

## Haftarah Weekly

This week's Haftarah is read from M'lachim Aleph (5:26 – 6:13)

The Rambam writes in the first Halochah of Hilchos M'lachim that the B'nei Yisroel were commanded to do three things on entering the land of Israel. One of these was to 'build the House Chosen by G-d', as it says (Devorim 12:5) "Seek the Place that (He has chosen as) His 'Home' and go there."

This week's haftarah contains the grand plan for the construction of the first Beis Hamikdosh which was to be located permanently in Yerushalayim. It is important to note that the haftarah continues with a strong warning which seems to have foreshadowed many of the great tragedies of the Jewish People. The warning being that the Temple, in all its magnificence, will be allowed to stand **if and only if** the Kings of Israel will lead their People in observing all the commandments of the Torah.

The haftarah begins with Hashem granting the request of Shlomo. He had earlier offered Shlomo whatever he wanted (M'lachim Aleph 3:5), and Shlomo had asked for wisdom. As a result Shlomo was blessed with wisdom as well as the other things Hashem had offered him! The very same passuk continues with the fact that Shlomo made a peace covenant with Chiram King of Tzur. Chiram would provide the magnificent cypress and cedars of Lebanon for the Temple, and Shlomo would provide Chiram with tremendous quantities of wheat and oil. The remainder of the haftarah outlines the various technical and architectural conditions of the Beis Hamikdosh. Included in this list is the number of workers and supervisors. In this week's parshah, the Jewish People construct the *Mishkan*, the portable Temple, which moved from place to place with the People in the desert, and after their initial entry into the Land of Israel, served as a place for the Divine Presence to reside. The Beis Hamikdosh on the other hand was to be a permanent resting place for the Divine Presence, in Yerushalayim. Indeed there are many contrasts between the Beis Hamikdosh and the Mishkon in terms of purpose and design.

The construction of the Mishkon was the fulfilment of the Divine Command "And let them make for Me a Temple, that I may reside among them," (Shemos 25:8) but it was also a tremendous act of Teshuvah – repentance - for the sin of worshipping the Golden Calf. The Ramban explains that this act of building the Mishkon helped restore the Jewish People to the level of the "Avos," the forefathers of the Jewish people, with whom the Divine Presence was never a stranger. Whereas, the construction of the Temple was simply the fulfilment of the Divine Command mentioned above. Hence, the generous spirit associated with the Mishkon's construction is unfortunately lacking. For the Mishkon, all the materials and labour required for the construction were donated by the Jewish People. However, in the haftarah, almost all of the structural material required was obtained from Chiram, although the labour was taxed from the Jewish People.

Both the Mishkon and the Beis Hamikdosh were extremely holy. Furthermore, they both had an inner chamber of utmost holiness which could only be entered on Yom Kippur by the Kohen Gadol. In the Mishkon, this room was known as the Kodesh HaKodoshim. In the Beis Hamikdosh, this room was called the D'vir. In terms of overall Kedushah, the Mishkon was holier than the first Beis Hamikdosh and the first Beis Hamikdosh was holier than the second. However, the third Temple in *Y'mos HaMoshiach* will exceed all the others in spirituality. Dimensionally, the proportions of the First Temple far exceeded the corresponding proportions of the Mishkon.

Each had three basic parts, serving equivalent functions: we have already mentioned the corresponding Kodesh HaKodoshim and D'vir. The 'Kodesh' in the Mishkon, contained the 'Shulchon', the 'Menorah', and the 'Mizbach HaZahav'. This corresponded to the 'Heichal,' – 'Palace' -in the Temple, in which Shlomo had ten Shulchonos and ten Menoros. The 'Chatzer' - courtyard, in the Mishkon, that hosted the 'Mizbach HaN'choshes' – copper altar, for animal and grain sacrifices, and the 'Kiyor' - the basin, corresponded to the 'Ulam' - the hall, in the Temple.

*Adapted from ou.org*

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## The Depth of the Torah

"וצפית אותו זהב טהור מבית ומחוץ תצפנו" - *"You shall cover it with pure gold"* [Shemos 25:11]

It happened once that R' Chaim Volozhin came in to his Rebbe, the Vilna Gaon, and asked him a complex question on the Zohar. In place of an answer, the Gaon said the following Dvar Torah: Rashi on this passuk tells us that בצלאל was commanded to make the ארון as three boxes: a wooden box, which was placed inside a large golden box, and a small golden box was placed inside the wooden box. The order in which Rashi describes the order of placing the boxes is logical. Nevertheless, our passuk implies that the small golden box was placed in the wooden box first, and both of these were then placed in the larger golden box. This is clear as the passuk says: "מבית" – firstly coat the wooden box from the inside (by placing the small golden box inside it), and then "ומחוץ" – coat it from outside, by placing them both in a big golden box. Surely, this order is less logical, as it is more difficult to pick up the wood and small golden box, and place them into the large golden box, than to put the wooden box into the large golden box, and then place the small golden box into that?

The Vilna Gaon therefore explained that the words in the passuk of "מבית ומחוץ" are not going on the wooden box, but rather are speaking from the perspective of the gold boxes. It is therefore saying "מבית" – that you should cover

the inside of the big box; and "ומחוץ" – the outside of the small gold box – with the wooden box. Why does the Torah, describe the positioning of the boxes of the ארון in this way?

The wood in the ארון is a reference to Man, as the passuk in (Devarim 20:19) says: "כי האדם עץ השדה" – "Man is like the tree/wood of the field". The two golden boxes refer to the two types of Torah, (the Torah, is often compared to gold): the outer box is the revealed Torah, and the hidden Kabbalistic Torah, is symbolized by the inner box.

The message of our passuk is therefore that for the תורת נגלה – the revealed Torah, one can go into as much depth as he likes – for even the inside of the outer golden box covered the wood. However, for the תורת נסתר – the hidden Torah, one cannot go to the full depth, one may only learn it in a more superficial manner, the "outer surface". Therefore, it is the outside of the smaller inner box, which covers the wooden box.

With this, the Vilna Gaon concluded his answer to his תלמיד – for when it comes to the תורת נסתר – such as Zohar, one may not go too deep. The Vilna Gaon therefore declined to answer R' Chaim Volozhin's question.

[פנינים משלחן הגר"א]

*Written by GDW*

## Gematria of the Week

Hashem commands Moshe to make the Shulchon (Table) out of gold and continues to say that he should cover it with a gold crown – זהב. The Gematria of זהב is 14 which is equivalent to that of דוד. The Gemoro in Yoma 72b explains that Dovid . merited to the 'Crown of Kings.' Due to the merit of the Shulchon, the B'nei Yisroel enjoyed prosperity. So too, it is the responsibility of a king to ensure the prosperity and continuity of his country. For this reason a strong connection is forged between the crown of the Shulchon and the crown of kingship. Indeed, in Gemoro B'rochos 3b, Dovid Hamelech is told that the B'nei Yisroel need a livelihood. Dovid replies that everyone should employ other Jews so that everyone becomes self sufficient (an alternative explanation is that the rich should provide for the poor). Regardless of the interpretation, this highlights the fact that it is the responsibility of kings such as Dovid to look after the welfare of their people.

## Words of the Wise

A rabbi once told the following parable: Around the turn of the twentieth century, Vladimir, an illiterate and unworldly Siberian peasant struck it rich. One day he was offered a very lucrative business proposition. Closing the deal, however, required his presence in Moscow.

He was pretty sure that a horse -- even the sturdiest his village had to offer -- would not be able to make the trip of several thousand kilometres. Some of the more sophisticated residents of the town came to his rescue, advising him about the existence of a new mode of transportation -- the "train." If he were to travel to Novosibirsk, the closest large city, he would be able to catch a train to Moscow.

Thus one fine day found Vladimir in the central train station of Novosibirsk. When he informed the lady behind the ticket counter of his intended destination, she asked him what sort of ticket he wished to purchase. Observing his confusion, she told him that he could purchase a first, second, or third class ticket. A third class ticket, she explained, offered absolutely no amenities, and didn't even guarantee a spot on the train. If the arriving train was already filled to capacity, he would have to wait for the next one. A second class ticket offered a greater chance of a spot on the train, along with more comfortable accommodations. A first class ticket came with a guaranteed seat with all amenities necessary to ensure a luxurious and comfortable journey.

Money was hardly an issue, so first class it would be. The ticket lady explained to Vladimir that the ticket was non-refundable, and should be guarded carefully. Vladimir heeded her advice and tucked his ticket beneath the many layers of clothing he was wearing.

As it turned out, the train would not arrive for another few days. Vladimir noted the date and time of its anticipated arrival, arranged for lodgings in the interim, and arrived back at the station two hours early, since this was his first time attempting such a journey. He decided to just follow the flow, assuming that he would be fine as long as he copied exactly what his fellow travellers were doing.

The train arrived. After his initial shock at seeing such a monstrously large caravan of cars, Vladimir regained his composure and scanned the terminal. As it was early, most of the passengers had not yet arrived, but he noticed three passengers boarding the very last car on the train. He followed them into the car, and when each one climbed beneath one of the benches in the car, he did the same. Unfortunately, he wasn't fully familiar with proper stowaway protocol, and his feet jutted out across the aisle of the third class car.

It was dark and lonely beneath the bench, and Vladimir quickly dozed off. However he awoke to a sharp kick to his shins and the startled peasant was expertly hoisted out by the burly conductor.

"You moron, you think this is a free ride?" he bellowed. "You need a ticket to ride this train!"

"What's the problem, sir," Vladimir meekly responded. "I have a ticket."

The fellow travellers on the train car burst out laughing at this ludicrous claim. Their laughter only intensified when he started peeling off layer after layer of clothing, starting with his expensive fur coat and ending with his undergarments. But much to their astonishment he pulled out a ticket - a first class ticket no less!

After verifying that the ticket was indeed authentic, the conductor, in a distinctly humbled tone of voice, asked the obvious: "Sir, you have an expensive first class ticket; so why you are lying under a bench in the third class car?!"

"Because that's what the others were doing..." was the embarrassed response. We too travel through life's long journey. At Mount Sinai we were given a first class ticket. One day the Conductor will want to know whether we used it or not.

Adapted from Chabad.org

## Bringing Hashem 'Down to Earth'

The purpose of creation of both the spiritual and physical world, is that one should make the physical realm a dwelling place for Hashem.

The first such "dwelling" was the Mishkan, the portable sanctuary built by the B'nei Yisrael in the Midbar after Matan Torah. The 15 physical substances, including gold, silver, copper, wood, wool, linen, animal skins, oil, spices and gemstones, represent the mineral, vegetable and animal resources of the physical universe together with man's ability to reshape these materials produce a structure capable of connecting and allowing man to communicate with Hashem.

The importance of this structure explains why the Torah devoted many parshiyot to the assembling of materials and eventual building of the Mishkan. The Midrash and the Bible commentators explain that the Mishkan is a structural representation of man, the physical universe, and of creation as a whole.

For example, the Mishkan's vessels represent the various organs and abilities possessed by man. The Ark (containing the Torah) corresponds to the mind, intellect and speech; the Menorah corresponds to the eyes and so to the sense of sight; the Table that held the "showbread," to the sense of taste; the Inner Altar on which the Ketoret (incense) were burned, to the sense of smell; and the Outer Altar on which the animal and meal offerings were brought represent the digestive system.

The Mishkan also parallels creation itself.

The Rambam describes how the universe is made up of three types of matter: spiritual beings, forms that are without matter, e.g. angels refined matter (the stars and heavenly bodies), and unrefined matter - (the earth and all its creatures).

Within the Jewish people there is also a threefold division: Kohen, Levi and Yisrael. This division corresponds to the universal aspect of matter, each level indicating a more refined way of living and being. In the Mishkan, these three levels are represented by: (1) the "Holy of Holies" - the inner chamber (2) the outer chamber of the Sanctuary and (3) the courtyard.

The courtyard was the place where the most unrefined aspects of Mishkan life took place, the shechitah of animals and the offering up of animals, and the washing of the Kohanim's hands and feet.

The Kodesh -- holy area was a place where the more "refined" elements of the Mishkan service took place: The lighting of the Menorah, the burning of the incense, and the displaying on the Table of the "showbread" eaten by the Kohanim on Shabbat. Moreover, only the Kohanim were permitted to enter this area.

Finally, the Kodesh Kodoshim - Holy of Holies, which housed only the Aron HaKodesh and into which only the Kohen Gadol was permitted entry and only on Yom Kippur, represented the transcendence of the material in man's service of G-d. (Yom Kippur can be seen as a day, where, to a certain extent, time does not exist. The Aron Hakodesh took up no space in the Kodesh Kodoshim thus transcending physical space.)

The Mishkan included these three areas because the task of "making G-d a dwelling in the lower realms" embraces all these areas of life. Man can serve Hashem from the most ordinarily physical to the extremely spiritual aspects of life.

The Torah calls the above structure a Mishkan -- Dwelling place - and also an Ohel Moed - 'Tent of Meeting.' Perhaps one can say that the names refer to two functions that the Mishkan has. 1) It is a dwelling place for Hashem (This is the meaning of Mishkan from the verb 'to dwell'). It is Hashem's palace on earth, where he sits on His throne (the Aron) surrounded by his servants and guards and army - Kohen, Levi and Yisrael. 2) It is also a place where man and G-d can communicate and have a dialogue. (An Ohel Moed, where man can meet with G-d). Man has the ability to reframe the materials and create structures which invest in the material, man has spirituality, which allows man to come into contact with the divine by allowing the divine to come down to earth so that he and his Creator can forge the ultimate bond of King and Servant. In this way, we can all strive to be Avdei Hashem. 'Servant's to G-d as was Moshe Rabbenu.'

*Written by Rabbi M Taubman*

## Riddle of the Week

How can it be that a boy who was born two weeks before his friend will celebrate his Bar Mitzvah after his friend? (no external circumstances such as illness)

*Last week's riddle:*

When is a specific food permissible to eat outside of the home, but once it is brought into the home, prohibited?

There are probably a few scenarios in which this case could occur. The most obvious one is during the 9 days, when there is a prohibition against eating meat. However, if one eats at a Seudas Mitzvah, such as a Siyum, then one can eat meat. Yet if one brings home some of this meat, then it becomes forbidden to eat it again!

## M'lachah of the Week

*Tzovea - Dyeing*

Originally, tzovea was used in the Mishkan to dye the curtains. Therefore any type of colouring, painting and darkening of the original colour is forbidden under this m'lachah, even when only temporary. However, since the dyeing of the curtains was for 'non-food' purposes, dyeing food is permitted, although some people are stringent in only using dye that improves the taste of the food.