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פקודי

SEEING THINGS WITH THE TORAH VISION



FROM THE SHIURIM OF

HARAV YISROEL BROG שליט"א

ROSH HAYESHIVA, YESHIVAS TIFERES AVIGDOR
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MOSHE ACCOUNTS FOR EVERY DONATION

This week's parsha starts with the following words: אלה פקודי המשכן, "these are the accountings of the Mishkan" (Shemos 38:21). Rashi says that Moshe Rabbeinu made a *cheshbon*, an accounting, of all the donations to the *Mishkan* - the *kesev*, *zahav*, *nechoshes*, and all of the *keilim* that were needed for the *avodah* in the *Mishkan*. He details how much of each was contributed and what each was used for.¹

Now, it's interesting to note that after the Torah has already described the making of the *Mishkan*, Moshe Rabbeinu now found it necessary to introduce a whole *parshah* of "transparency." He presented an accounting, a *din v'cheshbon*, to Am Yisrael for everything they collected and all the donations. What was the reason for this? The *Midrash* (Shemos Rabbah 45:4) comments on the *passuk*, והיה כצאת משה אל האוהל, that when Moshe went out to the *Ohel Moed*, יקומו כל העם, all the people would stand by the door of their tents and watch Moshe walk by, והביטו אחרי משה, and they would look at Moshe. I've pictured this many times in my mind. There were tents lined up, and suddenly, they heard Moshe coming. Everybody would jump from his tent to stand by the door with respect and awe to get a close-up picture of Moshe. They would look at Moshe until he arrived at the *Ohel Moed*.²

Chazal (Yalkut Shimoni 415) tell us an amazing thing.³ Among those who looked at Moshe, there were two distinct reactions. One group looked at Moshe and said, "Wow, look at that *tzaddik*! Look at that *kadosh*! Look at that *ish haElokim*. He's half *malach*." Moshe Rabbeinu was something indescribable. People in this group said, ואשרי יולדתו של זה, "fortunate are the parents who gave birth to this child. Hakadosh Baruch Hu speaks with him every day. He's completely committed and dedicated to Hashem all his days." But there was another group who expressed themselves negatively. They said ראה צוארו, "Look at his neck." I guess Moshe didn't have a pencil neck. He had a neck that looked like it was *gezunt*, as it should be. They said, "Look at his

¹ אלה פקודי. בפרשה זו נמנו כל משקלי נדבת המשכן, לכסף ולזהב ולנחשת, ונמנו כל פלוי לכל עבודתו

² והיה כצאת משה אל האהל יקומו כל העם, עומדין מכאן ומכאן ומכבדין אותו, שנאמר (שמות לג, ח): וצבבו איש פתח האהל והביטו אחרי משה, מה היו אומרים, אמר רבי יצחק אשרי יולדתו, וכו'.

³ אלה פקודי המשכן כל מה שהיה משה עושה היה (הקב"ה) עושה על ידי אחרים שנאמר עבודת הלוים ביד איתמר לא עשה אלא משנגמרה מלאכת המשכן, אמר להם בואו ואעשה לפיככם חשבון נכנסו כל ישראל עד שהוא יושב ומחשב שכן אלף ושבע מאות וחמשה ושבעים שקל שעשה ויום לעמודים התחיל יושב ותמה אמר עכשיו ישראל מוצאים ידיהם לומר וטלו משה האיר הקב"ה עיניו וראה אותם עשויים ויום לעמודים אמר להם ואת האלף ושבע המאות וגו', באותה שעה נתפייסו ישראל על מלאכת המשכן שנאמר אלה פקודי המשכן, ולמה עשה עמקן חשבון הקדוש ברוך הוא מאמינו שנאמר לא כן עבדי משה וגו' אלא ששמע משה ישראל מדברים אחריו שנאמר והיה כבא משה האהלה. ומה היו אומרים רבי יצחק אומר לשבח היו אומרים אשרי יולדתו של זה, כל ימיו הקדוש ברוך הוא מדבר עמו כל ימיו הוא מושלם להקדוש ברוך הוא. והביטו אחרי משה רבי חמא אמר לגנאי היו אומרים ראה צוארו ראה שקויו ראה כרעיו אוכל משל יהודים שותה משל יהודים וכל מה שיש לו משל יהודים. וחברו משיבו ריקה אדם ששלט על מלאכת המשכן אין אתה מבקש שיהא עשיר. כיון ששמע משה כך אמר להם חייכם משהמשכן נגמר אני נותן לכם חשבון שנאמר אלה פקודי המשכן. מהו העדות זו התורה שהיו יגיעים בה אמר להם הקדוש ברוך הוא בזכות התורה ובזכות הקרבנות אני מציל אתכם מגיהנם, וכן הראה הקדוש ברוך הוא לאברהם בברית בין הבתרים שנאמר ביום ההוא כרת ה' את אברהם בברית לאמר וגו'.

feet.” They said, “Look what happens when you’re living off the Jewish people and you’re drinking from the Jewish people. And whatever this man has, it’s from the Jewish nation.” You hear that?

And then, *Chazal* say, there was another group of *leitzaanim*, another group of mockers. What did those people say? They said וְכִי אָדָם, “Can it be that a person שְׁשֵׁלֵט עַל מְלֹאכֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן, who is in charge of the donations and work of *Mishkan*, won’t become wealthy? You think he’s going to remain a poor person?” Moshe Rabbeinu heard all this. So he told them, “I heard that. חַיִּיכֶם, I swear to you that when the *Mishkan* is finished, I will give you a *cheshbon*.” He said to them, “Come. Let’s make a *cheshbon*.” And that’s *Parshas Pekudei* אֵלֶּה פְּקוּדֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן.

The first thing I want to share with you is a thought from my grandfather, Rav Zalman Sorotzkin (1881-1966), the Lutzker Rav. It’s very interesting, he said, that when the Yidden gave all their gold, silver, and expensive jewelry to Aharon to build an *eigel*, we don’t find anybody demanding a *cheshbon* of where all the jewelry went. How many pounds did you have here? What did you put into this thing? The *leitzaanei hador* never said that Aharon pilfered or skimmed a little bit off the top. What’s the *pshat*? So the zeide said: That’s the *derech* of *leitzaanei hador*. Even nowadays, it’s like that. If a person gives money for holy things, for *yeshivos*, *mosdos haTorah*, he demands to know if there’s somebody in charge of every single penny. They want to have a very exact account. But when they give money for *narishkeit* and for *chullin*, they give with an open heart and demand nothing, no accounting! But the question really is: is there a place for this *leitzaanus*? What’s the *pshat* in this *leitzaanus*? By this time, they should have known Moshe Rabbeinu. Moshe Rabbeinu was not *stam kadosh kadosh kadosh*. Moshe Rabeinu was an *anav*. He put his life on the line for Klal Yisrael. He was so dedicated. How did they come to be *choshed* (suspect) him? How did people say such a thing?! Are we talking about people who are completely nuts?! What’s the *pshat* in this?

VIEWING THE WORLD THROUGH OUR OWN LENSES

The answer is people see the world through their own glasses. You have people who think: “If I were in charge of this job, working with so much gold and silver, what would it be for me to take a little? I deserve it. What is Moshe getting paid? Zilch! Nothing! Come on. Who does a job like that and gets nothing in return?!” People can’t believe it. Human beings are like that.

Years ago, when I was doing *kiruv*, I was trying to get a very famous person to come and learn with me. I heard from others that he expressed that he wants to come, but every time I reached out to him, he declined. Finally, I asked him, “Tell me, my friend, what’s holding you back from saying yes? I know in your heart that you want to study a little Torah with me, so what’s holding you back?” And the guy burst out and said, “Money.” I said, “What money?” He said, “No one does anything for free. I’d like to know what this is going to cost me. So now that it’s out on the table, give me the number. Then I’ll be able to say yes.” So I said, “There won’t be any number.” “How can that be, Rabbi? I know rabbis. I met rabbis before. Everybody wants money.” I said, “My grandfather told me before I went into *kiruv*, ‘Never accept money from the people you learn with. Never. Because if you accept money, you’re going to have to laugh at their silly jokes, and you’re not going to be able to tell them *mussar*. But if you don’t take a penny from them, you’ll be in control,

and you'll maintain control.” I said that to the fellow. He still couldn't believe me. He asked, “Rabbi, I would be so much more satisfied. Name a figure. I could live with it, but I'm sitting here on *shpilkes* figuring out if maybe it's going to be more.”

I had another *talmid* that we were *mekarev*, *baruch Hashem*. He knew my rule. My rule was no money between us. At one point, I called my grandfather (Rav Avigdor Miller) and said, “*Zeida*, it's backfiring on me because no one is giving me any money. I do need money to live.” He said, “Don't worry about it.” I said, “But *kiruv* is not free. *Kiruv* pays. People get paid for *kiruv*.” He said, “Don't take money for *kiruv*.” Then I invited a guy for Shabbos. He was someone who I already established as *frum*. On *Motzei* Shabbos, he asked my wife, “Rebbetzin, can I do something for you?” The Rebbetzin said, “Would you mind going shopping?” So he said, “Sure, why not?” The guy was so happy to go shopping. I forgot what store it was. He went shopping. And when he came home, he told the Rebbetzin, “Don't say a thing.” My Rebbetzin said, “Don't say a thing about what?” He said, “I paid for it.” My Rebbetzin told him, “That's very nice of you, thank you.” He said, “Oh, but the Rebbi won't take any money. I tried many times to give him money.” I called up a *rav*. I said, “What should I do in such a case?” He said, “You've got to be *mechanech* them. There's a conduct for the initial stage of *kiruv*. When you're beginning to be *mekarev* them, then you can't take a dime, but once they're already family and *talmidim*, then it's a different *parshah*. You don't have to be afraid they're going to control you. Now it's the time to give.”

Once, I invited another fellow for Shabbos. At that point, he had over fifty clothing stores in several states. He was on TV every day. I remember taking him to Telshe Yeshivah for davening. I went up to the chazan and told him to make a *shtark lecha dodi*. “Make it a *varmer davening* because we have this guy here and want to impress him.” And the guy really delivered. It was *gantz geshmak*. I introduced him to Rav Chaim Stein, zt”l. I told him he's an ancient *rav* from before the war. This fellow was already an established person. “Which war?” he asked me. I said, “The Civil War. The man is hundreds of years old.” Anyway, he was looking at him. Rav Chaim shook his hand. On the way home, I asked the fellow, “So what did you think? What was your impression?” He said, “I was impressed. I was very impressed.” I said, “What point impressed you?” He said, “The threads. The clothing those young yeshiva men wear is quite impressive. I didn't see any junk in that room.” He was a clothing man, so all he saw on people were their clothes. He said, “I can tell you how much they paid for each one of those things.” And he started thinking: potential customers. He said, “Why don't you offer the boys a discount if they come to my store?” I said, “I don't want you to lose any money giving them discounts.” He said, “If you knew how little I pay for the suits, I'm making a fortune when I give them a discount.”

But that's the way people are. People view things through their own glasses. I had another fellow I used to learn with. He was a cardiologist, and he lived for cardiology. He saw every person that he met, not as a person, but only if they were a potential candidate for heart surgery. He used to come in every week to learn, and he would tell me, “Rabbi, prepare yourself. I'm telling you, you're going to have open heart surgery. There's no question about it. You have every marker there is.” Finally, I got fed up with the guy and told him, “You know, I'm getting fed up with you. Okay, let's start the process.” So

he made me this big, fancy schmancy workout in the Cleveland Clinic. When I came down there, they said, “You’re going to go first on this treadmill-like machine. They keep turning the machine faster and faster and you hold on for dear life. Meanwhile, they’re praying and hoping that you have a heart attack on the spot, and if you don’t, they tell you that you have to have heart surgery to prevent the heart attack from happening in the near future. This guy called my wife beforehand and said, “Prepare yourself and the family that your husband is going to have open heart surgery.” The guy was convinced it couldn’t be otherwise. He didn’t mean bad, but that’s all he saw, a heart. I remember he said, “Turn up the machine,” and I was able to keep on going, chugging along. So he said, “Turn it up higher.” So finally, there were about six people around watching me because this guy told them you have to come watch a heart attack in the process. And they said, “Doc, he’s doing it as good as you’re doing it. That’s the number you got. He’s passing you up already.” He said, “Okay, stop the machine.” But he couldn’t see anything else but that. That’s how a person is.

Then you have people who are business people. They walk down the street and they see a whole bunch of houses on both sides. If you’re in real estate, what are you thinking? “I’d like to buy that one. I wonder when that one is going to go on sale.” And if you see a guy standing in front of the house, you say, “*Shalom aleichem, vus macht a Yid*. Tell me, do you live here?” “No, I rent.” “Do they *vant* to sell *efshar*? *Efshar* they want to sell? What are they asking for?” That’s how people are.

VIEWING THE WORLD THROUGH THE PRISM OF TORAH

You have to know that a *talmid chacham* looks at things completely from a Torah view.

When a *talmid chacham* looks at things, he sees a Torah lesson. The Steipler once took his son Rav Chaim to the Yarkon River and the Steipler called his son, “Chaimke, come quickly,” and he said, “Look. Look at the water. Do you see that green scum on the water?” “Yeah.” “*Dos is vus de mishnah shtait*, that’s what the *mishnah* is referring to in *bameh madlikin* when it says *ולא בירוקה שעל פני המים*, and not with the green moss that’s on the water. You can’t use that for lighting.” A different *zach*.

Here is a *frum* Yid walking down the block. He looks at houses, and you know what he sees? Is there a *ma’akah* on the roof? That’s what he sees. A lot of houses today have flat roofs. You look up, and you want to see if it has a *ma’akah*. Not so *pashut*. On landings. You go to houses and you sometimes see staircases with very low railings; you’re not *yotzei*. That’s what you have to know.

My Zeida walked down the block and he looked at houses to see *mezuzos*. If he saw *mezuzos*, he saw Yidden, and when he saw Yidden, he saw opportunities to be *mevarech* them, to shower them with brachos. And would say, “I’m being *mekayem* the *ratzon* of Hashem of giving them a brachah.” That’s how he viewed people. Every potential Jew was an opportunity to give a brachah.

And so it is with everything else in life. Ask yourself if the last time you went somewhere or you saw some technology or something interesting, did you think about the *gadlus haBorei* or the message of Hashem?

A *gadol* once related on a Friday night, when people came to visit him, that a certain businessman had come to him. This businessman realized that he was being robbed. Stuff from his company was disappearing. He went over to a guy who he suspected and said to the guy, “Did you take anything from me?” And the guy denied it up and down. So the guy installed cameras. A little while later stuff was missing again so he looked at the camera and lo and behold his suspect was stealing the stuff. He invited the suspect into his office. “I want to show you a little clip.” And he shows him on the screen the clip of how he’s coming in and stealing the stuff. The guy saw this and fainted from *bushah*, from shame. Rav Shteinman said, “*Nu*, how many times are we going to have to faint when we come to the next world and they’re going to show us things we did? *Nu*?” He turned to the people he was talking to and said, “You’re still young. You could still do mitzvos. You can still *shteig*. But I’m an old man already. Very shortly, I’m going to be called to the court. What kind of face am I going to be able to show in the next world?”

You hear that? A little story, a cute story, how he caught the *ganav*. One guy would say, “Wow, the powers of technology.” But the *gadol* saw a Torah lesson in it, a lesson to behave better.

It was the same with the Chafetz Chaim. When he heard about the technology of the telephone, he said, “Hashem is being *mechazek* our *emunah* in the fact that there is an *אוון שמעת* in *shamayim*.”

In the *Megillah*, we also have a story like this. What preceded the hanging of Haman? It says Charvona was in the garden and he said: *הנה העץ אשר עשה*. “What is more, a tree that Haman made for Mordechai, whose words saved the king, is standing in the house of Haman” (Esther 7:9). What does that mean? What do those words mean? It means: You want to know what to punish Haman with? There’s a tree that he built, a big hangman’s tree, a huge tree that he put up for Mordechai who spoke good about the king, and it’s already waiting in Beis Haman. Immediately, what did Achashveirosh say? “Hang him on it!” He didn’t say, “Okay, I hear. Now I know what the address is and how to take care of him. Let’s go and do a thorough investigation.” He said, “Hang him right now.”

What kind of reaction is that?! To hang your best friend on a tree?! Does that make any sense? The Vilna Gaon says an amazing thing. He says Achashveirosh did not understand the sentence that came out of Charvona’s mouth. Charvona said the *eitz* that Haman put in his backyard for Mordechai, *asher diber tov al hamelech*. Do you know how Achashveirosh understood it? He understood that Haman said this would be a great tree for the *melech* also, also, *אשר דבר טוב על המלך* - a great tree for the *melech* also! For Mordechai and for Achashveirosh! That is what caused him to become a raging bull, a raging Putin, and to take out his anger on Haman. “Hang him on it right away,” he said.⁴

But the question is: Was Achashveirosh such an idiot? How did he misunderstand such a simple statement? We said the problem was that Achashveirosh saw a whole list of things happening and they were throwing him off. What happened? In the beginning he made a deal with Haman. The deal was that he was going to accept a pile of dough from Haman as a

⁴ אשר דבר טוב על המלך. היתה סיבה מאת ה' שיאמר כן בזה הלשון שסיבור אחשוורוש שאמר כך אשר דבר המן שטוב הוא (העץ) יותר על המלך (הגר"א על מגלת אסתר ח:ט)

matanah, but the whole thing was that no one in the world should know that Achashveirosh was behind this deal. It was to be top secret. Haman was able to go and make the decree on his own. *Nu*. Mordechai Hayehudi became aware of the *gezeirah*. How did he know about it? *Ruach hakodesh*. What did he do? Mordechai told it to Esther Hamalkah: ואת פרשת הכסף אשר אמר המן לשקול על גנוי המלך, that Haman was going to sneak the money into the storehouses of the king.

Now, officially, no one knew about this. But then, they're sitting at a wine party, Esther, Haman and Achashveirosh. And all of a sudden, Esther says כי במכרנו אני ועמי "me and my nation were sold." The *melech* went crazy. "Sold? מי זה הוא, who is the person who did this?! There's no such plan. There's no such decree to destroy the Jews." Now, what he really meant to ask was, "Who told you this?" But Esther answered המן הרע הזה. Achashveirosh understood it in his way: "Haman, you blew your mouth! You ran your mouth and you told her this story." After that, the king was pretty ticked at Haman that he didn't keep the secret, so he went out to the garden to cool off a little bit, to catch himself, and what did he see? A bunch of workers cutting down these beautiful bonsai trees that he had. He collected in his garden these rare trees that were *mamash* beautiful. He turned to the guys who are cutting down the trees and said, "Why are you doing this?" They said that Haman sent them. "Haman sent you to cut down my trees?" Now, the king was really ticked off. So he came back in and saw Haman on his knees on the bed of Esther Hamalkah. He said והגם לכבוש, "You want to conquer the *malkah* with me in the house?"

At that moment, Charvona showed up and said, "Oh, גם הנה העץ, you should know there's an *eitz* also." So he heard all these things before: Haman, Haman, Haman. Haman is trying to usurp him, to undermine him. So when he heard this, he said, "Ah! Haman once again. He wants to hang me on the tree. Hang him up first!"

PROJECTING ON OTHERS ACCORDING TO HOW WE THINK

A person sees things, he *teitches* up things and thinks he's smart. You have to know the famous *gemara* (*Sotah 47a*) that relates that Rabbi Yehoshua ben Prachya had a *talmid*.⁵ You know what his *talmid's* name was? *Oso Haish*. Uncle Yoshke. When Yannai Hamelech killed all the *chachamim*, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Prachya ran away. He fled with his *talmidim* to Alexandria in Mitzrayim. When the *matzav* got better, Rav Shimon ben Shatach sent a message to him, "You can come back now." *Nu*. On the way home, as they were traveling back to Eretz Yisrael, they stopped at somebody's house. There was a *ba'alas habayis*, a *chashuve* woman who was *mechabad* them in a very special way. So when they finished eating, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Prachya said, "How nice is this hostess! He meant to say how respectful she was, how kind she was, how good she was as a host. But the *gemara* tells us that *Oso Haish*, Yoshke, thought that the *rebbe* was speaking about her physical beauty. So he said, "*Nu*

⁵ תנו רבנן: לעולם תהא שמאל דוחה וימין מקרבת, לא כפאלישע שדחפו לגחזי בשתי ידיו, ולא כיהושע בן פרחיה שדחפו לישו הנוצרי מתלמידיו בשתי ידיו, וכו'. יהושע בן פרחיה מאי היא - פדוהו קא קטיל ינאי מלכא לרבנן, שמעון בן שטח (אטמיניהו) [אטמרתיה] אהתיה, רבי יהושע בן פרחיה אזל ערק לאלקסנדריא של מצרים. כי הוה שלמא, שלח ליה שמעון בן שטח: מני ירושלים עיר הקודש לך אלכסנדריא של מצרים: אחותי! בעלי שריו בתוכך, ואני יושבת שוממה! אמר: שמע מיהו הוה ליה שלמא. כי אתא, אקלע ליההוא אושפיזא, קם קמיהו ביקרא שפיר, עבדי ליה יקרא טובא, יתיב וקא משתבח: כמה נאה אכנסת זז! אמר ליה ישו הנוצרי: רבי, עיניה טרוטות. אמר ליה: רשע, בכך אתה עוסק? איך ארבע מאה שפורי ושמתיה. כל יומא אתא לקמיה ולא קבליה. יומא חד הוה קרי קרית שמע, אתא לקמיה. הוה בדעתיה לקבליה, אחוי ליה בדיה, סבר מדחא דמי ליה, אזל זקף לבניתא פלסא. אמר ליה: חזור בך! אמר ליה: קר מקובלני ממך, כל החוטא ומחטיא את הרבים - אין מסיפקין בידו לעשות תשובה. דאמר מר: ישו הנוצרי יושפ ויהסי ויהסי את ישראל.

nu, her eyes are a little not so lined up.” His *rebbe* looked at him and said, “You *beheimah gasah* what you are! You understood that I was speaking about her physical beauty?! Get out of here! You’re not my *talmid* anymore.”

What’s the *pshat*? That ‘*tzaddikel*,’ that Yeshkele, had a different *kuk of mentschen*. He wasn’t looking for the good, the *penimiyus*. He was looking for the *yefas toar* and he thought his *rebbe* was the same thing as him, a *zelbe mentsch*, a *zelbe beheimah*. You see that he wasn’t even embarrassed to say it! If my *rebbe* would say such a thing, I don’t think I would respond. Keep quiet. Even *misafek*. But by him, it was *barur* that’s what his *rebbe* meant. He said, “But her eyes are not so nice, *Rebbi*.”

There was once a famous story like this with the Brisker Rav. Some wise guy came to the Brisker Rav and said to the Brisker Rav, “*Chazal say tzitzis* has to be *techeilis*.” *Techeilis* is similar to the *yam* and the *yam* is similar to the *rakia*, to *shamayim*, and *shamayim* is *domeh l’kisei hakavod*. If you look at *tzitzis*, you remember the Ribono Shel Olam. The guy said to the Brisker Rav, “I have a *kasha*. By me, I’ve been looking at *tzitzis* all my life. I never was reminded of the Ribono Shel Olam once. I don’t understand this *Chazal*. Maybe the Rav could give me an *eitzah* to understand.” The guy made a joke, and said, “Maybe I have to drink some cottonseed oil and maybe then I’ll understand, to get the oil in my *machshavah*, to get my brains a little loose, then maybe I’ll see it the way the *Chazal* see it.” A *leitz mamish*.

The Brisker Rav said, “Ah.” This Brisker Rav is *gevaldig*. Listen to what he told him. The Brisker Rav said to him, “*Chazal say in mesechta Avodah Zarah* that it’s *asur* to look at colored clothing of a woman that’s hanging on a clothesline. Why? Because maybe you’ll come to *hirhurei aveirah*.” The guy said, “Yeah, yeah.” He said, “Do you understand that *Chazal*?” The guy said, “Yeah.” “If so, your *kup* is good. Your head is working. The problem is not that you lack understanding. The problem is just where your *kup* is lying. Where your *kup* is planted. If you’d be *shakua* in *yiras shamayim*,” he said, “you would look at *tzitzis* and you would understand clearly where you see the *kisei hakavod*. Because you have no *shaychus* to *yiras shamayim*, that’s why you have that question.”

DEAL WITH PEOPLE ACCORDING TO THEIR LEVEL

Moshe Rabbeinu heard people talking about him, *leitzanim*. That’s how *leitzanim* are. He said, “I’m going to give you an answer. I’m going to be transparent. I’m going to tell you.” The lesson for regular people is not to be *leitzanim* and to realize that we see things through their own lenses. The lesson for leaders is to have to deal with people according to what their *madreigah* is and where they’re holding. The Torah gave the whole *Parshas Pekudei* to teach us that there are *teirutzim*. דע מה שתשוב. You have to know what to say to whom. Sometimes you have to answer. You have to know how to answer and what to answer.

❧ IN SUMMARY ❧

Moshe Rabbeinu had to give an accounting to the people of exactly how the materials were used for the building of the Mishkan. Chazal explain that some mockers assumed that Moshe got rich by misappropriating materials, but Moshe accounted for every item that was donated. We can then ask: What should we learn from this *parshah*? There are numerous examples that show how people tend to see and judge the world based on their own worldview. Whether it is a clothing magnate who assesses people in terms of their clothing, a cardiologist who looks at others in terms of their hearts, or angry Achashveirosh who jumped to a conclusion about Haman, people's perspectives are often colored by their own prejudices. We have to learn how to relate to others based on this episode. Practically speaking, for someone in *kiruv* this could mean not accepting money from a person we are being *mekarev*, so that we can retain a straight perspective and continue to have a good influence. An additional lesson is to sharpen our own perspectives, and notice the Torah angle that is present in everything we see. This week, I will (*bli neder*) assess whether my perspective of an event aligns with a Torah viewpoint, and I will practice looking at everyday objects and situations and focus on how they relate to the *mitzvos*.

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