

February 8, 2014

TETZAVEH - Command

This week's *parashah* begins with the command for the Israelites to bring clear oil of pressed olives for the *ner tamid* - the Eternal Light. It goes on to describe the Ark of the Covenant, instructions for making the gold covered table, how to make the lamp stand, the construction of the *mishkan*, and the required dimensions of the Altar of Burnt Offering. If we look to the reading from the *haftarah* found in Ezekiel 43, we see the description of the Third Temple which will be built in the messianic era. While the *Torah* portion describes the first Temple, Ezekiel describes the Temple at the end of time.

When we read texts from both Exodus and Ezekiel, we can't help but notice the great detail that must be taken into account. HaShem specifies the exact dimensions, materials, and even the placement of the Temple furnishings. According to Jewish tradition, when God showed Moses the divine blueprint for the *menorah*, a second look was not enough. Moses had to go back several times in order to get every detail just right.

But why all the details? Couldn't HaShem have given us more general instructions without bogging us down with so many minute specifications? Who needs it? Well, let's look at a computer address as an example. If I try to send a love letter to my wife, but leave the dot out of her e-address, the message won't go through. I know of a woman, not my wife, who mistakenly added salt to her recipe instead of sugar. This was not a good pie. Whether they are small dots or something that looks the same, small details determine the whole outcome of things. Any detail given to us by God may not always be understandable to us or seem to be of significance, but that does not diminish its importance.

Attention to detail often gets overlooked in today's fast-paced, productivity-focused society. I urge you to slow down a bit when it comes to serving God. Take time to help a stranger. Go the extra mile. Give that special touch. Paying attention to the details may have a greater impact on your life and on others than you think.

Hebrew Exodus 30:1-2

English Exodus 30:1-6

Haftarah Ezekiel 43:13-17

B'rit Chadashah Hebrews 13:10-16