



Counting And Accounting

By Zachary Rosenberg, 12th Grade

This week we read the last Parsha of Sefer Shemos. This Parsha deals with the actual production of the Mishkan, its vessels and the garments of the Kohanim, and then concludes Sefer Shemos with the Shchinah filling the Mishkan. The Ramban explains that Shemos, the Sefer of exile and redemption, ends with Bnei Yisroel being in that ultimate redeemed state of intense closeness to Hashem.

Pekudei begins with an exact accounting of the donations that were given toward the construction of the Mishkan and its vessels: "These are the accounts of the Tabernacle, the Tabernacle of testimony (that Hashem had forgiven the sin of the golden calf by having His Shchinah dwell among them-Rashi), that were accounted through Moshe. [38:21]"

The Ohr HaChaim, based on the Medrash [Shemos Rabbah 30:3], points out that there are times when the Torah states "V'Aileh-And these" and there are times when it states "Aileh-these." He explains that "V'Aileh-And these" comes to add to whatever had been mentioned before. "Aileh-these" means these and these alone-no others.

As such, he explains that the Torah is teaching us that this accounting of the donations for the Mishkan is the only true counting that exists! This is a counting that will stand for all eternity-its merit will never be taken away from

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Always Getting Back Up

By Eliyahu Friedman, 10th Grade

In this week's Parsha, the building of the Mishkan and its vessels is discussed. The Midrash Tanchuma gives two opinions regarding the 7 day inauguration of the Mishkan. Rebbe Chiya Ben Yosef derives that Moshe took the Mishkan apart and then reassembled it twice a day. He learns this from the Torah mentioning the words "takim" and "hukam", each meaning "to erect". The second opinion, Rebbe Chanina, goes even further to say that Moshe disassembled and rebuilt the Mishkan 3 times a day, because of the Torah also saying the word "vayakem", which has the same root as "to erect". The question is, why did Moshe need to take apart and rebuild the Mishkan multiple times? What was he accomplishing by doing this?

The Slonimer Rebbe has an intriguing interpretation of what this means. He says that Moshe's act of dismantling and rebuilding the Mishkan teaches us an important lesson. None of us are perfect, we are only

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Torah Teasers

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe

**Parshas Pekudei
Questions**

1. What type of coin, mentioned in this parsha, is mentioned only one other time in the Torah (and where)? \
2. Of all the precious metals collected for the Tabernacle, which had the largest amount?
3. What precious stone appears three times on the clothing of the High Priest?
4. Which two of the 12 stones found on the breastplate (*choshen*) are mentioned elsewhere in the Torah - not in relation to the Tabernacle?
5. Where in this parsha are bells mentioned?
6. In what context is fire mentioned, in both parshas Vayekhel and parshas Pekudei?

Answers

1. Each person was expected to donate to the Tabernacle a *beka* of silver, the value of half a *shekel* ([Exodus 38:26](#) with Rashi). In parshas Chayah Sarah, when Eliezer gives gifts to Rivkah, the earring has the weight of a *beka* ([Genesis 24:22](#) with Rashi).
2. Silver, with a tally of 100 (*kikar*) talents and 1,775 shekels, is collected in the greatest amount ([Exodus 38:25](#)).
3. The *shoham* stone is twice on the shoulder straps of the *ephod* (39:8), and also appears on the fourth row of the breastplate (*choshen*) ([Exodus 39:13](#)).
4. (1) The *sapir* stone is on the *choshen* ([Exodus 39:11](#)) and also mentioned in parshas Mishpatim as the vision the elders saw at Mount Sinai ([Exodus 24:10](#)). (2) The *shoham* stone which is on both the *choshen* (39:13) and the straps of the *ephod* (35:9) also appears in parshas Bereishis when describing the rivers flowing from the Garden of Eden ([Genesis 2:12](#)).
5. "Golden bells" appear on the bottom of the robe (*me'il*) worn by the High Priest ([Exodus 39:25](#)).
6. Fire is mentioned at the beginning of Vayekhel with regards to keeping Shabbat ([Exodus 35:3](#)), and in the last verse of Pekudei regarding the pillar of fire that led the Jewish people through the desert at night ([Exodus 40:38](#)).

ALIYAH SUMMARY

First Aliyah: This aliyah gives an exact accounting of the amounts of gold, silver and copper donated for the construction of the Tabernacle, as well as the vessels and building materials constructed with these supplies.

Second Aliyah: The high priest's ephod — a reversed apron which covered the back — and its precious-stone-studded shoulder straps were made. The High Priest's Choshen Mishpat ("Breastplate of Judgment") was assembled. It contained four rows of precious stones, each row containing three stones. Artisans engraved the names of the Twelve Tribes of Israel upon these twelve stones. The Choshen Mishpat was then secured by straps which connected it to the ephod.

Third Aliyah: The rest of the priestly garments were completed: The high priest's me'il (blue robe adorned with golden bells and cloth "pomegranates") and tzitz (a golden band worn on the forehead, which was engraved with the words "Holy to G-d"); and the four garments worn by both the high priest and the regular priests: tunics, turbans, sashes and pants. With this, the construction of the Tabernacle and all its vessels and accoutrement were finished.

Fourth Aliyah: The craftspeople brought their finished products to Moses. Moses saw that all the work had been done exactly to G-d's specifications, and he blessed the workers.

Fifth Aliyah: G-d instructed Moses to erect the Tabernacle on the first of Nisan. G-d also instructed Moses to place all the Tabernacle's vessels in their proper places, and to anoint all of the items with the anointing oil, thus sanctifying them. Moses is also directed to dress Aaron and his sons in the priestly garments, and to anoint them, too.

Sixth Aliyah: This aliyah describes Moses' fulfillment of the abovementioned directives.

Seventh Aliyah: Moses completed the proper placement of the Tabernacle vessels. When Moses finished this task a Cloud of Glory and the Divine Presence filled the Tabernacle. This cloud also served as the Jews' guide throughout their desert sojourn: when the cloud lifted, the people would travel, following the cloud until it rested, where they would set up camp until the cloud would lift again.



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Transcribed by
Ephraim Herrmann

Reading Ads In Jewish Newspapers and Magazines On Shabbos

Print media has crumbled in the secular world, but in the Jewish world it is expanding and flourishing more than ever because of Shabbos. It has now become a custom in many Jewish households that everyone after the meal on Shabbos, reads the multiple Jewish magazines that the world has to offer. However, the question is, is this mutar and is there anything to do in order to avoid Halachic pitfalls? The Gemara in Shabbos says you cannot read secular documents on Shabbos. How do we interpret what secular documents refer to? Rashi says it is referring to writings that relate to business while the Ramban says only Shturei Cheshbonos and Chovos but just simple letters that people write to each other is allowed. What about secular teachings? The Rashba says that there is a difference between business documents and teachings, and you can therefore read secular teachings. This is because you can derive a lot of benefit from them. However, the Rambam disagrees and says it is assur. One reason for this can be that you may come to write on Shabbos. Another reason can be because it is not appropriate to discuss matters other than Torah on Shabbos. Others argue and say even though it is not ideal to discuss these matters, there is a mitzvah to enjoy Shabbos and if a secular book accomplishes that for you, so be it. Reb Yaakov Emden says it is assur to read a newspaper on Shabbos because of the advertisements. This is because the ads are considered business related and are therefore assur on Shabbos. It would seem that most poskim would advise against reading newspapers but would not go out and completely assur it. In the Dirshu Mishnah Berurah, it says that in a situation where a Jewish newspaper has mostly advertisements, but there is a little bit of divrei Torah, you are allowed to read it. Rav Karelitz says that you cannot read this type of newspaper, even the divrei torah! Rav Belski says that you can't even look at newspapers with ads if you are looking for a mitzvah related thing. What about a situation where you know that you are not going to buy anything from the ads in the newspaper, in this situation is it mutar to read it? It could be that this scenario has a different halacha because you are not looking at the ads through a business mindset. However it is very hard to rely on this opinion because it is hard to know what we will want to buy in the future. Maybe the ad doesn't look relevant to you now, but it will a couple weeks down the line. Rav Asher Weiss writes that when a Jewish newspaper wants to advertise it should write in big letters not to read the ad on Shabbos. Rav Shechter says that you can read the articles in a Jewish newspaper, but you can certainly not pay any attention to ads related to community businesses. The bottom line is that we have to be careful of what we look at but we also have to make sure to sanctify the Shabbos to the best of our ability.

SPARKS OF CHASSIDUS



*With
Ari Ivry*

Parshas Pekudei opens with an accounting of the various materials donated by Bnei Yisroel for the making of the Mishkan. These donations included: gold, for the Mishkan's "vessels" (the menorah, ark, etc.) and the plating of its wall panels; silver, used for the "foundation sockets" into which the wall panels were inserted; copper, used in the making of the altar and the washbasin; wood, for the wall panels and posts; wool dyed in a variety of colors, and fine-spun linen, for the tapestries and the Kohen's garments; goat hair and animal skins, for the roof coverings; a variety of precious stones, for the ephod and choshen (the apron and breastplate worn by the Kohen Gadol); oil, for the lighting of the menorah; and spices, for the making of the ketoret (incense)—fifteen materials in all.

With 14 of these 15 materials, each individual gave whatever he or she chose to give, and however much he or she chose to contribute. The type and amount given depended solely on the resources and the degree of generosity of the individual making the donation. The single exception was the silver used to make the Mishkan's foundation. Here, Hashem commanded that each should give exactly half a shekel of silver: "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less." This teaches us a very important lesson. Every person is different: we differ in our intellect, character, talents and sensitivities. But we are all equal in our relationships with Hashem. So, while we each contributed to the making of the various components of the Mishkan in accordance with our individual capacities, we all gave equally of the silver of which its foundation was made. As regards the foundation of the relationship between us and Hashem, the rich person cannot give more, and the poor cannot give less, since we all equally possess that intrinsic commitment.

Upon this foundation we each build our individualized structure. Upon this foundation we each erect a home for Hashem made out of the unique talents, capacities and resources we are able to contribute. The foundation is the lowest, least noticeable part of a structure; sometimes it is buried out of sight in the ground. But, it is the silver foundation of absolute, fixed commitment that is the basis and support of it all.

Based on the Lubavitcher Rebbe's teachings

Yossi Weinstock

11th Grade

MISHKAN AND ROSH CHODESH

Among the myriad design and construction specifications in Vayakhel-Pekudei, a prominent refrain is “Ka’asher Tzivah HaShem” – as HaShem commanded. Why is this phrase repeated again and again?

What is often missed is that the essential pitfall of those who failed in Chet Ha’Eigel actually began with rationalizing and justifying the Golden Calf. To paraphrase a secular expression: “The path to Gehinom is paved with good intentions.” In reality, the path from holiness to depravity is almost always smoothed with justifications, with psychological, rhetorical, logical, and intellectual ‘smarts’ applied to normalizing what at its base is ugly, low and disloyal. In contrast, all true wisdom stems from Yir’at HaShem.

To build a Mishkan rather than an Eigel, to serve HaShem rather than serve ourselves, we need to follow HaShem’s directives, just because they are HaShem’s order – to serve HaShem, HaShem’s way. It is not because we like to follow orders, not because we agree with them or understand them either, for often we do not understand them. And it’s not about being generous, a perfectionist, or being exact. The antidote to the Eigel is not building a ‘temple.’ Rather, it is overcoming and suppressing contrary desire, thoughts, feelings, justifications and rationalizations. It is about bringing oneself to the state of doing HaShem’s will, simply because that is His command – whether or not we understand it or like it. To properly build a Mishkan, to lift up each aspect of the created world to serve as a vehicle of ha’shra’at haShechinah—the dwelling of the Divine Presence – depends upon ‘Ka’asher dibber Hashem.’

This is a good time to remind ourselves that the connection of Mishkan and Rosh Chodesh Nissan was by no coincidence. Through the Mishkan, Rosh Chodesh, and Shabbos, we are enabled to reside within a holy dwelling in space and time. When the Jewish People do ‘ka’asher dibber Hashem’ we return to the genius of Na’ase V’nishma (we will do and we will listen), which will ultimately bring the geulah.



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STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: EPHRAIM HERRMANN

As the start of the baseball season goes even more unlikely, I thought it might be nice to share a fascinating story regarding baseball and the Lubavitcher Rebbe as well as a strong lesson that we can all learn from it.

“It was a chilly winter night in Brooklyn, New York in 1955. The last trolley of the evening rolled by as a jolly, young Shimshon Stock ushered a close acquaintance of his and his soon to be Bar Mitzvah son into 770 Eastern Parkway: the Lubavitz Synagogue.

Inside 770, which would eventually become the world-renowned Lubavitch world headquarters, was the study and office of Rabbi Menachem Mendle Scheerson, also known as the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The Rebbe had accepted the leadership of this small hasidic community - which was still struggling to rebuild itself after the horrors of the Holocaust and Communist Russia. At this time the Rebbe only had a few shlichim (emissaries), who were scattered around Israel, America, North Africa and Europe. The Rebbe was still determined and highly motivated to build a global network of Jewish communities.

Shimshon, who was born and bred in America, was the classic “American Boy”, yet he had enjoyed a close and special relationship with the Rebbe prior to the passing of the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe. — the Rebbe's father-in-law Rabbi Joseph Isaac Schneerson — which continued on after the current Rebbe accepted the mantle of leadership. He introduced his friend and his friend's son to the Rebbe, who greeted them with his comforting and warm handshake while asking them to take a seat and make themselves comfortable.

The Rebbe briefly gave the boy a Bracha that he should grow to become a source of pride to the Jewish people and to his family. Just as they were about to leave, the Rebbe surprised the three Americans with the question he addressed to the youngster: ‘Are you a baseball fan?’

The Bar-Mitzvah boy replied that he was. The Rebbe asked him if he rooted for the Yankees or the Dodgers, and the boy replied, ‘The Dodgers of course.’ The Rebbe then asked him if his father ever took him to games, and the boy said that he went to games with his father ever so often. When the Rebbe asked him how the game was, the boy answered, ‘the Dodgers were losing by a lot so we left after the 6th inning.’ The Rebbe asked, ‘what about the actual players? Why couldn't they leave?’

The boy explained that there are players and fans. The fans can leave when they like — they're not part of the game and the game could, and does, continue after they leave. But the players need to stay and try to win until the game is over.

The Rebbe brilliantly responded, ‘That is the lesson I want to teach you in Judaism - in Judaism you can either be a fan or a player,’ said the Rebbe with a smile.

Outside 770, the father and son said goodbye to Shimshon, the three now sharing a new admiration of a pioneer in Jewish education.”

(Rosenberg-Continued from page 1)

those who gave—as it contributed toward Hashem’s presence entering this world.

However, any counting or accounting that a person makes of his alleged acquisitions and property is not a true counting. That, he explains, is contained within the Hebrew word for money “mamone.” It is actually a composite of two words: “ma,” meaning what, and “mone” meaning count. In other words, what are you counting? It’s not really yours!

It’s amazing how our view of the world can be so off as compared to the Torah’s view. We feel that when we count what we have, that is ours. What we’ve given away is gone, goodbye! The Torah here is teaching us the exact opposite. That which is given toward worthwhile causes is ours for eternity. That which we have is just waiting to roll away...

“Aileh—these.” Only that which was given toward the Mishkan—toward Hashem’s Presence being brought into this world—could really be counted. In order for us to once again have that Presence evident, we must use the Torah’s viewpoint to see what really counts.

(Friedman-Continued from page 1)

human. So naturally, we make mistakes and mess up sometimes. When we fall, it is easy to give up and forget it all. But we mustn’t let that happen to us, we must never give up hope. We must rebuild ourselves and strengthen our determination. For Rebbe Chiya Ben Yosef’s opinion, the dismantling and restoration twice a day corresponds to the day and the night. During the day, it is bright and auspicious, but during the night, it can seem dark and grim. This shows that we must continue to strive for greatness not only at day, when it is easier, but also at night, when it is more difficult.

This lesson also makes sense with Rebbe Chanina’s opinion, where the dismantling and reassembling occurred 3 times a day. Since it was taken apart 3 times a day for 7 days, there was a total of 21 times of disassembling. 21 is the Gematriya of the hebrew word “ehyeh”, “I will be”, which is how Hashem responded when Moshe asked for His name at the burning bush. This shows that even when we make mistakes, Hashem is still always with us. Furthermore, the full statement Hashem told Moshe, “ehyeh asher ehyeh”, has the same Gematriya as “ehyeh” squared, 441. This is the same Gematriya as the word “emes”, “truth”. We can see from this that if you don’t give up and keep on pushing forward, you will eventually find truth in our lives.

We learn from Moshe’s constant disassembling and reassembling of the Mishkan during its 7 day inauguration that we should keep on pushing for strength and growth. Even if we seem to keep on failing, if we don’t give up, we will achieve greatness.

Have a great Shabbos!

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Mishkan Vs. Beit Midrash

By: Akiva Mehlman

As this week's Parsha comes to a close, the Pasuk says that "Moshe could not enter the Ohel Mo'ed, for the cloud rested upon it, and the glory of Hashem filled the Mishkan." However, there is no parallel event where it says that the glory of Hashem filled the Beit Hamikdash. This suggests that the Mishkan in the desert was holier than the Beit Hamikdash in Yerushalayim. On the other hand, the Beit Hamikdash is called a Bayit, suggesting a degree of importance that the Mishkan, which was an Ohel, did not have. Rabbi Zilber explains that there are two ways of "measuring Divine revelation", the intensity itself and

the wider effect. In the Mishkan, the presence of the Shechinah was intense, but it was not yet felt in the wider world. This makes the Mishkan a temporary Ohel rather than a Bayit. In contrast, the presence in the Beit Hamikdash was less intense, but its effects were felt in the wider world. Here, Hashem was "at home" in this world making it a Bayit rather than an Ohel. The third Beit Hamikdash, which will be built in the future, will have both the intensity of the Shechinah's presence, which was present in the Mishkan, and also the widespread effects of its presence, which was present in the first Beit Hamikdash.

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