



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חדוותא דזעיר אנפין collections of
maamarim

given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Terumah 5763

In our *Parsha*, the construction of the *Aron Hakodesh* is detailed as follows:

וְצִפִּיתָ אֹתוֹ זָהָב טָהוֹר מִבֵּית וּמִחוּץ תִּצְפְּנוּ וְעָשִׂיתָ עָלָיו זֶרֶם זָהָב סָבִיב

And you will cover it with pure gold from the inside and from the outside,
and you will make upon it a gold crown all around it.

The *Daas Zekeinim Mi'baalei Ha'Tosfos* comments:

“It would have been fitting for the *Aron* to be made of solid gold. However,
because it will be carried on the shoulders (of the *Leviim*), it would have
been too heavy. Even though *Chazal* say (סוטה ל"ה.) - The *Aron*
carries those who carry it, this was only לפי שעה - for that time.

Similarly, we find that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* commanded us to make the
Mizbeach Ha'zahav out of wood and cover it with gold. The *Mizbeiach*
Ha'nechoshes as well was made from wood and covered with copper. This
ensured that they wouldn't be too heavy, for they were also to be carried
on the shoulders of the *Leviim*.

In our society, no wealthy individual would adorn his table with wooden
vessels plated with silver or gold. He wouldn't settle for anything less than
solid silver or gold *keilim*. How can it be that the *Mishkan* which expresses
kavod for Hashem, the *melech malchei hamlachim*, has wooden *keilim*
which are simply covered with metal? Let us not forget that the *keilim* of
the *Mishkan* weren't simply furnishings but physical items imbued with
kedusha. Nonetheless, even the most important item in the *Mishkan*, the
Aron Hakodesh, was made from wood so that it wouldn't overburden those
who carry it on their shoulders. Hashem commanded this even though He



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knows that הארון נושא את נושאי, the *Aron* would miraculously carry those who carried it.

This aspect of the *Mishkan* teaches us a key concept in *chinuch* and other areas. Parents and teachers must take care not to overburden their children or *talmidim*. Even when it seems that the child or the *talmid* can bear a heavier load, we must do what we can to lighten the burdens they bear.

In terms of *gashmiyus* this means that we shouldn't stand over them like taskmasters, forcing them to work and help with household tasks. Instead, we should find pleasant ways of motivating them to help out in ways that won't be too burdensome.

In *ruchniyus* this means that we must avoid teaching them Torah in a way that is too difficult and burdensome for them. Even though Chazal say (כתובות נ:א) that from age six, ספי ליה כתורא - a child should be taught much Torah, just as someone fattening an ox feeds it large amounts of grain, this must only be done in the correct and appropriate manner. For if *chalilah* we burden the children more than is necessary, we will lose more than we gain. Unfortunately, this phenomenon of overburdening children and *talmidim* can lead them to reject Torah and *mitzvos*, *rachmana li'tzlan*.

If the weight on their young shoulders isn't excessive, they won't try to throw it off. However, when the burden is too heavy, they cast it away, and can end up very far from *Yiddishkeit*, *rachmana litzlan*.

The same applies to the way a person treats himself. He must be careful not to be more *machmir* - stringent with himself more than is necessary, and not to take on burdens that are too heavy for him. Anything that he takes on should be carefully measured and defined to ensure that it is appropriate for his abilities and situation. Taking on too much will result in fewer accomplishments rather than more.

Even in matters of *ruchniyus*, taking on an overly ambitious project can lead a person to despair and give up. A person should learn a *kal v'chomer* from the *Aron Hakodesh*. It was constructed of wood rather than of solid metal so that the *Leviim* wouldn't be intimidated by the weight of their burden.



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Hakadosh Baruch Hu overlooked his own *kavod* and designed the *Aron* this way even though the *Leviim* wouldn't actually have to carry it. *Kal Va'chomer*, in our impoverished generation we shouldn't overburden ourselves or our children. Instead, we should do everything in a way that won't be overly difficult.

The *Mishna* in *Pirkei Avos* (ב:ט"ז) guides us to the correct approach.

הוא היה אומר, לא עליך המלאכה לגמור, ולא אתה בן חורין לבטל ממנה.
He (R. Tarfon) used to say, it is not incumbent upon you to complete the work, and you are not free to desist from it.

First of all, R. Tarfon wants a person to know that he doesn't have to complete the task. Why? Because when a person recognizes his limitations vis-à-vis the magnitude of the task he feels he must complete, he will quickly lapse into despair and despondency. He must know from the beginning of his *avoda* that אין הקב"ה בא בטרוניא עם בריותיו - Hakadosh Baruch Hu doesn't come to overburden His creations.

On the other hand, lest a person then decide to waste his days in self-indulgence and laziness, R. Tarfon also reminds us that we are never free to abandon our *avoda*. There isn't a single hour in the life of a Jew when he is exempt from his obligation to serve Hashem with all his might. He simply has to take care to make wise decisions that will help him maintain his strength and motivation, rather than break his spirit.

Im yirtze Hashem, we will be *zoche* to find the *shvil ha'zahav* - the golden path that will guide us to serving Hashem with strength and wisdom, while also knowing that we don't have to complete the *melacha*.

והשי"ת יגמור בעדנו וישלים עבודתנו, אכ"ר



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