

PHILOTORAH

לה"ו

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו וא'להי אבותינו שתשלח מהרה רפואה שלמה מן השמים, רפואת הנפש ורפואת הגוף לפצועי המלחמה, ולנפגעי מעשי טרור ואנטישמיות בישראל ובכל מקום שהם - עם שאר חולי ישראל. אמן.

May HaShem protect our soldiers; may He send Refu'ah Sh'leima to the many injured; may He console the bereaved families and all of Israel; may He end this war with success and peace for Medinat Yisrael and Klal Yisrael wherever we are.



YERUSHALAYIM in/out times for Parshat **T'RUMA**

ד' אדר ה'תשפ"ו • February 20-21, '26

🕯️ 4:55PM PLAG 4:20PM • 🕯️ 6:08PM R' Tam 6:43PM

Use the Z'MANIM link for other locales

משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה

HAFSAKOT

Parshat SH'KALIM is the Shabbat on or before Rosh Chodesh Adar. When there are two Adars, it is the second one to which Sh'kalim is attached.

Parshat ZACHOR is the Shabbat before Purim.

Parshat PARA is the Shabbat before Parshat HaChodesh.

Parshat HACHODESH is the Shabbat of or before Rosh Chodesh Nisan.

When Sh'kalim or HaChodesh is on Shabbat Rosh Chodesh, we have a three-Torah situation. They both cannot be in the same year - it's either one or the other or neither.

When I was a kid (maybe 8 or 9), a man in shul showed me the following in an old siddur or chumash, and asked if I knew what it meant.

בו דד וביו זטו

I had no idea. He seemed to be disappointed in me but was eager to teach me.

This is the code for the four possible situations of HAFSAKOT.

Huh?

The Four Special Parshiyot can never

be read on consecutive Shabbatot - there must be at least one Shabbat, possibly two, on which we read only Parshat HaShavua without a second Torah and a special Maftir. A Shabbat without a special Maftir, within the sequence of the Four Parshiyot, is called a HAFSAKA.

It follows that the Four Parshiyot span five (usual) or six (rarer) Shabbatot.

When the first day of Adar (or Adar Bet when there are two) is on a Monday (BET), then the 6th of Adar (VAV) is a HAFSAKA. Hence, BET-VAV. The break will be between Sh'kalim and Zachor. Option 1. Occurs 32% of years. The hafsaka for this option can be T'ruma, P'kudei, or Vayikra.

When the first day of Adar is on Wednesday (DALET), then the fourth of Adar (DALET) is the HAFSAKA. The break will be between Sh'kalim and Zachor. Option 2. Occurs 28.5% of years. The hafsaka for this option can be T'ruma or P'kudei.

This year 5786 is option 2.

Note that the 4th letter of the ALEF-BET is DALET (not daled, which many of us thought it was). The name of the letter is related to 'door'.

When the first day of adar is on Friday (VAV), there will be two HAFSAKOT, one on the second of

Adar (BET) and one on the 16th of Adar (YUD-VAV, rather than the TET-ZAYIN we use today). The breaks will be between Sh'kalim and Zachor -and- between Zachor and Para. By definition, there cannot be a hafsaka between Para and HaChodesh. Option 3. Occurs 28% of years. The first hafsaka for this option can be T'ruma or P'kudei; the second hafsaka can be Ki Tisa or Tzav.

When the first day of Adar is Shabbat (ZAYIN), then the HAFSAKA will be on the 15th of the month (TET-VAV). The break will be between Zachor and Para. Option 4. Occurs 11.5% of years. The hafsaka for this option can be T'tzaveh, Ki Tisa, or Tzav.

But since the 15th of Adar is Shushan Purim, which is observed in Yerushalayim, we will have a two-Torah Shabbat on the HAFSAKA, on which we read the 9-pasuk Torah reading of Purim morning, as Maftir in the second Torah.

Until I learned the above, this is what hafsaka meant to me - recess at school:



T'RUMA



19th of 54 sedras;
7th of 11 in Sh'mot

Written on 154.8 lines; ranks 43rd

9 Parshiyot; 4 open, 5 closed

96 p'sukim - ranks 38 (9th in Sh'mot)
T'ruma is more Tzav than Tzav!

1145 words - ranks 45 (10th in Sh'mot)

4692 letters - ranks 41 (9th in Sh'mot)

T'ruma is a short sedra with very short p'sukim (especially in words per pasuk)

MITZVOT

3 mitzvot; 2 positive, 1 prohibition

One of the mitzvot asei in the sedra is a super-mitzva, in that it includes the many commands to make all the furnishings of the Mikdash.

Further, the fulfillment of this mitzva facilitates many others.

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI; L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek & pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

Kohen - First Aliya - 16 p'sukim - 25:1-16

[P> 25:1 (9)] G-d tells Moshe to tell the People to donate materials in amounts that "each person sees fit". The donations were to be of gold, silver, copper; dyed wools (blue, purple, red), fine linen; goat-hair fabric, red-dyed sheep-skins, Tachash skins; acacia wood; oil for light, spices for the anointing oil and the incense offerings; gemstones for the Eifod and the Choshen.

SDT: In the list of materials donated by the people, the gems for the Eifod and Choshen are mentioned last. They were the most valuable of the gifts - why mention them last? Rav Moshe Sternbach quotes two reasons from different sources.

One, that they were brought to us by the Heavenly Clouds, without any effort on our part. Human effort is a major factor in the value of a contribution to the community.

Two, that the Nesi'im waited until last to give what was lacking. As valuable as was their gift and as noble were their motives - they should not have followed; they should have led.

It seems from our sources that silver was not as "as each person sees fit" as the other materials. Almost all of the silver (used for the ADANIM, foundation blocks of the Mishkan)

came from the mandatory and specific collection of the silver half-shekel. Some additional silver that was donated was used for Mishkan "decorative trim" and holy vessels. It is significant that it was specifically the foundation of the Mishkan that came from the silver half-shekels, that donation that all who participated share in it equally.

"And they shall make for Me a Sanctuary, and I will dwell in their midst" [95, A20 25:8]. This well-known pasuk constitutes the mitzva to build the Mishkan in that generation, and to build the Beit HaMikdash in later times (including our own). Each time the Mishkan was taken apart, transported, and reassembled, the mitzva was fulfilled. It was fulfilled by Shlomo HaMelech and his generation, and by Ezra HaSofer and his generation. It will be fulfilled IY"H when the third Beit HaMikdash will be built, IY"H in our own time.

SDT: Some interpret the word B'TOCHAM as "within each Jew", not just in the midst of the People, thereby personalizing the relationship between G-d and each Jew.

V'YIKCHU rather than **V'YITNU**. "Take" rather than "give". Famous question. The Malbim answers it this way. Really, everything belongs to G-d. So how can we give to Him. Our first step is to take from Him by using worldly goods for sacred purposes.

Just as making a bracha enables us to take possession of food which is actually G-d's, so too did the donations of materials for the Mishkan make those materials ours to give (and the balance to keep).

MITZVAnotes

Rambam gives 14 rules for the counting of the 613 mitzvot. Rule #12 is that it is not "appropriate" to count as separate mitzvot those commands that are part of a more all-encompassing mitzva. Therefore, Rambam does NOT count among the 613 the mitzvot to make the Aron, Menora, Shulchan, Altars, etc. since they are included in Building the Mikdash. In other words, ALL of the details of the building of the Mikdash are included in this one single Mitzvat Asei.

Other mitzva-counters disagree (in part). E.g. Ramban counts the making of the Aron as a separate mitzva (but not the other sacred vessels).

And, as you will see, there are specific details that are counted as separate mitzvot by Rambam too.

G-d will show the various forms that the work should take as models for the people to follow in M'lechet HaMishkan, the sacred task of building the Mikdash.

[S> 25:10 (13)] The first specific command is that of making the Aron

(Ark). It is to be made of wood, gold-plated inside and out. Four gold rings are to be fixed to its sides to receive the Carrying Poles (also made of gold-plated wood). The Carrying Poles, once inserted into the rings, may never be removed [96, L86 25:15].

MITZVAnotes

Note that although all the positive commands related to the details of each of the vessels are included within the "master-mitzva" of building the Mikdash (and everything in it), this prohibition is counted separately. In other words, the commands to make the Aron, to plate it with gold, to attach rings, to make poles, to cover them with gold, to put a decorative border around the top of the Aron, to make the lid, to fashion the K'ruvim from the Kaporet (lid), etc. etc. are all part of the mitzva to make the Sanctuary. The prohibition of removing the carrying poles is its own mitzva. To put the carrying rods into the rings is not its own mitzva, but the prohibition of ever removing them is.

The "Testimony" (the LUCHOT, the Tablets) shall be placed in the Aron.

Clarification: Some commentaries describe the ARON as three nested, open-top boxes - an outer box of gold, a middle box of wood, and an inner box of gold which had a rim to cover over the thickness of the

wooden box, so that only gold would be visible both from the outside and inside of the ARON. There are different opinions as to how thick the gold plating was.

Levi - Second Aliya - 24 p'sukim - 25:17-40

A thick, solid gold lid (called the KAPORET) is to be made for the Aron. From the lid are to be formed two Cherubs (K'ruvim) facing each other with their wings spread out above the lid. Communication from G-d to Moshe will be from "between the two K'ruvim".

Think about this... It seems a bit strange, does it not, that we would be commanded to make the K'ruvim in light of the strong prohibitions against graven images. And more so, if we note the chronology of the events in the months following the Exodus - specifically, that the command to build the Mikdash was given to the People in the wake of the Golden Calf fiasco. Golden Calf, no - but K'ruvim, yes? The "answer" is that **G-d is the Boss**. He says no graven images - then we dare not. And so, the Golden Calf is the ultimate affront to G-d. He commands us to make the K'ruvim, then we do. There are many examples of this same idea. Lighting fire is forbidden on Shabbat. In the Mikdash it is required. Piku'ach Nefesh

situations also require it. This is not contradictory. This is recognizing G-d's mastery of the world and our commitment to follow His commands.

[P> 25:23 (8)] A special table of gold-plated wood shall be made; a frame and decorative border to the frame are to be made of gold. Four gold rings are to be attached to the legs of the table as receptacles for the carrying rods. Shelves and supports for the shelves complete the Shulchan.

The Lechem Panim (Showbread) are to be placed on the Shulchan at all times [97, A27 25:30].

MITZVAnotes

This is not considered a detail of the making of the Shulchan, it is its own mitzva. The mitzva involves baking 12 special loaves (they were halachic matza) on Friday to replace the previous week's loaves on Shabbat. Tradition records a weekly miracle that the one-week-old Lechem HaPanim was found to be fresh by the kohanim on duty who shared in eating it. This mitzva makes the statement that we should not view food as only the physical necessity that the rest of the world sees it as, but rather we are challenged to add a spiritual dimension to even this most basic of our human activities. Lechem HaPanim are the symbol; our laws of kashrut, brachot, and more, help us achieve the spiritual levels of this

concept. In the Shabbat Z'mira KI ESHM'RA SHABBAT, we sing that G-d gave a Torah-mitzva to the Kohanim to put Lechem HaPanim on the Shulchan on Shabbat. THEREFORE, we are forbidden to fast on Shabbat (except for Yom Kippur) according to our Sages. In other words, G-d did not include a food in the Temple service just to feed Kohanim. G-d is showing us the potential spirituality of food. Take this lesson, He says, from the Mikdash into your homes. Food is not incidental to Shabbat; it is a significant part of our observance of Shabbat. We can see this from the earlier (Parshat B'shalach) introduction of Shabbat to the people of Israel. We were first taught Shabbat in the context of the manna. "And Moshe said - Eat it TODAY, for TODAY is Shabbat to HaShem, TODAY you will not find it in the field." As significant to Jewish Life as is fasting, so too is eating. It is part of our Judaism, not just a physical need we have to satisfy.

Some Chumashim put Sh'lishi here

[P> 25:31 (10)] The Menorah is to be made of solid gold, one continuous piece, a central branch with six side branches (3 on each side), decorative orbs, flowers, and cups adorned the ends of each branch, with additional ones on the central branch. The Menorah's utensils were also made of gold. Additionally, there was a 3-step platform that was used by the Kohen

when he tended and lit the Menorah - not that he wouldn't be able to reach the lamps, but so that he wouldn't have to raise his hands above his forehead, which is problematic for a Kohein Gadol because of the Tzitz he wore there. (The oil cups were separate and either attached or placed at the top of the branches.)

SDT: All parts of the Menorah were integral to the whole; none was "merely" attached. Torat Moshe applies this to the People of Israel and, with a play on words, says that even Jews who have strayed from Torah and mitzvot are part of the whole.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 14 p'sukim - 26:1-14

[S> 26:1 (14)] The MISHKAN was a roofless structure covered with three layers of coverings. The first was called the MISHKAN (the term is used for the whole structure as well as the first fabric covering - don't be confused, even though it is confusing) and was made of 10 panels of woven fabric made from three different colors of dyed wool, plus white linen. Five panels were attached to form one section; similarly for the other five panels. The two sections thus formed were linked with buttons of gold through loops of blue wool, the buttons attached the loops of T'cheilet on the edge of one section and the

loops woven onto the edge of the other section. The weave of the Mishkan included images known as K'ruvim (don't be confused).

Above the Mishkan was an 11-panel covering (sections of six and five panels joined with copper buttons) made of goat hair. The Mishkan was decorative; this covering, known as the OHEL, was utilitarian, affording protection from the elements. The OHEL and MISHKAN covered the sides of the structure as well as the top.

The topmost covering (some say it was just on the top, not the sides; others say it too draped down the walls of the Mishkan) was made of red-dyed sheepskin and Tachash skins.

FYI - it is well-known that Moshe's name is not to be found in T'tzaveh. Interesting to note that it only occurs once in T'ruma - in first pasuk

FOR YOUR INFORMATION... The Mishkan, as described in the Torah, functioned for the 40 years of the Wilderness (actually 39 years), and the first 14 years in Eretz Yisrael (in GILGAL), the years of conquest and settlement. After that, a stone structure - with the same dimensions as presented in Parshat T'ruma for the Mishkan - was made in SHILOH to replace the gold-covered wooden wall sections. (The K'rashim of the Mishkan were not used; they were buried.) The three coverings were the same, as were the furnishings inside

the Mishkan. The Mishkan stood in SHILOH for 369 years. After ELI HAKOHEN died, the Mishkan was set up in NOV, where it stood for 13 years, and then (after Shmuel's death) in GIV'ON for 44 years. That's a total of 480 years, from the Exodus until the first Beit HaMikdash was begun. It took 7 years to finish the first Bayit. The dimensions of the Beit HaMikdash were very different from those of the Mishkan.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 16 p'sukim - 26:15-30

[P> 26:15 (16)] The walls of the Mishkan were gold-plated wood planks. Each board had two pegs to be inserted into silver foundation blocks. Boards were joined by square gold rings into slits at the top of the boards; connecting rods through rings mounted on the sides, above and below their mid-lines; and a central bolt through the thickness of the boards, internally. There were to be 20 boards each for the north and south walls, eight on the west. The east side had no boards; it was covered by a special curtain.

SDT: Rashi brings a Midrash that Yaakov Avinu foresaw with Divine Vision that wood would be needed by his descendants upon their departure from Egypt. He brought saplings with him to Egypt which he planted and told his children to take the wood with them when they left Egypt.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya - 7 p'sukim - 26:31-37

[S> 26:31 (7)] A woven curtain (like the first covering of the Mishkan) was to be hung from four gold-plated wooden pillars to separate between the Holy of Holies and the main hall of the Sanctuary. This curtain is called the PAROCHET, and gives its name to the curtain which we place on the Aron Kodesh in shul. Rashi explains that Parochet means Mechitza, partition, or in the language of our Sages, Pargod, a partition between a king and his subjects. As such, the Parochet in shul also separates the congregation from the Torahs.

MA'ASEI CHOSHEIV, Rashi explains is highly skilled weaving (maybe involving embroidery?) which results in different designs on each side of the fabric.

The Aron is to be put into the Holy of Holies. The Shulchan on the north wall (2½ amot from the north wall) opposite the Menorah on the south wall (also 2½ amot from the south wall) are placed outside the Parochet in the main section of the Mishkan.

During Chanuka, the custom is to place the Chanukiya on the south wall of the shul, to commemorate the Menorah's position in the Mikdash.

A curtain similar to the Parochet was to be hung across the entrance of the Mishkan. This MASACH is to be hung

on five wooden pillars plated with gold, fitted with gold hooks, and inserted into gold foundation sockets. The Masach measured 10 amot by 10 amot, as did the Parochet.

Some commentaries say that each curtain hung from hooks on the supporting pillars. Others say that a rod was inserted at the top of each curtain and the rod was suspended from the hooks on the pillars. This allows the Parochet and Masach to hang evenly without sagging (just like today's curtain rods).

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 8 p'sukim - 27:1-8

[S> 27:1 (8)] The Mizbei'ach (Altar) is to be made of wood, plated with copper. It is a square with raised corners. All vessels and utensils for this Altar were to be made of copper, as are the rings for the carrying rods. This Altar was outside the Mishkan, in the courtyard of the Mikdash and was used for most of the sacrifices. (Unlike the internal, gold, incense Altar - not mentioned in this week's sedra).

The Torah says that this Altar was 3 amot tall. R. Yehuda says: understand it as it is written. R' Yosi says just as the internal Altar is twice as tall as it is wide and long, so too is this one. It measures 5 amot on each side of the square, therefore, it is 10 amot tall. But the Torah says three? That is, measured from its SOVEV.

The Aron, Shulchan, Menora are 1,2,3 in Parshat T'ruma. Then the structure of the Mishkan, then the External Altar. And then, the courtyard of the Mishkan. Internal (golden, incense) Altar doesn't come until T'tzaveh - after the garments of the Kohanim. The Washing Basin and its Stand don't show up until the beginning of Ki Tisa. When the actual construction is described in Vayakhel and P'kudei, the order is different.

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya - 11 p'sukim - 27:9-19

[S> 27:9 (11)] Linen curtains were to be made, as were wooden columns, decorated (trimmed, not totally covered) with silver. The courtyard curtains were to be hung from silver hooks on these columns. Each column was supported by a copper foundation socket. An entrance curtain was to be woven in the style of the Mishkan and the Parochet, and this Masach was to be hung across the eastern side of the courtyard. Copper spikes anchored the curtains that surrounded the Mishkan.

Haftara - 20 p'sukim - M'lachim Alef 5:26-6:13

In most years (85.7%), this haftara is read for Parshat T'ruma (as it is, this year). Once in a while, it is preempted by the Shabbat-R"Ch haftara (6.66%) or the Sh'kalim haftara (3.31%) or the Zachor haftara (4.33%).

The Haftara describes the preparation for the building of the first Beit HaMikdash, much like the Torah presents the preparation for the building of the Mishkan. One notices differences between the building of the Mishkan and the building of the Beit HaMikdash, especially on the point of participation of the people. In the case of the Mishkan, there was a high level of enthusiasm and volunteerism that even had Moshe begging the people to stop bringing materials. In the case of the Beit HaMikdash, there were conscriptions of labor forces to do some of the work to supply material for the Beit HaMikdash.

In the sedra we find the command to build the Mikdash and the purpose thereof - namely, so that G-d's Presence will dwell among us.

The haftara spells things out more clearly. This House, says G-d to Shlomo HaMelech, which you are building - IF you follow my laws and My statutes you shall do, and preserve all of the mitzvot to 'walk' with them, THEN I will keep My promise that I made to your father David, And I will dwell among Bnei Yisrael and I will never abandon My nation Israel. (6:12-13)

V'ASU LI MIKDASH is the mitzva. **V'SHACHANTI B'TOCHAM** is the promise, conditional upon our keeping the Torah.

Bringing the Prophets to Life

Weekly insights into the Haftara by Rabbi Nachman (Neil) Winkler

Author of Bringing the Prophets to Life (Gefen Publ.)

Construction That Led to Destruction

T'ruma - 20 p'sukim

- M'lachim Alef 5:26-6:13

Parashat T'ruma opens up the world of sacrificial rite to Israel by detailing the construction of the Mishkan, describing the vessels required for the rites and enumerating the raw materials necessary for the project. Our haftara parallels the parasha, describing the construction of Bayit Rishon (the first Beit HaMikdash) in detail by including the specific dimensions of each part of the building. And, although our haftara does not include the chapter's description of all the Temple's vessels (found in subsequent p'sukim), it does contain a closing phrase that parallels the promise we read in the parasha, i.e., Hashem's pledge to dwell in the midst of Israel through the presence of His Shechina in the Mikdash, just as He promised regarding the Mishkan.

Given these common themes, there is no need to search for any "esoteric" connection between the parasha and the haftara. Or is there?

Certainly, this sixth perek forms a perfect connection to the theme of our parasha, but, given that truth, why does the reading begin in the fifth chapter? What purpose was there to include the number of laborers involved in the massive undertaking (30,000) or their division of shifts sent to Levanon for wood (three shifts - 10,000 @ month)? Why did our Rabbis insist on including the number of porters (70,000), stone masons (80,000) and overseers (3300) - details that we do not find in our parasha? As impressive as the entire enterprise was, did this information have to be included in our haftara?

There must be a reason.

In order to understand the message Chazal wanted to share with us, we turn to the G'mara in Masechet Sanhedrin (21b) where it states:

"The moment Shlomo married Par'o's daughter, the angel Gavriel embedded a reed in the bottom of the sea on which a sandbank formed and upon which the city of Rome was eventually built."

Yet, this critique of Shlomo seems somewhat puzzling. After all, we first read of his marriage to the Egyptian princess in the beginning of the third perek, in which find no hint of criticism or reproach of the marriage, even though it includes the honor that Shlomo bestowed upon the

princess by having her dwell in the royal city (Ir David)!

It would seem, therefore, that Chazal based their discomfort of the King's actions on the verses in perek 11 that calls attention to how he married many foreign women including the Pharaoh's daughter! So, why do our Rabbis rely upon the negative assessment in the eleventh chapter rather than highlighting the more positive depiction described in the third perek?

I would humbly submit that Chazal understood how, in the early years of Shlomo's reign, his marriage to an Egyptian princess had both political and diplomatic impact. It solidified Israel's alliance with this powerful empire and it elevated her stature and influence within the neighboring states. For this reason, it was seen as an acceptable political and diplomatic act. But Shlomo's increasing political unions that were commonly achieved through his marriages with foreign women, led him astray, leading him to trespass the Torah prohibition against excessive number of wives - a law meant to prevent any foreign influences that would lead Israel away from Hashem.

And the earliest indication of how these influences impacted Shlomo, is found in the opening verses our haftara!

VAYA'AL HAMELECH SHLOMO MAS - in preparation for the massive construction, we read that Shlomo imposed a levy of forced labor upon thousands of his citizens. Chief Rabbi Dr. J. H. Hertz, commented: "Israel had been fatally familiar with the ugly word MAS, labor, wrung from them by hard taskmasters (in Egypt)." He continues by suggesting that Shlomo may have learned this practice from his wife's father, the Egyptian Pharaoh. Rabbi Hertz adds that the nation's widespread objection to this practice eventually led to the collapse of his kingdom (see chapter 12).

In summation, while the Torah praises the collective volunteerism demonstrated by B'nei Yisra'el in building the Mishkan, the haftara pointedly includes the contrast to the forced labor instituted by Shlomo in constructing the Mikdash. Perhaps this was the subtle lesson that our Rabbis hoped to teach by including this introductory section to the haftara - or, perhaps, not.

Regardless, the valuable moral remaining for all of us - and for all generations - is that the threat to the unity of our nation lies not in avoiding idolatry, but in shunning the adoption of any culture whose values are inimical to those of Torah - even when they may be politically and diplomatically beneficial. ★

ingredient in most Menachot), it was also used to consecrate each vessel <> three logs, standing (pun intended) as in ATZEI SHITIM OM'DIM, acacia wood used extensively in the construction of the Mishkan <> three decorations of the Menorah. The trophy cup is called a GAVI'A. The computer key is KAFTOR and the flower is the PERACH. The actual Menora shapes did not necessarily resemble these, but the names match <> sewing machine to facilitate various sewing jobs that were needed in the Mishkan. Remember, weaving was the main skill used to make the Mishkan (the first roof-like covering), but the 10 panels of the Mishkan were sewn together, as were the 11 panels of the Ohel covering <> column or pillar, of which there were many in the Mishkan - to support the PAROCHET, the covering of the entrance of the Mishkan, the curtains of the courtyard, and the entrance to the courtyard. Many AMUDIM <> a frame, MISGERET in Hebrew. The word is used in the description of the SHULCHAN <> a Matza with a face on it standing for the LECHEM HAPANIM, which also reminds us that those special loaves were halachic matza - not Chametz <> Notebook is MACHBERET, a term used in the sedra <> The computer screen is called a MASACH in Hebrew. The Biblical use of the word applied to the curtains that covered the entrance to

the Mishkan and to the courtyard of the Mishkan <> the snail is our old friend, MUREX TRUNCULUS, the snail from which the T'CHELET and ARGAMAN dye for the Mishkan and garments of the Kohein Gadol (regular kohanim too, according to the opinion that their AVNEIT was also multi-colored) was and is extracted. This dye is used today by many people for the P'til T'cheilet of their tzitzit <> VI is 6 in Roman numerals. 6 is SHEISH, which also means linen in the context of Parshat T'ruma <> B'SAMIM box represents the B'SAMIM that was collected for the anointing oil and the Ketoret <> The three good looking fellows are grandsons - Dvir, which is one of the names for the Kodshei Kodashim <> Naveh, another name for the Beit HaMikdash <> and Shoham, as in the stones that were used for the EIFOD and the CHOSHEN. In addition, Shoham and family live on Rechov Leshem (another stone of the Choshen) corner Avnei HaChoshen, in Modi'in <> Velcro logo represents the button & loop method of joining parts of the fabrics <> Davka Judaic Clipart collection includes the pieces shown - Mishkan, Aron, Shulchan, Menorah, Mizbei'ach <> and an Aron Kodosh from shul, which gets its name and its parochet from its namesake in the Mishkan <> The famous optical illusion - looks like a white goblet on black background. Looking at the

black, you should also be able to see two faces, looking at each other - like the K'RUVIM above the KAPORET of the ARON. The goblet can also represent the G'VI'IM on the Menora <> There is a cluster of four elements - monkey bars, a Spalding (pronounced in Brooklyn as SPALDEEN), a jump rope and DALET-DALET. The Shabbat between SH'KALIM and ZACHOR is called a HAFSAKA. A brake among the Four Parshiyot. HAFSAKA means recess, and from my days way back in Crown Heights Yeshiva, recess meant playing on the monkey bars in the school yard, playing punchball, and girls jumping rope. The DALET-DALET is one of four codes for HAFSAKA within the Four Parshiyot: This year, with the first day of Adar being on a Wednesday (yom DALET), the HAFSAKA is on the 4th (DALET) of Adar. See the CALnotes for the whole picture of the HAFSAKOT <> three new Unexplaineds

universe, and the Israelites' creation of the Mikdash, the Mishkan, the Sanctuary that travelled with them in the desert, the prototype of the Temple in Jerusalem.

The connection between them is not incidental. As a number of commentators have noted, the Torah invokes a series of verbal parallels between them. The effect is unmistakable. The latter mirrors the former. As God made the universe, so He instructed the Israelites to make the Mishkan. It is their first great constructive and collaborative act after crossing the Red Sea, leaving the domain of Egypt and entering their new domain as the people of God. Just as the universe began with an act of Creation, so Jewish history (the history of a redeemed people) begins with an act of Creation: "And you shall sanctify it and all its vessels." (Sh'mot 40:9)

The universe (B'reishit)
"And God made the sky" (1:7)
"And God made the two great lights" (1:16)
"And God made the beasts of the earth" (1:7,16,25)
"And God saw all that He had made, and behold it was very good." (1:31)
"The heavens and earth and all of their array were completed." (2:1)
"And God completed all the work that He had done" (2:2)
"And God blessed" (2:3)
"And sanctified it" (2:3)

לע"נ
 הרב יעקב צבי ב"ר דוד אריה ז"ל
 Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l

Two Narratives of Creation

T'RUMA

The Torah describes two acts of creation: God's creation of the

The Mishkan (Sh'mot)
"They shall make Me a Sanctuary" (25:8)
"They shall make an Ark" (25:10)
"Make a table" (25:8-9, 25:23)
"Moshe saw all the skilled work and behold they had done it; as God commanded it, they had done it." (39:43)
"All the work of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting was completed" (39:32)
"And Moshe completed the work" (40:33)
"And Moses blessed" (39:43)
"And you shall sanctify it and all its vessels" (40:9)

The key words - make, see, complete, bless, sanctify, work, behold - are the same in both narratives. The effect is to suggest that making the Mishkan was, for the Israelites, what creating the universe was for God.

Yet the disparity is extraordinary. The creation of the universe takes a mere 34 verses (B'reishit ch. 1, together with the first three verses of ch. 2). The making of the Mishkan takes hundreds of verses (T'ruma, T'tzaveh, part of Ki Tisa, Vayakhel, P'kudei) - considerably more than ten times as long. Why? The universe is vast. The Sanctuary was small, a modest construction of poles and drapes that could be dismantled and carried from place to place as the Israelites journeyed through the wilderness. Given that the length of any passage in the Torah is a guide to the significance it attaches to an episode or law, why devote so much time and

space to the Mishkan? The answer is profound. The Torah is not man's book of God. It is God's book of humankind. It is not difficult for an infinite, omnipotent Creator to make a home for humanity. What is difficult is for human beings, in their finitude and vulnerability, to make a home for God. Yet that is the purpose, not only of the Mishkan in particular but of the Torah as a whole.

A Midrash puts it graphically:

"It came to pass on the day that Moshe finished erecting the Mishkan" (Bamidbar 7:1) - Rabi [Yehuda HaNasi] said, "Wherever it says 'and it came to pass', it refers to something new." Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai said, "Wherever it says 'and it came to pass', it refers to something that existed in the past, and was then interrupted, and then returned to its original situation."

This is the meaning of the words "I have come into My garden, My sister, My bride" (Shir HaShirim 5:1). When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the universe, He desired to have a dwelling place in the lower worlds, as He has in the upper worlds. He summoned Adam and said, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil" but Adam transgressed the command. The Holy One, blessed be He, said to him: "This is what I

wanted, that just as I have a dwelling-place in the upper worlds, so I wished to have a dwelling place in the lower worlds. I commanded you one thing, and you did not keep it!" Immediately, God withdrew His Presence to the heavens. . .

[The Midrash then lists the subsequent sins of humankind, each of which caused the Divine Presence to withdraw one more level from the earth. Then came Avraham and his descendants, each of whom brought the Divine Presence one stage closer...]

Then came Moshe and brought the Divine Presence down to earth. When? When the Mishkan was erected. Then the Holy One, blessed be He, said: "I have come into My garden, My sister, My bride" - I have come to that which I desired [from the outset]. This is the meaning of "It came to pass on the day that Moshe finished erecting the Mishkan" - the source of Rabi Shimon bar Yochai's statement that "Wherever it says 'and it came to pass' it refers to something that existed in the past, and was then interrupted, and then returned to its original situation." (Tanchuma [Buber], Naso, 24)

The Mishkan, small and fragile though it was, was an event of cosmic significance. It brought the Divine Presence [the Shechina, which comes from the same root as Mishkan] down

from heaven to earth. How, though, are we to understand this idea? It is contained in one of the key words of the Torah, namely KADOSH, "holy".

As the Jewish mystics noted, creation involves an act of self-limitation on the part of the Creator. The word OLAM, "universe" is directly related to the word NE-ELAM, meaning "hidden". For there to be the possibility of a being with freewill, choice, and moral responsibility, God cannot be a ubiquitously tangible Presence. When the Israelites heard the voice of God at Sinai, they said to Moshe, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die" (Sh'mot 20:19). The direct, unmediated Presence of God is overwhelming.

The infinite crowds out the finite. God is like a parent; and unless a parent lets go, the child will never learn to walk. Letting go means that the child will stumble and fall, but not forever. Eventually it will learn to walk. So it is with other forms of learning-by-doing. At various stages a parent must progressively withdraw to leave space for the child to grow. So too God must withdraw if humanity - made in His image - is eventually to become His "partner in the work of creation". Creation is an act of Divine self-limitation.

This, however, creates a paradox. If God is perceptible everywhere, there

is no room for humankind. But if God is perceptible nowhere, how can humanity know Him, reach Him, or understand what He wants from us? The answer - already hinted at in the account of creation itself - is that God reserves, in several dimensions, a domain that is peculiarly His. The first is in time - the seventh day (and eventually, the seventh month, the seventh year, and the jubilee at the end of the seventh cycle of sabbatical years). The second was among the nations after their division into multiple languages and civilisations - the covenantal people, the children of Israel. The third was in space - the MIKDASH. Each of these is holy, meaning, a point at which the Divine Presence emerges from hiddenness to exposure, from concealment to revelation. As Shabbat is to time, so the MIKDASH was to space: KADOSH, holy, set apart, God's domain. The holy is the metaphysical arena where heaven and earth meet.

That meeting has specific parameters. It is where God rules, not humankind. Therefore it is associated with the renunciation of the autonomous human will. There is no room for private initiative on the part of humankind. That is why, later, Nadav and Avihu die because they bring a fire-offering that "was not commanded". Just as CHOL (the secular) is where God practises self-limitation to create space for humankind, so

KODESH where human beings engage in self-limitation to create space for God.

That is why the creation of the MISHKAN by the Israelites is the counterpart of the creation of the universe by God. Both were acts of self-renunciation whereby the one made space for the other. The elaborate detail with which the Torah describes the making of the Mishkan is to show that none of it was done at the initiative of Moshe, or Betzalel, or the Israelites themselves. Hence the lack of parallelism at one crucial point. Whereas after the creation of the universe we read, "And God saw all that He had made, and behold it was very good" (B'reishit 1:31), after the making of the Mishkan we read, "Moshe saw all the skilled work and behold they had done it; as God commanded it, they had done it."

When it comes to the holy, "as God commanded it" is the human equivalent of the Divine "it was very good". CHOL is the space God makes for man. KODESH is the space we make for God.

Around the Shabbat Table:

- (1) Why do you think the Torah spends more time on the creation of the Mishkan than it does on the creation of the entire universe?**
- (2) What does it mean to make space for God in our busy daily lives?**

- (3) **Bnei Yisrael received instructions from God on exactly how to build the Mishkan. Why couldn't they just use their own creative initiatives?**

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

Message from the Haftara

Rabbi Katriel (Kenneth) Brander

President and Rosh Hal'eshiva

Ohr Torah Stone Institutions

The Sanctuary as a Beacon

T'RUMA

Parshat T'ruma details the design of the Mishkan, while its haftara describes the construction of the Beit Hamikdash in Jerusalem by King Shlomo. Yet these architectural descriptions are not merely technical records of sacred design. They offer a vision of what a holy space is meant to accomplish.

The Temple in Jerusalem was far more than just a site of prayer and sacrifice. It was a living center of national and spiritual life, a place where men and women fostered their relationship with God in diverse and meaningful ways. When we recognize the full range of the Beit Hamikdash's roles, we better understand the significance and responsibilities of our own Batei Knesset, which have

succeeded the Temple as epicenters of Jewish life.

Rabbinic sources reveal a strikingly multifaceted institution. In addition to being a site of worship, the Beit HaMikdash was a place of learning and teaching for adults and youth (Tosefta Sanhedrin 2:6 and Bavli Pesachim 26a), a center of charitable distribution and social responsibility (Mishna Sh'kalim 5:6 and Rambam Sanhedrin chs. 1 and 3), and a model of socially and environmentally conscious institutional management (Mishna Midot 3:2). The Temple was not isolated from daily life; it enhanced it.

Our synagogues also have the potential to fill these roles. They host shiurim, provide space and resources for independent learning, and have the capacity to coordinate educational initiatives with local families and schools. They organize tzedaka campaigns, provide a forum for communal mediation, and collaborate on community-wide initiatives supporting important social and environmental causes. Like the Beit HaMikdash, synagogues too can be engines of education, responsibility, and moral leadership in addition to mere houses of prayer.

Crucially, the Temple was also the site of life cycle events such as marriages and bereavements. There were two special offices ensconced in

the eastern wall of the Temple where residents of Jerusalem could come and extend words of condolence to mourners or bestow congratulations and blessings to brides and grooms (Sof'rim 19). These offices positioned the Temple as a spiritual anchor not only for national worship, but for private joy and grief, sanctifying the rhythms of daily life.

This legacy also lives on in our synagogues: marriages are marked by an *aufruf*, where the groom is called up to the Torah. The Maharil (15th century) recounts a custom in which the community would dance the bride and groom home from the synagogue after Shabbat services. And when a community suffers loss, the whole congregation pauses its prayers at the start of Shabbat to offer words of comfort to the recently bereaved. These are not incidental traditions, they are echoes of the role originally filled by the Temple, affirming that the Jewish life cycle is not merely social rhythm, but a framework through which we connect with God.

There is a verse in our haftara that beautifully captures this vision: “And for the house he [Shlomo] made windows wide without, and narrow within” (Melachim Alef 6:4). In most ancient buildings, windows were designed to draw light inward. But here, the architectural design was the opposite. God, after all, does not

require illumination. The role of the windows was to allow the divine light to radiate outward.

The Midrash (Vayikra Rabba 31), explains the metaphor more explicitly. The role of the Beit HaMikdash is to channel the radiant values of the Torah into the world. Its light was not meant to remain contained within the sacred walls, it is meant to project morality and divine vision to the world.

So too with the Jewish people. Our calling is not merely to take in and reflect surrounding culture, but rather to shape it, to serve as a light unto the nations by embodying and promulgating the Torah’s divine values.

Viewed through this lens, the synagogue as a *mikdash me’at* must embody this idea, modeling for our communities principles of sanctity, justice, and social responsibility. When our *batei kneset* embrace this mission, they become more than just meeting places and prayer houses. They become beacons of light.

And when that light radiates outward, illuminating homes, communities, society, and the world, we are continuing the sacred work of the Mishkan and the Beit Hamikdash: bringing God’s presence into the world and serving as a light unto the nations. 



PhiloTorah D'var Torah

MIKDASH

BILVAVI - Beautiful song... with a caveat.

The song **BILVAVI** is based on a passage by Rabbi Eliezer Azikri in his **Sefer Chareidim** - song composed by Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner zt"l, set to music by Rabbi Shmuel Brazil.

The song translates thus:

I will build a Mishkan in my heart to glorify God's honor.

And I will place an altar in the Mishkan dedicated to God's divine rays of splendor.

And for the eternal, constant flame I will take upon myself the fire that fueled the Binding (Akeidat Yitzchak).

And as a sacrifice, I will offer God my soul, my unique soul.

It is really a beautiful song, combining emotional, meaningful words with a beautifully haunting melody.

So what's the caveat?

Simply put, do not consider the song to be a definition of the command in Parshat T'ruma of **V'ASU LI MIKDASH V'SHACHANTIB'TOCHAM**.

The command is to build an actual physical structure. The sedra and the one to follow (T'tzaveh, and the first third of the following sedra, Ki Tisa, and the two sedras that follow that one, Vayakhel and P'kudei) contain the specific details for the construction of the Mikdash. The collection and donation of materials was physical. The making of the components was and is actual physical work.

However...

The physical aspects of the Mishkan, Beit HaMikdash and the Avoda performed therein are nothing (probably worse than nothing) without our heart and soul.

This, as individuals and as the Nation of Israel.

Do we need to build a Mishkan in our hearts? DEFINITELY. Not as a substitute or a replacement for the actual Mikdash, but to give meaning and substance to the Mikdash and to facilitate G-d's dwelling among us, within us.

Are actual korbanot important? Most definitely. But they are nothing without our prayers and repentance and good deeds.

How about good deeds, mitzvot, and t'shuva without a Mikdash? That's the temporary situation, but not what should be and will be - BV'A.

And applying this idea to other aspects of Jewish Life...

We call the Beit Knesset, the Shul - a Mikdash M'at. A miniature version of the Beit HaMikdash. Some call the Jewish Home a Mikdash, as well.

But that does not replace the Beit HaMikdash.

And our prayers do not replace the Korbanot and Avoda of the Beit HaMikdash.

Davening is temporarily doing double duty - being prayer itself and a temporary substitute for Korbanot -as the pasuk declares (Hoshei'a 14:3) - UNSHALMA FARIM S'FATEINU - and let us render [for] bulls [the offering of] our lips.

Temporarily substituting - but not replacing.

Some people think that we have become more sophisticated than our predecessors and we don't need the actual Mikdash and Korbanot.

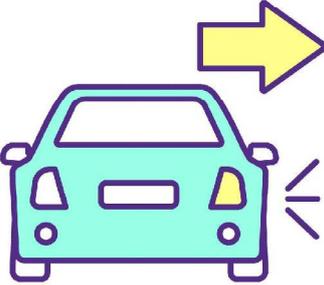
Not so. We pray all the time for the restoration of the Mikdash. The actual Beit HaMikdash - not just a symbolic one.

All we have to do now is mean it.
PTDT

מִחְוּן כּוּוּן 

MACHVAN KIVUN is a turn signal (on a car, bus, truck...)
a.k.a. (but I don't know where) - direction indicator lamp

A lot of Israelis call it a VIN-KER, obvious borrowing from WINKER.



Walk through the Parsha

with **Rabbi David Walk**



T'RUMA

I Am What I Own

This week we begin reading the Torah portions about the construction of the MISHKAN, the portable Temple of the Desert years. There's so much to discuss about the sublime symbolism incorporated into the fashioning of this religious site, but this week's reading begins with a topic most of us can identify with, namely institutional fundraising.

Personally, I've always hated fundraising, but I've worked for a few masters of the art, so I was rarely

called on to help. One such individual once told me: Fundraising is really easy; all you have to do is believe that what you're doing is the most important thing in the world.

Okay! I've been teaching Torah for over a half century, and I have found it immensely important and rewarding. But is it the most important thing in the world? I mean there are people out there feeding the hungry, curing the ill and pulling disaster victims out of rubble. So, teaching is pretty important, but the MOST important job in the universe? Probably not.

So, God uses a different tack. Our salient verse states: Tell the Israelite people to take for Me gifts; you shall accept gifts for Me from every person whose heart is so moved (Sh'mot 25:2).

Seems like a pretty soft sell. Collect on My behalf contributions from those who want to give. In my limited experience most people don't 'want' to give. In general, we are takers, when given the chance.

Actually, most commentators agree that God went out of the way to insist that this whole enterprise must be voluntary. Now there are compulsory payments in Judaism, like the MACHATZIT HASHEKEL we read about last Shabbat, but the 'Mishkan Building Fund' wasn't one of them.

Rav Shimshon Rafael Hirsch, I

believe, was dealing with this issue of volunteerism in his comment on this verse. He emphasized two critical terms in our verse: T'RUMA (translated 'offering', 'gift' or 'contribution') and YI-D'VENU ('freely given' or 'generously given'). He emphasized that God wanted generous gifts from the heart. We must measure generosity from the size of one's heart, not the size of one's bank account or stock portfolio.

There's a great scene in the classic movie *The Magnificent Seven* (1960) in which Yul Brynner is the head of a group (7, duh!) of hired guns who commit to protect a poor Mexican town from bandits. The peasants offer him their grain, which they 'describe as 'everything we own'. Yul Brynner's character, Chris Adams responds: Well, I've been offered a lot for my work... but never everything!

That's the concept being presented in our verse. It must be motivated by a generous spirit, not any other motivating factor. The Malbim says specifically: "For Me" - for My sake; that one should not mix into his intention any ulterior motive, such as honor or glory for his donation, or in order to receive reward, but solely for the sake of God.

The Malbim also emphasizes the democratic nature of these donations. He adds: 'From every man' - Thus, by saying 'from every man', it

indicates that the giver possesses free will and choice, and gives with a good heart, not because others pressure him or because he gives out of embarrassment, and the like. So that they should not think this donation would be taken only from the wealthy or the leaders of the community, it says, 'from every man'. Every person counts.

Clearly, there are to be no brass donor recognition plaques in the Mishkan.

Rabbeinu Bechaye customarily begins Torah readings with a quote from the book of Mishlei. He chose these verses very carefully to reflect a central issue in the upcoming parsha. This week he chose: Accept My discipline instead of silver; accept knowledge instead of gold (Mishlei 8:10). He is letting us know that the Jews who gave of their wealth taken from Egypt to the Mishkan Building Fund, got a good deal.

He begins his explanation of the verse with the expected ideas: Torah values are good both here and in the World to Come, wealth is potentially very destructive and causes worries and concerns. But then he really gets going:

The reason Shlomo employed the word K'CHU for the acquisition of ethical imperatives is that just as material benefits are acquired by the

owner 'taking' them, so a similar effort is required to obtain proficiency in Torah knowledge and for the diligent student to embrace its ethics. Anyone displaying laziness in his acquisition of Torah is liable to punishment even if he observes the relevant commandment... The same applies to people who say their prayers regularly, but as a form of routine.

We've already discussed the terms T'RUMA and YI-D'VENU in our verse. Rabbeinu Bechaye adds the significance of the V'YIKCHU, which means 'and they will take'. Even though we're discussing giving. Some authorities explain that when you give a gift to a great personage it is such an honor when they accept it, especially God, that the supposed 'giver' is really the receiver. So, we're getting more than we're giving.

However, Rabbeinu Bechaye is adding another wrinkle to the idea, which is: One must make an effort for a gift to be worthy.

Our donations and service to God are only of value, if we put in the effort to make them grand. This is especially true in the areas of Torah study and T'FILA.

The Kedushat Levi adds another ingredient and layer to our discussion. He emphasizes the use of the word LIBO (one's heart) in our verse.

The great Chasidic authority explains that including the heart in our equation emphasizes the link between the generous thought and the generous deed. It's the LEV which forms that connection between the brain and the hand.

I hate to disappoint the many fundraisers out there, but a careful analysis of our very famous verse (quoted often by fundraisers) leads us to the conclusion: It is not the size of the gift that matters most, but the heart of the giver embodied within it.



Rav Kook Torah



by Rabbi Chanan Morrison
www.ravkooktorah.com

Rising Above Ten Handbreadths

What is so important about the construction of the Mishkan that the Torah describes in such loving detail its measurements and furnishings? Was it not just an interim precursor to the Beit HaMikdash? What eternal message does this temporary structure have to impart?

The Mishkan enabled the Jewish people to express their devotion and love of God. But the Mishkan was more than just a hallowed place to serve God. By examining its structure

and parts, we may reveal the paths by which the human soul draws close to its Maker.

The Mishkan, the Altar, and the Ark

The two largest objects of the Mishkan were the Mishkan structure, composed of upright wooden beams, and the copper altar that stood in the courtyard. These parts of the Mishkan symbolize the path of contemplation and reflection. The design of the Mishkan reflects the overall structure of the universe. Careful examination of its dimensions and details, like contemplation of the universe in which we live, leads us to recognize the world's spiritual foundations. Through His creative acts, we gain awareness of the Creator.

The Altar is a continuation of this path of reflection. The soul's meditation on the inner nature of the universe awakens within us love and awe for God and the desire to serve Him. This was the function of the Altar, the focal point for serving God in the realms of emotion and deed.

Together, the Mishkan and the Altar formed a complete framework of Divine service. Thus, Talmudic tradition (Shabbat 92a) connects them with a HEKEISH, teaching that both reached full stature: "Just as the Mishkan was ten cubits tall, so, too, the Altar was ten cubits tall."

The third major furnishing of the Mishkan was the Aron, the gold-plated ark encasing the stone tablets from Sinai. The Ark represents the path of Torah, enlightenment through God's word that transcends the limitations of the human mind.

Carrying with Poles

The copper altar was not lifted directly but via wooden poles. So, too, our reflection on the inner nature of the universe does not come naturally, without effort. The service of God as represented by the Altar is performed by using the analytic and contemplative faculties of the soul.

The Ark containing the tablets was also carried with poles, indicating that we approach the Torah with our physical senses and intellect. However, these paths go beyond the overt abilities of the soul. The Sages taught that "anything carried by poles, one third is above [the porter's height] and two thirds are below." Two thirds are within the realm of our revealed faculties, the senses and the intellect. One third, however, rises above the human mind. It comes from the hidden recesses of the soul; we are able to connect to the Torah only through spiritual gifts.

Above Ten Handbreadths

The Sages taught that the furnishings of the Mishkan were carried ten handbreadths (about 90cm) above

the ground. What is the significance of this height? Ten handbreadths designate an individual's place and legal domain (*reshut*). This measurement signifies our bonds to the physical realm. Our ties to the material world are so powerful that even Moses and Elijah were unable to escape the constraints of ten handbreadths (*Sukka 5a*).

Rabbi Elazar taught that, in general, people carry their loads above ten handbreadths, like the Levites who were charged with transporting the Mishkan furnishings (*Shabbat 92a*). By extension, we may say that the calling of every individual is like the mission of the Levites; our purpose in life is to carry our load above ten handbreadths.

We must aspire to transcend the physical forces that bind us to the earth, going beyond our material needs. Just as the Levites carried the altar and the ark above ten handbreadths, we too should utilize these two paths – contemplation of the universe, with its resultant emotional and practical service, and the study of Torah, God's elevated word – to transcend the material binds of our physical nature.

Gold from the Land of Israel, pp. 149-151.

*Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. IV,
pp. 232-233*

Rav Kook on T'hilim

*from an unpublished work
by Rabbi Chanan Morrison*

T'hilim 12 - Circles and Straight Lines

סָבִיב רְשָׁעִים יִתְהַלְכוּן כָּרָם זֹלַת לְבַנֵּי אָדָם:

The wicked walk around; and the exalted matter is scorned by people. (T'hilim 12:9)

Why does the psalm describe the wicked as those who “walk around”? What is this exalted matter that people fail to appreciate? And what is the connection between the two parts of the verse?

Two Realms

The Kabbalists distinguish between two realms in the universe: the realm of Circles, and the realm of Straight Lines.

The natural world is a world of Circles. The heavenly bodies are spherical, rotating and revolving in space. In this view of reality, there is no right or wrong. There is just constant, eternal movement, turning along the never-ending cycles and gears of natural processes.

The purpose of creation, however, is its moral and spiritual progress.

When we recognize this inner direction, we are perceiving the realm of Straight Lines. When we utilize our free will to choose the correct path, we gain perfection for ourselves and for the entire universe. The realm of Straight Lines is the inner reality of linear progression, of right and wrong, of purpose and meaning.

The Power of Prayer

The Talmud explains that this verse is specifically referring to prayer. Prayer is a wonderful, exalted gift. Many, however, belittle and even ridicule the value of prayer. Why is prayer not properly appreciated?

Because many perceive the world through the viewpoint of Circles. They only see the continual, unchanging, and amoral aspect of the universe. In a world ruled by the laws of nature, what good is prayer? Why should praying influence the outcome of natural processes?

That is why the psalmist describes the wicked as people who “walk around”. They follow the cycles of the natural world. They look at the universe as a harsh reality of unfor-giving laws of nature and immutable fate.

But the enlightened are able to discern the realm of Straight Lines within reality. They sense the world's inner purpose and moral direction. They recognize that we are meant to

advance the goal of universal perfection through proper application of our powers of free choice.

With this outlook on the world, the efficacy of prayer is clear. Prayer is effective in refining our desires and directing our choices. It is an integral aspect of the purposeful world of Straight Lines.

*Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. 1, p. 26
on B'rachot 6b*

The Daily Portion **- Sivan Rahav Meir**

Reach for the sky!

Translated by Janine Muller Sherr

Are you familiar with the concept of the “greatness of man”? This week was the yahrzeit of Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel zt”l, who initiated an educational approach in the Jewish world based on this idea. He passed away 99 years ago, but it’s remarkable how relevant his approach remains to our lives today:

- The “greatness of man” encapsulates an entire worldview. In contrast to educational approaches that denigrated the student, Rav Finkel strove to elevate him. Instead of emphasizing the lowliness of man, he insisted that man is created in the image of God – that he is the pinnacle

of creation and the most exalted creature on earth.

- He emphasized each person’s uniqueness and encouraged everyone to become the most refined version of themselves. He taught that a person should conduct himself as if he or she lives in the King’s palace next to the King Himself. It is a life of nobility, royalty, and grandeur.

- But what about sins? What about the evil inclination? Rav Finkel taught that life does not need be a constant struggle. If a person would recognize his inherent nobility, he would realize that such shameful behavior was beneath him. If he is on such a high level, how could he even consider stooping so low?

We tend to emphasize the “smallness” of humankind, but it’s important to remind ourselves of our greatness.

Send your friends this link so that they can receive Sivan Rahav-Meir's content too: tiny.cc/DailyPortion



by Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple z"l

T'RUMA

People are the Sanctuary

A famous verse in this week's sidra tells us V'ASU LI MIKDASH V'SHACHANTI B'TOCHAM, "Let them make Me a sanctuary and I shall dwell in their midst" (Sh'mot 28:8).

There is a well-known interpretation that "I shall dwell in their midst" means "in the midst of the people", not merely "in the midst of the sanctuary". God dwells amidst the builders, not in the building.

This explains why the most magnificent place of worship is an empty, lifeless shell unless it houses a vibrant, devoted congregation.

It also explains a personal problem of my own. I have to explain that we have hundreds of visitors coming through the Great Synagogue, Sydney, every week. Most of the visitors are non-Jewish and have never been inside a synagogue before.

Some, however, are Jewish, generally tourists from other countries. We offer them guided tours at set times,

but the tourists frequently arrive on the doorstep at other times and insist that, regardless of our convenience, "We have to see the sanctuary" (it tends to be the tourists from the United States who use the phrase, "the sanctuary").

Obviously what they want is to look at the building. It is an impressive heritage building, and it has an impressive ambience and an impressive history.

But what these tourists never seem to have much time for (almost always they are leaving the same day or at best the day after) is to meet the congregation and to attend a service or congregational activity.

Tell them that it is the congregation who are the sanctuary and they will suspect that your intelligence is defective. But the fact is that without a congregation, a synagogue is just a piece of architecture; without human beings, a home is only a house.

Better than Gold

Understandably, the most valuable metal available - gold - was used in making the Ark of the Covenant - "And you shall overlay it with pure gold" (Sh'mot 25:11).

But if the gold was outside the ark, what was inside?

Sedra Highlight

- Dr Jacob Solomon

T'RUMA

In three places, our Parasha connects Melechet HaMishkan with Har Sinai and the receiving of the Torah:

(a) At the end of the first section telling us of the Aron, the Shulchan, and the Menora: *"Look carefully and then make them according to the design you were shown on the mountain"* (25:40).

(b) At the end of the second section detailing the main sanctuary: *"You shall erect the Mishkan according to the detailed way that you were shown on the mountain"* (26:30).

(c) After learning about the details of the main Mizbei'ach positioned outside and facing the sanctuary: *"You shall make the Mizbei'ach out of boards, a hollow structure, as you were shown on the mountain"* (27:8).

A possible explanation gives a message we can learn from the Mishkan.

Our people were not the only ones who built sanctuaries. An outside pagan-observer might be forgiven for thinking that the Mishkan was just another genre of worship. There is plenty of written and archaeological evidence that such structures were common at the time. Their precise designs varied, according to the par-

From the previous verse we learn that the answer was wood. Wood inside and gold outside - why was the Ark not made completely of gold? Surely gold is more precious and more durable than wood!

Surely the word of God deserves a completely golden repository, since the Psalmist says it is even more precious than gold (T'hilim 19:11) and the Book of Proverbs says (Mishlei 16:16) that it is better to get wisdom than gold. What could the Almighty have been thinking of when He commanded the use of wood?

A fascinating problem, but maybe the answer is that gold and wood each has a special quality. God wanted the gold to symbolise preciousness and permanence, but He wanted the wood to suggest the living nature of the Torah and its life-giving quality.

The Torah is EITZ CHAYIM, a tree of life (Mishlei 3:18). A tree is not inanimate like gold; it is a living thing, and not only does it have life but its branches give shelter and its fruit gives nourishment.

If the only casing the Torah had were gold, we might value it, cherish it and revere it, but we might not utilise it for daily inspiration and guidance.

-OZ

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

particular deities worshipped. Generally common to all such edifices was that they tended to be designed by the wise people of the societies they were purported to serve - in the belief that particular forms of service through them would please the gods, and that they in turn would take care of their followers from their dwellings up on high. These places tended to have images and icons into which the *eigel hazahav*, the golden calf, would have fit nicely; tangibles that people could identify with, as well as a hierarchy of priests that *inter alia* decided who had access to what.

Thus the Mishkan would have appeared to be very strange to Am Yisrael at the time. The Mishkan, like the Torah itself, was communicated by *Gilui Shechina* - Divine Revelation - in this case to Moshe Rabbeinu to pass on to the people. Much of it was quite contrary to what they no doubt knew from their experiences in Egypt. There were no icons, statues, or images of animals, as in line with the Second Commandment. With one exception - the *K'ruvim*. "As G-d commanded Moshe" we are told many times in Parashat P'kudei. Any other form of image other than the one that G-d communicated would have been *Avoda Zara*.

This is the strength of "as you were shown on the mountain". It tells us that the place of worship was

designed by the Creator Himself, not an assembly of wise men or priests. It was not intuitive, but counter-intuitive. The holiest item: the *Luchot* were kept in a never-to-be opened *Aron*. Yet the very holiest structure inexplicably had images that seemed to be the very forbidden things in the Ten Commandments. As the Torah instructed Moshe: "according to the design that you were shown on the mountain".

This fits in with what the position of Am Yisrael is all about. As Josephus puts it, placing all sovereignty in the hands of G-d. (*Against Apion*, 2:165); as the Gemara puts it, *KABALAT OL MALCHUT SHAMAYIM*, accepting that G-d who communicated the Torah to us knows what's best for us even if it appears counterintuitive and illogical at the time.

Not only would the *Aron*, *Shulchan* and *Menorah* have seemed decidedly odd to Klal Yisrael, but so would have the Mishkan itself. Taken down and wrapped up when on the move and set up again on arrival on the stages of the journey. Yet it did not lose its *Kedusha*. The novel idea was that it went with the people: the Almighty is with His People wherever they are - another novel aspect of the Mishkan.

And finally, that the *Mizbei'ach* was to be hollow. Very novel: as though it was to be of minimum substance, and in contrast with similar solid and

beautifully sculptured structures in the shrines of the time.

All this is a key aspect of the Mishkan. G-d communicated its design that in many ways was counter to what they understood was the right way of worship. Strange and highly contradictory. Yet the basis of KABALAT OL MALCHUT SHAMAYIM is that the Almighty knows best even when things are strange, as with other aspects of the Torah. And it is through the regular study of Torah that we get to understand elements that make our way of life comprehensible and spiritually fulfilling in ways that to the outsider appears to be counterintuitive. 🌿📖

Dvar Torah by **Rabbi Chanoch Yeres**

to his community at
Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe
Graciously shared with PhiloTorah

T'RUMA

"Like everything that I show you"
(Sh'mot 25:9)

Rashi comments that this verse is to be read together with the preceding one. "Make a Sanctuary for me like everything that I show you."

If so, why does the Torah interrupt this thought with the promise so that "I may dwell among them"?

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein in his sefer

Darash Moshe says that the Torah wishes to make the point that G-d's explicit instructions apply only to creating "this" sanctity, the physical sanctity, made of wood and stone.

However, there is another type of sanctity. There is the sanctity of educating our family, our children and the next generation that Torah is the way of life for us. This sanctity has no general instructions that apply to all equally. Each person must develop for himself the best way suited for his family, his children and the people he knows. The important point is that everything one does must be for the sake of Heaven to setting an example of drawing oneself closer to G-d. 🕯️

The Weekly 'Hi All' by Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld

T'RUMA 5784

Broadly speaking, Parshat T'ruma introduces us to the remarkable - and some would say revolutionary - doctrine of K'DUSHAT MAKOM, the sanctity of place. We are undoubtedly familiar with its more famous companion, K'DUSHAT Z'MAN, the sanctity of time whereby certain days and times are imbued with intense holiness, Shabbat and Yom Tov being the most illustrative of this principle.

With the command to construct a House for Gd, we are ushered into a dimension of holy space which is not

restricted to a specific location, but which incredibly can encompass wherever we might be. In a word, if the Infinite Almighty can contract Himself, as it were, into a small finite Mishkan, He can also choose to reside within each of us! As the verse clearly states, "They shall make for Me a Sanctuary so that I may dwell among them (25:8). No need for any intermediary, any third party to have access to Gd; each of us may experience Him in His full immediacy, directly - personally and intimately! And if Gd, in our tradition, is also known as HAMAKOM, the Place, then that theological denomination of Gd's Omnipresence comes to remind us that Gd is everywhere, where no place is devoid of His Presence, allowing us to rendezvous with Him and speak with Him as our close Companion wherever we might be.

There is another dimension of "place holiness" which, Rav Soloveitchik argues, is fundamental to understanding and appreciating our unique mission as Jews. To cultivate a religious "place consciousness" means to ask, "What is my makom, my place? What is my world perspective? What is my self-definition?" The answer to these questions, the Rav avers, is not a function of only what you know. "For knowledge alone means nothing. The spiritual nomad [he who has no place] may have universal knowledge and yet remain cultureless, for he

does not experience his knowledge... modern Jews have much theoretical and practical knowledge [of their tradition, but the problem] lies in the fact that they are lacking in the living experience of [religious] values, the passionate merger of the worshiper with the object of his worship... [They are lacking a] "religious life permeated with enthusiasm and rapture, [one] which opens to man new vistas and enchanted horizons... Without the idea of place consciousness, the state of K'dusha, sanctity, can never be acquired or held."

In other words, the Rav asserts that what finally transforms the "spiritual nomad" into a "spiritual settler" is the stark realization that wandering and sampling the wares of cultures alien to his true self will prove to be a futile attempt at self-fulfillment. Only when the Jew implants himself within the all-enveloping, all-inclusive religious culture and Torah life-style of what it means to be Jewish, only then does the Jew experience what it means to come home, to come back to his "place" - to himself. In a word, with this self-discovery, the Jew will have attained an eternal and powerful rootedness in holy place - K'DUSHAT MAKOM. Indeed, that experience can be life-changing, gifting one a fresh perspective on life, one saturated with meaning and purpose.

A third interpretation of K'DUSHAT

MAKOM is to be found in the writings of the Chofetz Chayim. In the dramatic scene when Moshe approaches the "burning bush", HaShem tells him "Do not draw near here. Take off your shoes... for the place - HAMAKOM, upon which you stand is holy ground - ADMAT KODESH HU" (Sh'mot 3:5). The marvelous insight of this great sage is the conviction that whatever place you may find yourself, can become holy. HaShem is telling Moshe that the simple, ordinary soil upon which he is standing is sacred - KODESH! This astonishing idea posits that the sanctity of space is not only a function of Gd's Presence, but that finite man can actually endow temporal, mundane space with lasting holiness!

The brilliance of the Chofetz Chaim's understanding of K'DUSHAT MAKOM is his wider definition of what "place" can refer to. In his view, "place" can be much more than a physical location. It can also refer to the "place" - the situation - in which a person finds himself. What this means is that no matter what state or condition I may find myself, I have the wherewithal to transform that experience into the stuff of K'dusha by how I respond.

To illustrate: Say I am celebrating the simcha of a child. My happiness is boundless. I am brimming with excitement and delight. If in that

moment of sheer joy, I can remember the "other", if, in the midst of my own personal celebration, I can be sensitive to people around me and behave with kindness and generosity of spirit, if I can climb out of my own simcha state and genuinely make someone else happy, that very deed transforms my "place" - my situation into something holy! I have created an unforgettable K'DUSHAT MAKOM.

Of course, the opposite set of circumstances present a very different and perhaps far more difficult challenge. Say you have experienced some personal defeat, some terrible disappointment. Your life is now fraught with tension and anxiety; your day, no longer bright and inviting, is now overcast with gloom and misery. If, under these stressful circumstances, if when you find yourself in this dark "place", you nevertheless behave with dignity, charity and goodness. If, when assailed by feelings of despair and melancholy, you do not allow yourself to descend into some hedonistic, self-medicating escape, but rather you display courageous emotional restraint and proper ethical behavior to all around you, you have then fashioned out that passional state of unhappiness to something holy! Here, as well as, in what appears to be the most unlikely of places, you have created a precious K'DUSHAT MAKOM!

~~~~~

While all of the above understandings of a K'DUSHAT MAKOM are certainly not mutually exclusive, it is the Chofetz Chayim's explanation which seems most relevant during these frightening and trying times. When war wages and fatalities crush our spirits, when the world appears to turn against us, it is precisely when we find ourselves in these bleak and black "places", that we must transform that very "place" into a MAKOM KADOSH - a place and atmosphere of sanctity. And how? By doing exactly what we, as a people, have been doing since October 7th. We have heroically demonstrated such extraordinary acts of chesed and tzedaka, such incredible togetherness and camaraderie so as to astound everyone who thought the very opposite would occur. Thank Gd, we rose to the occasion and behaved forgivingly and lovingly, gallantly and magnanimously. One day soon, all of these brave and valiant stories will be told.

Until then, we can only pray that HaShem reward and respond to our K'DUSHAT MAKOM with His K'DUSHAT MAKOM, His immanent Presence, which can shield and deliver us from this suffering and hate, and usher in an era of vindication and peace. 🙏



## GM - T'RUMA

**GM** The key pasuk in Parshat T'ruma - and T'tzaveh, and the beginning of Ki Tisa, and all of Vayakhel and P'kudei... and much of the the Book of Vayikra - is Sh'mot 25:8 -

וַעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשִׁכַנְתִּי בְתוֹכָם:

*And they shall make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst.*

The regular Gimatriya of this pasuk is 2120. Five other p'sukim in Tanach have the same numeric value - including a pasuk that occurs twice - Sh'muel Bet 22:31 and T'hilim 18:31 -

הָאֵל תַּמִּים דְּרָכּוֹ אִמְרַת יְהוָה צְרוּפָה  
מִגֵּן הוּא לְכָל הַזּוֹסִים בּוֹ:

*As for God, His way is perfect; the word of Hashem is tried. He is a shield to all those who take refuge in Him.*

There are other p'sukim in Torah and Nach that express the idea that the purpose of our building the Mikdash is to help develop our relationship with God. This pasuk - from Shirat David - is a GM that touches upon that theme.

**GM** God has expressed His Plan for His people - to take them out of Egypt, form them into a Nation at Sinai and give us the Torah, and to bring them to Eretz Yisrael. We find this "partnership" between Torah & the Land of Israel in a number of places in the Torah.

The ARON (holy ark) in the Mishkan (and later in the Beit HaMikdash) represents the Torah - the Luchot, both the intact second set of Tablets with the Aseret HaDibrot engraved on them, and the broken pieces of the first Luchot, are contained therein. The original Sefer Torah was kept on a shelf at the side of the ARON. The pasuk that first commanded the construction of the ARON is Sh'mot 25:10, in Parshat T'ruma -

וַעֲשׂוּ אֲרוֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים אֲמֹתַיִם וָוָצִי  
אֶרְבּוֹ

וְאֹמֶה וָוָצִי רֹוּבּוֹ וְאֹמֶה וָוָצִי קְמוֹתוֹ:

*They shall make an ark of acacia wood,  
two and a half cubits its length,  
a cubit and a half its width,  
and a cubit and a half its height.*

The Gimatriya of this pasuk is 3094. Six other p'sukim in Tanach have the same numeric value - including Bamidbar 34:11, in Parshat Mas'ei -

וַיֵּרֶד הַגָּבֹל בְּשִׁפְמֵם הָרִבְלָה בְּמִקְדָּם לְעֵין  
וַיֵּרֶד הַגָּבֹל וּבְמוֹזָה עַל־כַּתֵּף יָם־כַּנְתֹּת  
קְדָמָה:

*The border descends from Sh'fam  
toward Rivla, to the east of Ayin.  
Then the border descends and hits  
the eastern shore of Lake Kinneret.*

All of this perek in Mas'ei deals with God's instructions to Moshe about the borders of the Land which He is giving to Bnei Yisrael, and names Elazar HaKohen, Yehoshua bin Nun, and the tribal leaders who will be in charge of inheriting the Land on behalf of all the People. The pasuk in this GM is one of several that specifies the boundaries of Eretz Yisrael.

*USFUNEI T'MUNEI CHOL is the title of my book of Gimatriya Matches - IY"H and BE"H. The title translates to Hidden in the Sand. That's how I feel about my Gimatriya searches. Like walking along the beach with a metal detector. Beep-beep-beep. Lean down and find something. Usually, nothing of note. But sometimes you find something special.*

## GM - SH'KALIM

Here is a Gimatriya Match between the NISTAR gimatriya of a pasuk and the regular gimatriya of a different pasuk.

In Sh'mot 30:13, from the beginning of Ki Tisa, which is also from Parshat Sh'kalim, we find the mitzva of the MACHATZIT HASHEKEL.

זֶה אֲיָתָנוּ כָּל־הָעֵבֶר עַל־הַפְּקָדִים  
בְּמוֹצֵיית הַשֶּׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ  
עֶשְׂרִים גֵּרָה הַשֶּׁקֶל בְּמוֹצֵיית הַשֶּׁקֶל  
תְּרוּמָה לַיהוָה:

*Everyone included in the census must give a half shekel. This shall be by the sanctuary standard, where a shekel is*

20 gera. It is half of such a shekel that must be given as an offering to God.

Longish pasuk with a relatively high gimatriya - 5921.

Searches with large gimatriyas do not usually return many other p'sukim that match. In fact, 5921 showed only one match, a pasuk in Melachim Bet that did not lend itself to an interesting comment.

But the NISTAR gimatriya of the above pasuk did result in an interesting match.

The NISTAR gimatriya of Sh'mot 30:13 is 5722. Two p'sukim in Tanach have that gimatriya. One presented an interesting match - Divrei HaYamim Alef 21:17 -

First, the context.

The perek tells of David HaMelech who ordered a census of the people be taken. It was a direct count - not with a half-shekel or other means of indirect counting. G-d got angry (so to speak) and a plague cost thousands of lives. David admitted that he had sinned and begged G-d to punish him but not the people. The pasuk in question -

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי הֲלֹא אָנֹכִי  
אָמַרְתִּי לְמַנּוֹת בָּעָם וְאֲנִי הוּא אֲשֶׁר-  
וָצִאתִי וְהָרַע הָרְעוּתִי וְאֶלֶּה הַצֵּאן מִן-  
עֵשׂוֹ יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהֵי תְהִי נָא יָדְךָ בִּי  
וּבְבֵית אָבִי וּבְעַמֶּךָ לֹא לְמַנְפֶּה:

And David said to God, "Did I not say

to count the people? Then I am the one who has sinned, and I have committed evil, but these sheep, what have they done? HaShem, my God, I beg that Your hand be against me and against my father's house, but not against Your people for a plague."

We are not just dealing with a match of gimatriyas (two different kinds), but specifically, with a Torah pasuk that states the mitzva, and a match to its NISTAR value that shows the dark side of the mitzva - the tragedy that occurred when it was disregarded.

## RED ALERT!

T'RUMA

*by Rabbi Eddie Davis (RED)  
of the Young Israel of Hollywood -  
Ft. Lauderdale (Florida)*

## DIVREI TORAH

- The Torah states that the people should take unto Hashem a T'ruma, a gift (25:2). It doesn't say to give the T'ruma, but to take. Many commentators deal with this question. One of the better answers that I read came from Rabbi Zvi Dov Kanatopsky. His answer is that before you can give a gift to Hashem, you have sanctify the object first. And that is done at home. As when you offer the T'ruma from your produce, you separate a portion (about 1/50) from your produce. This

act of HAFRASHA, separation, is done at home. This separating it makes it holy. Then you may give it to the Kohen. This same act is necessary before giving a gift for the construction of the Mishkan. Therefore using the verb “to take” is appropriate in this verse. Take the gift, separate it in your home, thereby sanctifying it, and then give it to the construction of the Mishkan.

- Two words are used interchangeably here: Mishkan and Mikdash, the Tabernacle and the Holy Temple. After the Revelation of the Almighty at Mt. Sinai, each Jew felt that he was just anointed with the divine spirit, and each of their tents was the residence of Hashem. Of course, this feeling vanished with the debacle of the Golden Calf. Back in Parshat Chayei Sara, when Yitzchak married Rivka and brought her into his mother’s tent, Rashi comments there, quoting a Midrash, that when Sara was alive, a light was lit from Erev Shabbat to Erev Shabbat, and a blessing was in the dough, and a cloud hovered over the tent. When Sarah died, these miracles stopped. When Rivka entered the tent, these miracles returned. When I looked up this Midrash, there was a fourth aspect to the tent that Rashi did not mention: that the doors to the tent were wide open. Rashi omitted this one because what Rashi wanted to present was the idea that Sara’s (and

Rivka’s) tent represented the Mishkan. Very subtle, but nicely stated. Take home message: our goal is to create a Mishkan out of our homes.

- When Moshe came down from Mt. Sinai carrying the Tablets of the Ten Commandments, he ended up shattering them when he saw the Golden Calf. What happened to the broken Tablets? Hashem instructed Moshe to build a wooden Ark which would house the broken Luchot and the second set as well, until Betzalel built the permanent Aron (Ark). Rashi mentions that after the permanent Aron was built, the broken Tablets were stored in the wooden Ark. and the wooden Ark containing the broken Tablets would accompany the Jewish army into battle. Ramban disagrees. He writes that everything in the wooden Ark was transferred to the permanent Ark, and the wooden Ark was buried. [Note: When I moved here in 1981, the Shul was in a house on the location of the current synagogue. In the house/shul, there was a wooden Aron, built by a member of the Shul, which housed the Torahs. When we built the new building, we could not just throw the wooden Aron away. It had to be buried. I worked with the contractor and had the wooden Aron broken into wooden slabs. It is buried under the Main Sanctuary of the current Shul.]

- Rashi comments that the wooden Ark with the broken Tablets accompanied Klal Yisrael into battle. Why was that a good thing to do? The broken Tablets represented a terribly low point in our history. A mere 40 days after the Revelation of Hashem, the Jewish nation worshiped an idol. And this is what we want to remind Hashem as we enter a battle! I can only offer this attempt at an answer. If the entire Jewish army were Torah observant, then they were entitled to take the permanent Aron with them into the war. But they are not fully frum. The army needed to demonstrate that they are Jewish, linked permanently to the Torah, but flawed with sin. Hashem should have mercy and compassion as they are now required to engage a bitter enemy who hate the Jewish people. We need Hashem to assist his flawed people in their time of need.

- The building appeal in the desert was highly successful. The people responded with full hearts and they gave so much that a call was announced to have them stop giving. Yet to buy the required public sacrifices, Hashem established a half shekel annual tax in order to secure these necessary funds. It goes to the root of philanthropy. To build a building and to outfit the physical need, people will give. But to support the daily service within the Sanctu-

ary, that requires additional convincing to gain the necessary funds. Tzedaka is a real concern in our day. Firstly it is wrong to translate Tzedaka as charity because in English charity is optional. In Hebrew the root of Tzedaka is Tzedek, righteousness which is obligatory. Tzedaka is a religious Mitzva. Yet getting a solicitation in the mail can be ignored. A person coming to your door should be given. But the amount is up to the donor.

- There is no illumination in the Holy of Holies. Reading the text leaves us the impression that it is totally dark in that room. When the Kohen Gadol enters the Holy of Holies once a year on Yom Kippur, he is carrying only the incense which is not a source of light. Holy sources record that there was a divine source of light, but I am not satisfied with the source. Another area of concern is the weight of the Parochet. It must have been extremely heavy. Too heavy for a one or two man job to lift and maneuver. Even being held in place is questionable. What I am left with is the strong conviction that Hashem ultimately maintains and safeguards every detail of the Torah and everything described therein. Even the ability to create a Menorah from beating and shaping a large piece of gold would require expert precise craftsmanship.

- In the desert, where did they get all

these items necessary for the construction and maintenance of the Mishkan? We cannot assume that Bnei Yisrael brought these items with them from Egypt. The gold, silver, and copper could have come with them. I cannot assume that in packing, a person said to his wife: Dear, did you pack the olive oil? And what about the frankincense? Rabbi Steinsaltz zt"l wrote that they could have traded with caravans that were traveling in the desert, even the Techeilet-blue dye, which came from an aquatic snail-type of creature. And the Midrash claims that the colorful Tachash animal was divinely created to be in the desert, and immediately afterward became extinct. The truth is we do not have and never will have all the answers. All we have is our faith in Hashem: that He provided for every need while in the desert.

- MIDRASH. Moshe had trouble figuring out how to build the Menorah. And yet Betzalel, much much younger than Moshe did know how to do it. Moshe said to Betzalel: your name is the answer. You grew up BETZAIL EIL, in the shadow of Hashem. I, on the other hand, grew up in a non-Jewish palace and not among Jews or Jewish culture. [Note: Jewish education is so important!]

## Questions by RED

### From the text

1. What was the first utensil described in the Torah for the Mishkan? (25:10)
2. What forms were crafted for the top of the of the Ark? (25:18)
3. What was the Menorah made out of? (25:31)
4. What was the Outer Altar made out of? (27:1,2)
5. How tall was the Outer Altar? (27:1)

### From Rashi

6. What is the meaning of the Hebrew word T'RUMA? (25:2. Rashi and Hirsch)
7. Where did the T'cheilet (bluish dye) come from? (25:4)
8. What was the Tachash animal? (25:4)
9. What were the spices needed for in the Mishkan? (25:6)
10. Where did Bnei Yisrael get acacia wood in the desert? (25:5)

### From the Rabbis

11. The Ibn Ezra was an anti-Midrash commentator. According to him, where did Bnei Yisrael get acacia wood in the desert?
12. What is the root of the Hebrew word Aron (the Ark), and therefore what is its meaning? (Rabbeinu Bachya)
13. What is the meaning of coating the Ark with gold inside and outside?

(Beit HaLevi)

## Midrash

14. How thick was the gold Kaporet (covering) for the Ark? (Sukka 5a)

## Haftara - Melachim Alef

15. How many people were involved in the construction of the Beit HaMikdash?

## Relationships

- a) Dina - Peretz
- b) Yocheved - Gershon
- c) Shimon - Shaul
- d) Gershon - Livni
- e) Elisheva - Nachshon

## ANSWERS

1. The Ark
2. The two K'ruvim, childlike golden figures.
3. Gold
4. From copper plated acacia wood.
5. Three Amot, about 4.5 feet.
6. Rashi: Separation, separate some of your money to Hashem.  
Hirsch: From the Hebrew RUM, elevate. Elevate yourself by giving.
7. From the secretion of a rare amphibious animal called a Chilazon.
8. A beautiful multi-colored animal that existed only at that time and then became extinct.

9. For the anointment oil for the Mishkan, its vessels, and for kings and Kohanim, and the daily incense offering.

10. There is a Midrash that says that Yaakov knew through prophecy that Bnei Yisrael would need those trees in the desert. He transplanted acacia trees from Canaan in Egypt and told his descendants to take them with the Jewish people when they will leave Egypt.

11. There must have been a small acacia forest in the Mt. Sinai area.

12. The root of the word ARON is OR, Light, to tell us the Torah is the light of the world.

13. That the community should feel responsible to provide an adequate living to the teachers of Torah.

14. One Tefach, about four inches.

15. 30,000 men

## Relationships

- a) Aunt & Nephew
- b) Siblings
- c) Uncle and Step-father & Nephew and Stepson
- d) Father & Son
- e) Siblings