

Terumah 2016

1.

Do small details also matter?

“Its knobs and blossoms shall be (hammered) from it (the same material as the Menorah).” (25, 31)

"כפתריה ופרחיה ממנה יהיו."

The Chafetz Chaim (al Hatorah) says the Menorah resembles chachmas (the wisdom of the) Hatorah in many ways. It is for this reason that the menorah, including the base, is one solid piece. The pasuk is informing us of the prohibition of making separate pieces and attaching them. They need to come from one. The question is why the cups, knobs and flowers also need to be from the same piece? It would be much easier to have different pieces and attach them later. Why are we so strict that all of the parts of the Menorah come from the same piece? The Chafetz chaim answers and explains that this alludes to **everything that Chazal tells us, whether it's the root of the Halacha aka the main part (the Menorah), or a seemingly insignificant intricate detail. Whether big or small, every single small detail is from Hashem and from Har Sinai!** There is nothing that is not is hinted to in the Torah. This is why even the flowers, cups, and knobs need to be made from one piece.

No matter how small an area of Torah is we need to be careful with it. There are ways to do everything whether big or small. There are ‘small mitzvos and halachos’ as we will elaborate on in parshas Eikev. People unfortunately tend to trample on the mitzvos with their feet and heels, but we must be careful with them as well (as stated by Rashi quoting the Medrash Tanchuma). For example, there is a proper halachic way to put on, tie and remove our shoes (as stated in Shabbos (61a) and Shulchan Aruch siman beis). Furthermore, the Mishna Berurah (ibid) explains; there is also a proper way to put on and remove our clothing as well.

2.

The Torah is literally for everyone

“They shall make an Aron of acacia wood, two and a half amos its length; one and a half amos its width, one and a half amos its height.” (25, 10)

"ועשו ארון עצי שטים אמתים וחצי ארכו ואמה וחצי רחבו ואמה וחצי קמתו."

Many meforshim ask; **why are all the measurements halved?**

The Baal Haturim (answer one) answers that **every person who learns needs to break and lower himself and have humility.**

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh as well as the Nachlas Tzvi (page 218) (answer two) answer and explain; **only if there is a complete achdus (unity) can we have a true completion. The measurements are half in order to allude to the concept that we need to combine together to create a beautiful whole entity.**

The Kli Yakar (answer three) answers and explains that we need to know that we are incomplete. Meaning, regarding learning, mitzvah performance and perfecting our middos we are incomplete. We are all lacking somehow, regardless of how great we are. There is always more to learn. Similarly, there are always more mitzvos to perform. The pasuk in Iyov (28, 12) states “Wisdom, where can it be found?” The answer is; someone who thinks he is lacking. The reason for this is; he will strive to exert himself, toil, diligently learn, and grow. Conversely, someone who views himself as a chacham (wise person) and complete, is a fool. Similarly the Mishna in Pirkei Avos (perik four) states ‘who is a wise man? Someone who learns from everyone.’ The Kli Yakar explains that someone who views himself as incomplete will learn from everyone. When it comes to knowing Hashem, we have to know we know nothing.

This is the explanation as to why we call a chacham a talmid chacham, because he always views himself as a talmid (student). If he views himself as a student he will always strive to grow more. Even a great talmid chacham and Rosh Yeshiva must view himself as a student (in regards to learning) in order to continue to grow.

If we combine the answer of the Bal Haturim (humility) with the Kli Yakar (incompleteness), we can easily understand the explanation as to why a person is a chacham if he learns from everybody else. A chacham is someone who learns from everyone. Why does he learn from everybody else? **Since he lowers and humbles himself. He is willing to learn from literally everyone, even from a small child.** This theory can be supported by a fundamental Gemara in Taanis (7a) and Makkos (10a) Rebbi Chanina says I learned a lot from my Rebbeim, I learned more from my chavrusas, and from my students I learned the most (ומתלמידי יותר מכולם). The Ben Yehoyadah explains it is for this precise reason that a chacham is called a talmid chacham; he is always learning from his students! The Aruch Hashulchan (Yora daya siman 246 os 4) explains; if you want to know the greatness of the Torah, learn this from Moshe Rabbeinu. He was the highest human being connected to Hashem. He was greater than any mortal. However he was constantly growing and adding until he departed. The pasuk (Devarim 3, 24) quotes Moshe saying “You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness.” This is unbelievable. Moshe the leader of the entire Jewish nation and talmid chacham about whom the pasuk comments “no one amongst the Jews ever stood like Moshe”, viewed himself as only reaching the mere beginning of the Torah! Moshe was constantly learning and growing.

The Rambam (hilchos Talmud Torah 1, 10) also agrees with this concept. The Rambam writes, ‘until when is a person obligated to learn? Until he dies!’ We see from this that a person is obligated to learn more and more! This idea is expressed by Rav Pam zasa”l who was giving a shiur and there was only five minutes left. He started a Tosefos and his talmid asked what’s the point of starting since there will not be enough time to complete it. Rav Pam responded and answered by asking another question; why did Rashi stop his payrush (commentary) in Bava Basra (29) in the middle of the perek and Mesechta. Rashi knew he was going to pass away, so why did he start? Didn’t he want to bid farewell to everyone and take care of other endeavors? Rav Pam answered and explained that **you need to learn and write till death, no matter where you end off.** This is a chacham; he constantly strives to learn. As the pasuk in Mishlei (3, 15) states “It (the Torah) is more precious than pearls, and all of your desires cannot compare to it

(the desire for Torah).” "יקרה היא מפנינים וכל חפיציד לא ישבו בו." We must collect as many pearls as possible. We must collect as many mitzvos and as much Torah as we can. This also coincides perfectly with what Rav Harfenes writes (Yisroel V'oraisa page 160). Rav Harfenes recommends occasionally going in front of the sefarim shelves and looking at the sefarim. We will then come to acknowledge how much we truly have to learn!

Another (answer four) answer is as follows; **the measurements are broken to symbolize that every person has a chiyuv (obligation) to learn Torah. Even if a person is only a half; meaning he is very busy or doesn't have the greatest abilities, he still needs to learn. Learning is for every person at their own level.** With this concept in mind we can understand the pasuk in Devarim (30, 14) “the matter is very near to you - in your mouth and your heart – to perform it.” We see from this pasuk that the Torah is close to everyone. The Rambam (hilchos Talmud Torah 1, 8) as well as the Tur (Yora daya siman 246) write ‘every Jew is obligated to learn Torah (women are obligated to learn the halachos that are applicable and relevant to them). It is irrelevant if one is poor or wealthy, healthy or afflicted, single or married, old or young, there is an obligation to learn. Even if you have children you still need to learn. The Gemara in Shabbas (31) relates that one of the questions we will be asked after we die and are judged is; ‘did you fix (set aside) time every morning and night to learn?’ (As stated in Yehoshua (1, 8) “you shall delve after it day and night.)’ We see clearly from this that even the ‘half person’ who has half of the typical abilities of the average person or the individual who is super busy, must still set aside time to learn. Reb Pesach Krohn (Footsteps of the Maggid (pages 196-198) is bothered by a pasuk in Mishlei (22, 6) that states “Train (educate) the youth according to his way.” "חנך" "לנער על פי דרכו." Surprisingly and interestingly the word chanoch/חנך which is typically spelled with a vav (חנוך) isn't. Why? Shalomo is alluding, that educating the brightest, smartest and top child isn't difficult. However, educating the weaker, less intelligent child is much more challenging. It is incumbent upon us to focus on the child who is lacking and educate him in Torah. Shlomo Hamelech is telling us, even if the child is lacking certain capabilities; still educate him in a manner fitting for him. This is why the Aron's measurements were half to show that the Torah is for everyone at every point of our lives!

Thank you Yair Moshe Ausabel for typing this up.