

# O H R N E T

SHABBAT PARSHAT VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI · 27 ADAR 5773 - MAR. 9, 2013 · VOL. 20 NO. 23

## PARSHA INSIGHTS

### THE ULTIMATE LABOR SAVER

*“Six days shall labor be done, and the seventh day will be for you holy...” (35:2)*

**F**or as long as I can remember, one of society’s most cherished dreams has been a robot that gets all your work done for you.

In the late fifties we were regaled with fanciful concoctions of tin cans that looked like Tin-Man-rejects from “The Wizard of Oz”, complete with the apron and a happy mechanical smile. In the sixties, wacky inventors produced little motorized “home-puppies” that scooted around cleaning the carpet and swept the floors. Nowadays robotics has reached amazing levels. Watching a car being assembled today is an eerie experience with nary a human in sight. (Except of course to execute the mandatory strike for shorter hours and better working conditions.)

I want to let you into a secret. The “Ultimate Labor Savor” has been in existence for over three thousand years. The trouble is that many people don’t know how to operate it.

*“Six days shall labor be done, and the seventh day will be*

*for you holy...”*

The grammar of this verse is unusual. The Torah doesn’t say you can do labor for six days, rather it expresses itself in the passive, “*labor shall be done.*”

When we keep Shabbat, G-d’s blessings rest on all our workday efforts. If you’re a creative writer for an ad agency, suddenly you’ll find a brilliant new concept that just wafts into your consciousness from out of nowhere on Tuesday morning. If you’re a cabinetmaker, all the mortises that you cut are a perfect fit. If you’re a pilot, you’ll find that there’s a break in the weather allowing you a landing-window at your destination, avoiding a three-hour delay and a few hundred irate passengers. The list is as endless as the activities of man. When we keep Shabbat properly, even if you don’t overly exert ourselves, we will find that things just seem to get done, that little bit quicker and better.

Shabbat is the Ultimate Labor Saver.

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## PARSHA OVERVIEW

### Vayakhel

**M**oshe Rabbeinu exhorts *Bnei Yisrael* to keep Shabbat, and requests donations for the materials for making the Mishkan. He collects gold, silver, precious stones, skins and yarn, as well as incense and olive oil for the *menorah* and for anointing. The princes of each tribe bring the precious stones for the *Kohen Gadol's* breastplate and *ephod*. G-d appoints Bezalel and Oholiav as the master craftsmen. *Bnei Yisrael* contribute so much that Moshe begins to refuse donations. Special curtains with two different covers were designed for the Mishkan's roof and door. Gold-covered boards in silver bases were connected, forming the Mishkan's walls. Bezalel made the Holy Ark (which contained the Tablets) from wood covered with gold. On the Ark's cover were two figures facing each other. The menorah and the table with the show-breads were also of gold. Two altars were made: a small incense altar of wood overlaid with gold, and a larger altar for sacrifices made of wood covered with copper.

### Pekudei

**T**he Book of Shmot concludes with this Parsha. After finishing all the different parts, vessels and garments used in the Mishkan, Moshe gives a complete accounting and enumeration of all the contributions and of the various clothing and vessels which had been fashioned. *Bnei Yisrael* bring everything to Moshe. He inspects the handiwork and notes that everything was made according to G-d's specifications. Moshe blesses the people. G-d speaks to Moshe and tells him that the Mishkan should be set up on the first day of the first month, i.e., Nissan. He also tells Moshe the order of assembly for the Mishkan and its vessels. Moshe does everything in the prescribed manner. When the Mishkan is finally complete with every vessel in its place, a cloud descends upon it, indicating that G-d's glory was resting there. Whenever the cloud moved away from the Mishkan, *Bnei Yisrael* would follow it. At night the cloud was replaced by a pillar of fire.

## LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

## THREE VERSIONS OF A NAME

**W**hat Jews in Israel call Shechem, the Arabs call Nablus. There are three versions for the source of this name:

### NEAPOLIS

When the Romans built a new city next to the site of ancient Shechem they named it Neapolis, Latin for "new city". The Arabs corrupted its pronunciation into Nablus.

### NEVALAH

When the sons of Yaakov took up arms against the resi-

dents of Shechem, it was because a *nevalah* — an outrage — had been committed against their sister Dinah.



### NAB LUS

The Arab tradition is that this name is a combination of two Arabic words Nab (tooth) and Lus (snake). Their legend speaks of a giant snake in the vicinity of Shechem named Lus that was slain and its teeth were placed on the gates of Shechem. Those who entered the city would look at those teeth and exclaim "they are the Nab of Lus".

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## PARSHA Q&A ?

### Vayakhel

1. On which day did Moshe assemble the Jewish People?
2. Why is the prohibition against doing work on Shabbat written prior to the instruction for building the Mishkan?
3. Why does the Torah specify the particular prohibition of lighting a fire on Shabbat right after it had already noted the general prohibition of doing work on Shabbat?
4. What function did the "yitdot hamishkan" serve?
5. What function did the "bigdei hasrad" serve?
6. What was unusual about the way the women spun the goat's hair?
7. Why were the *Nesi'im* last to contribute to the building of the Mishkan? How does the Torah show dissatisfaction with their actions?
8. Who does the Torah identify as the primary builders of the Mishkan? From which tribes were they?
9. What time of day did the people bring their daily contributions for the construction of the Mishkan?

10. For what was the woven goat's hair used?

### Pekudei

11. What did the *Kohen Gadol* wear between the *mitznefet* and the *tzitzit*?
12. What role did Moshe play in the construction of the Mishkan?
13. Which date was the first time that the Mishkan was erected and not dismantled?
14. What was the "tent" which Moshe spread over the Mishkan (40:19)?
15. What "testimony" did Moshe place in the *aron*?
16. What function did the *parochet* serve?
17. Where was the *shulchan* placed in the Mishkan?
18. Where was the *menorah* placed in the Mishkan?
19. Who offered the communal sacrifices during the eight days of the dedication of the Mishkan?
20. On which day did both Moshe and Aharon serve as *kohanim*?

## PARSHA Q&A!

### Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary unless otherwise stated.

### Vayakhel

1. 35:1 - The day after *Yom Kippur*.
2. 35:2 - To emphasize that the building of the Mishkan doesn't supersede the laws of Shabbat.
3. 35:3 - There are two opinions: One opinion is to teach that igniting a fire on Shabbat is punishable by lashes as opposed to other "melachot" which are punishable by death. The other opinion is to teach that violation of numerous "melachot" at one time requires a separate atonement for each violation.
4. 35:18 - The edges of the curtains were fastened to them. These were inserted in the ground so the curtains would not move in the wind.
5. 35:19 - They covered the *aron*, the *shulchan*, the *menorah*, and the *mizbachot* when they were packed for transport.
6. 35:26 - It was spun directly from off the backs of the goats.
7. 35:27 - The *Nesi'im* reasoned that they would first let the people contribute materials needed for the Mishkan and then they would contribute what was lacking. The Torah shows its dissatisfaction by deleting a letter from their title.

8. 35:30, 35:34 - Bezalel ben Uri from the tribe of Yehuda; Oholiav ben Achisamach from the tribe of Dan.
9. 36:3 - Morning.
10. 36:14 - It was made into curtains to be draped over the Mishkan

### Pekudei

11. 39:31 - *Tefillin*.
12. 39:33 - He stood it up.
13. 40:17 - *Rosh Chodesh Nissan* of the second year in the desert. For seven days before this, during the consecration of Aharon and his sons, Moshe erected and dismantled the Mishkan. (*Rashi* 39:29)
14. 40:19 - The curtain of goatskin.
15. 40:20 - The *Luchot Habrit*.
16. 40:21 - It served as a partition for the *aron*.
17. 40:22 - On the northern side of the *Ohel Mo'ed*, outside the *parochet*.
18. 40:24 - On the southern side of the *Ohel Mo'ed* opposite the *shulchan*.
19. 40:29 - Moshe.
20. 40:31 - On the eighth day of the consecration of the Mishkan.

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## ERUVIN 2 - 8

“One who follows the stringencies of Beit Shammai and also the stringencies of Beit Hillel is described by the verse ‘and a fool goes in the darkness’ (Kohelet 2:14).”

Why is he called a fool and not pious for being strict, as taught in the above *beraita* in our *gemara*? Rashi (*Eruvin 7a* and *Rosh Hashana 14b*) offers an answer. The *beraita* is speaking about one argument based on one reason that has two halachic consequences: one lenient and one strict. A person who is strict in both *halachot* is a “fool” since he is contradicting himself by not showing consistency in following one reason throughout, and by not knowing to distinguish which reason is correct.

• *Eruvin 6b*

“Be careful in your work as a scribe, since your work is work of Heaven; perhaps you will omit a letter or add a letter and result in the destruction of the world.”

Rabbi Yishmael gave this advice to Rabbi Akiva on the importance of copying the Written Torah with utmost care. What is the “destruction” referred to by Rabbi Yishmael in omitting or adding a letter? Failing to write the letter *aleph* in “and the Lord G-d is true (*emet*)” would leave “*met*” meaning “dead”, and adding a *vav* onto the words “And G-d spoke” would turn the verb “spoke” into the plural form — implying two deities (Rashi).

• *Eruvin 13a*

@ OHR *Profiles of Ohr Somayach Alumni and Students*

written by Daniel Keebler

**Benjamin Cohen Age: 21**  
**Columbus, Ohio**  
**Columbia College, Chicago**  
**Major: Post Production Film**  
**JLE Israel Experience Student**

Ben Cohen describes himself as “conservative” and points to his grandfather, a holocaust survivor, as his spiritual inspiration. Ben is president of his campus’ Israel group, vice president of Hillel, and vice president of communications for student government. You might say he is also VP of Israel trips, having been on so many before. What made the JLE Israel Experience different from the rest? Ben says



that other Israel programs fixate on Israel politics, whereas JLE taught Judaism’s perspective on the Jewish people and their homeland.

Learning *gemara* with the JLE mentors tops his list of trip highlights. He says that meeting “these very successful people who still manage to study Torah” despite their busy schedules shattered his stereotype of devoutly Orthodox Jews being stone-age hermits. Besides the priceless aspects of the trip — great friends and terrific rabbis — Ben says JLE had “great food, great hotels, and great trips.” This post-production film major intends to re-edit his routine in life to include meeting with his local mentor every month, making 100 *berachot* a day, and setting his Jewish theme as “always strive to do more.”

## JEW-RUSALEM

**From: Bart**

*Dear Rabbi,  
Jerusalem isn't mentioned in Islam's "Koran," but I don't think it's mentioned in the Five Books of Moses either. I've heard it argued that the Koran's omission of Jerusalem shows a lack of connection between Islam and Jerusalem, but can't the same be said of Judaism?*

Dear Bart,

Jerusalem is mentioned many hundreds of times in the Jewish Bible. As for the Chumash (Five Books of Moses), it is true that the exact word "Jerusalem" does not appear there. Most simply, this is because it was not yet called Jerusalem, and it had not yet been revealed as G-d's chosen city.

Under Jebusite rule and earlier, Jerusalem was divided into two cities, the western part called Jeru (Yere) and the eastern part called Salem (Shalem). Both of these names do appear in the Five Books: "And Malki-Tzedek, King of Shalem" (Genesis 14:18). "And Abraham called that place...Yere" (Genesis 21:14).

Around the time of Joshua's conquest, the Amorites consolidated the two halves of the city, and they combined the two names: Jeru-salem. From this point on in history, our Bible refers to Jerusalem countless times.

Furthermore, the Chumash refers 19 times to "the place that G-d will choose" as the center for Jewish life and religion (e.g. Deuteronomy 12:11, 14, etc.). The Prophets Samuel and Gad finally reveal to King David that this chosen place is Jerusalem and the Temple Mount.

So these are two reasons Jerusalem isn't mentioned explicitly in the Chumash as the holy city: It hadn't yet been called that; and it hadn't yet been revealed as such.

Maimonides, writing around 800 years ago, offers three reasons that the Chumash does not explicitly reveal the identity of the holy city:

1. If the nations had learned that this place would express the highest Jewish ideals, they would have united in an effort to occupy and prevent the Jews from ever controlling it. (Sound familiar?)

2. If they had known of Jerusalem's special spiritual stature, they may have tried to take advantage of its spiritual nature by making it into a center of idol worship.

3. Each of the twelve tribes would have desired to have Jerusalem in their borders, and this would lead to disunity.

Once the Jews had conquered and divided the land, the above ceased to be considerations.

So, in conclusion, Jerusalem played a prominent part in Jewish history and writings more than two thousand years before Islam's rise and the writing of the Koran, which makes no mention of Jerusalem, despite the fact that by then it had certainly become known as the holy city of the Jews.

• Sources: *Jerusalem, Eye of the Universe*,  
by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan

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### MAKE-BELIEVE ANGER

**Question:**

I am aware of the danger of losing one's temper and I try my best to avoid doing so. But I find it difficult to discipline my children when they get out of hand without demonstrating how upset I am with their behavior. What is the right thing to do?

**Answer:**

Your dilemma has already been dealt with by our Talmudic Sages (*Mesechta Shabbat 105b*).

Rabbi Yochanan ben Nuri is quoted as comparing one who breaks things or disposes of his money in anger to an idol worshipper. (A classic example of such behavior was recently provided in Israel by a man who became so

incensed with a member of his family that he took three million shekels of the family savings and set them afire.) If the purpose of such a demonstration of anger is to impress upon the members of one's household how strongly he objects to their behavior, it is permissible to even do some nominal breakage.

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, in his classic *Mesillat Yesharim*, points out that even while the Sages mentioned in the *gemara* were demonstrating their anger, it was only a show, for in their hearts there was no anger. This should be the guideline for you in disciplining your children. Learn to show anger but make sure that you are calm inside because real anger can cause you to lose control and act in a counterproductive way.

## THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE STORY

### IN SEARCH OF A KNIFE

“A holocaust survivor with a sense of mission.” This is the capsule description of the late Moshe Dovid Reisner who settled in Bnei Brak after World War Two.

Many stories have been told of his heroic behavior in a Nazi concentration camp. No sooner was he released than he began performing circumcisions as the only *mohel* in the Bohemian region of Czechoslovakia.

Once, upon arriving in one of the area cities to perform a *brit*, he discovered that he had left his knife at home. Hours

passed during a fruitless search for a knife, since life had not yet returned to that liberated community and all the shops were closed. Reisner then came up with a bold idea. He went to the local police station and asked the non-Jewish officers to break open one of the shops where a suitable knife might be found. To everyone's surprise the police agreed to do so, a proper knife was indeed located and the *brit* performed.

Needless to say, the shop owner was subsequently informed and compensated.

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