

Parashah # 22  
(Updated 3.1.08)

Vayak'hel ~ וַיַּקְהֵל ~ And he assembled

Torah: Sh'mot/Exodus 35:1 ~ 38:20  
Haftarah: M'lakhim Alef/1<sup>st</sup> Kings 7:13-50  
B'rit Hadashah: 2<sup>nd</sup> 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, as I settled in to begin my Parashah reading for today and I started reading, 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 was getting to see the **Mishkan/Tabernacle** actually being built! And besides, in the Torah of HaShem, there's always something new!

### CHAPTER 35

Shabbat is revisited once again (verses 1-3). Gosh, do you suppose HaShem is serious about keeping the Sabbath? This was just addressed last week as well as a couple of weeks before that. I don't want to sound like a broken record but apparently, HaShem felt it was necessary to bring it up again. **Moshe Rabbenu** (say Moe-sheh Rah-bay-nu)/**Moses our Teacher** exhorts **B'nei Israel/Sons of Israel** to keep the **Sabbath/Shabbat** and not to build the **Mishkan / Tabernacle** on that day. Regardless of the importance of the **Mishkan/Tabernacle**, it could not be built on the Sabbath because the day that testifies to the existence of God 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 **mo'ed**, Hebrew for **appointed time** that we learn about. We learned about it through HaShem's example in **B'reshheet/Genesis 2:2-3**. Additionally, it is the most important of all (say moe-eh-deem) **moedim, appointed times**, because it is the only ritual observance listed in the **Decalogue/Ten Commandments** and is considered more important than **Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement**, because it comes each week and gives more opportunities to read Torah and 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 that is different from every other day of the week and 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  
Luke 4:16  
Acts 13:14, 42  
Acts 17:1, 2

Mattityahu/Matthew 12:1-21  
Yochanan/John 5:1-9  
Acts 16:13  
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 my Brother Lynn stated . . . Shabbat: a day when we ask God for nothing and thank Him for everything.

For the last several years, as I have become more and more Torah observant, I have felt very strongly about observing Shabbat. Each year as this has been repeated I kept thinking there is more to this, there just has to be more to this. A few years ago, I became frustrated (G~D 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 material from First Fruits of Zion, I feel better concerning some of my feelings. We know that 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; they already observed it but he reminded them of it the first thing after he had assembled them.

So when Yeshua returns, what do you suppose will be the very first thing He addresses as soon as He assembles the people in Jerusalem? I believe He will reinstate Sabbath worship and it will be a day sanctified and set apart as holy. No longer will the tradition of man reign supreme but the tradition of the Holy One of Israel will be reinstated!!!

In **verse 3**, "You shall not kindle a fire" refers to the work required to do so; the gathering of wood, 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 clear and **easy to follow** just 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 of the week. For those who are not Torah observant, 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 of the week, Sunday, as their day of rest, they allot approximately two hours to the L~RD and then they are off to the local restaurant, shopping, 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 of mine made a copy of a book cover and one of the pages from it. The book, "Natural Cures "They" Don't Want You to Know About, apparently lists several natural cures for ones body. I have no idea who the author is 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 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment?????

In His Torah, our Father has specified the appropriate times that He wants to meet with us, His people. If we want to meet with Him and have Him bless us, then 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 that detail will result in Him blessing us. I don't know about you, but I want to live in His blessings.

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 need to remember the conditions **B'nei Israel/the Children of Israel** were under in Egypt. There were no Jewish artisans, since the Egyptians did not train them or permit them to develop their talent for the finer skills. However, there were unskilled Jews who had natural ability and they were inspired and uplifted to volunteer for what needed to be done, confident that their G~D would help them to 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 **verses 3-7** that the **t'rumah (voluntary giving with a willing heart)** was so great that 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 that problem! And I could go on and on about that but I won't!) In their zeal to have a share in the construction, the people continued to bring their gifts to Moshe, who then had it transferred to the work site. After several days, the artisans informed Moshe that there was more than enough, so Moshe called a halt to the contributions. This is quite 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. And, Moshe, unlike typical rulers and some mega-church pastors, was not interested in amassing huge treasuries that would be at his disposal.

As a side note . . . some people say you need to "give till it hurts." Don't you believe it! G~D doesn't want gifts given in pain. He wants gifts given in joy! In fact, those are the only kinds of gifts that please Him. The concept of "giving till it hurts" didn't come from G~D. He would rather you give \$10 with joy than \$20 grudgingly. In **2 Corinthians 8:11-12**, the Rav Sha'ul urges the church in Corinth to give with eager willingness. Eager willingness; that's 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 that Believers were to pay the national taxes of the governments that ruled them. This is read in His “render unto Caesar” teaching.

Voluntary giving in the **Brit Hadashah** can be underscored in **2<sup>nd</sup> 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 compulsory for G~D loves a cheerful giver”. To me that echoes what Moshe told **Bnei Israel** in the wilderness.

**An interesting note!** In my studies, I couldn’t find where the Brit Hadashah teaches that 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 that when we give to Him with all our hearts. **HOW** a person gives may be more important than **WHAT** a person gives.

## 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 G~D’s teachings.
- There is a Table that reflects man’s struggle to sustain his physical being by fighting for his daily bread.
- There is a Menorah that reflects man’s obligation to spread the light of Torah beyond himself.
- There is the Ark that is in the Holy of Holies which radiates its holiness to the Table and Menorah and through them to the entire world.

A couple of years ago, I “saw” or “read” something that had escaped me prior to that time. In **verse 3**, it says that 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 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 took our sins away. 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 that I can find that 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 that 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 some interesting commentary concerning the Laver which was a very large copper basin in the Courtyard where the **Kohanim/Priests** were required to wash their hands and feet before performing their service. We are told very specifically that the Laver was made from the mirrors of the many women. Actually, these mirrors were brightly polished sheets of copper. It is told that 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 Jewish children were born. HaShem said that 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 that every single mirror had to go into it, no matter how big it would become. The Laver was unique in that 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. To me, 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 that **B'tzal'el** meant "**in the shadow of G~D's protection**" and that **Oholi'av** meant "**tent of my father**".

**Vayak'hel ~ ויקהל ~ And he assembled**  
**Haftarah: M'lakhim Alef/1<sup>st</sup> 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 that they were more beautiful and greater in number than those made for the Tabernacle.

I noticed that there are three things mentioned here that were not found in the Tabernacle account.

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

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

- Yachin (say 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 that the basis of Jewish life is the glow of the Torah, which is symbolized by the Menorah.
- Boaz (say 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 that 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 ~ ויקהל ~ And he assembled**  
**B'rit Hadashah: 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 9:1-15; Ivrit/Hebrews 9:1-14; Revelation 11:1-13**

**2<sup>nd</sup> 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, in which Rabbi Sha’ul verbally draws a comparison, not only of the places themselves but concerning the ***cohen gadol/high priest***, as well.

**Revelation 11:1-13** Well, we could spend our entire two hour 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 two menorahs mentioned in both the Torah Portion and the Haftarah.

***The corresponding Psalm for this Torah portion is: Psalm 61***