

The architect...

Ki Tisa 5782/2022

For the past two weeks we have read about the instructions given to Moses to create the Mishkan, the Tabernacle. Structures. Clothes. Vessels. Everything given down to the smallest detail. Moses has the plans, and then God comes and tells him that he has decided that Bezalel the son of Uri and grandson of Hur, will be the one who will be the master architect, the master creator¹.

Moses was obviously humble, the Torah describes him as such, but it must have been a blow – here was a man who had fully leaned into his role as the servant of the Almighty. There is nothing he wouldn't do for God. He was ready to act and bring the vision of the Mishkan into reality. So why was there a need for Bezalel?

The Seforno notes that God's choosing of Bezalel was due to two reasons, firstly he was an artist – he had the skills – but he was also deeply spiritually inclined². The Ramban notes that that the Midrash tells us that this role had been predetermined at the creation of the world, and God was merely just informing Moses now³. Both commentaries offer compelling reasons for Bezalel's inclusion, but why not mention this earlier.

There are larger debates around the chronology of the Torah, but most of our Sages agree that the Mishkan was established as a direct result to the sin of the Golden Calf, bringing the focus of the Jewish people back to a centralised place, with a regimented expression of worship.

The Chizkuni asks why Bezalel's grandfather gets mentioned here, and responds that Hur was martyred at the sin of the Golden Calf when he tried to deter the Jewish people from partaking in idol worship⁴. Perhaps the reason why Bezalel is only mentioned now, juxtaposed to the incident (albeit in the Torah, before the story of the sin) as a way to highlight that fact.

In the Ramban's comment, he makes note that each of us has a predestined task that we have been divinely tasked to do. While we don't always know what that task is, we spend our life time trying to pursue it, and search for it. The Talmud explains what made Bezalel so spiritually attuned to take on this role⁵. But it isn't just about having the skills to do something, sometimes you need the situation to arise whereby you realise who the puzzle all fits together, and you can actually make the impact through your predestined task.

The Torah teaches us that every person has a role to play, even if there is someone else who might have the same skill sets, when it is your time to act and create impact, it is your time, and no others.

All citations can be found in **A New Page of Talmud**