

Parshas Vayak'hel in a Nutshell
(Exodus 35:1-38:20)

Moses assembles the people of Israel and reiterates to them the commandment to observe the Shabbat. He then conveys G-d's instructions regarding the making of the Mishkan (Tabernacle). The people donate the required materials in abundance, bringing gold, silver and copper; blue-, purple- and red-dyed wool; goat hair, spun linen, animal skins, wood, olive oil, herbs and precious stones. Moses has to tell them to stop giving.

A team of wise-hearted artisans make the Mishkan and its furnishings (as detailed in the previous Torah readings of Terumah, Tetzaveh and Ki Tisa): three layers of roof coverings; 48 gold-plated wall panels, and 100 silver foundation sockets; the parochet (veil) that separates between the Sanctuary's two chambers, and the masach (screen) that fronts it; the ark, and its cover with the cherubim; the table and its showbread; the seven-branched menorah with its specially prepared oil; the golden altar and the incense burned on it; the anointing oil; the outdoor altar for burnt offerings and all its implements; the hangings, posts and foundation sockets for the courtyard; and the basin and its pedestal, made out of copper mirrors. ❖



Vayakhel, "And he gathered," begins by relating that Moses gathered together the entire Jewish people. This teaches an important lesson: When building a Sanctuary where G-dliness will be revealed, one must establish unity among the Jewish people.
-- The Rebbe

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

Shabbos Schedule

Erev Shabbos – Feb 25 / I Adar 24

Candle Lighting 5:25 pm
Mincha 5:25 pm

Shabbos Day – Feb 26 / I Adar 25

Tehillim Reading 8:00 am
Shacharis 9:30 am*
Torah Reading 10:40 am
Kiddush 12:15 pm

Mincha 5:00 pm
Farbrengen 5:25 pm
Shabbos Ends 6:25 pm

**Latest morning Shema is now 9:20 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

Weekday Schedule (not on a holiday):

Minyan

Shacharis (Mon-Fri) 6:15 am
Shacharis (Sunday) 9:00 am
Mincha (Sun-Thurs) 1:45 pm
Maariv (Sun-Thurs) 9:15 pm

Bulletin

*This week's Bulletin
is sponsored by
The Shul .*

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Tehillim - Psalms

**Join us this Shabbos morning
Feb 26 at 8:00 AM for
Shabbos Mevorchim Tehillim.**

**This week's Tehillim reading is
dedicated to
a refuah sh'laima
for
Yoel Avraham ben Yetta.**

This week's Torah reading also includes Parshat Shekalim (Exodus 30:11-16), which speaks of the half-shekel each Jew contributed to the Sanctuary. This Shekalim Torah reading occurs on the Shabbat that falls on or before Adar (or II Adar).

***Thank You to:
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**Join us each weekday
morning Mon-Fri as we
delve into the mysteries of
Chassidic concepts.
5:55 am, followed
immediately by Shacharis.**

Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, Feb 26, 2022
Eastern Standard Time

Earliest Tallis 5:39 AM
Latest Morning Shema 9:20 AM
Earliest Mincha (Gedola) 12:38 PM
Plag Hamincha 4:38 PM
Earliest Evening Shema 6:12 PM

Chassidic Masters

Passive Labor

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

One of the greatest paradoxes of a life of faith concerns the need to work for a living. If G-d is the source of all blessings, why toil to earn a livelihood? And if we do work, how can we avoid the thought that it is our labor alone that produces material results? We seem torn between absolute passivity and the denial of G-d's involvement in the world.

Thus the believer engages in what can be termed "passive labor." In the opening verses of Vayak'hel, Moses instructs the people of Israel:

Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a sabbath of sabbaths to G-d . . .

Not "six days shall you work," but "six days shall work be done." The passive form suggests that even during the week's six workdays, when the Jew is permitted and obligated to work, he should be occupied with, but not preoccupied by, his material endeavors.

This is how chassidic teaching interprets the verse, "If you will eat the labor of your hands, you will be happy and it will be well with you." What King David is implying, say the chassidic masters, is that the labor in which a person engages for his material needs (so that "you will eat") should be only "of your hands"—an activity of the outer man, not an inward involvement.

One's "hands" and "feet" should attend to one's material endeavors, while one's thoughts and feelings remain bound up with G-dly things. This is the same concept as that implied by the verse, "Six days shall work be done." One does not do the work; it is "done," as if of its own accord. The heart and mind are elsewhere, and only the person's practical faculties are engaged in the work.

The Jew works not to "make a living," but only to fashion a keli ("vessel") to receive G-d's blessings. This is what the Torah means when it says, "And the L-rd your G-d will bless you in all that you do." Man is not sustained by his own efforts, but through G-d's blessing; it is only that G-d desires that His blessing should realize itself in and through "all that you do." Man's work merely provides a natural channel for the divine blessing of sustenance, and man must at all times remember that it is no more than a channel. Though his hands prepare the channel, his mind and heart must remain focused on the source of the blessing.

The chassidic masters take this a step further. In truth, they say, man should really not be allowed to work at all. For of G-d it is said, "I fill the heavens and the earth" and "the whole earth is full of His glory." The proper response to the ever-present nature of G-d would be to stand in absolute passivity. To do otherwise would be to be guilty of what the Talmud calls "making gestures before the king." If a person standing in the presence of a king were to do anything other than devote his attention to the king, he would surely forfeit his life.

So it is only because the Torah itself permits, indeed commands, "Six days shall work be done" and "the L-rd your G-d will bless you in all that you do," that work is permissible and desirable. But to go beyond the level of involvement sanctioned by the Torah—beyond the "passive labor" of making a "vessel"—that would be, in the first place, to show a lack of faith that human sustenance comes from G-d; and second, it would be "making gestures before the king"—an act of rebellion in the face of G-d.

The Double Shabbat

This explains the phrase shabbat shabbaton—"a sabbath of sabbaths"—used by Moses in the above verse. Shabbat is not a day of rest following six days of active labor. Rather, it is a "sabbath of sabbaths," a Shabbat following six days that are themselves "sabbaths" of sorts—days of passive labor, in which one's work engages only one's external self, with the true focus of one's attention in a higher place.

Indeed, a true day of rest can only be one that follows such a week. Citing the verse, "Six days you shall labor, and do all your work," the Sages say: "On the Shabbat, a person should regard himself as if all his work were complete." This is true rest—rest in which one is utterly free of all workday concerns. If, however, during the six days a person had been preoccupied with material concerns, on the seventh day anxieties will invade him; even if his body ceases work, his mind will not be at rest.

(Continued next page)

On the other hand, if he has given his work its proper place during the week, the light of Shabbat will illuminate him, and it will be shabbat shabbaton—a Shabbat twice over. For Shabbat will then permeate his whole week, and when the day itself arrives it will have a double sanctity.

The Day After Yom Kippur

This also explains the context in which Moses addresses the above verses to the assembled congregation of Israel.

Our Sages elaborate on how the building of the Mishkan (Tabernacle) atoned for, and rectified, the sin of the Golden Calf. Ostensibly similar (both the Calf and the Mishkan were a “consecration” of physical matter, particularly gold), the Mishkan was, in truth, the very opposite of the Calf: the Golden Calf was a deification of the material, while the Mishkan was a subjugation of the material to serve the Divine. So on the day after the first Yom Kippur, immediately following G-d’s full forgiveness of Israel’s sin, Moses conveyed G-d’s instructions to the people to build Him a “dwelling-place” in their midst; that very day, the people donated their gold, silver and copper to the making of the Mishkan.

First, however, Moses gathered the people of Israel and commanded them in G-d’s name: “Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a sabbath of sabbaths to G-d . . .” This implies that, like the Mishkan, this commandment is a refutation of, and atonement for, the sin of idolatry.

Maimonides traces the origins of idolatry to the fact that Divine Providence is channeled through natural forces and objects. The original idolaters recognized that the sun, moon and the stars derived their power to nourish the earth from G-d, yet they attached divine significance to them. Their error was to regard them as objects of worship, whereas they are no more than the instruments of G-d, like “an axe in the hands of the hewer.”

In a certain sense, the excessive preoccupation with business and the material world is also a form of idolatry. For this, too, involves the error of attaching significance to what is no more than a vessel or channel of Divine blessing. The materialist’s preoccupation with material things is a form of bowing the head, of misplaced worship. Only when a person sees his workday effort for what it truly is—a way of creating a natural channel for the blessings of G-d—will his work take the passive form and the focus of his thoughts be on G-d alone.

This is how idolatry—whether in its overt or its more subtle forms—is atoned. Six days of passive work in the sense of mental detachment and the realization that human work is only an instrument of G-d, culminating in and inspired by a “sabbath of sabbaths” that focuses utterly on the source of our blessings—are the corrective for, and the denial of, the instincts of idolatry. ❖

SHABBAT MINYAN: PARSHAT VAYAKHEL / SHKALIM @ THE PATERSON SHUL (plus A JEWISH BOXING DISCUSSION)

The Paterson Shul @Seniors Tower of Paterson located at 510 E. 27th Street/Paterson will have Minyanim on Shabbat February 26 at 9:00 am.

Besides a good Davening and a Kiddush, they will also be discussing “Jews in the Boxing Ring” with a special historian guest.

(With COVID restrictions lifted for masks, they are only required when entering/exiting the apartment complex.)

For more info visit: www.PatersonShul.org

From Our Sages – Vayak’hel

The Parshah of Vayakhel records the actual implementation of G-d’s instructions on how to build the Mishkan (Tabernacle), recounted earlier in the Parshah of Terumah. Indeed, much of Vayakhel is almost an exact repeat of Terumah, the only apparent difference being that the details which in Terumah are prefaced with the words “They shall make . . .” are here presented following the preface “They made . . .”

But first,

Moses assembled the entire congregation of the children of Israel, and said to them: These are the words which G-d has commanded, that you should do them:

Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a sabbath of sabbaths to G-d; whoever does work on it shall be put to death.

You shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations on the Sabbath day.

An Six days work shall be done; and the seventh day shall be holy. . . . Every wise-hearted man among you shall come and make all that G-d has commanded . . . (Exodus 35:2, 10)

Why does the Torah place the commandment to cease work on Shabbat next to the work of the Mishkan? To teach us that a person is guilty of violating the Shabbat only if the work he does has a counterpart in the work of making the Sanctuary: they sowed (the herbs from which to make dyes for the tapestries); you too shall not sow [on Shabbat]. They harvested [the herbs]; you too shall not harvest. They loaded the boards from the ground onto the wagons; you too shall not bring an object from a public domain into a private domain . . .

-- (Talmud and Rashi, Shabbat 49b)

Thus the Mishkan not only defines the type of work forbidden on Shabbat, but also the type of work the Jew is engaged in on the other six days of the week: the work of building a home for G-d out of the materials of physical life.

-- (Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi)

Gold, silver and copper (Exodus 35:5)

“Gold” represents the purity and perfection of the tzaddik. “Silver” represents the great yearning of the baal teshuvah (“returnee” or penitent) for closeness to G-d—a yearning many times more powerful than that of the tzaddik, because it is a yearning from afar (kesef, the Hebrew word for silver, also means “yearning”). Copper, the lowliest of metals, represents the good deeds of the sinner. G-d’s home on earth is complete only when it includes all three.

-- (The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

They spoke to Moses, saying: “The people are bringing much more than enough . . .” (Exodus 36:5)

Said Rabbi Aba bar Acha: There’s no understanding the character of this people! They’re solicited for the [Golden] Calf, and they give; they’re solicited for the Mishkan, and they give.

-- (Jerusalem Talmud, Shekalim 1:1) ❖

Haftorah for Parshat Shekalim in a nutshell

II Kings 11:17-12:17

The *Parshat Shekalim Torah reading* discusses the annual obligation for every Jew to give half a shekel to the Temple coffers. The *haftorah* discusses the efforts of King Jehoash (9th century BCE) to earmark these communal funds for the upkeep of the first Holy Temple.

Background for this haftorah: Because of an alliance with the Northern Kingdom of Israel, idol worship had become rampant in the erstwhile righteous Davidic dynasty-controlled Southern Kingdom. When the king of the Southern Kingdom, Ahaziah, was killed, his mother Athaliah murdered the remainder of the royal family and seized the throne. During her brief reign, she actively promoted idolatry. Unbeknownst to her, one of Ahaziah's sons, a small baby, was hidden and survived. When he became seven years of age, Jehoiada the High Priest led a successful revolt against Athaliah, and installed the child king, Jehoash, as the new King of Judea.

The haftorah begins with the new king renewing the people's covenant with G-d. They destroyed all the pagan altars and statues and appointed officers to oversee the Holy Temple. Jehoash then instructed the priests regarding all the funds that were donated to the Temple. According to his plan, all the funds would be appropriated by the priests. In return, the priests would pay for the regular maintenance of the Temple. In the 23rd year of Jehoash's reign, the priests neglected to properly maintain the Temple. Jehoash then ordered that all monies should be placed in a special box that was placed near the Temple altar, and these funds were given directly to the workers and craftsmen who maintained the Temple. ❖

EMBRACING ALL DIFFERENCES

Tuesday, March 8 at 8:00pm at Shomrei Torah. The Bravman Family is honoring Ilona's blessed memory with an education series:
Inspired by Ilona - Communal Education Series on Inclusion

"EMBRACING ALL DIFFERENCES"

Panelists: Rav Judah Mischel, Zeesy Grossbaum, Adeena Penner
Moderated By: Rabbi David Pardo

For more information: <https://biolink.fyi/ilona>

שבת שלום גוט שבת!



Gutt Shabbos to all!