an additional level of empowerment. "And to contrive works of (literally, "to think thoughts to make") art, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass..." (32) – work with these materials is attributed to "contrivance" or "thinking." Further on, Betzalel is also endowed with teaching ability – "And He has put it in his heart that he may teach" (34). All these dimensions are part of the world of an artist who gives expression to his experience as a creator. Alongside Betzalel is his assistant – "... both he and Aholiav, son of Achisamakh, of the tribe of Dan. He has filled them with wisdom of heart, to do all manner of work..."

They are joined, on the third rung, by all who are "wise of heart": "And Betzalel and Aholiav and every wise-hearted man, in whom God put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the Sanctuary, did according to all that God had commanded" (*Shemot* 36:1).

The cooperation of these two groups is underlined by the phrase common to both – "*nesiat ha-lev*," a stirring of the heart. It is with this expression that the text begins its description of the willing donors: " And they came – everyone whose heart **stirred him** (*nesa'o libo*)..." (21), and now the same quality is attributed to the wise-hearted artisans: "Moshe called Betzalel and Aholiav and every wise-hearted man in whom God had put wisdom, everyone **whose heart stirred him** (*nesa'o libo*) to come to the work to do it..." (*Shemot* 36:2). A "stirring of the heart" produces a position of giving, and it also produces the position of an artistic creator.

b. "Take from among you an offering to God" – It is with these words that the command concerning the offering begins. Moshe speaks of "taking," an act through which something is removed from one's own domain and comes to the Higher domain ("an offering to God"). Logic would seem to agree with the use of the verb "taking," as though the "long arm" of God takes something from the domain of the people and brings it to Himself. But upon deeper contemplation, the matter is not so simple, since the command to "take" is addressed to the people: "Take" ("*kechu*," in the plural form of the imperative) – it is not some foreign, external person or force that takes from you; you yourselves should "take." What is the meaning of "taking" when it is the owner himself who performs the action?

c. The answer would seem to lie in the identity of the "taker." After describing Moshe's call to Betzalel, Aholiav, and all the wise-hearted men, the text continues:

(2) And Moshe called upon Betzalel and Aholiav and every wisehearted man, in whose heart God had put wisdom, everyone whose heart stirred him to come to the work to do it.

(3) **And they took** from before Moshe all the offering which *Bnei Yisrael* had brought for the work of the service of the Sanctuary, with which to make it. And they brought more freewill offerings every morning.

The contribution has already been brought by the people; it has been placed before Moshe, and now it is taken by the wise-hearted artisans. This description comes in the wake of their personal empowerment as those whom God has called upon by name, filling them with a spirit of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, and added value, in the wake of the glorious creation which they are about to bring into the world. It would seem that in the wake of this empowerment, the "taking" by the creators of the *Mishkan* might be interpreted as being carried out by those belonging to the Divine realm, the Higher authority.⁶

In fact, this description reflects an arena that includes a taking side and a giving side, while at the same time they are both part of the sphere of "the people." This fact sits well with the description of the *Mishkan* as the creation of the people, a creation to which God will come and rest His Presence amongst His people.

d. In *Divrei Ha-Yamim*, David's speech likewise mentions willing

⁶ There are two questions that demand attention in this context. First, what is the meaning of the contrast with Moshe implied in the expression, "And they took from before Moshe"? This would seem to mean that the materials were in his domain or in his possession, and now they were passing over into the domain of those engaged in the work. Why the emphasis on them being "before Moshe"? Is the transition of the materials from him to the "creators of the *Mishkan*" indeed comparable to a transition to the Higher authority?

Furthermore, we must question the meaning of the discrepancy between Moshe's original plan and what actually happens. Moshe starts off by appealing to the nation twice: the first time he says, "Take from among you an offering to God; whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, and offering of God – gold and silver and brass..." (35:3). The second appeal is, "And let every wise-hearted man among you come and make all that God has commanded..." (35:10-19). But the text in fact describes the nation's response only to the first appeal (21-29), not to the second. Moshe comes back to the wise-hearted men once again after appointing Betzalel, in God's Name, and after describing the spirit resting upon the group (Betzalel, Aholiav, and all who are wise-hearted): "And Moshe called Betzalel and Aholiav and every wise-hearted man in whose heart God had put wisdom, everyone whose heart stirred him to come to the work, to do it" (36:2). Immediately thereafter, the Torah describes their "taking," with a realization of Moshe's prior command – "Take for yourselves" (which is also a realization of the original command at the beginning of *Parashat Teruma*, "Take for yourselves a contribution for God"). The unanswered question here is: what was the degree of projection of the change in plan?

generosity, and in this sense there is a direct connection between this outpouring and the one described in our *parasha*. However, the description of the initiative in *Sefer Melakhim* ignores the matter of the contributions, presenting an entirely different picture:

And King Shlomo raised a levy out of all of Israel, and the levy was thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand each month, by turns: a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home, and Adoniram was in charge of the levy. And Shlomo had seventy thousand porters, and eighty thousand stone cutters in the mountains, aside from Shlomo's chief officers, who were over the work – three thousand three hundred, who ruled over those engaged in the work. And the king command, and they brought great stones, expensive stones, to lay the foundation of the House with dressed stones. And Shlomo's builders, and Chiram's builders, and the Givlim hewed them, and they prepared the timber and stones to build the House. (*Melakhim I 5:27-32*)

These verses describe Shlomo's preparations for construction of the *Mishkan*: a nation-wide official program including a levy, workers, and officers who rule over those engaged in the labor. The gap between this description and that of the *Mishkan* is considerable. The following comments may shed light on the reasons for it:

1. There is almost no connection between the preparations necessary for building the *Mishkan* and those necessary for an edifice on the scale of Shlomo's Temple. The latter unquestionably requires mobilization of all tools and resources at the disposal of the king and the kingdom.

2. The description in *Divrei Ha-Yamim* is of David's preparations in anticipation of the building of the Temple (a link in the chain of other preparations). In view of this, it is no coincidence that willing giving is attributed to David, as part of the inner preparations for, the intention behind, and the coming into being of the Temple. The stage of physical construction, through the vessels of action, is attributed to Shlomo.

3. Further to the discrepancy between the *Mishkan* and Shlomo's Temple: in *Sefer Shemot*, the expression that is used, "that I may dwell in their midst", refers to the God's Presence in the midst of His people. In this sense, the willingness of the people, the inner essence and feeling amongst *Am Yisrael*, creates the basis upon which the *Mishkan* is founded. When it comes to the Temple, Shlomo speaks of an entity whose impact and importance extends beyond the borders of Israel:

"And also concerning the stranger who is not of Your people, Israel, but comes from a far country, for Your Name's sake (for they shall hear of Your great Name, and of Your strong hand, and of Your outstretched arm) – when he comes to pray towards this House – hear, You, in heaven, Your

dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calls to You, in order that all people of the earth may know Your Name, to fear You, as do Your people, Israel, and that they may know that this House, which I have built, is called by Your Name." (*Melakhim I* 8:41-43).

Shlomo views strangers and foreigners as belonging to the Temple; it is an address for them, too.⁷

Special expression of this is to be found in the fact that in the descriptions in *Sefer Melakhim*, the first mention of building the Temple is made to Chiram, king of Tyre. The first stages of the practical work are also implemented in cooperation with him, rather than in an internal Israelite framework.⁸

To sum up: we started our exploration with a question as to the place of willing generosity and voluntary contribution in the *Mishkan*. Various aspects of the text seem to indicate that this aspect carried great weight: the introduction of the subject with this idea, the intensive empowerment of the givers, and the fact that the *Mishkan* is built in its entirety from freely given contributions (except for the sockets, which are fashioned out of the half-shekels). When David lays the preliminary foundations for the future Temple, this aspect is similarly emphasized.

⁷ This association finds startling expression in *midrashei Chazal*, which bind together two events – the inauguration of the *Mishkan* and the occasion of the marriage of Pharaoh's daughter: "This is as it is written, 'The words of King Lemuel...' (*Mishlei* 31). Why is Shlomo referred to as 'Lemuel'? Rabbi Yishmael taught: On the same night that Shlomo completed the construction of the Temple, he married Bitya, Pharaoh's daughter, and the celebration of the Temple's joy mingled with the celebration of the daughter of Pharaoh, and the celebration of Pharaoh's daughter's joy was greater than the celebration of the Temple..." (*Midrash Rabba, Bamidbar* 10:1). According to the *midrash*, Shlomo binds together two events – the resting of the Divine Presence in the Temple and the marriage of the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt (the text does not refer to her by name, as though pointing to the more significant issue – the connection with Egypt, with Pharaoh as its figurehead). The Sages criticize Shlomo for this, but it seems that their criticism is aimed at his taking to an extreme a principle that is essentially positive: a real connection of the entire world to the Temple and God Who dwells in it.

⁸ This description maintains a dialogue with a different, prior description of David's kingdom. When Jerusalem is built up as the capital city, Chiram, king of Tyre, approaches David: "And Chiram, king of Tyre, sent messengers to David, with cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons, and they built David a house" (*Shmuel II* 5:11). Chiram offers materials and builders, and he builds David a royal palace. This is an altogether unusual picture: a king volunteering to build the royal palace of another king. The text goes on to record that "David perceived that God had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people, Israel" (*ibid.* 5:12). David sees before him the willingness of a foreign king to establish the royal palace, and through this he perceives the greater story – the universal inspiration of the Divine Presence, extending beyond the borders of Israel, which is now starting to become a reality. Attention should also be paid to the difference between Chiram's involvement in the realm of the human monarch, which he undertakes on an entirely voluntary basis, and his efforts for the Temple, further removed from him, which are undertaken for full payment, not out of willing generosity.

The answer we proposed pointed to a conceptual sphere and world-view that lie at the foundation of *Sefer Shemot*. This *sefer* is essentially about the building up of *Am Yisrael*, their appearance on the stage of history as a nation. In the *parashot* concerning the *Mishkan*, a new layer is added to the national edifice. The "giving" is an internal expression, a giving of the self, and the "space" thus created may be imbued with a Dweller. This distinction opens the door to many additional insights, both in *Tanakh* and in life in general.

Translated by Kaeren Fish