

# Snapshot Torah



**GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA**  
**ISSUE 22**

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**VAYAKHEL**

**22<sup>nd</sup> Adar 5774**

**Kohen - First Aliya:**

**Chapter 35, verses 1 - 20**

- ✚ Moshe assembles B'nai Yisrael together to warn them that they must not work on the Shabbat.
- ✚ He explains to them that lighting fires on Shabbat is also forbidden.
- ✚ Moshe then reiterates the purpose of the Mishkan, and the donated materials required to build it.
- ✚ Moshe also emphasised that he would like skilled workers to come forward and volunteer their services to either assist with the Mishkan's construction or help sew and weave all the garments required, to be worn by Aaron and his sons whilst they are performing their duties.

**Levi - Second Aliya:**

**Chapter 35, verses 21 - 29**

- ✚ Inspired by Moshe's motivating speech, the men and women came to him willingly, handing over their gold and silver jewellery in abundance, along with all the other necessary materials needed for the construction.
- ✚ The leaders of the tribes provided the precious stones required to be set into the Ephod (apron) and the Hoshen (Breast Plate)

**Sh'lishi - Third Aliya:**

**Chapter 35, verse 30- Chapter 31, verse 7**

- ✚ Moshe informs B'nai Yisrael that Hashem has chosen Betzalel as the chief architect, and that Oholiav will be his assistant.
- ✚ B'nai Yisrael had donated so much gold, silver, copper and other materials that Moshe has to step in, to politely ask them to stop giving.

**R'VI' - Fourth Aliya:**

**Chapter 31, verses 8 - 20**

- ✚ The construction of the Mishkan began with the curtains. These were made from linen, entwined with turquoise, purple and scarlet wool.
- ✚ Each curtain was twenty eight cubits long and four cubits in width.
- ✚ Eleven extra curtains made from goats hair, measuring thirty cubits in length and 4 cubits wide, to form a tent which will surround the Mishkan.

**Chamishi - Fifth Aliya:**

**Chapter 31, verse 21 - Chapter 32, verse 16**

- ✚ The K'rashim (Planks of wood with Tenon's covered in gold, with silver sockets attached), along with the Parochet (woven partition walls) and the screen covering the entrance were made next.
- ✚ Betzalel commenced work, constructing the Aron (Ark), the Aron's lid with the two carved K'ruvim and the Shulhan (Table).

**Shishi - Sixth Aliya:**

**Chapter 32, verses 17 - 29**

- ✚ Betzalel then hammered out the seven branched menorah from one block of pure solid gold; Followed by the wooden altar covered in gold for which the incense will be burned upon.

**Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya:**

**Chapter 33, verses 1 - 20**

- ✚ Finally the Mizbayah (altar), all the copper vessels, the laced hangings attached to wooden poles making up the courtyard and the embroidered screen covering the entrance gate were completed.

## Haftorah –

1<sup>st</sup> BOOK OF KINGS Chapter 7 verses 40 to 50

### OVERVIEW:

- ✚ Shlomo Ha Melech (King Solomon) employed Hiram, an expert coppersmith, to create copper columns to flank the largest doorway of the Beis Ha Mikdash (The Temple).
- ✚ Each column were to be eighteen cubits (approx. 30 feet) high and were topped by two capitals which were intricately carved with pomegranates and palm leaves
- ✚ Hiram also built a copper Mikvah (basin) which stood upon twelve oxen, facing all the primary directions on a compass. (North, South East and West). This was to be used by the Kohanim before carrying out their duties in the Beis Ha Mikdash.

### LINK TO SEDRA READING:

- ✚ The Sedra mainly deals with the actual building of the Mishkan, whereas the Haftorah is relating to the Final construction of the 1<sup>st</sup> Beis Ha Mikdash.

### WEEKLY DISCUSSION: Betzalel – The Man with the Midas touch!

Midrashim tell us that Moshe was having a hard time with the specifications on how to construct the Mishkan and some of its contents, most significantly how the menorah could have been crafted from just one block of gold. Hashem comforts him by telling not to worry because he has bestowed all the necessary wisdom for the task that lies ahead to Betzalel, who Hashem, personally appointed to be the Mishkan's chief engineer.

Who was this Betzalel and why did he deserve such an accolade as this?

Firstly, Betzalel was connected by family to all the major characters in the Torah and Tanach. The Torah tells us that he was a direct descendant from Yehuda but his genealogy does not stop there. You have Hezron, Yehuda's grandson who was one of the seventy people who went down into Mitzraim with Yaacov. Next you have Nachshon ben Amminadab, an ancestor of Hezron's whom the Midrash tells us was the only one who had the emunah (faith in Hashem) to enter the Reed Sea before it even split, making it safe to cross; And because of that act, as mentioned in the book of Ruth, Nachshon's descendants, eventually lead to Dovid Ha Melech (King David.)

Then you also have the link, connecting him to Caleb who was one of the two spies who brought positive reports about the land of Israel. Caleb ultimately also became the only person apart from Joshua who made the complete journey from Mitzraim to Israel and was able to settle there.

Besides this great Lineage of people, Betzalel had his own merits too. Even though he had just recently completed his apprenticeship, he was already a well accomplished and versatile craftsman who was skilled in every kind of workmanship. Whether it was Carpentry, stone masonry, textiles or working as a Gold / Silver Smith, etc.; He excelled in them all. Apart from this though, Betzalel also had the unique gift of being able to motivate his fellow co-workers and had the ability to translate and simplify even the most complex instructions into ways that they would understand and carry out to the letter.

The Mishkan and all of its components was a very difficult structure to put together with all of its intricacies and minute details. Yet Betzalel was not only able to keep track and organize the entire construction, within its original budget of what was donated and without one single mishap occurring; but every one of the hundreds of parts required, fitted together perfectly, the first time of asking with no alterations required. Not only that, it was built to last. The original altar was durable enough, lasting hundreds of years, as it became the same altar Shlomo Ha Melech used in the first Beis Ha Mikdash.

What Engineer could claim such a thing today? One project, built on time, under / on budget, and 100% correct. Not many. I imagine. In short Betzalel was the greatest production manager / engineer ever and truly deserved to have had the privilege of carrying Hashem's wisdom and spirit inside of him.

