בס"ד

פרשת ויקהל - פקודי תשע״ז       רי דניאל ברונשטיין

ויקהל משה

                   The Parsha begins –"ויקהל משה את כל עדת בני ישראל -וביום השביעי יהיה לכם שבת

שבתון להשם ,כל נדיב לבויבאה את תרומת השם" And Moshe gathered all the congregation of Bnai Yisroel, to keep the Shabbos, and to build a Mishkan. The Pri Tzadik explains, that the purpose was to exclude and remove the Eirev Rav from the covenant of Shabbos, and the contribution to building of the Mishkan.

             When Moshe wanted to take the Eirev  Rav out of Egypt, He did not consult Hashem ( Shemos 32-7). Moshe thought he could bring them תחת השכינה. The problem was that since they were not exposed to the suffering and slavery (כור הברזל) in Egypt, they did not have the mesiras nefesh necessary to accept and keep the Torah.

              Moshe converted them on a trial, wait and see basis. Did they have the heart to cling to Hashem? (Similarly, the אור גדליה explains the sugia  of the conversions of Rus and Orpah, also on a trial basis. Rus validated her conversion while Orpah turned her back and voided it.)

                 When the Eirev Rav made the Egel, (same  Rashi) they turned their backs from Hashem. (And although Bnai Yisroel also had a part in this episode, their heart is always attached to Hashem. As the Rambam holds, a husband can be beaten to give a 'Get' and it is considered to be voluntary ' for a Yid really wants to do the will of Hashem'.)

              Consequently, Hashem separated the Eirev Rav from Klal Yisroel. The Shabbos was ׳ביני ובין בני ישראל אות היא לעולם׳. The Mishkan was only for נדיב לבו- the hearts of Bnai Yisroel that desire to cling to Hashem.

הנשאים

         The נשיאים brought the “ אבני שהם ואבני המלואים  לאפד ולחשן ”. They brought the jewels for the Bigdai Kehuna. Rashi(35:27) points out that they made a חשבון, 'let them bring and we will fulfill whatever is lacking'. As mentioned above, the Yidden with joy passion and alacrity brought everything that was needed in 2 days. The נשיאים could only contribute jewels for the second phase of the Mishkan; the Bigdai Kehuna. Rashi concludes that to offset their laziness they were the first to contribute at the Dedication  Of the Mizbeach. Because of their laziness a 'yud' was taken from their name-נשאים.

              Rashi is kind to the נשיאים. The Midrash (במדבר רבה מ״חה) is not. According to the Midrash the נשיאים were upset that Moshe did not seek their contribution first. They were Baal gaivanik! When they realized that they lost out on the Mishkan, they gave for the איפד והמלואים. Again they lost a 'yud' from their title and to make amends they were first to give at the Dedication of the Mizbeach. But they needed תשובה וכפרה for their sin was not just laziness, it had conceit mixed in.

                 The answer lies in understanding that all the Bigdai Kehuna was a כפרה for sin. The Gemorroh ערכין ט״ז. goes through all the various כפרות provided by each of the בגדים. The Ephod was to compensate for avodah zarah. One could say that גאוה is a form of ע״ז as the Gemorroh in סוטה ד״ף ה. ‘Hashem says me and the Baal gaiva cannot exist in the same world'. Thus by bringing the jewels for the Ephod, the נשיאיםwere trying to effect a כפרה for themselves.