



REBBETZIN DR. ADINA SHMIDMAN



This week's Haftorah and Parsha seem to have an obvious connection - both discuss the building of a physical space for Hashem amidst the Jewish people. And yet, there appear to be significant differences worth noting. The fundraising approach for the Mishkan was based on the people's generous giving of their resources, of their own accord. By contrast, in regards to the Beit HaMikdash, Shlomo HaMelach taxed the people to raise money for the building campaign.

Another difference was that the people donated their time for the Mishkan project while Shlomo HaMelach hired artisans to construct the Beit HaMikdash. These differences seem to suggest that there was a level of buy-in and positive spirit when it came to the Mishkan construction while the people had to be pressured and directed when it came to building the Beit HaMikdash. If this is the case, why is it that we yearn for the Beit HaMikdash?

Maybe we should be aiming to return to the Mishkan.

Perhaps what Shlomo HaMelach was instructing the people when he launched the Beit HaMikdash project was that as an established community, there are certain obligations and structures that need to be in place for a community to function well. Spontaneous behavior might work for a "start-up nation" in its nascent stage but as a nation matures, there are needs to be met and one can't rely on spontaneous generosity. Communal responsibilities are the obligation of each person in a defined and expected manner. A community built on these values creates a permanent home for Hashem rather than a temporary dwelling, a home that we hope to return to speedily in our day. ■

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