

SICHA POEM

Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 31

Teruma, Sicha 2

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The Tachash is a type of Chaya says Rashi,
It's skin was as beautiful as can be.
It was one of the materials that the Yidden were commanded to bring,
In order to make the Mishkan's outermost covering.

There is a debate about this creature's identity,
Whether it is a Chaya or a Beheimah is discussed in Talmud Bavli.
It is a type of large kosher Chaya, says the Talmud Yerushalmi,
What compels Rashi to conclude that it was a type of Chaya specifically?

Why Rashi continues with “It existed only at that time,” is clear,
Since about the Tachash a five year old seasoned student never did hear.
Rashi describes that it was multicolored too,
Because the Tachash is not an animal that can be found in the zoo.

However, Rashi's words still need explanation,
Why does he elaborate on Onkelos's translation?
Onkelos translates it as “Sasgona,” that should seemingly suffice,
Why add, “therefore... that it rejoices and takes pride in its colors” that are so nice?

The answer is that when Rashi defines Tachash as a type of Chaya,
He does not intend to negate the view that it is a type of Beheimah,
But rather Rashi comes to clarify,
That a Tachash is an animal and not a color of dye.

One might assume that Tachash skins compare to ram skins dyed red,
If so, "red dyed and Tachash colored ram skins," the Passuk should have said.
"Red dyed ram skins and Tachash skins" indicates that they aren't the same,
From the Tachash animal itself the Tachash skins' color came.

Rashi brings and explains Onkelos to prove his point clearly,
"Sasgona" on its own could be explained as "שש גוֹנָא" - six colors so pretty.
Therefore Rashi must continue and explain that "Sasgona" is a description,
Of an animal that rejoices and takes pride in the colors of its skin.

"Takes pride" is additional wording of Rashi,
To teach us about the Tachash's unique quality.
Its colors weren't just a beautiful feature,
But its pride about its colors were part of its essential character.

It is clear that a contribution from the animal kingdom is greater,
Then the dye from the plant kingdom which is lower.
Not only were the Tachash's colors part of its skin but they were part of its nature!
The Mishkan's uppermost covering was Tachash skin because it was superior!

To be completely part of the category of Chai was the Tachash skins role,
This reflects the inner theme of the Mishkan as a whole.
The term Chai alludes to Hakadosh Baruch Hu,
For the source of vitality for all existence comes from His existence so true!

Every entity in the world is divided into aspects three,
1. Its essential existence which is an equally shared quality,
2. Its distinctive character and defining nature,
Which differs from all other entities like fire vs water.

3. Secondary details that are additional,
To its essential character they are not integral.
The Mishkan expresses the Chai - the life force connection,
Between Hashem and even the most external aspects of creation like coloration.

Three aspects within the Mishkan we also see
1. The vessels which represent the defining nature of each entity.
2. The planks which surrounded everything equally,
Which represents that all beings exist because of Hashem only.

3. The coverings that encompass the Mishkan that are higher,
They represent the most external form that comes from Hashem's desire.
They have Bittul to Hashem and therefore they seem insignificant,
Compared to matter which comes from Hashem's speech and feels separate.

These three aspects also exist in a person's service,

1. Actual Mitzvah performance,
2. Intention, which according to one's mind and heart does vary,
3. Customs which are not necessary for the Mitzvah's validity.

Precision in the actual performance of Mitzvos is evident,
Because action is most important.
Intention also has a very important role,
Because a Mitzvah without intention is like a body without a soul.

With regards to additional details and customs, why do we need precision?
Especially concerning customs that are connected to the education of children.
The Tachash skins provide a lesson for every Jew,
External color and additional details are part of the Chaya's nature too!

Things that appear as external as can be,
Must be carried out with vitality,
Because specifically in the details is where we see,
Excitement, passion, pride and loyalty!

When we carry out Hashem's will,
Not just the big things but the customs we also fulfill,
In the best and most beautiful way,
We will merit the coming of Moshiach today!