

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT VAYAKHEL
PEKUDEI & HACHODESH

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

SHABBAT - KNOWING THE END GAME!

The day was the 11th of Tishrei, 2449, the Jews had been eagerly awaiting Moshe. He had now been up on the mountain of Sinai for a third period of 40 days. On Yom Kippur Moshe finally received forgiveness for the sin that the Jews had perpetrated on Shiva Asar Be Tamuz when they worshiped the golden calf. He was now able to come and approach the people and tell them all that he had learnt whilst above with Hashem. At this point we would have expected Moshe to enter the camp and start to relate about how he had prayed sincerely for the people, how Hashem in His Great Mercy had forgiven the people for their sins, perhaps how Hashem had guaranteed after Moshe's pleading that he himself and not an angel would lead the people into Eretz Yisrael. Yet we seem to be surprised to learn that upon descending the mountain, Moshe decides to relate two important messages. The first is Shabbat the second is the building of the Mishkan. Why did he choose to relate these specific matters at this point in time?

We can understand why Moshe told them about the building of the Mishkan straight away. The Bnei Yisrael had sinned. They were no longer on the same high spiritual level that they possessed at Har Sinai. Moshe wished to implore on them the necessity to constantly show their allegiance to Hashem. The way forward would be through having a place of worship and through sanctifying a time of worship. This was Moshe's message. To stop ourselves from sinning in the future we need to have a place of worship and a time solely designated to worship.

Let us take a deeper look as to why Moshe focused on the Mitzvah of Shabbat.

After the sin of the Golden Calf the people were left dismayed. The mitzvah of Shabbat brings with it both consolation and the correct path to lead our lives.

Our sages teach us that when the Pasuk states Sheshet Yamim YeAseh Melacha - it means literally that for six days work will be done and on the seventh Tishbot - you should rest and consider as if all your work has been completed. One should approach the seventh day as if a new

beginning has arisen; it is a day separate to all others. Sanctify it by specializing on our connection with Hashem. No other mundane daily work should even enter our minds, we should view all of that as already completed. All the sorrow of that business week, all that effort, those phone calls, emails, discussions, meetings, arguments etc they all come to end on Shabbat.

The Bnei Yisrael had witnessed the breaking of the holy tablets, and had heard that their punishment for the Golden calf will last for generations, they were despondent.

The Mitzvah of Shabbat was given to them specifically now to teach them that everything comes to an end. The time will come when they will not suffer the punishment of the golden calf, the time will come when just like Shabbat, everything will seem to them in the past, and a new dimension of time and spirituality will flow. When a person knows that there is an end to his suffering, then the pressure is much less felt. There is an extra urge and confidence to see it through.

The Gemara in Ketubot (33b) asks what is more stringent punishment; Mita - Death or Malkut - the 39 lashes that Bet Din can apply to a sinner? The Gemara explains that Chanania Misha'el and Azaria all disobeyed Nebuchadnezzar and didn't bow to the idol. For this they were sentenced to death by fire. Nevertheless Hashem performed for them a miracle and they came out alive. Rav is of the opinion that had Nebuchadnezzar punished them through Makot (rather than death) they would not have survived, they would have broken under the pressure and bowed down. Hence Malkut is more powerful than death. However the Gemara goes on to rebuff this and states that there is a difference between Malkut that has an end, and Malkut that has no end. According to the Torah we are supposed to grant 39 lashes and no more. When a person is told how many lashes they are going to receive, then it is much easier for him to deal with it. However when the lashes are meted out without any fixed amount, then this can cause a person to brake. Chanania Misha'el and Azaria would have only succumbed to Malkut without an end, however if they were given a fixed amount of Malkut for their disobedience then they would have managed to cope.

The lesson is clear; when there is a fixed amount of sorrow, we can take encouragement and look

25TH ADAR 5783

SHABBAT BEGINS:
17:54pm

SHABBAT ENDS:
18:57pm



DVAR TORAH
Shabbat - Knowing the End Game!
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil



DVAR TORAH
Parsha Insights
By Rabbi David Baadani



DVAR TORAH
The Real Provider
By Rabbi Yehonatan Salem



OUR CHAHAMIM
Rabbi Shimon



HALACHOT
By Rabbi Eli Mansour



KIDS ZONE
Comic and Quiz



Shabbat
Shalom

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forward to the day the sorrow will end. We can convince ourselves of the temporary aspect and keep a constant reminder of the end game. Shabbat is a taste of Olam Habah. It is a taste since through it we come to the realization that the world is being constantly run by Hashem. It is His hand that guides

us through business, it is His Hand that guides our family and social life, and it is His hand that guides our success. On Shabbat we stop our robotic life, and take a break. A break where we can focus on the real source of life – Hashem. The Midrash Rabbah (Vayikra 3:1) states that the Jewish people will be redeemed

from our exile in the merit of Shabbat observance. Let us take encouragement from the message of Shabbat, let us focus at least this one day out of seven on Hashem and His commandments, and in this merit the Geula Kerova. Amen.

Shabbat Shalom.



RABBI DAVID BAADANI

Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI

What prompted Moshe Rabbeinu to sit down and give an accounting of all the donations brought in for the Mishkan? The Holy One, blessed be He, trusted him, as it says: בְּכֵל בֵּיתוֹ נֶאֱמָן הוּא, 'He is trusted throughout My household', why did Moshe feel the need to give them an accounting? Because he heard the scoffers, and the cynics of that generation whispering behind his back... "Could it be that the man in charge of the work of building a Sanctuary, with weights of silver and gold that are not examined, nor weighed or accounted for will not become wealthy!" When he heard that he said: "Be assured, I will give them an accounting." There are two things that are taught with

this Midrash. Firstly, in every generation there are scoffers. Even in the generation of Moshe Rabbeinu, a generation that saw the sights of G-d, witnessed the Ten Plagues, the Exodus from Egypt, the splitting of the Red Sea, and stood in front of Mount Sinai. A generation that knew their leader, the father of the prophets. A leader who was ready to erase his name for Israel's sake. Even in such a generation, דור דעה, there were scoffers, mockers, cynics who believed that every person is driven solely by self-interest. As a result of the distorted reality seen in their imagination they could not discern the purity of human virtues, even as great as Moshe was. They suspected him as an unfaithful person, one that is capable of embezzling. Moshe Rabbeinu himself knew that there was no truth in their words, because his

wealth came from another place. As it is said: פָּסַל לָךְ שְׁנֵי לִחוֹת אֲבָנִים כְּרֵאשֵׁינִים Carve two tablets of stone like the first. The Midrash says he showed him a quarry of sapphire in his tent and said to him: The chips (פסלת = פסל) shall be yours to keep (לך). It was from this that Moshe became very rich. Even though it was clear to Moshe that this wealth belonged to him, and was not taken from the donations of the Mishkan, he still provided an accounting to Bnei Yisrael, in order to clear himself of suspicion. As the Torah says וְהִיטֵם נְקִיִּים גְּמִי שְׂרָאֵל you shall be clear before ה' and before Israel. Do not leave a shadow of a doubt. אֵלֶּה פְקֻדֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדֻת. This is the contribution; this is the full accounting of all your donations to the Mishkan. All your donations have been accounted for, and clarified before you.



RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

The Real Provider

In the opening words of our Parasha we are told to work for six days, and the seventh day – Shabbat, should be sanctified to Hashem, not to do any constructive actions of work on it. Due to the holiness of this day, even the mitzvah to build the Tabernacle – G-d's abode on earth, with all the construction required in order to erect it, may not be done on Shabbat. After Adam sinned, he was cursed, having to earn his food by the sweat of his brow. Before he had sinned his sustenance was channeled directly to him, without having to make any effort. On Shabbat, we are elevated to the level of Adam before his sin. One who chooses to sanctify this holy day can experience "living with G-d" without needing to exert himself for his requirements. However, one who desecrates this holy day thereby subjugates himself to require exertion in order to sustain himself and his family on this day. Often people say: "Saturday is

our best day for business. People are off work and able to shop." The answer to this is that if a person does not accept the holiness of the day, it will remain mundane for him and he will be subject to the curse of needing to earn his keep. However, if he does accept this commandment, then he is opening the doors to divine blessing and existence. It must be said, that even when we do exert effort during the six working-days, our revenue is not a direct result of our efforts, rather, it is G-d who actually, sustains us in His abundant kindness. A parable is brought (by the author of the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch) to illustrate this: A big fish, open-mouthed, is chasing its prey, a smaller fish, which is fleeing for its life. They are both swimming in the same direction, but eventually the big fish will catch up with the smaller fish. If the bigger fish is caught, we would expect to see the smaller fish lying inside the bigger fish's stomach, with its tail towards the bigger

fish's tail and its head towards the bigger one's head. However, in fact, we may find the smaller fish laying the other way, with its tail towards the head of the bigger fish and its head towards the tail of the bigger one. The reason for this is because, in fact, the bigger fish did not eat the smaller fish that it was chasing. Rather, another small fish that was innocently swimming towards the bigger fish mistakenly swam into its open mouth, and the other one escaped! When we are doing our next business deal, let us remember that we are just doing our duty, to try earning our livelihood. The real source of our sustenance, however, is G-d, who often gives us income through unexpected deals or even mistakes. When we understand that essentially G-d is our sole provider, even though we provide input. Then, when we sanctify the holy Shabbat and rest from doing work, we will merit seeing that it is the hand of G-d that channels all our needs towards us.



OUR CHAHAMIM

Rabbi Shimon the Righteous

Rabbi Shimon HaTzaddik (the Righteous) was one of the last survivors of the Knesset Hagedolah (the Great Assembly), a group composed of 120 men of Israel. On the day after the destruction of the first Beth Hamikdash (Temple), it was the Knesset Hagedolah that did so much to assure the survival of the Jewish nation, a nation that was threatened as much by the disappearance of the Beth Hamikdash as by the Galut (exile) that ensued. It is to them that we owe, in particular, our ritual of prayer, say the Sages in citing the prophet Hosea: "Let our lips substitute for bulls." Counted among those in that Knesset Hagedolah were great members of the community, including even some of the prophets. Rabbi Shimon HaTzaddik himself was the Kohen Gadol (High Priest) in the Beth Hamikdash. He held this office for forty years, attired in his solemn blue garments, and by virtue of his immensely pious works, many were the miracles that the Jewish people benefited from. What follows is an account of one of these miracles, thanks to which the Beth Hamikdash was saved from destruction by the Samaritans, a group that also wanted to massacre the Jewish population of the

land. The Eternal, however, put an end to this sinister plan and punished the Samaritans as they deserved. This entire story is recounted in the Talmudic tractate Yoma. Our Sages teach us: The 25th of Tevet is a Yom Tov (a holiday). On that day we are not allowed to give eulogies or recite Tachnun (bi-weekly supplications). On that day, in fact, the Samaritans had asked for and obtained from Emperor Alexander the Great the authorization to destroy the House of the Eternal in Jerusalem. The terrible news was told to Rabbi Shimon HaTzaddik. What did he do? He dressed himself in his High Priest garments and called for several notable figures in Jerusalem. Each took a lit torch and they all marched during the night to encounter the Emperor, who was on his way to Jerusalem with his retinue. In the morning they found themselves face to face with his procession. His court attendants announced to the Emperor: "Here are the Jews that have arisen against you." Yet in seeing Shimon HaTzaddik, Alexander the Great hastened to descend from his chariot and prostrate himself before him. Stunned, his court attendants asked him, "A great king such as you bows down before

Jews?"

He replied, "I saw the face of this man when I was in the midst of battle. It was thanks to that vision that I triumphed over my enemies."

Then, turning towards Rabbi Shimon HaTzaddik and his companions, he asked them why they had come to meet him. Rabbi Shimon replied, "Is it conceivable that idolaters could manage to persuade you to destroy a building in which we never stop praying for you and the longevity of your Empire?"

"Of what are you speaking?"

"The Samaritans."

Cognizant of his error, Alexander the Great told them, "They are in your hands. Do with them as you wish."

Immediately, the heads of the community seized the conspirators, attached them to the tails of their horses, and dragged them among prickly shrubs and thistles all the way to their villages on Mount Gerizim. There, they destroyed everything in their path, exactly as the Samaritans had planned to do to Jerusalem.

Since that time, the 25th of Tevet has been decreed as a festival among the Jewish people.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

The Beracha Recited Over Chocolate Bars with Nuts, and Over Coated Almonds

The prevalent custom is to recite the Beracha of "She'hakol Niheya Bi'dvaro" before eating chocolate. This Halacha applies even to chocolate bars containing nuts or small pieces of rice; even though nuts generally require the Beracha of "Ha'etz" and rice requires the Beracha of "Mezonot," in this case the Beracha of "She'hakol" covers the entire chocolate bar. Since the chocolate constitutes the "Ikar" – the primary ingredient – and the nuts or pieces of rice are added as an enhancement, it is the chocolate that determines the Beracha over the entire product. As such, one recites "She'hakol" and this Beracha covers even the nuts or pieces of rice. What Beracha does one recite over coated almonds, such as almonds coated with honey, sugar or chocolate? The Ben Ish Hai (Rabbi Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909), in Parashat Pinhas (15), records that his father had the practice to separate a bit of coating from the almond and then recite separate Berachot: "Ha'etz" over the almond, and "She'hakol" over the sugar coating. However, the prevalent practice in Iraq, as

the Ben Ish Hai observed, was to recite "She'hakol" over the entire almond. The Ben Ish Hai ruled that his father's custom was the more correct view. Rabbi Moshe Halevi (Israel, 1961-2001), in his work "Birkat Hashem" (vol. 3, p. 326; listen to audio recording for precise citation), suggests distinguishing in this regard between different kinds of coatings. In his view, the Ben Ish Hai referred to foods such as the "Labass," an almond with a thick coating. A thick coating constitutes an independent entity which warrants its own Beracha, and for this reason the Ben Ish Hai held that one should recite two separate Berachot, over the almond and over the coating. With regard, however, to almonds with a thin coating of sugar or chocolate, Rabbi Moshe Halevi contends that one should recite "Ha'etz" over the almond and this Beracha covers the coating, as well. Since the coating is very thin, it is deemed subsidiary to the almond and thus does not warrant its own Beracha. Others held that even if the almond is covered with a thick layer of coating one recites "Ha'etz" over the entire almond; this appears to be the

position of Hacham Ovadia Yosef.

It thus emerges that three opinions exist with regard to coated almonds. One view requires reciting "She'hakol" in all cases, another view requires reciting "Ha'etz" in all cases, and a third view holds that one recites "Ha'etz" if the coating is thin and two separate Berachot if the coating is thick.

All three views are acceptable, and one should therefore consult with his Rabbi for guidance.

Summary: One recites the Beracha of "She'hakol" over chocolate bars even if they contain nuts or small pieces of rice. There is a difference of opinion as to which Beracha or Berachot one recites over coated almonds. Some maintain that one recites "She'hakol," others maintain that one recites "Ha'etz," and others maintain that if there is a thin layer one recites "Ha'etz" whereas if there is a thick layer one recites two separate Berachot – "Ha'etz" over the almond and "She'hakol" over the coating. All three practices are acceptable and firmly grounded in Halacha, and one should therefore consult with his Rabbi for guidance.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Vayakhel-Pekudei

Moshe Rabbeinu exhorts the Jewish People to keep Shabbat, and requests donations for the materials for making the Mishkan. He collects gold, silver, precious stones, skins and yarn, as well as incense and olive oil for the Menorah and for anointing. The princes of each tribe bring the precious stones for the Kohen Gadol's breastplate and ephod.

Hashem appoints Bezalel and Oholiav as the master craftsmen. The Children of Israel contribute so many resources that Moshe begins to refuse donations. Special curtains with two different covers were designed for the Mishkan's roof and door. Gold-covered boards in silver bases were connected, forming the Mishkan's walls. Bezalel made the Holy Ark (which contained the Tablets) from

wood, covered with gold. On the Ark's cover were two figures facing each other. The Menorah and the Table with the Showbreads were also of gold. Two Altars were made: a small incense Altar of wood, overlaid with gold, and a larger Altar for sacrifices, made of wood, covered with copper.

Rabbi Sinclair,
Seasonsofthemoon.com



1

On which day did Moshe assemble the Jewish People?

35:1 - The day after Yom Kippur.

2

Why is the prohibition against doing work on Shabbat written prior to the instruction for building the Mishkan?

35:2 - To emphasize that the building of the Mishkan doesn't supersede the laws of Shabbat.

3

Why does the Torah specify the particular prohibition of lighting a fire on Shabbat right after it had already noted the general prohibition of doing work on Shabbat?

35:3 - There are two opinions: One opinion is to teach that igniting a fire on Shabbat is punishable by lashes as opposed to other "melachot" which are punishable by death. The other opinion is to teach that violation of numerous "melachot" at one time requires a separate atonement for each violation.

4

What function did the "yitdot hamishkan" serve?

35:18 - The edges of the curtains were fastened to them. These were inserted in the ground so the curtains would not move in the wind.

5

What function did the "bigdei hasrad" serve?

35:19 - They covered the aron, the shulchan, the menorah, and the mizbachot when they were packed for transport.



This week's Parsha sheet is dedicated Leiluy Nishmat Odette Myriam bat Yehoudit Abecassis Z'l

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