



The Importance of Leadership

By Noah Steinmetz, 11th Grade

Parshas Vayakhel comes at a low point for Klal Yisroel, as it occurs immediately following the Chet Ha'egel. Somehow, however, they were able to fix this massive error and build the Mishkan right after it, without even thinking about the major sin that they had just committed. How was this possible? What message could they have received that they changed their minds so quickly and turned onto the right path of building the Mishkan?

One explanation could be that there was a major difference between Klal Yisroel during the Chet Ha'egel in Parshat Ki Tisa and Klal Yisroel now in Parshat Vayakhel. In Parshat Ki Tisa, the Torah says "Vayikahel Ha'am Al Aharon", meaning: "The nation gathered around Aharon". In Parshat Vayakhel, it says "Vayakhel Moshe Es Ha'am", meaning: "Moshe assembled the nation". By the Chet Ha'egel, the nation gathered together without a leader and were like a mob. When people gather together without leadership, they lose their individuality and do bad things that they otherwise wouldn't be doing. But once Moshe assembled them together, they became a community with a leader. They were able to come together with

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Are Mirrors Holy?

By Jobe Silver, 12th Grade

Check Yourself Before You Wreck Yourself: Are Mirrors Holy?

"He made the laver [Kiyor] of copper and its stand of copper, from the mirrors of the women who performed tasks at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting." 38:8

Rashi is puzzled by the pasuk and wonders what the purpose of the mirrors is. He says that these were the mirrors that the Jewish women would use to beautify themselves. In Mitzrayim, when the men would come home from a day of backbreaking work, they had no interest in spending time with their wives. The women realized that if all their husbands would do is go to work, come home, and go to sleep, there would be no more Jewish children. So the women used their mirrors to beautify themselves so that when their husbands came home they would see their wives and spend time with them.

How could these seemingly inappropriate mirrors be used to create the holy Kiyor which was used in the Mishkan?

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Torah Teasers

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe

Parshas Vayakel**Questions**

1. This parsha begins with Moshe assembling the entire congregation together ([Exodus 35:1](#)). What are two other places in the Torah where someone gathers together a congregation?
2. In this parsha, what four types of jewelry do the Jews donate to the Mishkan?
3. In this parsha, what is done "every morning" (*baboker baboker*)? What else in the Torah is done "every morning"? (3 answers)
4. Where in this parsha are wings mentioned?
5. Which two items in the Tabernacle are made of one solid piece of gold? What other item, used in the desert, was fashioned from one solid piece of metal?

Answers

1. In parshas Korach, Korach gathers a rebellious congregation around Moshe and Aharon ([Numbers 16:19](#)). In parshas Chukas, Moshe and Aharon gather together the congregation before bringing forth water from the rock ([Numbers 20:10](#)).
2. The people bring "bracelets, nose rings, rings, and body jewelry" ([Exodus 35:22](#)).
3. Bnei Yisrael continue to bring gifts to Moshe for the Tabernacle, "every morning" (*baboker baboker*) ([Exodus 36:3](#)). The same expression is used in the following three places: (1) In parshas Beshalach, describing when the Manna is collected ([Exodus 16:21](#)). (2) In parshas Tezaveh, when the Torah describes how Aharon burns the incense every morning ([Exodus 30:7](#)). (3) In parshas Tzav when the Torah describes how Aharon kindled wood every morning to keep a fire burning on the altar ([Leviticus 6:5](#)).
4. The cherubs had wings that spread over the Holy Ark ([Exodus 37:9](#)).
5. The cover and cherubs on top of the Holy Ark is made "of one banged out solid piece of gold" ([Exodus 37:7](#)), as is the Menorah (37:17). In parshas Beha'aolscha, Moshe is commanded to fashion two trumpets, each out of "one solid piece of banged out silver" ([Numbers 10:1](#)).
6. The following items are shaped as squares: the Golden Altar ([Exodus 37:25](#)), the Copper Altar (38:1), and the breastplate (*choshen*) of the High Priest (39:9).

ALIYAH SUMMARY

First Aliyah: On the day after Moses descended from Mount Sinai with the Second Tablets, after successfully securing atonement for the sin of the Golden Calf, he gathered all the Jewish people. The primary purpose of this assembly was to inform the Jews of G-d's desire for a Sanctuary to be constructed. He began, however, with a brief reminder regarding the observance of the Shabbat. This was followed by a description of the materials needed to construct the Tabernacle, and a list of the vessels, Tabernacle parts, and priestly garments which were to be produced.

Second Aliyah: The men and women came forward and generously donated all the materials which Moses enumerated.

Third Aliyah: Moses announces G-d's choice of Bezalel and Oholiab to serve as foremen of the Tabernacle construction project, and he transfers to them all the donated materials. The people, however, continued donating generously, until the craftspeople report to Moses that they have more than enough materials to complete their task, causing Moses to issue a proclamation requesting everyone to cease donating materials.

Fourth Aliyah: The craftspeople began their work. In this aliyah, the tapestries which covered the Tabernacle were assembled.

Fifth Aliyah: The construction continued. In this aliyah, the craftspeople construct the Tabernacle wall panels, their sockets, the curtains which covered the entrance to the sanctuary and which separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the sanctuary, the Ark, and the Showbread Table.

Sixth Aliyah: This aliyah describes the construction of the menorah (candelabra) and the Incense Altar. The anointing oil and the incense are also prepared.

Seventh Aliyah: The Tabernacle's construction is capped off with the construction of the Outer Altar, the copper wash stand, the mesh curtains which surrounded the Tabernacle courtyard, and the beams and hooks which anchored them.



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10-Minute Halacha Shiur

*Given by Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz
on yutorah.org*

*Transcribed by
Shmuel Maltz*

Yisqadal or Yisqadeil

First of all, *Kadish* itself is written in Aramaic. It is not the only *Tefillah* we read in this language. We read *Berich Shimeh*, *Yekum Purkan*, *Kol Nidrei*, etc. in Aramaic. It comes up all over the place. It is very similar to Hebrew. *Shamayim* in Hebrew, *Shamayah* in Aramaic. *Yabasha* in Hebrew, *Yabashta* in Aramaic. Yet, some say that one shouldn't generally daven in Aramaic because the *Malachim* don't connect to that language. Some say that it's a corruption of Hebrew, so specifically that language can't be used. Some say that Aramaic which is so close to Hebrew the *Malachim* can't understand, so too other languages they won't be able to connect to.

A Gemara Brachos says that when Hashem hears us say *Yehei Shemai Rabah*, He regrets destroying the Beis Hamikdash. Ask Tosfos, why do we say it in Aramaic? They give one answer that if it were in Hebrew, the *Malachim* would understand and get jealous that they aren't able to say such a powerful *Tefillah*. Another reason is because they used to say *Kaddish Derabanan* after learning, and the one saying *Kaddish* would say it in a language that everyone understood, which was Aramaic.

The shoresh of *Kadaish* is Aramaic, and the shoresh of *Kadash* is Hebrew. So, one can say that *Kaddish* is some sort of combination of Hebrew and Aramaic, and therefore we say *V'yiskadaish*. Others say that it should be all in Aramaic, but we want to paraphrase a Pasuk in *Yechezkel*, so we say *V'Yiskadash*. This can depend on the two reasons of Tosfos. According to the first reason, we don't want the *Malachim* to understand what's going on, so we don't want any of *Kaddish* to be in *Lashon Hako-desh*, or we're just trying to get the *chevra* to understand what is going on in *Kaddish*, so it wouldn't be a problem to stick another word of *Lashon Hakodesh* into *Kaddish*. The Mishnah Berurah holds that since it's based on the Pasuk of *Yechezkel* which says *Yisgadal V'yiskadaish*, it should be in Hebrew, and it should be *Yisgadail V'yiskadaish*. Rashi is quoted as saying that the first two words are in Hebrew, and the rest is in Aramaic. Prior to the reference of the name of Hashem, the rest is in Hebrew. *Yisgadal V'Yiskadash* is said.

The Mishnah Berurah quotes an opinion which says that if it's in Hebrew, then *Yiskadaish* is said. The *Pri Megadim* and the *Gera* hold that way. However, Rav Yaakov Emden says that Rashi meant to say *Yisgadal V'Yiskadash*.

Rav Schachter says *Yisgadail* since Rav Soloveitchik said it, but one should not change their *minhag* since these types of grammatical issues don't really matter.

SPARKS OF CHASSIDUS



*With
Ari Ivry*

Vayakhel begins by describing how Moshe assembled the entire nation and, after first relaying Hashem's command to keep Shabbos, conveyed Hashem's 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, despite the supreme importance of building the Mishkan, this activity may not be pursued on Shabbos. One might think that, since the main theme of Vayakhel is the construction of the Mishkan, that 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. 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 built." Unlike the revelation of the Divine Presence at Sinai, which was mainly Hashem's initiative, the Jews' labor and service in building the Mishkan, 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 Hashem'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, 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 Hashem 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 Hashem's blessings. The result of this knowledge is that, while we work hard during the week to provide the receptacle for Hashem'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 Hashem. 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 Hashem'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

ENOUGH ISN'T ENOUGH

YONI AHARON, 10TH GRADE

In this week's Parsha, we see every Jew donating valuable possessions to build the Mishkan. In the next two Torah portions, the Torah summarizes the accomplishments of the nation by detailing the work that was done by Betzalel and his companions who were filled with Heavenly spirit. Moshe declares the success of the campaign and the generosity of the donors by announcing, that "The work (and contributions) had been enough for all the work, to do it — and there was extra" (Exodus 36:7). Not only was there enough for the completion of the task, but there were even extra materials. But many commentaries are concerned about Moshe's seemingly strange expression of completion. "There was enough, and there was extra." After all, if there was enough, then there wasn't extra. And if there was extra then it should not be called enough! The Torah could just well have stated, "There were extra contributions of work and material for the work that was needed." It seems that only by having more than enough, there was enough. Is that possible? President John F. Kennedy loved to tell the story of a political battle for the mayoralty of the small manufacturing city of Fall River, Massachusetts. The candidates scoured the industrial community for support, each pledging prosperity, growth, and increased productivity. But general promises would not persuade the voters. The candidates scoured the community, talking to citizens as if each vote would truly decide the election. They were right. It was the tightest race in Massachusetts's history. During the vote-counting, the candidates sat nervously with their supporters awaiting the final tally. It took days to declare, and weeks to finally confirm, that the winner of the mayoral race was actually decided by one vote! But the winner's jubilation was muted only days after the results were declared. You see, everyone in the town reminded him, "It was my vote that got you elected!" The Sichos Tazdikim explains that Moshe wanted the proud accomplishment of building the Mishkan combined with humility, despite the enormity of the accomplishment. Had there been exactly enough gold, silver, copper, and other materials contributed to complete the construction, then perhaps a false sense of pride may have crept in. If it were not for me, some may have thought, "There would be no Mishkan!" "I gave the contribution that turned the tide!" Everyone would have pinned the success on his or her copper or silver or gold. The only way this false pride could be avoided was if there was a bit more given to the cause than actually was needed. Only then, would you have not only a Mishkan but a building lacking individual haughtiness. Therefore, only when there was more given than was actually needed, did Moshe feel that he truly had enough! When we face extreme situations, and we contribute to their positive resolution, it is important to realize that we are only messengers. Adapted from Torah.org



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STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: YOEL HORWITZ

R' ZUSIA AND THE RAV

In the town of Anipoli, there were two Rabbis, R' Zusha the Chassid and the town Rav, a Misnaged. R' Zusha was always happy despite the fact that he had nothing but troubles: poverty and ill-health. The Rav, on the other hand, despite his honorable position in the community, was always unhappy, depressed, bitter and angry. He couldn't bear others, nor even himself.

One night, bitter and frustrated, he went to ask R' Zusha for help. He sneaked out of his house at an hour when nobody would see him and secretly made his way to the hovel which R' Zusha called home. When he arrived, the lamps were still burning, so he knocked hesitantly. Almost immediately, R' Zusha appeared at the door with a smile and an invitation to enter.

The Rav asked, "How is it that you are so happy and content and I am always angry and cursing everybody?"

"Let me give you an example," offered R' Zusha. "Take the wedding of R' Moshe's daughter. When R' Moshe, the local philanthropist, made a wedding for his daughter recently, he dispatched a messenger to personally invite the special citizens of Anipoli. When the messenger came to your house, you demanded to see the guest list. You saw that you were 14th on the list."

"Chutzpah!" you shrieked, and decided that, while you would attend, you would come late. When you arrived, all the guests were sitting at the tables already and eating the festive meal. When you arrived, there were no empty places to be found.

"Soon, Reb Moshe the philanthropist saw you looking for a place to sit. 'Rabbi,' he called out, 'where have you been?' They brought you to the head table, but there were no more empty places. They brought you a chair, but you sat behind somebody else. You were furious, looking for somebody to lash out at, but nobody was really paying any attention to you. The waiter didn't even see you. By the time the host noticed that you weren't eating, all the food was gone."

"R' Moshe went into the kitchen to find something, but it was not a portion befitting the Rav of Anipoli. Everything had already been picked through. By this time you were cursing the host and the waiters and the guests and even the bride and groom themselves. When it came time for the bentching (Grace after Meals) and the Sheva Brochos (seven blessing said after the festive meals in the presence of the bride and groom), you had been all but forgotten. You went home broken, angry and bitter, cursing the Master of the World Himself."

"When the messenger came to the house of R' Zusha, (he always referred to himself in the 3rd person), Zusha was taken aback. What a kind gesture! Reb Moshe is inviting Zusha to the wedding of his daughter? What has Zusha ever done to deserve an invitation to their wedding?"

"So Zusha went two hours early to the wedding. Zusha asked what he could do to help set up. Zusha officiated at the ceremony. Zusha ate a full meal. Zusha was honored with bentching and Zusha recited the Sheva Brochos."

"You see," R' Zusha continued, "You wanted everything, but you ended up with nothing. Zusha didn't ask for anything, but he got it all!"

(Steinmetz-Continued from page 1)

the leadership of Moshe and collectively fix their sins and build the Mishkan. Furthermore, it is remarkable how successful the organization for the building plan was. Everyone had specialized jobs as far as what to donate, and who put together what, and so everything came together beautifully. Being in the right type of crowd under the right leadership was the key to getting past the Chet Ha'egel and building the Mishkan.

It is very important that we listen to Hashem and our Rebbeim, because without it we will be like a crowd without any leadership and we will be doing horrible things that we wouldn't think to ever do. But as long as we have leadership, we will be able to come together as a community and do what we are supposed to as the Jewish people.

We can also see from this Parsha that a very opportune time to come together is on Shabbos. When Moshe gathered the Jews at the beginning of Vayakhel, he immediately instructed them about Shabbos. It wasn't just a coincidence that Moshe decided to tell Klal Yisroel about Shabbos when he assembled them, there was a hidden message. Shabbos is an extremely opportune time to come together as a community - when we aren't involved in work or school - and fulfill the will of Hashem.

(Silver-Continued from page 1)

Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch says that this is a clear way to show how Judaism views the physical world. He explains that the physical world is able to be used in two different ways: for Kedusha or for Tumah. Unlike other religions, Judaism looks to incorporate the physical world and even include it in the holiest place in the world, the Mishkan.

This answer applies to each and every one of us. Each of us has the opportunity to find the kedusha in the physical world and even elevate the physical world, just like how those mirrors could end up in the Mishkan.

Rav Hirsch, when describing the Avodah of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, asks the following question. We know that the Cohen Gadol would dip in the mikvah whenever he would change his clothes, but before changing back into his street clothes he had to go back to the Mikvah. Why?

He gives an answer related to that of his previous question. Even when the Kohen Gadol leaves the holiest place on earth he still has an incredible opportunity: before he continues with his daily life, he goes to the mikvah to show that this too is a holy Avodah. Through this, he is showing that his post-Yom Kippur existence and relationship to the physical world is also going to be something filled with kedusha.

Adapted from Reb Jew

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MESSAGE TO ALL JEWS**AARON DANESH****9TH GRADE**

What message does Parshat Vayakhel impart to every Jew?

Generally, the parshiyot Vayakhel and Pekudei are read together. Vayakhel, “And you shall gather,” points to the unification of all the entities in this diverse world, uniting them within the domain of holiness. Pekudei, in contrast, means “counting,” and highlights how every entity possesses its own unique importance. For every creation was given a unique nature with which it can serve G-d.

Although the sequence of the two parshiyot indicates that Vayakhel prepares one for Pekudei, Vayakhel contains its own unique lesson. This lesson receives greater emphasis when Vayakhel is read and studied as a separate parshah.

In particular, the message of Vayakhel applies to the Jewish people and alludes to their being gathered together to form a single collective entity, in the spirit of the mitzvah, “Love your fellow man as yourself.” This is possible because all Jews share a single essence; all are “truly a part of G-d

above.” (See Tanya, chapter 32.)

The importance of this message is emphasized by the fact that the Alter Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the founder of Chabad Chassidism, placed “Behold I accept upon myself the fulfillment of the mitzvah ‘Love your fellow man as yourself,’” at the very beginning of the prayer service in the Nusach Ari Siddur, making it the foundation of one’s daily activities.

This is the message of Parshat Vayakhel. One seeks to unite with every member of the Jewish people. Striving to unite with one’s fellow Jews will lead to the ultimate fulfillment of Vayakhel—the ingathering of the Jewish people to Eretz Yisrael.

A significant lesson results from the fact that Vayakhel and Pekudei are read as separate parshiyot. There is no need to wait for Pekudei, the census of the Jewish people, for the beginning of Vayakhel, the ingathering of the exiles. On the contrary, the Jews will first gather together in Eretz Yisrael, and afterwards there will be a census.

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