

# דברי מנחם

*Diarei Menachem*

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In this week's Parsha, we are introduced to the portions that Bnei Yisrael contributed towards the building of the Mishkan. Many are the ideas incorporated by the wording of the opening sentence that finds Hashem saying to Moshe: "Speak to the Children of Israel and let them take for Me (V'YIK-CHU LI) a gift" (Sh'mot 25:2).

As we know, the element of taking something of our own (time, money, effort) and giving to someone else in need is, indeed, taking something for ourselves, and also for Hashem (as it were): Because of the feeling of brotherhood and the sense of accomplishment; or because of the fulfilment of a Mitzva, which brings gladness to Hashem.

Our rabbis taught us that when the people gave freely of their personal belongings for the Mishkan, they were building more than just an edifice: For the Rambam, the Mishkan re-enacted the people's experience at Sinai: For now they would hear the word of G-d once again, this time through the Ark that was placed in the epicenter of the Shechina's dwelling place.

The Mishkan was to become the rallying point of the people and the destination of their offerings; there, they would achieve spiritual elevation. And what did Bnei Yisrael really "take" in return? - No less than the Shechina itself that would "dwell among them". Yes, a reminder, perhaps, of that supernal aspect of Godliness, the holy Neshama, that dwells within each and every one of us.