



10 years of Points to Ponder on

Parashiyos VaYakhel Pekudai

Shekalim, Parah & HaChodesh

**וַיַּקְהֵ֣ל משֶׁ֗ה אֶת־כָּל־עֲדַ֛ת בְּנֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל Moshe gathered all of Adath Israel (35:1) - Rashi** explains that Moshe gathered the nation the day after Yom Kippur to tell them about the building of the Mishkan. Why was this gathering necessary? **Rav Soloveitchik**  noted that unlike the Ganav and Gazlan where we treat the private person more severely than the public thief, when it comes to Shabbos the rule is reverse. The reason, he explained, was that as far as the essence of Shabbos was concerned, Shabbos testifies to the fact that Hashem created the world. Public desecration of Shabbos is tantamount to apostasy. Thus, Moshe went to the entire people, the day after Yom Kippur when the people would be able to be witnesses (Edah= Eidim) to the sovereignty of Hashem over the world.

**וַיַּקְהֵ֣ל משֶׁ֗ה אֶת־כָּל־עֲדַ֛ת בְּנֵ֥י יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל Moshe gathered the entire people of Israel, and he said to them, "These are the things that God has said to do." (35:1)** – Why did Moshe need to gather the people? Such gathering was only done to give the people some extra reproof or to ente them in a Bris. Why here**? Ibn Ezra** suggests that it was to collect donations. **Ramban** suggests that it was to have them enter a new Bris after the Cheit HaEigel. **Rav Aharon Lichtenstein**  suggested that the message here was from Moshe who recognized that the people were likely feeling distanced from him – having been with him though their challenges and now experiencing his reaction to the Eigel as one of distance and dissociation. In order to re-encourage the relationship and perhaps restore and repair it, Moshe calls all of the people together instead of just speaking to the leaders and letting the word go forth.

**וַיַּקְהֵ֣ל משֶׁ֗ה And Moshe gathered (35:1) - Rashi** notes that Moshe gathered the people on the day after Yom Kippur when he descended from the mountain. The Gemara (Sanhedrin 20b) notes that there are three Mitzvos that the Jews were commanded when on the cusp of entering Eretz Yisrael -- to establish a king, destroy Amalek and build a Beis HaMikdash. If the Mikdash was to be last, why did the order change and the Mishkan commanded immediately after they were forgiven -- Motzai Yom Kippur? **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky**  explains that after Bnei Yisrael lost their status after the Eigel and demonstrated how quickly we sink when we have no connection to Hashem, they needed the Mishkan right away. Thus, if they needed a direct line to Hashem, they would be ready to connect to Him immediately -- with an address for the rendezvous.

**שֵׁ֣שֶׁת יָמִים֘ תֵּֽעָשֶׂ֣ה מְלָאכָה֒  Six days you shall do Melacha and on the seventh it will be Kodesh (35:2)** – In Yisro it mentions both Melacha and Avodah. Why do we not mention Avodah here? Also, why not mention Lo Taavod in Yisro? **Rav Soloveitchik**  noted that the only issur is not to do melacha, work is technically permitted. When one does Avoda he is unfulfilled with his actions (think Avdus not melachus). Melacha is work that is done with a purpose – and hopefully one that has a Kedusha attached to it. Vayakhel deals with the Mishkan, the Melacha described is one of purpose – and of a lofty one at that.

**שֵׁ֣שֶׁת יָמִים֘ תֵּֽעָשֶׂ֣ה מְלָאכָה֒ וּבַיּ֣וֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִ֗י יִֽהְיֶ֨ה לָכֶ֥ם קֹ֛דֶשׁ Six days you shall work (35:2)** - It seems incredible that after the days of Teshuva, of Kabbalas Hatorah and Yom Kippur, the first thing that happens when Moshe gathers the people and speaks with them is not about their experience nor about his on the mountain. Instead it is about Hilchos Shabbos. Why? **Rav Baruch Mordechai Ezrachi** explained that Shabbos is other-worldly. It is the chance that one has to disengage from the present world and engage the soul (וינפש= it turns you into souls). So powerful is the day that it creates a renewal that rejuvantes the person for the rest of the upcoming week. There is no other experience that can have that effect automatically. Hence Shabbos is so powerful it is even דוחה בנין המקדש! Hence, Moshe first spoke to the about the powerful experience of Shabbos and only thereafter addressed any other spiritual needs – Mishkan and forgiveness included.

 **And the seventh day is kodesh (35:2) – Rav Belsky**  noted that Shabbos is mentioned twice in connection to the building of the Mishkan. In Parshas Ki Sisa it follows all of the commands to build the Mishkan while in Vayakhel it precedes all of the completion of the work. Why the change? Rav Belsky explained that both Shabbos and the Mishkan represent means through which a person can achieve Deveikus with Hashem. Shabbos represents the contemplation through abstention of worldly activity while Mishkan represents the power of doing. There is no aspect of human life that cannot be elevated through some form of Avodas Hashem.

לֹֽא־תְבַֽעֲר֣וּ אֵ֔שׁ **Do not light a fire (35:3)-** Of all of the 39 Avos Melachos only Haavara was stated. Why? **The Chasam Sofer**  explained that one should not begin to light his spiritual fire ON Shabbos. Rather, that fire needs to burn all week long. **Rav Pinchas Friedman**  adds that only if one builds the fire all week long, will it remain lit on Shabbos. This is the Kiyum of he who toils on Erev Shabbos shall eat on Shabbos (Avoda Zara 3a). Our dear friend, **Rav Abba Wagensberg**  explained that the connection between the building of the Mishkan and Shabbos extends to this arena of life as well. We engage in so many projects that demand our attention. However, as we do so, we must never lose sight of the spiritual opportunities that surround us. In that manner we are building sanctuaries of time and build a Shabbos tantamount to building a Mikdash.

**זָהָ֥ב וָכֶ֖סֶף וּנְחֽשֶׁת Take Terumah from them...and copper (35:5) - Rav Yaakov Bender**  quoted the **Novominsker Rebbe**  who noted that in the Mishkan we needed gold and silver...and copper. If one of the copper hooks is not in the right place, the mishkan is not complete -- nor can it be replaced with gold or silver. The Rebbe added that a Yeshiva is like the Mishkan, all types of students are needed to make it successful. Rav Bender added that we are all trying to build places for the Shechina. We need to cherish every person regardless of person and limitation.

**And all the wise in the heart from among you shall come and perform all that Hashem commanded (35:10)** – Many meforshim point out that this is the source for the idea that mitzvos need to be performed and cannot merely be contemplated in order for one to fulfill the will of Hashem. The Tzaddik **Rav Shimon Mirsolov**  explained that the ultimate of Chochma is the reality that one shouldn’t be too much of a Chocham beyond that which Asher Tziva Hashem.

 **Vavei HaAmudim (35:10) – Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus** notes that in all other languages starting a page with a vav would be grammatically incorrect. However in the Torah it is an ideal … Vavei HaAmudim highlights the continuity of Torah– they should not only be seen as a lone Chavaya – experience – but rather as a long continuous life of Torah and Mitzvos – a life of true Torah success.

**וְאֵ֖ת לֶ֥חֶם הַפָּנִֽים: Lechem HaPanim (35:13)** - The Gemara in Menachos notes the 2 opinions as to the proper shape of the Lechem HaPanim -- as to whether it was to be a canoe shape (like **Rashi** suggests) or perhaps a solid rectangle shape. **Rav Schachter**  would often note that this is perhaps the basis for the difference of opinion as to the shape of the Challos of Shabbos which are to represent the Lechem Hapanim -- either they are to be rectangular (like the loaf shapes we find out of some bakeries) or more of an oval/canoe shape. He would also remind us of the minhag by some to have 12 Challos or a large Challah that breaks down into 12 parts. The Gra didn’t have this minhag. He would cut both loaves at each of the three meals totaling 12 parts over Shabbos.

**Each person who had Nedivus HaLev (35:21)** – Who are the ones with Nedivus HaLev? **Rav Yerucham Levovitz** (Daas Torah) explains that this refers to those who do for the mission – not for themselves. They dedicate their hearts to the mission, to see it through -- no matter what. There is a Midrash to Parshas Shoftim that tells us to learn from ants. Ants do not check research about how or what is the best job to do or what is “worth it”. Ants do what they can to prepare for the future “Shema Yigzor Alai Chaim.

 **וַיָּבֹ֥אוּ הָֽאֲנָשִׁ֖ים עַל־הַנָּשִׁ֑ים The men came on top of the women (35:22) - Onkelos** explains that this means that the women came and took off their jewelry that they were wearing and donated it. Why did they need to wear the jewels and donate it themselves? Why not send it with their husbands? **Klei Yakar** notes that the women didn’t bring their jewelry on their own because they did not want to make it seem that they too, were complicit with the Eigel. **Rav Moshe Feinstein**  explains that the women wanted to make it clear that they were not donating items that they had no need for. They wanted to make it clear that they were donating the jewels that they wore to the last moment in order to demonstrate that the will of Hashem was more important to them than the jewel itself.

**וְכָל־אִשָּׁ֥ה חַכְמַת־לֵ֖ב  Women whose hearts uplifted them in wisdom”(**[**35:25**](https://www.sefaria.org/Exodus.35.25?lang=he-en&utm_source=ravkooktorah.org&utm_medium=sefaria_linker)**)** - What was this special wisdom? According to the Gemara (*Shabbos* [99a](https://www.sefaria.org/Shabbat.99a?lang=he-en&utm_source=ravkooktorah.org&utm_medium=sefaria_linker)), the wool was washed and spun — while still attached to the goats! **Rav Kook**  explained that the two coverings of the Mishkan relate to two spheres of wisdom in the world. The first level of wisdom is abstract and general, while the second is practical and detailed. The abstract wisdom shines with brilliant flashes of the intellect and variegated hues of the imagination. This wisdom deals with inner, sublime matters, and therefore corresponds to the colorful inner covering. Practical wisdom, on the other hand, would appear to be a simpler matter, serving primarily to protect and watch over the abstract concepts of the inner wisdom. But in truth, the practical wisdom of how to apply abstract principles in everyday life is profound and rare. Spiritual abstractions may be revealed through prophecy and Divine inspiration. But the practical Torah of mitzvot could only be revealed through the unique clarity of Moses’ prophetic vision. These women were blessed with the gift of the highest wisdom. By virtue of its profound insight, their “hearts were uplifted,” thus elevating all feelings and emotions, all actions and deeds, all aspects of life. Their wisdom was so great that “they spun [on] the goats.” They were able to elevate the material world — even life’s vexing aspects, as symbolized by a mischievous goat — binding and tying it to the lofty eternal light.

**וְכָל־אִשָּׁ֥ה חַכְמַת־לֵ֖ב בְּיָדֶ֣יהָ טָו֑וּ  And every woman who had the knowledge of the heart spun the wool by hand (35:25) - Rashi** explains that they were able to spin wool while still attached to the living sheep. Why was this trick necessary? **Sforno** notes that the lesson here was one of doing the Mitzva in the best way possible. Somehow the quality was enhanced when the wool was spun while on the sheep and it was a positive. **The Meshech Chochma** explained that the women were able to participate even if they were Niddot and the **Arugas HaBosem** added that the ability to showcase a talent gave the people a bit of self esteem back that they had lost at the time of the sin with the Eigel. Being able to do something extraordinary set the tone for greatness.

**וְהַנְּשִׂאִ֣ם הֵבִ֔יאוּ And the Nesiim brought (35:27) - Rashi** notes that the letter “Yud” is missing from their names because the Nesiim were delayed in bringing the initial donations for the Mishkan and chose to wait for everyone else to bring. When they realized that they had nothing more to bring, they worried. In the end, their bringing of the stones was probably worth much more than anything anyone else brought. Why punish them for wanting to give everyone a turn and then to fill in the gap? **Rav Moshe Feinstein**  learned a number of critical lessons here: First, he suggested that they sinned in showing a lack of faith in the people to make the necessary contributions for the Mishkan. Moreover, their belief that they were big enough to “fill in the gap” implied a certain Gaava on their part. The Mishkan was going to get built with or without the Nesiim. They should have done their piece first. Also, people are to react with Zerizus -- with expedience when filling the word of Hashem. If we cannot expect this from the Nesiim then how are the common people going to be held to the standard?

**וְהַנְשאִם And the Tribal leaders (35:27)** - There is a missing letter Yud in the title Nesiim. **Targum Yonatan** translates the word as if from the clouds referring to the fact that the stones fell from Shomayim and the leaders gave them to the Mishkan. **Rashi** notes that they tarried in donating waiting for others to contribute first and then they would make up the shortfall. The only thing that was left for them was the stones. **Rav Shlomo Amar** noted that there is no contradiction in the explanations here. Rather, the Nesiim might have found the stones but were negligent in bringing them. Once they had these expensive stones in their hands; they should have contributed first, performed the Mitzvah swiftly and afterwards worried about what was missing. The fact that they sat there and waited for everyone to finish bringing was a great chisaron. Upon seeing נשיאים not bringing anything, or at least not swiftly, could have resulted in a weakening of the tzibbur.

**ְהַנְשאִם The Nesiim (35:27)** – The midrash about the laziness of the Nesiim is well known. They waited and they lost out. But why did they lose the letter yud? The **Shemen HaTov quotes the Chiddushei HaRim** who explains that the letter “Yud” takes today’s actions and turns them into future (Lashon Atid). The Nesiim’s laziness demonstrated that they were not Ro’im Es HaNolad.

**ְהַנְשאִם And the Nesiim brought the stones (35:27) –** **Rashi** cites the Midrash that notes that the Nesiim were derelict in their donation until it was too late. **Rav Moshe Tzvi Neriah**  noted that it was not laziness per se that caused them to delay. Rather, they misjudged their people’s interest and zeal in donation. They underestimated the excitement of the people in the project! A leader who underestimates his people is not able to lead them.

**ו****ְהַנְּשִׂאִ֣ם The Nesiim (35:27) - Rashi** notes that they lost their “Yud” since they were lazy in responding to the call to pledge. But this wasn’t standard laziness, they were giving everyone a chance to get involved. Why punish them for that? The **Brisker Rav** explained that one does not make calculations when it comes to doing a Mitzva. If donating to the Mishkan was a mitzva then doing it should have been swift -- not calculated. So why were they given the chance to respond to the call for the gems for the Bigdei Kehuna? **Rav Dovid Soloveitchik**  explained that the mitzva to donate applied to the Mishkan but the Bigdei Kehuna didn’t carry the same call for donation.

**ְהַנְּשִׂאִ֣ם The Nesiim brought (35:27)** - The commentaries point out that the Nesiim failed to be among the primary donors to the Mishkan preferring to allow the others to come first. As a result they didn’t really get to donate much. However, they WERE able to contribute the stones for the Ephod and the Choshen. If the Jewish people contributed so much more, why did Hashem make sure that these items were not contributed by others? **Rav Nissan Alpert**  Explained that there is an implicit message here: Nesiim are not to lord power OVER the people. Their job is to be the building block - the bedrock and foundation upon which they will be able to carry the people. They will be the stones that Bnei Yisrael are supposed to establish their names.

**רְא֛וּ קָרָ֥א ה בְּשֵׁ֑ם בְּצַלְאֵ֛ל בֶּן־אוּרִ֥י בֶן־ח֖וּר לְמַטֵּ֥ה יְהוּדָֽה Behold Hashem called in the name of Betzalel (35: 30-35)** – The Midrash comments that Moshe was most impressed that Betzalel was in the shade of Hashem in that Hashem commanded the creation of the Aron before he commanded the Mishkan but Betzalel logically deduced that the Mishkan needed to be made first in order to have a place for the Aron. **Rav Pinchas Teitz (HaMaor 5721)** noted that Betzalel merely demonstrated logic – why does this demonstrate that he was in the shade of Hashem? Rav Teitz answered that the Jews at the time were living in a status of Nissim V’Niflaos and one might assume that the same could be for the building of the Aron and then the mishkan thereafter. This was the Chiddush of Betzalel – when it comes to strengthening Torah we are not allowed to rely on Nissim and must reach out with strong, united Kochos to build and strengthen Torah.

**רְא֛וּ קָרָ֥א ה בְּשֵׁ֑ם בְּצַלְאֵ֛ל בֶּן־אוּרִ֥י בֶן־ח֖וּר לְמַטֵּ֥ה יְהוּדָֽה See that Hashem called Betzalel (35:30) – Darash Moshe** – Why does it say Reu for him and not at the time of the appointment of Aharon? **Rav Moshe Feinstein**  points out that when Hashem gives a person a talent, s/he must use it for Kavod Shomayim. The Baal Simcha (Bris or Bar/Bat Mitzva) represents the ideals of…which s/he uses for Kavod Shomayim.

**רְא֛וּ קָרָ֥א ה בְּשֵׁ֑ם בְּצַלְאֵ֛ל בֶּן־אוּרִ֥י בֶן־ח֖וּר לְמַטֵּ֥ה יְהוּדָֽה Behold Hashem called Betzalel Ben Uri ben Chur (35:30)** – Why does Moshe need to say Reu? And furthermore, why is Betzalel always called upon as the grandson of Chur? **Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel**  pointed out that Chur was Moser Nefesh for the truth and faith in Hashem. That same dedication was displayed by his grandson in the building of the Mishkan. Parents and grandparents can have that impact on children and grandchildren. We need to remember and see it and take the lesson to heart.

**רְא֛וּ קָרָ֥א ה בְּשֵׁ֑ם בְּצַלְאֵ֛ל בֶּן־אוּרִ֥י בֶן־ח֖וּר לְמַטֵּ֥ה יְהוּדָֽה Behold Hashem called in the name of Betzalel son of Uri Son of Chur (35:30) - Rashi** comments that Chur was the son of Miriam. Why did he wait to tell us this NOW? And why was it important? And why note the word Reu in the plural after last week when Hashem said behold to Moshe in the singular? **Rav Shmuel Barenbaum**  explained that  initially Moshe understood that the building of the mishkan was going to require a person who had unique strengths and spiritual abilities. He thought that it was going to be he, Moshe, who would be worthy of the project. Hashem told him that no, it was going to be Betzalel’s job. Moshe accepted the idea. But the people might not. Thus, Hashem told them Reu – see that this was was not nepotism or something worse, rather Betzalel who was the right man for the job and is the descendant of Chur, son of Miriam was selected to atone with the Mishkan for the death of Chur and the Eigel.

**And to think thoughts (35:32)** – What is the Chiddush in Betzalel’s ability to think thoughts**? Rav Schlessinger quoted Rav Chaim of Volohzin**  who once explained to a certain donor upset with the thought that he was paying the horse bills of the meshulach department that this was the intention of “Lachashov Machashavos – to determine where each dollar donated would be most best used for the intention of the donor who donated it. Rav Schlessinger added that the same is true of the Shomer Shabbos – Sicharo Harbeh Miyod Al Pi Falao – based on the work and the intention comes the reward.

**ה֕וּא וְאָֽהֳלִיאָ֥ב He and Ohaliav (35:34)** - Betzalel is recognized as a very important person  from a very important Shevet -- Yehuda. On the other hand, Ohaliav is not identified too well and comes from Dan which is the tribe not gifted the most important of status. **Rav Schwab** notes that Ohaliav seems to have been the regular guy -- a hard worker, a Yorai Shomayim but without the fanfare. Why the twinning of these personalities? Rav Schwab notes that the Torah wants us to take the idea that in the house of Hashem, there is room for all of Kahal Hashem with Hashem. Everyone can play a part and everyone has a place to do so.

**ְהַמְּלָאכָ֗ה הָֽיְתָ֥ה דַיָּ֛ם And the donations were enough and more (36:7)** – The **Ohr HaChaim** asks what the big deal is if the Mishkan had a treasury of reserve? He answers that the reference to enough and beyond is a reference to that which was collected not to the donors**. Rav Mordechai Eliyahu** explains that if there were to be a surplus of materials, then the donors would be annoyed and come to fight to see to it that their donation was used and not merely part of the leftovers. To that the work as Dayam. But in totality, the amounts were more than enough.

**הָֽיְתָ֥ה דַיָּ֛ם לְכָל־הַמְּלָאכָ֖ה לַֽעֲשׂ֣וֹת אֹתָ֑הּ וְהוֹתֵֽר: Enough and even more (36:7)** – There is an inherent contradiction in these 2 words. Either the people brought enough with them or they brought too much – which is it? **Rav Meir Shapiro , Lubliner Rav** explained that in terms of the amount donated, there was enough but in terms of the desire to give – the people desired to give much more.

וַיְהִ֥י הַמִּשְׁכָּ֖ן אֶחָֽד **And the Mishkan was one (36:13)** - What does the word Echad mean here? **Rav Wolbe** explained that it does not mean one and not two. Rather it means that it was a single entity that included everything in it. He likened this to the concept of Yichud as by Hashem Echad as if to say Hashem includes everything. He is everything, everything emanates from Him and everyone needs Him.

**וַיַּ֧עַשׂ בְּצַלְאֵ֛ל  Betalel made (37:1) - Rashi** notes that Betzalel is singled out because he dedicated his soul to the project. What type of “soul did he give” to the project? Was anyone trying to stop him? **Rav Shaul Yisraeli**  suggests that the main point of having a mikdash is that you are Moser Nefesh for it. To have an Aron, you need to have a lowering of personal hubris in order to be humble. It is through this humility that one can change gold and wood into a Davar She’B’Kedusha -- by making it a utensil we use in serving Hashem. Betzalel got that message -- therefore he gave his soul in order to make sure that we give ours too.

**וַיַּ֧עַשׂ בְּצַלְאֵ֛ל  Betzalel made the Aron (37:1)** – When it came to the Klei HaMikdash, the furniture of the Mikdash, there is still a mitzvah to have them even if they are not functional. **Rav Hershel Schachter**  asked why did they not make the Aron in the Bayis Sheni as one of the Kli HaMikdash? Rav Schachter quoted Rav Soloveitchik who noted that the Aron is not a Klei HaMikdash. It is a means for the Kavod first of the Luchos and then later for the Sefer Torah. Without Luchos and a Sefer Torah then there is no need for an Aron without Luchos. The Aron needs luchos to be a Bris. A Shul needs mispallelim and a Yeshiva needs people to learn or they are useless.

**וַיַּ֧עַשׂ בְּצַלְאֵ֛ל  And Betzalel made the Aron (37:1)** – Why is Betzalel’s name specifically mentioned here in the context of the Aron and not by any other Kli? The **Sefer Yaalas Chen** explains that Betzalel was Moser Nefesh for the Mishkan more than any other person alive at the time. Frankly, the purpose of the Mishkan was to have a place for Hashem’s Shechina – to be based in the Torah housed in the Aron. The Torah, we are told, is set aside for Those who dedicate their lives (L’Mi SheMeiMis Atzmo Aleiha) to it. Without Betzalel’s dedication, no Aron could have been housed. Hence here specifically he is singled out.

**The Keruvim (37:9)** – How could it be that at the time of Churban HaBayis HaRishon the Keruvim were hugging each other? **Rav Schachter**  cites the Ritva in Yoma who explained that when Bnei Yisrael were heading into Galus Hashem was like the Yotzai L’Derech and the hug was to pacify Bnei Yisrael.

**בְּמַרְאֹת֙ הַצֹּ֣בְאֹ֔ת אֲשֶׁ֣ר צָֽבְא֔וּ Out of the mirrors of women (38:8)** - It is interesting that in the three references to the Kiyor, this one does not mention that it was to be utilized for washing. Why? The **Mesech Chochma** explains that this is the time that the Torah identifies the source for the Kiyor -- from the mirrors of the women, and thus, he adds, that incorporating the mirrors into the *kiyor* expanded its purpose. It was no longer a simple container storing water and making it available to prepare a *kohen* for service. Rather it reminded people of hope borne through pain and despair and would forever encourage those who viewed it to follow the example of one's ancestors. **Rav Yaakov Neuberger**  added that it is not a surprise that the Sotah waters come from the Kiyor. The family comes to the Mikdash convinced that the relationship will never be repaired. After all they harbor accusations of faithlessness and actions which make them credible. Nevertheless Torah insists otherwise. The couple, should they continue their family, is encouraged to share in the optimism that the mirrors represent, to look beyond their present painful anguish and attempt to envision what kind of future may be available to them. The Kiyor stands to remind us that we need to harness hope even when the Hester Panim of Hashem challenges our Emunah and casts ambiguity on our future.

**בְּמַרְאֹת֙ הַצֹּ֣בְאֹ֔ת אֲשֶׁ֣ר צָֽבְא֔וּ  With the mirrors (38:8)** - Why is it that when we learn of the source of the donation of the mirrors -- the shining mirrors -- that there is no mention of the function of the Kiyor? **The Mesech Chochma** explains that when we understand the purpose of how we came to have the Kiyor -- that it represented hope bourne from despair as demonstrated by the women, it elevated the Kiyor’s purpose, not only in function but also in symbol -- namely that of strength.

**בְּמַרְאֹת֙ הַצֹּ֣בְאֹ֔ת אֲשֶׁ֣ר צָֽבְא֔וּ  He made the Kiyor from the Mirrors that glowed (38:8)** – **Rashi** cites the fact that the women donated these mirrors that they had used to beautify themselves for their husbands. Moshe was not fond of these mirrors and Hashem told him that these were most beloved to him. **Rav Wolbe**  comments that although it is difficult to understand why these were most beloved, they do prove that beauty is not a shallow matter before Hashem. Rather, it is where and for what beauty is used that helps understand what the point is for – to increase kedusha in the world.

**בְּמַרְאֹת֙ הַצֹּ֣בְאֹ֔ת אֲשֶׁ֣ר צָֽבְא֔וּ  He made the Kiyor with the reflecting mirrors (38:8) – Rashi** explains that Moshe was not comfortable accepting the mirrors in that they were used in order to entice the husbands. Hashem told Moshe that these mirrors were more precious than all the other donations. **Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky**  explained that when the women told their husbands “I am prettier than you” it didn’t mean that it was a competition – it meant that my beauty comes from you—reflecting the beauty of the sanctity in the relationship and how the bond adds to the individual parts.

**אֵ֣לֶּה פְקוּדֵ֤י הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ This is the accounting of the Mishkan (38:21) - Rav Moshe Feinstein**  noted that the Torah is dropping a hint here. A person needs to spend his life constantly aware that he exists to do the will of Hashem and to see to it that he does so. Hashem gives us the elements and tools to achieve it.

**אֵ֣לֶּה פְקוּדֵ֤י הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ These are the accountings of the Mishkan (38:21)** – The **Midrash Tanchuma** (Pekudai 7) notes that Moshe wanted to provide a complete and accurate accounting of everything in the Mishkan. According to the Midrash, Moshe wanted to remove any suspicion from those who were complainers. While in the process, Moshe forgot to account for the Adanim – the hooks that attached to the pillars of the Chatzer. Only after Hashem opened his eyes to his accounting error was Moshe able to calm himself down in front of the people. **Rav Chaim Sabato**  suggests that perhaps Moshe was put through this stress because he sought not only to placate the people but even those who complained about him excessively. **The Meleches Shlomo cites Rav Shlomo Alkavetz** (Shekalim 3:2) who explains that the concept of Nekiiyim M’Hashem V’Yisrael refers to those who received intelligence and wisdom – not an accounting in front of every single person.

**אֵ֣לֶּה פְקוּדֵ֤י הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ This is the accounting of the Mishkan (38:21)** – The Midrash notes that Rav Tanchuma explained that Parshas Pekudai anything Moshe needed to account for, was blessed. **Rav Elya Sveii**  explained that only Moshe was able to put together the pieces of the Mishkan as he was the one responsible for the accounting. He, explains Rav Elya, was the one who could unite the people in service to Hashem. When one considers that the Mishkan was the uniting force but it was made up with a sum total – one could be afraid that the accounting would be a divisive force. Therefore, the Torah tells us that it was Moshe alone who united the people and only he could use the accounting and actually bring them together.

**אֵ֣לֶּה פְקוּדֵ֤י הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ These are the accountings (38:21) – Rashi** notes that the word Mishkan appears twice in the possuk in order to tell us that Hashem had forgiven us for the Cheit HaEigel as he had allowed the Shechina to rest with us then. How did the Mishkan serve the role of atonement and how did its existence prove that there was atonement for Cheit HaEigel? **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky**  explained that this is like a person who experiences a certain reversal of financial fortune. While he sells things that he does not need. He will not sell things he does – those he will mortgage instead. Similarly, the Jewish people knew that in the Midbar they did not need gold and silver. What they needed was a place for Hashraas HaShechina. Cheit HaEigel showed them of the need for Hashem in their lives. Their quick and full response to the appeal served to demonstrate that they had learned of their need for Shechina and that they knew that a cheap substitute could not replace Hashem. Thus, Hashem forgave them with the command of the Mishkan.

**אֵ֣לֶּה פְקוּדֵ֤י הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ These are the accountings (38:21) – Rav Moshe Feinstein**  noted that the accountings that a person needs to provide in his life are primarily about his life and if s/he is meeting the life goals that Hashem is expecting from him or her. Rav Moshe noted that the **Chofetz Chaim** would regularly remind people that the main issue that Hashem has with us is about the life we lead without any accounting – the time wasted and lost. The first way to combat that lost time is to make an accounting for it and study Mussar to find it.

**אֵ֣לֶּה פְקוּדֵ֤י הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ מִשְׁכַּ֣ן הָֽעֵדֻ֔ת The Mishkan of testament (38:21)** - The mishkan was a rather impressive artistic edifice. Why is it merely referred to as Mishkan Haeidus? **Rav Moshe Shapira** explained that the beauty of the building was only there because it was the utensil for the spread of the Shechina and the torah She’Baal Peh-- not just the simple items inside it.

**מִשְׁכַּ֣ן הָֽעֵדֻ֔ת Mishkan Haeidus (38:21) – Rashi** notes that the Mishkan is referred to as “HaEidus” since it is a testament to the Jewish people that Hashem forgave them for the Cheit HaEigel. Yet, notes **Rav Aizik Ausband** , this seems difficult since every punishment today has a bit of Cheit Haeigel involved in it. Why should that be if Hashem already forgave? He answers that Hashem forgave that generation for the sin – hence it is an eidus in that the calculations of the individual donations and the totality were equal as were the individual members of Klal Yisrael as well as the collective. However, the cost long term is to be born each generation that sins and now must pay for it.

**הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ מִשְׁכַּ֣ן** **The Mishkan the Mishkan of testimony (38:21) Rashi** notes that the term Mishkan is repeated twice in order to hint to both Battei Mikdash that were destroyed because of our sins. It follows that if we do Teshuva we will merit the Beis HaMikdash and its rebuilding. **Rav Schachter**  reminded us that this helps explain a difference of opinion in Halacha for in the Bentching there is a discussion as to whether we should include the word “B’Rachamav” in the third Beracha or not (Boneh Yirushalayim or Boneh B’Rachamav Yirushalayim). The Rema says to use the word but the Gra did not. According to Rav Schachter, those following the opinion of the Gra hold that since the Beis HaMikdash was taken away because of our sins, when we do teshuva, Hashem promises He’ll accept our teshuva. As such, it won’t be an act of Rachamim to return the Mikdash, but an act of Din, since He’ll be “Mechuyav” to give us back the beis hamikdash.

**וּבְצַלְאֵ֛ל בֶּן־אוּרִ֥י בֶן־ח֖וּר לְמַטֵּ֣ה יְהוּדָ֑ה עָשָׂ֕ה  Betzalel…did all that Hashem commanded Moshe (38:22) - Rashi** cites the Gemara (Berachos 55a) that notes the discrepancy between that which Hahem commanded Moshe and that which Betzalel did. The gemara seems to imply that Moshe agreed with Betzalel’s changes (making the building before the Keilim) hinting to perhaps an error on the part of Moshe. This seems strange and cannot be? Moreover, Moshe praises Betzalel’s Ruach HaKodesh. However this too seems strange insofar as Betzalel seems to only have been suggesting common sense – not Ruach Hakodesh. How do we explain it**? Rav Yisrael Belsky**  explained that there are 2 perspectives to the Mishkan – that of Hashem and his revelation to the people and that of the people and how they were to use the revelation. When commanding the Mishkan, Hashem described its building from most Kadosh internally to the outside. Betzalel preferred the perspective of the people as they would rise up to the kedusha – from outside in.

**וּבְצַלְאֵ֛ל בֶּן־אוּרִ֥י בֶן־ח֖וּר לְמַטֵּ֣ה יְהוּדָ֑ה עָשָׂ֕ה  Betzalel did all that Hashem commanded Moshe (38:22)**  - Why is it that only in regard to the Bigdei Kehuna do we find the words Kaasher Tziva Hashem? Why not include the phrase by the rest of the Mishkan as well? **Rav Velvel Soloveitchik**  explained that the word Tziva applies whenever you do something that is not to change at all. If it is a Mitzva L’doros then it can have the word Tziva attached to it. Since the Mishkan had curtains that would later be changed to permanent walls in the Beis Hamikdash, the term Tziva could not apply to it. The Bigdei Kehuna did not change – they got the term Tziva. **Rav Schachter**  added that the same can be said when studying Maaseh Rav. Sometimes a Rebbe’s actions may be based on a unique set of conditions and his recorded Psak may be local to a unique situation. Learning where to apply a Maaseh Rav correctly is also part of the concept of l’doros.

 כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּ֥ה֖ ה אֶת־משֶֽׁה:**As Hashem commanded Moshe (38:22) –** Throughout Parshas Pekudai we find reference to this idea repeated over and over. Why? **Rav Mordechai Kamenetzsky**  suggested that the message here is to teach us that not only was the entire picture one that was done, each step in the effort, the intricacies of the stones and the designs were significant and important. Each step contained such direct detail that each was done exactly as Hashem commanded Moshe.

ָּל־אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּ֥ה ה אֶת־משֶֽׁהָָּּ **As Hashem commanded Moshe (38:22) –** We find that the making of the Bigdei Kehuna utilized this phrase while the construction of the Mishkan did not. Why the difference? **The Brisker Rav**  explained that the word Tzivah only applies to Mitzvos that apply L’Doros as opposed to a Horaas Shaah. The Bigdei Kehuna would remain while the Mishkan would later be forgone in favor of the stones of the Beis HaMikdash. **Rav Schachter**  would often add that the same is true today when learning from watching a Rebbe's Hanhagos instead of learning proper actions directly. The former may constitute a Horaas Shaah while the latter provides the Rebbe’s actions clearly.

**בֶּ֚קַע לַגֻּלְגֹּ֔לֶת מַֽחֲצִ֥ית הַשֶּׁ֖קֶל בְּשֶׁ֣קֶל הַקֹּ֑דֶשׁ Half a Shekel per head (38:26)** - Why were the Adanim, the sockets specifically paid for, using the half shekel head tax as opposed to, say, the Aron? **Rav Eli Mansour** explained that when it comes to the sockets, they represented the foundation upon which Judaism is built, which in the spiritual sense refers to Emunah. In regard to Emunah, we must all participate, without any exceptions. Nobody can say, “I’m not ready yet for Emunah.” The belief in G-d and G-d’s providence is something expected of us all, from the most learned scholars down to the simplest layman. The half-shekel symbolizes the fact that we only know half the story. Emunah requires us to acknowledge that as human beings, our vision and understanding are very limited. We see and understand very little of how G-d runs the world.

עָשָׂ֥ה וָוִ֖ים לָֽעַמּוּדִ֑ים **Vavei HaAmudim (38:28)** – A Sefer Torah is filled with the letter Vav and most columns in the Sefer Torah specifically start with a Vav. Vav is the most common letter in the Torah. Why? **Rav Shimshon**  **Dovid Pinkus**  explained that in other languages a sentence cannot begin with the word “And.” In the Hebrew language it is quite common. The reason is that the Torah is one long connection. It begins with Berashis and carries forward until the present day. In the same way that we cannot cut out one’s childhood for it made the adult who he or she is, we cannot ignore the twists and turns of each piece of the Torah – they, like each piece of the Mishkan – are connected.

**And in regard to the 1775 Shekalim he made hooks for the amudim (38:28)** – The Midrash Tanchuma notes that when Moshe could not figure out where the missing 1775 Shekalim went, he was greatly distressed until he found these that had been used for the hooks. The lesson here is apparent – that not only must our accounting be true to Hashem , it should be beyond the scrutiny of Yisrael as well**. Rav Baruch Simon** added in the name of the Maharal, that one may not simply note that since the goals of a project are noble so the means will be noble as well. Rather, one must watch out for the means when considering the goals as well.

**They hammered out the sheets of gold and cut threads [from them] to work [the gold] into the blue wool, into the purple wool, into the crimson wool, and into the fine linen, the work of a master weaver. (39:3)** – **Ramban** is amazed at the detail that the Torah goes into in order to explain how they spun the gold thread for the Eiphod. Why not merely mention that they made an Eiphod with gold and Tekheles? Ramban explains that the mention here is due to the uniqueness of spinning gold into threads that could be woven. This process was not known or utilized prior in history and was so special to Hashem that he wanted it expressly mentioned. **Rav Simcha Zissel Broide**  explains that the uniqueness should have not been so special. After all, Betzalel was able to infuse a tremendous amount of Machshava into each aspect of the Mishkan. In fact, he was able to utilize and attach the letters used in constructing the world. So why was spinning gold so special in the eyes of Hashem? Rav Simcha Zissel answers that we learn the power of a Chiddush in the eyes of Hashem. Whenever one utilizes the power of chiddush in the opportunity to serve Hashem – such power is unique and has a special place in the eyes of Hashem. The same holds true for the spinning of gold as well as for the true Chiddush in Torah study.

**וַיִּכְתְּב֣וּ עָלָ֗יו מִכְתַּב֙ פִּתּוּחֵ֣י חוֹתָ֔ם They wrote on it Kodesh to Hashem (39:30)** -  Why does the Torah note that they wrote the words – didn’t ONE person write the words? The **Imrei Emes** explained that the letters were written at once. Why? **Tosafos Yom Tov** explained that this way the name of Hashem was never written incompletely. Thus, notes the Imrei Emes, the Tzitz was written by 4 people at the same time to see to it that the name of Hashem would never be formed incompletely.

**וַתֵּ֕כֶל כָּל־עֲבֹדַ֕ת מִשְׁכַּ֖ן אֹ֣הֶל מוֹעֵ֑ד וַיַּֽעֲשׂוּ֙ בְּנֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל All of the work of the Mishkan was completed and Bnei Yisrael did according to all that Hashem commanded to Moshe (39:32)** - The order seems to be reversed -- it should highlight that Bnei Yisrael did as they were commanded and THEN that the work was completed. Why the change? **Rav Dr. Abraham J. Twerski**  quoted **Ramban** who noted that Bnei Yisrael didn’t really have the craftsmen skilled to complete the intricate work of the Mishkan. It was the help of Hashem that gave them the skills. Thus, said Rav Twerski, the Possuk is there to tell us that the work was completed by Hashem and credited to his Shlichim. Rabbi Twerski added that it is irresponsible to take responsibilities that we are not equipped to do, but when it comes to Mitzva performance we need to give it our all, in order to bring a mitzva to completion.

 **וַיָּבִ֤יאוּ אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ אֶל־משֶׁ֔ה They brought the Mishkan to Moshe (39:33)** – The Midrash Tanchuma notes that Moshe felt bad that he had no hand in the building of the Mishkan and thus, Hashem made sure that only he could put it up. How could Moshe think that he had nothing to do with the establishment of the Mishkan – the Midrash notes that he would regularly check in on the artisans and teach them how to make every aspect of the Mishkan. He clearly DID give of himself for the building of the Mishkan. Why the worry? **Rav Shmuel Yaakov Borenstein**  explains that we learn the value of hands-on involvement in a project. Moshe refused to accept any role in building the Mishkan that he was not 100% involved in hands-on. Since he had given that hands-on to the artisans, Hashem gave him another opportunity to have a hands-on role in the building of the Mishkan.

**וַיָּבִ֤יאוּ אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ אֶל־משֶׁ֔ה And they brought the Mishkan to Moshe (39:33) – Rashi** explains that it was Moshe who needed to put it together as a description of how the Shechina would attach it. Moreover, the Midrah explains that the people knew how to build the individual pieces but only Moshe was able to connect the pieces**. Rav Aharon Lichtenstein**  explained that the 2 ideas apply to one’s inner Mishkan as well. The inner Mishkan needs to be put together and not only the individual parts and at the same time, needs the final blows to come from Hashem even as it looks like the person is doing all of the work.

**וַיָּבִ֤יאוּ אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן֙ אֶל־משֶׁ֔ה  And Moshe set up the beams (39:33) -  Rav Zeidel Epstein** explained that obviously Hashem did the work on His own. Why did Moshe need to be a part of the charade? Rav Zeidel explained that it is important for one to know that if he is deserving he is the catalyst to have Hashem lower Himself to fit a mindset that humanity can experience His glory. Moshe was the catalyst that made Hashem able to fit the Mishkan despite the limitations of confined space.

**אֶת־בִּגְדֵ֥י הַשְּׂרָ֖ד לְשָׁרֵ֣ת**  **Bigei Kehunah (39:41**) - It is interesting to note that while we have many rules concerning the clothing of the Kohanim and the Kohein Gadol, no such clothing exist for a Novi. Why? My friend**, Rav Dovid Gottleib**  explained that the clothing of the Kohein will be utilized for many generations to come. The form therefore, is crucial. The job of the Novi is for the moment and requires creativity and flexibility.

**Bnei Yisrael did all of the Avoda… and Moshe saw all the Melacha (39:42-43)** – Why did the Possuk change focus from Avoda to Melacha**? Rav Nebenzahl**  explained that Melacha speaks to the constructive act done with foresight. Avoda speaks to the work itself. While Bnei Yisrael can be rated for having completed the physical activity properly (the Avodah), Moshe had the ability to judge their intention and this too, he found to be proper.

**כֵּ֤ן עָשׂוּ֙ בְּנֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל אֵ֖ת כָּל־הָֽעֲבֹדָֽה: Bnei Yisrael did the Avodah (39:42)** – Why is the work referred to as Avodah in regard to Bnei Yisrael but Melacha when Moshe thinks of it? **Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl**  explains that Melacha refers to the thought and intent behind the work. Avodah refers to the physical labor. When considering the Mishkan everyone was able to see that the physical Avodah was completed properly but only Moshe was able to see that the intent in each step was also pure. Hence he was able to evaluate the Melacha.

**In accordance with all that the Lord had commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel do all the work (39:42) – Rav Dovid Stav**  explains that the Parshiyos of VaYakhel-Pekudai demonstrate that dreams exist. He likens Parshiyos Terumah and Tetzaveh to dreams with plans of exactly how things were planned out to be in the Mishkan. However, things do not always turn out as expected. VaYakhel Pekudai show us that even when things are not exact but that we follow the plan as demanded of us, then we need not fear dreams.

**וַיְבָ֥רֶךְ אֹתָ֖ם משֶֽׁה: Moshe blessed the people (39:43) - Rashi** explains that Moshe offered the Tefillah that Shechina should rest as a result of your actions. But Hashem had ALEADY promised that if they build the Mishkan then the Shechna would rest. Why offer this Tefillah? **Rav Betzalel Rudinsky**  suggested that the building of the Mishkan symbolized the desire and involvement of the people to correct their sin of the Eigel. But there were 2 aspects to the sin, the first was the doing of the actual Avaira but there was the additional component of the energy in doing the sin. The former was fixed with the completion of the building. The latter was bigger – it was about the assistance that Hashem gives to a project that one puts his energies to. This is what Moshe was encouraging in his Tefillah – that Hashem should have his Shechina in ALL of our actions.

**וַיְבָ֥רֶךְ אֹתָ֖ם משֶֽׁה And Moshe blessed them (39:43) – Rashi** notes that he blessed them with the prayer that the Shechina should be felt through their actions. **The Ksav Sofer** asks why this blessing was necessary if, after all, Hashem had already promised that if they were to build him a Mikdash he would dwell with each and every one of them? **Rav Shmuel Dovid Walkin**  answers that Hashem’s promise was only true to that generation. Moshe’s Beracha carried beyond d that generation to other generations to come.

**וַיְבָ֥רֶךְ אֹתָ֖ם משֶֽׁה And Moshe saw the entire work and they had done it as Hashem had commanded Moshe they did it. and Moshe blessed them (39:43)- Rashi** cites the well known added Tefillah Moshe offered – Yehe Ratzon SheTishreh Shechina B’Maaseh Yideichem. V’Hi Noam Hashem Elokeinu Aleinu . **Rav Pam**  noted that it is obvious that the Shechina will be on the Mishkan for a receptacle built in holiness is a warm receptacle for the Shechina. Maaseh Yideichem referred to more – to the work that people do. It is hard for a person to experience Shechina in those Maaseh Yadayim – to experience Shechina in everything man does and achieves. It makes the world a more Shechina-filled environment.

**וַיְבָ֥רֶךְ אֹתָ֖ם משֶֽׁה**: **And Moshe blessed them (39:43) – Rashi** explains that the Tefillah offered was a Tefillah that the Shechina should be successfully imparted through your Maaseh Yadayim. The **Midrash** offers a different blessing – Yosef Hashem Aleichem Kachem Elef Piamim. Why are these Berachos connected to the Mishkan? The **Koheles Yitzchak** explains that when one donates to a Shul or a Beis HaMedrash, merits to have many generations – especially of sons and daughters who study and dwell in Torah and Mitzvos.

**And Moshe saw the entire work and they had done it as Hashem had commanded Moshe they did it. and Moshe blessed them (39:43)-** Why the double stress on the fact that they did it? Moreover, Betzalel did not do exactly as Hashem commanded? The **Piacetzner Rebbe**  explained that within each Mitzva (like each Nevuh0 there are Kavannos and Yichudim but these are impossible to achieve if one does not perform the actual Mitzvah. Betzalel ultimately made the Mishkan – he recognized the intention of Hashem more than Moshe in the practical execution of the Mitzva. Doing is crucial in following the will of Hashem.

**תָּקִ֕ים אֶת־מִשְׁכַּ֖ן אֹ֥הֶל מוֹעֵֽד: You shall establish the Mishkan (40:2) – Rav Schachter**  would often stress that the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdash served more than as a place to bring Korbanos. The Rambam notes that when we daven we face the Makom HaMikdash as it is the central place of prayer. It is also the central place of Torah both written (as is evidenced by the Sifrei Torah Shel Azara and their authoritative status) and oral (evidenced by being the central Sanhedrin’s meeting point). This is the reason we daven and ask for the rebuilding of the Mikdash and to get out piece of Torah – the 2 go hand in hand. The Mikdash is also a place of emanation of prophesy – Yona got Nevuah when he would go to the Simchas Beis HaShoeiva. The point of the mikdash is central to us – its centrality requires constant reminder – hence the repetition of these Parshiyos.

**And you shall place the Aron (40:3)** – In regard to the other Keilim, they were all placed and anointed. The Aron did not need the placement and the anointing in order to be functional. Why**? Maran HaRav Schachter quotes Harav Moshe Soloveitchik**  that the Aron was functional already at the time that the broken Luchos were placed in it. All too often, we think we need major ceremonies in order to make things functional. However when it comes to education, the kedusha is apparent right away.

**וַיְהִ֞י בַּחֹ֧דֶשׁ הָֽרִאשׁ֛וֹן בַּשָּׁנָ֥ה הַשֵּׁנִ֖ית בְּאֶחָ֣ד לַחֹ֑דֶשׁ הוּקַ֖ם הַמִּשְׁכָּֽן The mishkan was established And they established the Mishkan (40:17)** - **Rav Schachter** would often remark that there is a Rabbinic tradition that when Titus destroyed the second Beis HaMikdash he was merely grinding the flour that was already ground. According to Rav Schachter, this meant that the non-Jews do not have the ability to defile our holy sites. It must be that we had sinned to the point where the Mikdash had already been spiritually destroyed and there was little defilement left. The same is true, albeit on a lower level for our Shuls as well. Our comportment in our Shuls must reflect our appreciation of Bechiras Yisrael and carry and convey our respect for the place and the chance to interact there with Hashem too.

**On the first day of the first month of the second year, the Mishkan was established (40:17)** – The Midrash Tanchuma notes that Hashem stretched the date in order to have it coincide with the birthday of Yitzchak. Why? The **Shai L’Torah** explains that the end of a Galus is the Geulah. This lesson is seen nowhere as clearly as when the Mishkan which is the culmination of the Galus Mitzrayim is established on the same day as the one it started. The nation had now gone full circle and moved closer to Hashem.

**The Mishkan stood (40:17)** – How did it get set up? **Rashi (39:33)** notes that Hashem told Moshe if he puts in a hand, the Mishkan will rise on its own. **Rav Shaul Yisraeli**  used to note that when we put in a hand, we are creating a Kiyum – a permanence. Hashem joins us and guarantees that the project is seen through to fruition. **Rav Shimshon Dovid Pinkus**  added that this is why we mention the Mitzvos as “Mitzvosav” and not “Mitzvoseinu” since as long as we put in a hand to it, Hashem helps us finish it off.

 **וַיָּ֨קֶם משֶׁ֜ה אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּ֗ן Moshe established the Mishkan (40:18) – Sforno** explains that the ten Yeriyos curtains were put up before the beams – essentially putting on the roof before the building itself. How it stood is a matter of discussion as to whether it was miraculous or perhaps by end pieces. Why was this necessary? Why the roof before the structure? **Rav Reuven Feinstein** explained that we need to always remember why it is that we are doing what we are doing before doing it. Once we know the goal, we are ready to reach it.

**And Moshe set up the Mishkan (40:18) – The Midrash Tanchuma (Pekudai 11)** notes that Betzalel, Ohaliav and each of the Chachamim were not able to set up the Mishkan in order to give Moshe the opportunity to be able to do so. The Midrash applies the Possuk “Ish Baar Lo Yeida U’Ksil Lo Yavin Es Zos” to this situation. Why**? Rav Boruch Mordechai Ezrachi** explains that when things go wrong, a Ksil looks at the situation and determines the ideal from it. The idealist sets his goals and tries to figure out why the Metzius don’t meet the facts. A fool cannot figure out that Hashem wants Moshe to have his turn – Ksil Lo yavin – because he does not take it into account.

**And Moshe set up the Mishkan (40:18)** – Why must Moshe himself set up the Mishkan? Why didn’t he use agents to help him? **Rav Moshe Feinstein**  explains that when one builds something that is Kadosh, we do not want to leave the details to others. If we are to do so, we can guarantee that the project will not be completed correctly. Only when we actively create the Kedusha can Kedusha be maintained.

**וַיִּקַּ֞ח וַיִּתֵּ֤ן אֶת־הָֽעֵדֻת֙ אֶל־הָ֣אָרֹ֔ן He took (40:20)** – What is the point of the word VaYikach here? If Moshe placed the Luchos in the Aron, clearly he took them from somewhere. Why add the word? **Rav Gifter**  explained that the act of taking was significant in its own right. Until this point, the Luchos were in Moshe’s tent where Torah would spring forth from. Now it would come from a more public place.

**כִּֽי־שָׁכַ֥ן עָלָ֖יו הֶֽעָנָ֑ן Moshe could not enter the tent because of the cloud (40:35) – Or HaChaim** notes that elsewhere (24:58) we find Moshe able to enter a cloud of Kedusha. What does the Possuk mean here? **Rav Shmuel Barenbaum**  explained that when Chazal tell us that the actions of Tzaddikim are greater than the creation of heaven and earth, it means that there is a certain revelation of Hashem’s Kedusha in a place where the people choose to serve Hashem. Thus, in the Mishkan, a place of man-generated Kedusha, Moshe did not gain immediate access even if he did elsewhere.

**וְלֹֽא־יָכֹ֣ל משֶׁ֗ה לָבוֹא֙ Moshe could not enter the Ohel Moed (40:35)** - How do we end the Sefer with Moshe’s failure to enter the Mishkan as an ending? **Rav Nebenzahl**  answered that there are 2 ways to relate to Hashem. One is the path of distance and the other is the path of closeness. The former is contained in the idea of the end of Sefer Shmos -- serving Hashem even when afar. The latter is the beginning of the book of Vayikra.

וּבְהֵֽעָל֤וֹת הֶֽעָנָן֙ **When the cloud rose the people would move (40:36-37)** - The Gemara (Bava kamma and elsewhere) learn the laws of Melachos Shabbos from the Mishkan. How do we learn the carrying laws. After all, was carrying done in the preparation of the Mishkan? **Rav Schachter**  pointed out to us that the moving and traveling in the Midbar was part of the responsibilities of setting up the Mishkan. The purpose of Mishkan was to be mobile. Taking it up and putting it down – and carrying it was part of the Melacha. Hence these otherwise extra Possukim at the end of the Chumash.

**כִּי֩ עֲנַ֨ן  For the cloud of Hashem was on the Mishkan (40:38)** - In 1948, when the *medinah* was first established, the Chazon Ish had already moved to *Eretz Yisroel*. He is quoted as having said that the establishment of the *medinah* constitutes the end of the *golus* but is not yet the *geulah*. Some thought that this statement was mere double-talk. **Rav Schachter**  suggested that the Chazon Ish was merely following the wording of the Ramban in his introduction to Sefer Shemos. There, the Ramban notes that the ultimate Geula is the Hashraas HaShechina. Rav Schachter suggested that this is most probably what the Chazon Ish meant when he commented that the establishment of the *medinah* represents the end of the *golus* because the British are no longer preventing the Jews from returning back to *Eretz Yisroel* and there was a tremendous *kibutz goliyos*, but we still did not merit the *hashro'as ha'Shechina* which is referred to with the technical term of *geulah*. May we all merit to see the *geulah* very soon during our lifetime.

**For the cloud of Hashem was on the mishkan by day and the fire at night (40:38) – Rav Yehuda Tzedaka**  used to note that since every Jew is like a mini-Mishkan, then the themes of Annan and Eish need to be applied to the human too. How so? Rav Tzedaka explains that the anan refers to Tzniyus. The message to us is that Tzniyus is a good thing in a Jewish living as a rule of thumb. However, there are times when we must act with a fire -- at these times Tzniyus and Anivus is misplaced.

**For Parshas Parah:**

**They should take for you a Parah Adumah (19:2)** – For whom should the cow be taken? **Rav Gifter**  suggested that it was for Moshe. In other words, Chazal seem to suggest that the Parah Adumah is an atonement for the Cheit HaEigel. Rav Gifter pointed out that the Tefillah of Moshe was that which saved them from the initial bolt of the sin of the Eigel. Hence, the post-sin purification is also credited to him -- imagine that! Forever more, all return from Tumah via Parah Adumah will be credited to Moshe Rabbeinu!

**For Parashas HaChodesh**

**וְרָאִ֨יתִי֙ אֶת־הַדָּ֔ם When I see the blood (12:13)** - Why the stress on the blood of Seder night? **Rav Yechiel Perr**  suggested that the blood is symbolic of Mesiras Nefesh - of dedication to the cause. **Rav Wolbe**  added that this was the mistake of the Nesiim who didn’t rush to apply the Mesiras Nefesh principle and lost out. It is not a surprise that their atonement is read immediately after the Rosh Chodesh of Parshas HaChodesh.

**For Haftara Shabbos Pekudai**

**Haftara (Melachim Alef Perek 8) – Rav Amnon Bazak**  notes that the Beis HaMikdash had many similarities to the Mishkan but that there are clear distinctions apparent to Shlomo HaMelech now that he is inaugurating the Mikdash. While both edifices are places of rendezvous with Hashem, the Mishkan was a place where Moshe spoke to Hashem face to face. He entered and Hashem spoke. In the Mikdash, the rendezvous would be different, people would enter the Mikdash and their sense would be that this is where Hashem would be best able to listen.

**: And the people who were giving the monies shall not be accused since they were doing their work in good faith (Melachim II: 12:16)** – When it came to Moshe, Moshe provided a detailed accounting of the Mishkan. Why? **Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky**  explained that Moshe was not appointed by the people, he was placed upon them by Hashem. In an effort to remove any degree of suspicion by the people on him, Moshe chose to account for every penny used. However, in general, when communal projects are undertaken in honesty, those undertaking it are to be granted a Chezkas Kashrus.

**: And Shlomo lifted his hands to the heavens (Melachim I: 8:22) – Rav Yaakov Kamenetzsky** pointed out that the style of artists is wrong in the depiction. Outstretched arms means with the palm of the hands upward, as if ready to accept that which falls from the heavens. This is a lofty style of Tefillah not in practice today. Why? Rav Yaakov explained that today people are not always ready to accept the blessing from Hashem unadulterated. Instead, they want Hashem to do what they want Him to do irrespective of His will. Thus, we cannot use Prishus Kapayim in prayer.

**: Rav Rivlin**  notes that the Mishkan which is the primary focus of the torah reading and the Beis HaMikdash which highlights the Haftorah were not carbon copies of one another. What right did Shlomo HaMelech have to deviate from the building directions of these parshiyot? Rav Rivlin answers that when Dovid sat with Shmuel in Neyot B’Rama, the gemara (Zevachim 54b) notes that they were up all night studying Romo Shel Olam (the beauty of the world). Clearly a reference to the Beis HaMikdash, Dovid was receiving instructions about when to innovate and in what way to deviate --- via Novi and Urim v’Tumim.

**For Haftaras Shabbos Shekalim (Leap year)**

**וְעַתָּ֗ה אַל־תִּקְחוּ־כֶ֙סֶף֙ מֵאֵ֣ת מַכָּֽרֵיכֶ֔ם Now therefore receive no more money of your acquaintance" (12:8)** - After trying to bring order to the decimated coffers of the Beis HaMikdash, King Yoash tries to standardize the fundraising efforts. Whereas previously each Kohein was to go out and solicit donations from their acquaintances, now there would be standard fees charged and paid in the Beis HaMikdash. **Rav Alex Israel**  notes that the change to the system brought control over the process away from a limited group of fundraisers, protection from corruption by those collecting bigger donations and accountability in the spending of the money. He suggests that this is why in Divrei Hayamim it is noted that at this time the people gave to the project joyously -- for once there is a sense of rebuilt, unwavering trust in the project, the people dedicated to the project’s goals can give to it freely.

**“All the monies that will be brought to the Beis HaMikdash for Bedek HaBayis shall be taken by the Kohanim and they shall strengthen the Beis HaMikdash (Haftorah for Shekalim Melachim II:12:6)** – Not only relevant to the Mitzva of Shekalim but the Haftorah also relates to the Parsha as well. Indeed, **Rav Wolbe**  points out that the point of Parshas Pekudai is to highlight the fact that Moshe and anyone else working with him were diligent in watching every penny that was used in the building of the mishkan. There was no room for waste. Rav Wolbe adds that for any project to be successful – whether in building or maintaining the operation, 2 things need to be avoided – Kavod and Kessef.

**Haftara Parshas Parah**

# Son of man! The house of Israel are dwelling in their land and have defiled it like Tumas

**Niddah (Yechezkel 36:17)** – Why is the reference to Tumas Nidda instead of Tumas Meis? **Rav Chaim BenSinor**  suggested that the Tumah can be removed relatively easily with Teshuva after which one is able to achieve Geulah. In the same way that the unique status is preserved despite the Tumah with a Niddah, Hahem does not change our status even when we need to be removed from the home due to Tumah.

**: Son of man! The house of Israel, as long as they lived on their own land, they defiled it by their way and by their misdeeds, like the uncleanness of a woman in the period of her separation was their way before Me. (Yechezkel 36:17)** – Why does the Novi refer to sins and misdeeds at the beginning of the Possuk and later – in the context of Niddah merely refer to the “way” of sin? **Rav Yaakov Krantz, famed Dubno Maggid** explains that there is a difference between a Derech and misdeeds. The Derech refers to premeditated thought, which although hidden from our fellow man is revealed to Hashem. Misdeeds are seen by all. Many Aveiros Bein adam L’Makom tend to be in thought while Bein Adam L’Chaveiro are always revealed. While Hashem knows of both types of Aveiros, and both defile the land, the Bein Adam L’Chavero – revealed actions lead to the galus.

**Haftara Shabbos HaChodesh**

**וּבְי֚וֹם הַשַּׁבָּת֙ יִפָּתֵ֔חַ וּבְי֥וֹם הַחֹ֖דֶשׁ יִפָּתֵֽחַ: And on the day of the Chodesh it shall be opened (Yechezkel 46:1) - Rav Yigal Ariel**  explained that Rosh Chodesh became an important FAMILY celebration in the time of Dovid HaMelech as declared by Yehonasan to King Shaul. **Rav Tzaddok** explained that the reign of Dovid HaMelech is compared to the moon and Rosh Chodesh was a time for renewal. This is why we highlight Dovid at the time of Kiddush Levana. We find the same in the time of Elisha. In this Haftara, the Novi uses the opportunity that it was also the time that other kings would have the chance to shine on Rosh Chodesh on behalf of the people.

**: כִּ֥י נִכְח֖וֹ יֵצֵֽא Rather he is to leave by way of the opposite one (Yechezkel 46:9)** - **Rav Pam**  noted that one of the best things that help teachers avoid burnout is to teach people not subjects. This is relevant as a part of this Haftara where we read of rejuvenation at a time of year when it is a part of nature to experience the newness.

**And when the Nasi comes (Yechezkel 46) – Rav Menachem Leibtag** highlights the reference change from king to Nasi and the stress on his additional Korbanos to highlight the fact that in Yechezkel’s time, the monarchy had sold out the centrality of Hashem’s rule in the world. In order to prevent that situation from ever re-occurring, the offering of regular Korbanos by the king and then only presenting them to the Kohanim who would take over the offering on his behalf and the demotion in title as well as the recognition that he rules only over his nachala, remind the king that he serves at the will of Hashem and it is to Him that the king and nation must direct their attention.