

## OFFERINGS FOR THE SANCTUARY AND THEIR CONNECTION TO G-D

Rabbi David Pinto Chlita

*It is written, "Let them take an offering for Me" (Shemot 25:2).*

This week's parsha, which deals with offerings for the Sanctuary, comes after Parshiot Yitro and Mishpatim, which deal primarily with the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai, and continue with the laws and mitzvot that were also given on Mount Sinai.

We need to understand why the verse says, "Let them take an offering for Me." What does "for Me" signify? True, Rashi explains it by citing the Midrash: "For Me – for My Name." However we still need to understand why G-d's Name is mentioned when it comes to giving an offering. There is a well-known question, one that we have already mentioned, namely why Hashem asked the Jewish people for an offering to build the Sanctuary. Do silver and gold not belong to Him, and does He not have the ability and power to do all that He wants?

We also need to understand the reason for the seemingly redundant expression in this verse: "Let them take an offering for Me – from every man whose heart motivates him, you shall take My offering." The first part of this verse ("Let them take an offering for Me") seems unnecessary, for all the Torah needed to say was, "From every man...."

In regards to the connection of Parshiot Yitro and Mishpatim with Parsha Terumah, we find the following commentary: "Since the Children of Israel joyfully took upon themselves the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, and they said: 'All that Hashem has said, we shall do and we shall hear,' G-d immediately said to Moshe: 'Speak to the Children of Israel, and let them take an offering for Me'" (Tanna D'vei Eliyahu Rabba 7). This requires an explanation, for what connection is there between the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, we shall do and we shall hear, and offerings for the Sanctuary?

We know that the goal of the Sanctuary was to make the Shechinah dwell among earthly beings, and to create a connection between G-d and Israel, a permanent connection effected by means of the Sanctuary and the rituals that took place in it, as the Ramban states in his commentary at the start of the parsha. This is the meaning of, "I will dwell among them" (Shemot 25:8), this being the goal of the Sanctuary.

Connecting to G-d by means of the Sanctuary was only possible when the Jewish people were able to completely annul themselves and their essence vis-à-vis Hashem. At that point, when they annulled their will and their thoughts before those of the Creator – when the Children of Israel said, "we shall do and we shall hear" – they were able to be united and connected to G-d, for the Shechinah would dwell among them on earth in a permanent and clear way. In fact it is not possible to be mutually connected and united when there are two different powers and personalities. Having two masters runs contrary to the concept of unity, and unity is only possible when one among the two is annulled and fused into the other.

At Mount Sinai, the Jewish people not only received the Torah, nor did they only agree to fulfill all 613 mitzvot. Above all, they annulled their personalities and will before that of G-d, this being expressed by the statement: "We shall do and we shall hear." There is no reason to weigh different opinions and to think, for there is no other intelligence or will besides G-d's. Hence we shall do and then we shall hear. Thus the entire Jewish people achieved perfect unity with G-d by accepting the Torah with the words, "We shall do and we shall hear." This is

the meaning behind the expression, "The Holy One, blessed be He, the Torah, and Israel are one."

Since the Children of Israel reached this level, they became worthy for the Shechinah to dwell among them, the result of achieving perfect unity with Hashem. He came to dwell among them, so to speak, in a permanent and clear way. As Rashi explains on the verse, "It was on the day that Moshe kalot [finished] erecting the Sanctuary" (Bamidbar 7:1): "On the day that the Sanctuary was erected, the Israelites were like a kalah, a bride coming beneath the chuppah." Like bride and groom, like two spouses, two bodies that form one, one spouse being like the other's own body, likewise the Holy One, blessed be He, and Israel were connected and united like a married couple with a single body on the day of the inauguration of the Sanctuary, when the Shechinah came to dwell among them. We have already explained that this is why the Torah separated the account of the giving of the Torah from the detailed laws that follow it with the commandment: "You shall not ascend My altar on steps" (Shemot 20:23). Steps allude to pride, which is the opposite of humility and self-annulment. Pride prevents unity between Hashem and Israel by means of the Torah. Hence this warns us not to lose the "we shall do and we shall hear" on account of pride, commanding us not to ascend the altar, which alludes to humility, by means of steps.

This was how the Children of Israel received the Torah. Through humility and by completely annulling themselves before G-d, they reached the level at which "the Holy One, blessed be He, the Torah, and Israel are one," and thus they were joined with their Creator. This is what Hashem said to them before asking that they build the Sanctuary: "Let them take an offering for Me." The foundation of the Sanctuary and the prerequisite for the dwelling of the Shechinah is that you take from yourselves an offering for Hashem. It is only when you continue to strengthen yourselves in the area of "we shall do and we shall hear" – by taking from yourselves an offering for Me, by devoting your entire being to Me, and by annulling yourselves before Hashem – that there is reason to continue by saying: "From every man whose heart motivates him, you shall take My offering." At that point, you will be worthy for the Shechinah to truly dwell among you, and you will be able to connect with G-d and become one with Him. Taking this offering means an acquisition, to be taken and completely acquired by the Holy One, blessed be He, like an offering that is consecrated to Hashem.

This self-annulment expresses itself by accepting the Torah through the statement, "We shall do and we shall hear," meaning that we have renounced our own opinions. The Torah continues with Hashem's request to the Children of Israel: "Let them take an offering for Me" – by annulling themselves in regards to the Holy Torah. This is how the Midrash explains it: "Let them take an offering for Me. It is written, 'For I have given you lekach tov [a good teaching]; do not forsake My Torah' [Mishlei 4:2]" (Shemot Rabba 33:1). The Torah and the Sanctuary are connected to one another. In fact the fusion of the Jewish people with their Creator began at the giving of the Torah through "we shall do and we shall hear," and it ended with the lekicha (literally "taking") of the Jewish people, a term used for the kiddushin. The Jewish people will therefore be acquired by their Creator through ve'yikchu ("let them take an offering for Me"), through the power of lekach tov, a good teaching, meaning through the Torah which they accepted.

We can now fully understand the verse, "Let them take an offering for Me" – which our Sages have interpreted to mean:



Publication of  
**HEVRAT PINTO**

Under the Direction of  
**Rabbi David Hanania  
Pinto Shlita**

**CHEVRAT PINTO**

207 West 78th Street  
New York - NY 10024

Tel: 1 212 721 0230  
www.hevratpinto.org  
hevratpinto@aol.com

Editor-in-Chief:  
**Hanania Soussan**

"For Me – for My Name." When the Jewish people are united with their Creator, they truly carry His Name, for they are one. As we know, the entire Torah is composed of the Names of the Holy One, blessed be He. Furthermore, the Jewish people are also alluded to in the words of the Torah. In fact the term Yisrael ("Israel") is an acronym for Yesh Shishim Ribo Otiyot Latorah ("There are 600,000 letters in the Torah" – this corresponding to the number of the Children of Israel). The letters of the Torah are the Names of the Holy One, blessed be He. Now it is written, "Then all the peoples of the earth will see that the Name of Hashem is proclaimed over you, and they will fear you" (Devarim 28:10). When the Children of Israel do the will of G-d by annulling themselves before Him and by cleaving to Him, His Name dwells upon them. Hence "they will fear you" – when non-Jews see the Jewish people, they will see, as it were, the Holy One, blessed be He, in person. This is what constitutes, "For Me – for My Name," meaning that when you take yourself for Me and for My Name, you are "taken" (consecrated) at the same time, becoming part of the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He.

When the Jewish people reach this level – the level of "we shall do and we shall hear," making themselves into a complete acquisition of Hashem in order to become a holy offering for Him – He then says, "I will dwell among them" – literally in them: I will descend and become one with them so that we reside together, like a married couple that forms a single body. First comes an awakening below by means of, "Let them take

an offering for Me," by belonging to G-d, and then comes an awakening above: "I will dwell among them."

We find an allusion to this idea in the last letters of the expression Ve'yikchu li terumah ("Let them take an offering for Me"), which has the same numerical value as the Name E-yeh, the Name of G-d that contains the Jewish people. As we know, this Name demonstrates the unity and connection of the Jewish people with Hashem, "I will be with them" (Shemot 3:14; see Ohr HaChaim ad loc.). The Name E-yeh is also alluded to in the initials of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Patriarchs of the nation, men through whom the connection of the Jewish people with Hashem began, and who were completely connected to Him and annulled themselves before Him.

When the Jewish people reach the level of, "Let them take an offering for Me," meaning complete self-annulment before G-d, their offering for the Sanctuary will be with true generosity. In fact since they will feel united with G-d, when they give for the Sanctuary they will feel that they are giving for themselves. This is the gift of a willing heart, the greatest gift possible. When a man gives to his son, he is happy to give and does so with all his heart. How much more when he gives to himself. Likewise when a Jew is united with G-d, it is truly himself that he is giving through his offering to Hashem. This is true generosity, to be of one heart with Hashem. It results in a gift that comes from the very root of life, meaning the heart, with the greatest sense of connection, a

## Real Life Stories

### The Yeshiva that was Rebuilt in a Day

The Rebbe Rabbi Yitzchak Meir, the author of Chiddushei HaRim and founder of the Gerer dynasty, was the son of Rabbi Israel Rotenberg, the Rav of Magnishov and Ger. His father was among the disciples of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, as well as being close to the Maggid of Koznitz. When he went to Koznitz, Rabbi Israel would usually bring his son with him. The Maggid loved to exchange words of Torah with this extremely bright boy.

When he grew into adulthood, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir married the daughter of the wealthy Rabbi Moshe Chalfan Lipschitz of Warsaw, quickly becoming known as the "Ilui [genius] of Warsaw." After a few years, he opened a yeshiva for extremely gifted students. His classes were known as being understandable only by those with exceptionally intelligent and sharp minds.

Over time, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir received offers to serve as the Rav of prestigious communities. However he rejected them all. Even after his father-in-law lost his entire fortune and the family experienced difficult times, he obstinately refused to accept a position in the rabbinate. He continued to learn and teach Torah while selling holy books, which earned him a very meager income.

Over time, the place which housed Rabbi Yitzchak Meir's yeshiva became too small. He therefore had to make it larger so that learning would be bearable, and also to allow new students who came knocking at the door to join. However Rabbi Yitzchak Meir was afraid that moving to a temporary location during the renovation work would detract from their Torah learning and result in a loss of study time. Hence he adamantly refused every plan to renovate and expand the yeshiva.

More and more people came to study there each day, all of them exceptional students, squeezing their way into the small space. When it became impossible to fit anything more inside, people began to use the windows as a place to write. One day, when the situation became completely unbearable, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir said: "If only someone could start and finish the renovation work in a single day! It would give me great satisfaction." However such a request seemed impossible to fulfill.

Word of this reached the ears of the chassid Reb Yankel. He racked his head to find a solution to this problem. All of a sudden, he had a brilliant idea.

A very wealthy building contractor lived in Warsaw, though he was not a chassid or an observant Jew. Reb Yankel went to find him and explained how difficult it was to study in Rabbi Yitzchak Meir's yeshiva.

This contractor, who had heard of the "Ilui of Warsaw," was not particularly moved by the plight of the yeshiva and its students. He therefore offered to do the work for a considerable sum of money, and he awaited Reb Yankel's response. "We'll speak about money later," he answered him. "However the amount of time that you've estimated for the renovation work isn't feasible."

"Meaning what?" asked the contractor with surprise.

"Meaning that the renovations have to begin and end in a single day."

The contractor looked at him as if he had completely lost his mind. "Nobody will be able to do this work for you in less time than I've said!" he declared.

Reb Yankel was not about to lower his head out of embarrassment. On the contrary, he stared at the contractor with a penetrating gaze. "Let me ask you a personal question: How many years have you been married?"

Despite his astonishment at such an unexpected question, and although he couldn't understand where Reb Yankel was going with this, he told him how many years he had been married.

"Do you have any children?" continued Reb Yankel as he delved into the contractor's personal life.

"Regrettably, I still don't have any," he replied sadly.

"Very well," Reb Yankel said with enthusiasm. "Here is what I'm offering you: Do the renovation work in a single day, and as a reward the Rebbe will give you a blessing to have children!" Needless to say, Reb Yankel had not discussed this with Rabbi Yitzchak Meir beforehand. A glimmer of hope appeared in the eyes of the contractor. He weighed Reb Yankel's every word, and then agreed to his proposal.

In the days that followed, plans for renovating the yeshiva were completed, and all the construction material was brought to the site. This great building contractor, who employed numerous workers, prepared a group of highly skilled workers for the given day. When everything was ready, Reb Yankel told Rabbi Yitzchak Meir that on the following day the renovation work would take place, exactly as he wanted, in a single day.

On the following day, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir's classes were given in a different place, as a great upheaval began within the walls of the yeshiva. Metal, bricks, various materials and numerous workers were all on the move, with our friend the contractor supervising everything.

The work continued for the entire day, the following night, and even into the early morning hours of the next day. Only a short time before the normal opening of the yeshiva, the windows were installed. What had been a small, dingy place on the day before was now a spacious hall. Several workers were still finishing the last details as the yeshiva was about to open.

When Rabbi Yitzchak Meir arrived at the yeshiva, he had difficulty believing his eyes. In a single day, the place had become unrecognizable! His eyes shined, and he was filled with joy and satisfaction. "Wonder of wonders! Marvel of marvels," he murmured.

At that point, Reb Yankel realized that the moment was right. He therefore approached Rabbi Yitzchak Meir and said, "All of this is very good, but the price is quite expensive. I promised in your name a son for the contractor!"

All of a sudden, the smile on Rabbi Yitzchak Meir's face turned into a serious expression. For a moment, he was completely immersed in thought. "May Hashem help him," he eventually said, and then he went inside to begin his daily classes.

A year later, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir was asked to be the sandak at the circumcision of the contractor's son.

### Intentions

It is written, “Let them take an offering for Me” (Shemot 25:2).

In commenting on Rashi’s explanation (“For Me – for My Name”), Rabbi Gedaliah of Lintz, a disciple of the Baal Shem Tov, cited Rabbi Shmuel of Kaminka in stating:

“We have a tradition that giving tzeddakah is always useful, even when given with selfish intentions, since the poor will benefit from it in any case.

“This is why,” he added, “in this verse Rashi underlines ‘For Me – for My Name.’”

This also explains why the verse says, “Let them take an offering for Me” rather than, “Let them give an offering to Me.” It is because giving tzeddakah is permissible even when done with selfish intentions, which is not the case for someone who receives tzeddakah. The latter must have unselfish intentions, thereby allowing him to serve G-d, and not to benefit from unnecessary things.

### An Example

It is written, “They shall make an Ark of acacia wood” (Shemot 25:10).

Why acacia wood?

G-d set an example for all time, that when a man is about to build his house from a fruit-bearing tree, he must be reminded: Since the supreme King of kings, when He commanded the Temple to be built, instructed that only non-fruit bearing trees must be used, although all things belong to Him, how much more should this apply in your case!

– Shemot Rabba 35:2

### The Symbol of Man

It is written, “You shall cover it with pure gold; inside and outside shall you cover it” (Shemot 25:11).

This gold layer “inside and outside” for the Ark of acacia wood requires an explanation, for if gold was required for the beauty and radiance of the Ark, a single outside layer would have sufficed! Why was gold necessary for the inside as well?

A marvelous idea is mentioned by Rabbi Chanan Levi Shlita in his Torah book *Imrei Chanan*:

The Ark symbolizes man, who is endowed with a good inclination (symbolized by gold), and an evil inclination (symbolized by wood).

The good inclination requires man to perfect his character traits and for his words to agree with his thoughts, just as the Ark was covered with gold inside and out. On the other hand, he must remove the evil inclination from sight and bring it under control of the good inclination from both sides, so that he does not carry out the thoughts of the evil inclination.

### The Symbol of Torah

It is written, “You shall make a Menorah of pure gold” (Shemot 25:31).

Based on what the Arizal said, meaning that the gold Menorah alludes to the holy Torah, the Ridbaz wrote that the “six branches [which] emerge from its sides” (v.32) allude to the six orders of the Mishnah that emerge from the central light, which alludes to the written Torah. The “four cups, engraved like almonds” (v.34) allude to the four parts of the Torah: Pshat, Remez, Drash, and Sod. The Menorah’s “knobs and its flowers” (ibid.) correspond to the study of Torah through pilpul, which decorates and beautifies it.

### As a Whole

It is written, “Hammered out shall the Menorah be made” (Shemot 25:31).

A special commandment was given in regards to the Menorah, one that we find in regards to no other vessel of the Sanctuary: “Hammered out shall the Menorah be made.” Everything had to be made from a single block of

gold – not only the main body of the Menorah, but also its bowls, knobs, and flowers. In fact the Holy One, blessed be He, had to show Moshe a Menorah of fire in order to explain it to him.

As Rabbi Eliyahu Murciano says in his book *Az Amarti*, this specific commandment applies to the holy Torah, for the Menorah symbolizes the Torah, which was given to us as a whole along with its bowls, knobs, and flowers, meaning the teachings of Aggadah and Halachah. Whoever says anything false about the Torah, it is as if he has denied the Torah in its entirety; he is a true unbeliever!

## In the Light of the Parsha

### Heaven Decrees According to their Words

It is written, “Let them make a Sanctuary for Me, and I will dwell among them” (Shemot 25:8).

In the Midrash our Sages say, “It is written, ‘For I have given you a good teaching; do not forsake My Torah’ [Mishlei 4:2]. ... Can you imagine a sale in which the seller is sold along with his goods? However G-d said to Israel, ‘I sold you My Torah. Yet with it, so to speak, I have also been sold,’ as it says: ‘Let them take an offering for Me’ [Shemot 25:2]. This may be compared to the only daughter of a king, whom another king married. When he wished to return to his country and take his wife with him, he [the father] said to him: ‘My daughter, whose hand I have given you, is my only child. I cannot part with her, neither can I say to you: “Do not take her,” for she is now your wife. Yet I would request this favor from you: Wherever you go live, have a room prepared for me, that I may dwell with you, for I cannot leave my daughter.’ Thus G-d said to Israel, ‘I have given you a Torah from which I cannot part, but I also cannot tell you not to take it. Yet this I do request: Wherever you go, make for Me a house where I may dwell.’ Thus it says, ‘Let them make a Sanctuary for Me, and I will dwell among them’ ” (Shemot Rabba 33:1).

The explanation of this Midrash is that the Holy One, blessed be He, made the Shechinah dwell in the Temple so as to be near the Torah, for the Temple is the root and origin of the Torah, as it is written: “If a matter of judgment is hidden from you... you shall rise up and ascend to the place that Hashem your G-d will choose. You shall come to the Kohanim, the Leviim, and to the judge who will be in those days. You shall inquire, and they will tell you the word of judgment” (Devarim 17:8-9). We also read: “For the Torah will go forth from Zion and the word of Hashem from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:3). In fact that is when the great Sanhedrin will reconvene. This is precisely what happened, since G-d made the Shechinah dwell next to the Torah, for it is found in the Holy of Holies, the place of the Holy Ark.

We must point out that before the giving of the Torah, the Holy One, blessed be He, rejoiced in it, as it is written: “I was then His delight every day” (Mishlei 8:30). Now that He gave the Torah to the Children of Israel, He can no longer rejoice in it, so to speak. Therefore what use was there in making the Shechinah dwell next to the Torah, since it was no longer possible to rejoice in it?

It seems to me that in reality, the Holy One, blessed be He, studies Torah and rejoices in it as He did before giving it to the Children of Israel, as we read in the Gemara: “Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav, ‘The day consists of twelve hours. During the first three hours, the Holy One, blessed be He, occupies Himself with Torah’ ” (Avodah Zarah 3b). And yet He gave the Torah to Israel! Hence from the Midrash, it follows that the Torah is no longer with the Holy One, blessed be He. However since everything that the Sages of Israel say in regards to Torah is enacted in Heaven, all the satisfaction that the Holy One, blessed be He, derives from Torah pertains to the novel explanations brought by the Children of Israel, as mentioned in several places in the Gemara (see Chagigah 14b).



## The Journeys of the Sanctuary

When G-d said to Moshe, "Let them make a Sanctuary for Me" (Shemot 25:8), he replied: "It is written, 'Behold, heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain You' [I Kings 8:27], and yet You say to me: 'Let them make a Sanctuary for Me'?" G-d said to him, "Moshe, it is not as you think! I only ask of you twenty cubits to the south, twenty to the north, and eight to the west. Thus I will descend and concentrate My Presence below."

The Sanctuary accompanied the Children of Israel for 480 years, starting from the second year of their departure from Egypt. They made 42 journeys in the desert, and each time they traveled, the Sanctuary was disassembled and then reassembled in their new encampment. When they entered the promised land, the Sanctuary was set up in Gilgal, where it remained while they conquered the land. Next, it was set up at Shiloh, where it remained for 369 years.

The town of Shiloh is located in a part of country belonging to the tribe of Ephraim, south of Samaria. In the year 2503, 24 years after the tribes of Israel entered the land (meaning when the conquest of the land was complete), all the people gathered together in order to construct a permanent Sanctuary for the Ark of the Covenant, and to establish a place reserved for the offering of sacrifices.

The structure which they built was made of stone and covered with curtains; it was not made of wooden beams like the Sanctuary in the desert. Placed inside were the Ark of the Covenant and the sacred vessels.

After the inauguration and consecration of the Sanctuary, Joshua convened the Sanhedrin composed of 70 elders. At the same time, lots were drawn in order to distribute the land among the tribes, which had not yet received their share.

The Sanctuary was moved after the destruction of Shiloh, first to Nob, the city of the Kohanim, and then to Gibeon after the destruction of Nob. The time during which it was firmly established in Nob and Gibeon totaled 57 years, until King Solomon undertook the construction of the Temple in all its splendor in Jerusalem, the holy city.

Let us return to Shiloh, which merited to shelter the Sanctuary and its vessels. Although not a permanent situation, it still lasted long enough, a period of 369 years. The importance of Shiloh reached its peak during the time of Eli the Kohen Gadol. Indeed, Shiloh was a pilgrimage center, for people normally came and brought offerings to the Sanctuary wherever it was located, as it is written: "This man would ascend from his city from year to year to prostrate himself and to bring offerings to Hashem, Master of Legions, in Shiloh" (I Samuel 1:3). It was in Shiloh that the young Samuel was brought to learn with Eli the Kohen Gadol.

After Eli the Kohen Gadol grew old, his sons Hophi and Pinchas did not follow his ways, and their actions aroused G-d's anger. During the war between Israel and the Philistines, Hophi and Pinchas went out to battle at Aphek along with the Ark. The Children of Israel suffered serious losses during the battle, the Ark was captured, and Hophi and Pinchas were killed. A man from the tribe of Benjamin ran from the battlefield to Shiloh to announce the disastrous news. Upon hearing it, Eli fell from his chair and died as well. The Philistines then destroyed and burned Shiloh.

After the ensuing destruction, people called this former place of the Sanctuary Taanath Shiloh [Mourning for Shiloh], since whoever passed it would mourn over its destruction (Zevachim 118b). We have no knowledge of a continued Jewish presence in this area, which is also what Rabbi Ishtori HaParchi mentions when he arrived in the region and discovered Shiloh destroyed.

## The Surprising Find

About three decades ago, archeological excavations began in this region, where remnants from the time of Eli and Samuel were found. The following account was given by archeologist Israel Finkelstein, who described what he saw: "Carbonized raisins were found in a pile on the floor of one room. These buildings were destroyed in a fierce conflagration. Burnt floors were found all over. Collapsed burnt bricks accumulated on these floors to a height of more than three feet. Some of the bricks had been baked by the blaze that had raged here. Roof collapse was discernible

in many places. ... Near the summit of the tell [hill], we found an Iron Age I installation with several collar-rim jars inside. Fourteen Iron Age silos, each about five feet in diameter were found in the northwest part of the hill...in two of these silos we discovered huge quantities of carbonized wheat."

Archeologists seeking to accurately determine the location of the Sanctuary at Shiloh discovered evidence on the flat and spacious expanse to the north of the hill. According to them, the topography corresponds to the location of the Sanctuary. Rabbi Yoel Bin Nun undertook an analysis of the terrain with the help of archeologists, and they found jagged markings in the rocks of the hill that made the terrain suitable for establishing the Sanctuary. What happened next was a surprise: The dimensions of the area were 50 by 100 cubits, which corresponds to the description of the Sanctuary given in Parsha Terumah.

More archeological evidence appeared to researchers: On the western hillside they found a pit that contained a large quantity of animal bones and pottery fragment that dated to the period of the Judges. The most likely hypothesis is that these fragments belonged to the Sanctuary in one way or another.

Evidence was also found at the hill that rises at Shiloh, where the remains of dwellings were discovered, as well as an ancient winepress that in all likelihood was used for making wine for the Sanctuary service. Discovered there as well were numerous caves, grottos containing tombs, and wells.

## A Spiritual Experience

Following the archeological excavations that occurred in the region where the Sanctuary once stood (and possibly because of them), a Jewish presence was eventually established some time later on the vestiges of this ancient village of Israel. The Jewish town of Shiloh has grown in recent years, and today over a thousand people live there. May they increase even more!

In the local synagogue, which was built with a great deal of effort and an impressive and unique architectural design based on the appearance of the Sanctuary, we find numerous motifs that bring the Sanctuary to mind. It seems that those who built this synagogue wanted to feel that they were praying in a kind of "miniature Sanctuary."

The design of the synagogue was based entirely on the model of the Sanctuary and its vessels. Its walls are made of stone on the outside and wood on the inside, as was the case with the Sanctuary at Shiloh. The number of "beams" is identical to those of the Sanctuary, namely 20. There is no fabric curtain at the entrance of the synagogue, as there was in the Sanctuary, but rather five pillars made of stone, not wood.

Twenty stone bases serve as the foundation of the synagogue, and the passageway leading to the woman's section consists of a ramp that resembles the one leading up to the Altar in the Sanctuary. The wash-basin at the entrance of the synagogue was based on the design of the kiyor, which was located in the courtyard of the Sanctuary, although it now serves all the synagogue's faithful, not just the Leviim.

The ark was designed after the model of the Ark of the Covenant, meaning with Cherubim above and poles on its sides. The rostrum in the middle of the synagogue is built very much like the Altar. It is a spiritual experience in and of itself!

## Guard Your Tongue

### It Often Leads to Resentment

It seems to me that a person must be careful not to praise Reuven in the presence of his business partner Shimon (or a wife in the presence of her husband, or a husband in the presence of his wife) for having done him the favor of lending him money, or for having given him tzeddakah, or for paying him a good salary and the like.

In fact this often leads to resentment in Shimon's heart towards his business partner Reuven, and sometimes it can even result in a loss or dispute, for the other will think that he has spent his money uselessly.

– Chafetz Chaim