

Parshat Vayakhel

Despite its heavily technical, famously repetitious, and externally focused descriptions, Parshat Vayakhel is deeply concerned with the inner dimensions of the human psyche. The verses are saturated with heart, as the word *lev* appears a dozen times. *Lev* connotes not just emotion, but indicates many psychological constructs such as thinking, memory, inclinations, desire, and motivation. In Parshat Vayakhel we encounter hearts that are lifted, generous, and wise.

Many commentators focus and elaborate on these internal descriptions, portraying the Israelites as virtuous volunteers who are inspired and committed to both donate generously and dedicate their time and energy to build the Tabernacle.

Some commentaries accentuate the importance of the inner world over the external manifestations. Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski argues that God asked

and implementing ambitious action can lead to exponential achievement.

Ideally these two different emphases are ultimately complementary. Perfecting our internal thoughts, emotions, and motivations should

engender tangible constructive expressions. Our goal is to produce sanctified actions that are