



דרכים בפרשה

ויקהל



וכל אשר נמצא אתו עצי שטים לכל־מלאכת העבדה הביאו

And everyone who possessed acacia wood for any work of the service brought that. (35:24)

The Midrash in Shir Hashirim Raba (1:12) discusses where the wood was brought from. אמר רבי לוי, כתיב: והבריה התיכן בתוך הקרשים, הבריה שלשים ושתים אמה היה, ומהיכן היתה נמצאת בידם לשעה, מלמד שהיו מצנעים עמהם מימות יעקב אבינו, הדא הוא דכתיב (שמות לה, כד): וכל איש אשר נמצא אתו עצי שטים, אשר נמצא עצי שטים, אין כתיב כאן, אלא אשר נמצא אתו, מתחלה בריה - center-bar, and the great *krashim*/planks along with them from Yaakov Avinu in Mitzrayim all the way to the *midbar* in order to be able to use when building the *mishkan*. Based on the dimensions of the Torah, we understand that these were extremely heavy items (the center bar itself was thirty-two amos). Carrying such cumbersome items throughout their travels was definitely no “walk in the park”.

We find that Chazal lavish their praises on Moshe Rabbeinu, describing him as חכם לב - a wise hearted person that chooses mitzvos. Moshe merited receiving this name because he chose to busy himself with the עצמות יוסף, taking them out of Mitzrayim. The gemara relates (Sota 13a) תנו רבנן בא וראה כמה חביבות מצות על משה רבינו

שכל ישראל כולן נתעסקו בביזה והוא נתעסק במצות - שנאמר חכם לב יקה מצות וגו' - *Come and see how beloved mitzvos are to Moshe Rabbeinu. At the time of the leaving Mitzrayim, all the Yidden were involved in taking the plunder from Mitzrayim, and he was involved in the performance of mitzvos, as it is stated: “The wise in heart will take mitzvos”*. The question begs to be asked: why do we not find in Chazal equal praise given to the Yidden for bringing the wood with them?

On a basic level, this can be answered as follows: Hashem had just issued the mitzvah of collecting the בייזה הים - plunder of Mitzrayim. This was the proverbial calorie-free-all-you-can-eat buffet of the finest items in the world, and it was even a mitzvah to take them. On the other hand, there was an opportunity to collect the remains of Yosef. The easy choice, which at the same time would have also been self-fulfilling, would be to take the בייזה הים. But Moshe went along the altruistic path, choosing the Mitzvah that had no side benefits. Although the Yidden took the wood with them, as difficult as it may have

been, it was not at the expense of the **ביזה** **הים**.

I heard from Rav Mordche Druk z"l another beautiful answer: There are many different types of mitzvos in the Torah. Some are easy and some are more difficult. Within the difficult ones as well, there are those that are easier than the others. For example, for the person that loves Pesach so much that he begins his countdown to Pesach from the very first day after the Yom Tov ends, sure the preparations may take a lot of work, but it is a labour of love and thus an easier mitzvah for him than others. There is also the factor of whom the mitzvah is being done for. It is certainly a lot easier to host friends for a Shabbos meal than a homeless person. One will be quicker to write a tzeddaka check to an organization or person that is more popular.

Rav Druk continued: Building the Mishkan was a mitzvah that is *bein adam lamakom*. If you would announce that you need help to *shlep* something for Hashem Himself, there would be many people lined up vying for the opportunity. However, if you give a *klaap* on the bimah asking for some volunteers to help someone from the shul move to another house, this special *bein adam lachaveiro* mitzvah would not fetch the same amount of attention. There are many more people that are willing to *shlep* when it is for Hashem, but not for someone else. Yosef Hatzaddik had many descendants; Moshe was not one of them,

but when it came to doing a chessed for another person, Moshe was right there.

Chazal tell us that during the *churban*, Yitzchak Avinu asked Hashem to have mercy on His children in the merit of *akeidas Yitzchak*, but Hashem did not acquiesce. It was only when Rachel "reminded" Hashem of how she readily handed over to Leah the *simanim* (the codes that she arranged with Yaakov that would prove she is Rachel and not an imposter), that Hashem relented.

But was this action really greater than Yitzchak's willingness to give up his life? By being sacrificed, wasn't Yitzchak also giving up his chance at getting married? The answer is as we have discussed. Yitzchak was willing to give it all up for Hashem. That is a great level. But Rachel was even willing to give it up for her sister (at the time, she did not know that Yaakov would marry her as well). She was willing to accept a life of watching her sister live with the man that she was meant to marry, just so she could spare her the embarrassment.

Good Shabbos, מרדכי אפפּעל



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