

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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Chabad of North Beverly Hills, 409 Foothill Rd. Beverly Hills, 90210

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The Torah reading of Vayakhel begins by describing how Moshe assembled the entire nation and, after first relaying G-d's command to keep Shabbos, conveyed His desire that the Jews donate objects for the construction of the Mishkan.

Rashi explains that Moshe prefaced the commandment to construct the Mishkan with the command to keep Shabbos in order to inform the Jews that, notwithstanding the supreme importance of building the Tabernacle, this activity may not be pursued on Shabbos.

One might think that, since the main theme of Vayakhel is the construction of the Mishkan, the command to build it should have been stated first. Why is the order reversed?

The relationship of Shabbos observance to the construction of the Mishkan is not only a negative one (i.e., that the Mishkan may not be built on Shabbos), but also a positive one - that Shabbos observance serves as a preparation for the building of the Mishkan. How so? Although 39 general categories of creative labor are prohibited on Shabbos, Moshe singled out the lighting of a fire.[4] How does the command to not light a fire - more than any other - relate to building the Mishkan?

Also, why did Moshe find it necessary to first assemble every Jewish man, woman and child - something he rarely did - and only then relate the commandments of Shabbos and the construction of the Mishkan?

Consider. The overall purpose of the Mishkan was to "Make for Me a sanctuary so that I may dwell among them," i.e., the revelation of the Divine Presence here below. As the Midrash states: "When did the Divine Presence reveal itself in this world? On the day the Mishkan was erected."

Unlike the revelation of the Divine Presence at Sinai, which was mainly G-d's initiative, the Jews' labor and service in building the Tabernacle - as well as the preparation for its construction by all Jewish men, women and children - resulted in the completed state of Divine revelation manifest within the Mishkan.

The revelation of the Divine Presence within this world denotes G-d's absolute unity. Since this revelation was brought about by the Jewish people, it followed that they had to be united in this common cause. Thus it was that Moshe assembled all the people before relating the command to construct the Mishkan.

Moreover, one of the principal causes of dissension and disunity in this world are disagreements over money, for people tend to panic over the potential loss of wealth. Thus, when all the Jews acted together to give money for the construction of the Mishkan, it revealed the depth of their unity. This unity was further emphasized by Moshe's emphasis on the laws of Shabbos, and particularly on the prohibition against creating a fire.

The underlying concept of Shabbos is to ingrain within us the knowledge that G-d created and is responsible for the entire world. This knowledge should have a profound impact on our conduct during the six weekdays, for it helps us understand that the work we do during the week to earn our living is merely a vehicle and a vessel for G-d's blessings.

The result of this knowledge is that, while we work hard during the week to provide the receptacle for G-d's blessings, the work will not consume us; our heads and hearts will remain immersed in the study of Torah, the performance of mitzvos and the service of G-d.

This theme is stressed by the prohibition against creating fire "in all your dwelling places," i.e., that the physical "places" in which a person generally "dwells" must be without "fire" - without consuming passion. When a person lives life in this manner, knowing that G-d's blessings are responsible for his livelihood, he will not become consumed by a desire for wealth, and his ability to unite with his neighbor to build a Mishkan will be immeasurably enhanced. (Based on Sefer HaSichos 5749, Vol I, pp. 292-298)

And Moses assembled the entire congregation of the children of Israel (Exodus 35:1) This was on the morning after Yom Kippur, the day that Moses descended from the mountain [with the Second Tablets].(Rashi) - chabad.org

And Moses assembled the entire congregation of the children of Israel, and said to them... a sabbath of sabbaths to G-d (35:1-2) This teaches us that Moses instituted the practice to assemble on Shabbat to listen to the reading of the Torah. (Midrash) - ibid

The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less (30:15) People differ in their intellect, character, talent and sensitivity. But all are equal in the very basis of their bond with G-d: their intrinsic commitment to Him. So while every man contributed to the making of the various components of the Sanctuary in accordance with their individual capacity, all gave equally of the silver of which its foundation was made. As regards the foundation of the relationship between man and G-d, the rich man cannot give more, and the pauper cannot give less. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe) - ibid

And he made the altar of incense of acacia wood (Ex. 37:25) A Chasid once came to Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad Chasidism, and asked him, "Is it possible that the real intent behind the incense was only to dispel the smell of the animal sacrifices?" The Alter Rebbe told him that this was not so. "Whenever a person offered a sacrifice in the Temple," he explained, "the first thing he had to do was regret his sins and return to G-d with a whole heart. Then and only then were his sins atoned for. Sometimes, however, it happened that a person didn't repent completely, and there was still a trace of sin in the air. The purpose of the incense was to dispel its foul odor." (Shmuot VeSipurim) (From: LChaim 5760, #609) - lchaimweekly.org

SHABBOS SHEKALIM

The Shabbat before the month of Adar (and in a leap year, Adar II) is called "Shabbat Parshat Shekalim," or simply "Shabbat Shekalim." On this Shabbat we read about the mitzva of the half-shekel.

G-d commanded every Jew to give a half-shekel to atone for the sin of the Golden Calf. The sin of the Golden Calf was the sin of idolatry. Idolatry causes the Jewish people and G-d to be distanced and alienated from each other. The antidote, therefore, was to unite the Jewish people with G-d in true unison.

In essence, the Jewish people and G-d are one entity. Without G-d, the Jews are incomplete. They are only half of a single whole.

This fact was demonstrated by the mitzva of the half-shekel. The other "half" is G-d, and together they comprise a single unit. Rich and poor were commanded to give the same amount, for every Jew, no matter who he is, is only "half." Only by uniting with G-d do we become complete.

This is also connected to the month of Adar, in which the miracle of Purim took place. The Talmud explains that the spiritual reason for Haman's decree was that the Jewish people had become tainted by idolatry. The decree was nullified in the merit of the half-shekel.

When the Jews worshipped the Golden Calf, it gave the appearance that they had become disconnected from G-d. Their miraculous salvation refuted this notion, demonstrating openly that the Jewish people can never be separated from G-d.

The merit of the half-shekel aroused the Jews to observe Torah and mitzvot with even more devotion and self-sacrifice, making them worthy of the Purim miracle. May it be G-d's will that the merit of reading about this mitzva render us all worthy of the ultimate miracle, the coming of Moshiach and the Final Redemption. (From: LChaim 5760, #609) - lchaimweekly.org

My father said: Truth is the middle path. An inclination to the right, to be overly stringent with oneself and find faults or sins not in accord with the truth, or an inclination to the left, to be overly indulgent, covering one's faults or being lenient in demands of avoda out of self-love - both these ways are false." (From Rebbe's Hayom yom 27 adar i).

All of a person's earnings are predetermined in Heaven [in the beginning of the year] between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, except for the expenses of Shabbat and the festivals and the expenses of teaching one's children Torah. Regarding these, if one spends less, it is deducted from his earnings, and if one spends more, it is added to his earnings
— Talmud, Beitzah 15-16 (Chabad.org).

PARTICIPATE IN DAILY CLASSES

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Rosh Hashana (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Makos (men)
<u>Wednesday</u>	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
<u>Thursday</u>	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
<u>Daily</u>	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chassidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM

Sunday 9:00 AM

Mincha/Maariv: 5:50 PM

SHABBOS PARSHAS VAYAKHEL
Shabbos Mevorchim – Shabbos Shekalim
February 28, 2003

Candlelighting: (Los Angeles) 5:31 PM
Friday Mincha: 5:45 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:14 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- **Tehillim** **8:00 AM**
- **Shacharit** **9:30 AM followed by
Kiddush, Cholent &
Farbrengen**
- **Chumash** **4:45 PM**
- **Mincha** **5:20 PM followed by
Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends** **6:31 PM**

Yartzeit: Rabbi Hershel Shusterman – Adar 3

Happy Birthday to Jonathan Bekhor

Mazal tov to Chazan Yossi and Ethel Perles on the
upsherenish of their son Yaakov Mendel.

GOOD SHABBOS!