

Parashah # 22

(Updated for 2.26.11)

Vayak'hel ~ וַיַּקְהֵל ~ And he assembled

Torah: Sh'mot/Exodus 35:1 ~ 38:20

Haftarah: M'lakhim Alef/1st Kings 7:13-50

B'rit Hadashah: 2nd Corinthians 9:1-15;

Ivrit/Hebrews 9:1-14; Revelation 11:1-13

Wow Oh Wow!!! This is SO much fun. Who says the Original Covenant is boring? There is SO much Technicolor here!!!

Earlier this week, when I settled in to begin my Parashah reading for this Shabbat, I thought “Oh no!! A rerun . . . I hate reruns!” However, it wasn't a rerun at all! Before, HaShem was describing all of this **TO** Moshe, now I'm getting to see the (Meesh-kahn) *Mishkan/Tabernacle* actually being built! And besides, in the Torah of HaShem, there's always something new!

CHAPTER 35

This portion begins in **verse 1** with Moshe assembling the whole congregation. The verb used for *assemble* is (kah-hall) *qahal* (קָהַל). When translated from Hebrew to Greek it became ekklesia, which was **mistranslated** into English as “church”. The Hebrew word for *congregation* is (ah-daht) *adat* (עֲדָת). Adat is from the root word *adah* (עָדָה) and refers to something which is appointed. Another word derived from this same root is *mo'ed* (מוֹעֵד) which is used in **Vayikra/Leviticus 23** to designate the biblical festivals – the *appointed times of the L~rd*. The important point here is the Holy One gave His Torah to the entire assembly or community NOT to any one individual. Yes, He dictated it to Moshe but it was for everyone. Consequently everyone was involved, one way or another, in the construction of the Tabernacle.

Shabbat is revisited once again (**verses 2-3**). Gosh, do you suppose HaShem is serious about keeping the 7th day Sabbath? This was just addressed last week as well as a couple of weeks before. I don't want to sound like a broken record but apparently, HaShem felt it was necessary to bring it up again. *Moshe Rabbenu* (Moe-sheh Rah-bay-nu)/*Moses our Teacher* exhorts *B'nei Israel/Sons of Israel* to keep the *Sabbath/Shabbat* and the *Mishkan/Tabernacle* was NOT to be constructed on Abba's *set apart/holy day*. Regardless of the importance of the *Mishkan/Tabernacle*, it could not be built on the Sabbath. Shabbat is the day which testifies to the existence of HaShem and supersedes the Tabernacle where He is served. A profound statement in the Chumash reads: “**Acknowledgment of G~D must precede service.**”

Shabbat is the first (moe-ehd) *mo'ed/appointed time* we learn about. We learned about it through HaShem's example in **B'resheet/Genesis 2:2-3** “On the seventh day G~d was finished with His

work which He had made, so He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. G~d blessed the seventh day and separated it as holy; . . .” Did you notice???? “**G~d blessed the seventh day and separated it as holy** . . .” He didn’t bless any other day of the week!!! I don’t care what **people** say. It is important for us to read His Instruction Book for ourselves to know what HE says. Additionally, it is the most important of all (moe-eh-deem) **moedim/appointed times**, because it is the only ritual observance listed in the **Decalogue/Ten Commandments**. In fact, it is considered more important than **Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement**, because . . .

- it comes each week
- it gives more opportunities to read Torah
- it makes a consistent, positive impact on one’s life.

It also is a day to bring the family together to honor and remember HaShem and love one another. A Christian friend of mine, living in Jerusalem said, “Shabbat is a more holistic, integrated family day which is different from every other day of the week. It is anticipated and planned for by Torah Observant people; it becomes a day of rejuvenation and spiritual enrichment for the family, much more than Sunday is for Christians.”

The following verses in the **B’rit Hadashah/Renewed Covenant/New Testament** include keeping the Sabbath/Shabbat:

Mattityahu/Matthew 5:17-19
 Mattityahu/Matthew 12:1-21
 Luke 4:16

Yochanan/John 5:1-9
 Acts 13:14, 42
 Acts 15:21

Acts 16:13
 Acts 17:1, 2
 Acts 18:4

Some time ago, I ran across an interesting quote which fits well with this Torah Portion. “More than the Jews have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jews.” - *Ahad Ha'am, 1856-1927* And, as Brother Lynn stated . . . “Shabbat: a day when we ask God for nothing and thank Him for everything.”

Over the last several years, as I have become more and more Torah pursuant, I have felt very strongly about observing Shabbat. Each year I keep thinking there is more to this, there just has to be more to this. A few years ago, I became frustrated (HaShem please forgive me) with the “Christian” community because they became so “up in arms” over the 10 Commandments being removed from one place and then another. My thought was . . . they can’t even keep the 4th Commandment so what’s the big deal?!?!?! Please forgive me for my attitude but that’s where I was at the time.

After reading some other commentaries, I feel better concerning some of my feelings. We know many things in Torah are a fore-shadow of things to come, right? So when Moshe assembled the people, the first thing he did was to REMIND them concerning the Sabbath.

They already knew about it and they already observed it. Still, he reminded them of it the first thing after they assembled.

So when Yeshua returns, what do you suppose He will address as soon as He assembles the people in Jerusalem? I believe He will reinforce Sabbath worship and it will be sanctified and set apart. Never again will the tradition of man reign supreme but the 4th Commandment of the Holy One of Israel will be reinstated!!! Baruch HaShem!!!

In **verse 3**, “You shall not kindle a fire” refers to work; the gathering of wood and the effort required to get a fire started. However, there was **NO** prohibition from keeping a fire going. The instructions given on *Har Sinai/Mt. Sinai* were as **clear and easy to follow** then as they are today.

Shabbat comes from a root word meaning to cease, desist, rest, stop. Therefore, Shabbat is for stopping. Our heavenly Abba Father knew/knows we need to rest at least one day a week. For those who are not Torah pursuant, the “work week” may only be five days but on the other two days, they shop, clean house, do laundry, work in the yard but few actually take one day to rest. Even those who observe the first day (Sunday) as their day of rest, allot a couple of hours to the L~RD and then are off to the local restaurant, shopping, movies, ballgames, etc. Observing Shabbat prevents us from abusing the services of others. Several times in Torah, Adonai instructs us to provide rest to our children, servants and even animals. Isn't it about time we start stopping?

Clarence Wagner, former CEO, at Bridges For Peace, said it best, “Shabbat is not a day of freedom *from* work but a day of freedom *to* enter God's restoring rest.”

A friend copied some pages from “Natural Cures “They” Don't Want You to Know About”. It lists several natural cures for ones body. I don't have the name of the author but “Natural Cure” #81 says ***“Rest from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown. Each week the moon cycles are in position to promote healing and rejuvenation in the body. Resting during this time promotes the optimal rejuvenation of your cells.”*** Imagine that!!!! Could our Abba Father actually have hit the nail on the head with the 4th Commandment?????

In His Torah, our Father has specified the appropriate times He wants to meet with us, His people. If we want to meet with Him and have Him bless us, we should meet at the times He has consecrated. We have seen how closely HaShem pays attention to detail and how our paying attention to **HIS** detail will result in Him blessing us. I don't know about you, but I want to live in His blessings.

As Torah teacher, Mike Clayton says: “Spend a moment of reflection here. How much do you delight in His Shabbat? How much do you strive to live this one commandment? Is it time to lay the excuses down? Let's look at it this way. The Shabbat is the meat sandwiched between

two pieces of bread, the Bread of His Presence.” Mighty powerful words from our Brother Mike!

In **verse 21**, we read about those “**whose heart stirred/inspired him.**” When we stop to think about the ones who came to do the work of weaving, sewing, building, etc., we should remember the conditions *B’nei Israel/the Children of Israel* were under in Egypt. There were no Hebrew artisans. The Egyptians did not train them or permit them to develop their talent for the finer skills. However, there were unskilled Hebrews who had natural ability and they were inspired and uplifted to volunteer for what needed to be done, confident HaShem would help them do His will properly.

CHAPTER 36

In **Sh’mot/Exodus 35:5-Sh’mot/Exodus 36:2** the terms . . .

- heart makes him willing
- whose heart stirred him
- whose spirit makes him willing
- had willing hearts
- hearts stirred them
- heart impelled him
- heart stirred him

. . . are used seven times. Scripturally speaking, the number seven means “spiritual perfection and **completeness**”. Apparently, this is true, because we learn in the following **verses 3-7** the *t’rumah (voluntary giving with a willing heart)* was so great Moshe had to instruct the people not to produce any more. (I bet there are a lot of Rabbis and Pastors today who wish they had such a problem! I could go on and on but I won’t!) In their zeal to have a share in the construction, the people continued to bring their gifts to Moshe. He had it transferred to the work site. After several days, the artisans informed Moshe there was more than enough, so Moshe called a halt to the contributions. This is a tribute to all concerned. The generosity of the people was unlimited and the artisans were exceedingly honest, refusing to accept more than they needed. Moshe, unlike typical rulers and some mega-church pastors, was not interested in amassing huge treasuries to be at his disposal.

As a side note . . . some people say you need to "give till it hurts." Don't you believe it! HaShem doesn't want gifts given in pain. He wants gifts given in joy! In fact, those are the only kinds of gifts which please Him. The concept of "giving till it hurts" didn't come from our Heavenly Father. He would rather you give \$10 with joy than \$200 grudgingly. In **2nd Corinthians 8:11-12**, *Rav Sha’ul/Rabbi Paul* urges the church in Corinth to give with eager willingness. Eager willingness is what God looks for!

Back to the Tabernacle! If, in fact, there was more than enough, what was done with the leftover materials? I would like to share the thoughts of three different Sages with you.

- Ramban states: “There was only a small, insignificant amount of leftover material, and it was put away for future repair work, or it was used to make additional vessels for the Tabernacle service.”
- Sforno said: “Since there was a bit extra, the artisans could do their work without skimping on their use of materials.”
- “In order that every contributor would have his gift used for the Tabernacle, and not be embarrassed by the return of his gift, a miracle happened and everything that was “extra” was incorporated into the Tabernacle and its parts, without making them any bigger than they were required to be.” Or HaChaim

While we are on the subject of “giving”, according to the Torah, there are two types of giving – voluntary and mandatory.

- **Mandatory** giving is usually described in terms of the “tithe”. Contrary to popular opinion, the mandatory giving described in the Torah was not 10% but somewhere between 20 – 23% of one’s annual income.
- **Voluntary** giving, as we learned above, is what each person gave willingly and cheerfully to fulfill HaShem’s purpose.

The *Brit Hadashah/New Testament* teaches both voluntary and mandatory giving exactly the same way as the Torah does. Yeshua supported the giving of the half-shekel Temple tax and He also taught Believers were to pay the national taxes of the governments which ruled them. This is read in His “render unto Caesar” teaching.

Voluntary giving in the *Brit Hadashah* can be underscored in **2nd Corinthians 9:7** when *Rav Sha’ul/Rabbi Paul* said “Let them each one do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion for G~D loves a cheerful giver”. This echoes what Moshe told *Bnei Israel* in the wilderness.

An interesting note! In my studies, I couldn’t find where the Brit Hadashah teaches we MUST tithe! Believers are encouraged to give liberally and joyfully and in **Mattityahu/Matthew 6:24-34**, Yeshua teaches us, actually exhorts us, “Don’t worry! But seek first the kingdom of G~D and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you!” In our giving, we shouldn’t worry how our personal needs will be met. Our Abba Father will take care of us when we give to Him with all our hearts. **HOW** a person gives may be more important than **WHAT** a person gives.

Even last week HaShem exhorted us in **Sh’mot/Exodus 34:20** “. . . no one is to appear before me empty-handed.” We are told in **Mattityahu/Matthew 18:20** “For wherever two or three are assembled in my name, I am there with them.” If the above two scriptures are true then we

should be bringing offerings to HaShem each time we meet so we will be in a position to do His will and take care of the widows, orphans and the poor and needy.

CHAPTER 37

This chapter involves all the details concerning the items to be placed in the Tabernacle. These vessels symbolize the innermost of human ideals:

- There is the Ark containing Yehovah's teachings.
- There is a Table reflecting man's struggle to sustain himself physically by fighting for his daily bread.
- There is a Menorah which reflects man's obligation to spread the light of Torah beyond himself.
- And, the Ark in the Holy of Holies radiates its holiness to the Table and Menorah and through them to the entire world.

Several years ago, I saw or read something which previously had escaped me. **Verse 3** says B'tzal'el "**cast four gold rings for it at its four feet**". Stop and think of all the pictures you have seen of the Ark for the Covenant and of the priests carrying it. The poles are on their shoulders, right? The ark was pretty much hanging between them as they walked. Based on what we just read, that would be impossible. The Ark was to be "high and lifted up" as Yeshua was "high and lifted up" when He died for our sins. Of all the Tabernacle furniture, the Ark is the only piece which had the rings placed "at its four feet". The Complete Jewish Bible is the only translation I can find which renders this verse as "At its four feet". My Hebrew reading abilities are not good enough to know exactly what it says in the original Hebrew.

Verse 24 in the Complete Jewish Bible by David Stern, tells us the menorah and its utensils were made of **sixty-six pounds** of pure gold. Just as the menorah was to represent HaShem's light, so too is the entire Word of G~D, which is made of **sixty-six books**. Is this a coincidence? Or is this a G~D incidence?!

CHAPTER 38

This chapter addresses . . .

- The Altar for burnt offerings (**verses 1-7**)
- The Laver (**verses 8**)
- The courtyard (**verses 9-17**)
- The screen for the gateway to the courtyard (**verses 18-19**) and
- The tent pegs (**verse 20**)

I found interesting commentary concerning the Laver which was a very large copper basin in the Courtyard. Here the (Koe-hah-neem) **Kohanim/Priests** were required to wash their hands and feet before performing their service. We are told very specifically the Laver was made from the mirrors of the many women. Actually, these mirrors were brightly polished sheets of copper. Moshe was reluctant, initially, to accept these gifts because they had been used to incite lust. However, HaShem told him he was wrong because these very same mirrors had been necessary in the survival of the nation. In Egypt, the men had come home at night, exhausted from a long, backbreaking day of labor in the fields and the women had used their mirrors to help entice them to continue normal family life. Thanks to this, many Hebrew children were born. The commentary indicated not only should the mirrors be accepted, they should be used in their entirety to make the Laver. The reason the Torah does not give a specific size for the Laver is because every single mirror had to go into it, no matter how big it would become. The Laver was unique in because its water would be used in the future to bring peace between husband and wife by proving the innocence of women accused of adultery (**Numbers 5:17, 28**).

Verses 22 & 23 mention B'tzal'el, from the tribe of **Y'hudah/Judah** and Oholi'av, from the tribe of Dan. This represents "from the least to the greatest" were involved in the making of the Tabernacle. Yehuda was the largest tribe and was the first in "marching" order as they traveled whereas Dan was the smallest tribe and brought up the rear in their travels. Also, when we met these men earlier, I shared **B'tzal'el** meant *in the shadow of Adonai's protection* and *tent of my father* is the meaning for **Oholi'av**.

Vayak'hel ~ וַיִּקְהַל ~ And he assembled
Haftarah: M'lakhim Alef/1st Kings 7:13-50

The parallel to our Torah portion and the building of the Tabernacle is pretty obvious. Here we read of **Sh'lomo's/Solomon's** construction of the First Temple and we learn of very generous contributions, as well as enthusiastic people and skilled artisans who participated in making the different parts of the building as well as the various vessels and utensils. The description of these articles makes it very clear they were more beautiful and greater in number than those made for the Tabernacle.

I noticed three things mentioned here which were not found in the Tabernacle account.

- The Sea/Yam (yahm) was an extra large Laver. Commentary says its size was so large it could hold over 13,000 gallons.

Then there were two gigantic pillars at the entrance of the Temple and they had names.

- Yachin (Yah-keen and remember there is NO "J" in the Hebrew language) was the name of one and it stood at the right side of the doorway, which was the side of the Menorah.

Commentary indicates the name Yachin denotes a firm foundation and proclaims the basis of Hebrew life is the glow of the Torah, which is symbolized by the Menorah.

- Boaz (Bo-ahz), which stood on the left, was on the side of the Table with the Bread of the Presence or Showbread. **Boaz** means “*in Him is strength*” and proclaims the strength of prosperity, symbolized by the Table, comes from HaShem, Who alone holds sustenance in His hand. (Gosh I wonder if the “prosperity preachers” realize this originated in the Original Covenant, not the B’rit Hadashah?)

Vayak’hel ~ וַיִּקְהַל ~ And he assembled

B’rit Hadashah: 2nd Corinthians 9:1-15; Ivrit/Hebrews 9:1-14; Revelation 11:1-13

2nd Corinthians 9:1-15 The “heading” for these verses in one of my Bibles is entitled “The Offering for the Saints”. **Rav Sha’ul/Rabbi Paul** is exhorting those in Corinth concerning their heart for giving to the work of HaShem. His comment in **verse 7** about “G~D loves a cheerful giver” reminded me of our Torah portion concerning those “whose hearts are willing” who brought offerings for the Tabernacle.

Ivrit/Hebrews 9:1-14 “Earthly and Heavenly Sanctuaries” is the topic of these verses and they draw a comparison, not only of the places themselves but concerning the **cohen gadol/high priest**, as well. **Verse 4** indicates the Table of Incense is inside the Holy of Holies. However, it is my understanding the Table of Incense was just outside of the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (**Sh’mot/Exodus 40:26**). The only item in the Holy of Holies is the Ark for the Covenant. This leads one to question the writer of Hebrews. Was the author not aware of where the Tabernacle/Temple furniture was to be placed? Hmmm!!!!!!

It is my understanding when scripture was canonized there were three rules.

1. It was not supposed to contain personal commentary.
2. The authors were to be known.
3. The authors were to have been eyewitnesses.

Hmmmmmm!!! It is for these reasons I feel **Rav Sha’ul/Rabbi Paul** was NOT the author of the Book of Hebrews. After all, he was a Levite and would have known where the Temple furniture was placed.

Revelation 11:1-13 Well, we could spend our entire Torah Study time on these passages entitled “Two Witnesses”. Many books have been written concerning these verses, as well as many sermons preached. One of the most direct parallels is in **verses 3 & 4** where it

compares the two witnesses to the menorahs mentioned in both the Torah Portion and the Haftarah. Many, reading about the menorahs and the olive trees, say the two witnesses may not turn out to be individuals but the believers from the two Houses of Israel. The House of Judah and the House of Israel can be symbolized by the menorah and the olive tree. In addition, remember **Rav Sha'ul/Rabbi Paul** tells believers they are grafted into the citizenship of Israel (**Ephesians 2:11-12**). Obviously, if believers are still here during these 42 months (**Revelation 11:2**) then either the pre-trib rapture is a false doctrine or HaShem's witnesses didn't qualify for it.

The corresponding Psalm for this Torah portion is: Psalm 61

Next week's lesson: Parashah # 23

P'kudei ~ פְּקֻדֵי ~ Accounts

Torah: Sh'mot/Exodus 38:21 ~ 40:38

Haftarah: M'lakim Alef/1st Kings 7:40 ~ 8:21

B'rit Hadashah: Revelation 15:5-8

Shavuah tov (Have a good week)!!!

Who fills his mind with Torah clears it of fear and folly.

Rabbi Chanina Sgan HaKohanim