

Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHAH

ISSUE 19

21st February 2014

TERUMAH

2nd Adar 5775

Kohen - First Aliya:

Chapter 25, verses 1 - 16

- ✚ Moshe, acting on Hashem's instruction, asks Bnai Yisrael to donate willingly from the heart, all the materials required for the construction of a portable sanctuary/ tabernacle (the Mishkan).
- ✚ Hashem then relates to Moshe what vessels are also required to be made from the donations; along with all the sizes and dimensions that he would like them to be.
- ✚ The Aron (Ark) must be 2½ cubits long (1 cubit is approx. 2 feet), 1½ cubits wide and 1½ cubits high. It is to be made from wood, and covered, both inside and out with layers of gold.
- ✚ Also 4 rings made from gold should be fixed onto the corners so that 2 staves made from acacia wood, also covered in gold; can be slotted through, enabling the Aron to be carried.

Levi - Second Aliya:

Chapter 25, verses 17 - 40

- ✚ The Aron cover must be 2½ cubits long & 1½ cubits wide. It's to be made from a block of pure gold. Two K'ruvim (cherubs) are to be carved out on top, so that they are facing each other with their wings outstretched. This will be the place where Hashem will communicate to Moshe from, in the future.
- ✚ The Shulhan (Table) constructed from wood should be 2 cubits long, 1 cubit wide and 1½ cubits high. It is to be also covered with a layer of gold.
- ✚ 12 loaves of bread called Lechem Hapanim are to be placed on the Shulhan at all times.

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya:

Chapter 26, verses 1 - 14

- ✚ A Menorah (candelabrum) fabricated from one solid block of gold must have six branches which extend out from a seventh, primary branch.
- ✚ The Mishkan itself is to be surrounded by ten large tapestries that are then sewn together and attached to the K'rashim (wooden beams), using hooks to hold them in place.

R'VI' - Fourth Aliya:

Chapter 26, verses 15 - 30

- ✚ The walls of the Mishkan are made from planks of acacia wood, standing 10 cubits high and 1½ cubits in depth. These are joined and held together with sockets made from pure silver.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya:

Chapter 26, verses 31 - 37

- ✚ A Parochet (partition wall) using interwoven purple, turquoise and scarlet wool is made in order to divide up the Mishkan between the Kodesh (holy) section and the Kodesh Hakodashim (the holy of holies)

Shishi - Sixth Aliya:

Chapter 27, verses 1 - 8

- ✚ The Mizbayah (Altar) is made from a hollowed out slab of wood, measuring 5 cubits long, 5 cubits wide and 3 cubits tall. Horns are then carved out on each corner and then covered in a layer of copper.
- ✚ Next suitable vessels are required to be made so that the accumulated ash from the korbanos (Sacrifices) can be gathered up afterwards.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya:

Chapter 27, verses 9 - 19

- ✚ .Finally the Hatzer (the courtyard of the Mishkan) is to be enclosed with finely twined woven linen, 100 cubits long and 50 cubits wide. These are supported on pillars with bases made from copper.
- ✚ All the other additional equipment and vessels used for the Mishkan also must be formed from copper.

Haftorah – MELACHIM 1 (KINGS 1) Chapter 5, verse 26 – Chapter 6, verse 13

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ The Haftorah describes the construction of the first Bais Hamikdash four hundred and eighty years after leaving Egypt.
- ✚ Shlomo Hamelech (King Solomon), assembled the necessary materials and labourers to accomplish this monumental task.
- ✚ In total 30,000 men were conscripted into the labour force, along with 70,000 transporters and 80,000 stonecutters.

ILINK TO SEDRA READING:

- ✚ Parshas Terumah describes the Mishkan and everything that will be associated with it. In order to recognise Hashem's presence, Bnai Yisrael are asked to donate all the necessary materials for the construction so they will feel they have participated in this great event.
- ✚ The Mishkan was only a temporary building so now Bnai Israel have established themselves in the land of Israel, the Haftorah relates to the first Beis Hamikdash construction in order for Hashem to have a permanent structure to reside in.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION:

The Torah is usually is very cautious with words, however today's sedra goes to great lengths emphasizing and describing every detail of Mishkan's construction, Hashem told Moshe to create the tabernacle exactly the way He commanded and not to stray from Hashem's blueprint. I.e. all the materials used, exact measurements, even the finer details of how each component is made etc. Why?

Firstly, The Mishkan was more than just a dwelling place. All the components of the tabernacle were part of an intricate visual aid to illustrate Hashem's relationship with Bnai Yisrael. One aspect of this relationship was Hashem's requirement for complete obedience.

After the events of the Heter Eigel (Golden Calf), Hashem realized that the People needed a form of visual evidence of His presence. The act of disobedience relating to the calf demonstrated the need to follow and worship a God who was visually tangible. Hashem's provision of the Mishkan not only allowed the people to sense His divine presence, but also to see their leader (Moshe) go in to meet with him in a concrete place and not disappear up a mountain.

To this end, Hashem gave very specific instructions about the size of each component and the materials required to build it. These seemingly cumbersome rules were not intended to burden the people, but to show Hashem's unquestionable authority and holiness. They had to obey reverently not only in the construction of the Mishkan, but also in the way they worshipped. Any irreverence or ritual uncleanness could result from an individual being cut off from his nation or even death.

I think that this is part of the Torah's unending emphasis on the importance of detail, of the small things in life that lead to the makeup of the greater whole. All of Jewish life and ritual is composed of myriad details. The Mishkan/Tabernacle serves only as an example - a physical building constructed with strict attention to great detail - for the even more delicate spiritual structure that we are trying to erect and make tangible in all our lives today. In order to emphasize the necessity for the devotion to detail in constructing our spiritual lives, the Torah was purposely heavy on detail in describing the physical appearance and construction of the Mishkan.

To summarise The Mishkan therefore teaches us the lesson of the inherent gain and worth of love's labour and of the necessary intense desire to be Jewish in the fullest sense of that word. I cannot think of a better incentive than that and I pray that all of us will see it in that light too.

