



Likkutei Sichos

Volume 11 | Terumah | Sicha 1

Terumah in the spiritual service of the Jew

The word *terumah* (donation) occurs three times in our *parsha*, corresponding to the three kinds of gifts brought by the Jewish people for the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle). These donations have a spiritual dimension that applies even today. The three kinds of donations are:

(1) Donations for the *adanaim* (the sockets). The sockets supported the wooden boards that formed the tabernacle walls. The same amount was given by every person. (“The wealthy should not add and the poor should not give less.”). In the spiritual terms, the *adanim* represents the service of *kabalos ol* (submitting to the Will of Hashem). This service applies to all Jews equally.

(2) Donations of the half-shekel coin. The relevance of this donation today is the custom to read the portion of the half shekel on *Shabbos sheklaim*. And some have the custom to donate a half shekel every year on the fast of Esther. (3) Donations for the construction of the *Mishkan*. Every person donated according to his or her heart’s desire. This represents the “inner service” (relating to mind and heart, i.e., understanding and feeling) which is unique to every Jew.

Question:

However a question may be raised. The *adanim* represent *kabalas ol* which applies to all Jews equally. Therefore, all Jews should have been instructed to participate. However, the Torah obligation specifically applies to men between the ages of twenty and sixty. Conversely, the commandment to donate for the construction of the *Mishkan* represents understanding and emotion. This, in turn, requires maturity and wisdom and should have been limited to mature adults. Why, then, were all the Jewish people obligated?

Explanation:

The donation of the *adanim* (submitting to the Will of Hashem) is expressed by reciting *Shma* and prayer (called the *Amidah* or standing prayer¹). They reflect an “internal service” performed

by the heart and mind. Nevertheless, the *foundation* of the service (which must be felt) is *kabalas ol*. This explains the difference in requirements. On one hand, only mature adults are obligated to recite the *Shma* and pray, because *Shma* and prayer express the comprehensive service of the mind and heart. On the other hand, because the foundation is *kabalas ol* which must be felt, the words of the *Shma* and prayer are the same for all.

After the service of *Shma* and prayer, we proceed to the service of the rest of the day. It involves constructing the *Mishkan* by “making a dwelling place for Hashem in the lower realms.” This service applies to every Jew, yet the manner of the service is different for every individual. Because the goal is to create the dwelling place for Hashem in every place according to its characteristics.

Moshe Awakens the Essence of the Soul

Constructing the home for Hashem in the physical realm can only be done after first performing the “internal service” of the mind and heart. This service founded upon the *kabalas ol* which emerges from the essence of the Jewish soul. For this reason, Moshe gathered all the children of Israel to awaken the essence of their soul before giving the commandant to construct the tabernacle. The same is true in every generation. The “Moshe of every generation” awakens the essence of the soul of the Jew, which empowers each individual to serve Hashem with his or her internal faculties.

¹ The Amida or standing prayer is also known as Shemona Esrai, which is Hebrew for the number 18. This refers to the number of blessings which were originally recited.

