



Wembley Synagogue

פְּקוּדֵי

Insights from the commentators into the Sedra of Pekudei 5768

What's the Sidra about?

1st Aliya begins with an accounting of the materials used in the construction of the Mishkan.

2nd & 3rd Aliyot The Kohen Gadol's breastplate and vest are described. The remaining garments of the Kohen Gadol and the other Kohanim are detailed.

4th Aliya Moshe inspects the completed Mishkan. Moshe certifies that the entire project followed the exact details of Hashem's instructions. Moshe blesses the workers.

5th, 6th & 7th Aliyot On the 1st day of Nissan, 2449, the Mishkan was assembled. After every vessel was properly in place, the presence of Hashem -the Shechina, descended in a cloud and filled the Mishkan. (Source: Rabbi Aron Tendler)

אֵלֶּה פְּקוּדֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת אֲשֶׁר פָּקַד עַל־פִּי מֹשֶׁה - *These are the accountings of the Tabernacle, the Tabernacle of Testimony, which were reckoned at Moshe's bidding (38:21)* The Rabbis say that Moshe was actually required to account! Why, asks R' Moshe Gruenwald z"l was an accounting required from Moshe? We read about the workers in the first Bet Hamikdash (Melachim II 12:16), "They did not make an accounting with the men into whose hands they gave the money to pay out to the workmen, for they acted with integrity." Furthermore, why wasn't an accounting taken from Bezalel and his helpers? Also, Chazal teach that Moshe could not give a complete accounting, and a bat kol - Heavenly Voice had to vouch for him. If so, what was the purpose of even beginning the accounting? R' Gruenwald explains: The purpose of the accounting was to teach us a lesson. Many commentaries explain how the various parts of the Mishkan and its furnishing allude to different parts of the body and their strengths. Each of us must learn to take an accounting of himself. Are we using our organs and our abilities as intended? In a similar vein, R' Gruenwald asks: Why do we calculate according to a lunar calendar? After all, the sun is more distinguished! He answers that we can learn a lesson in proper behaviour from the moon. Every month, the moon waxes and wanes. So, too, we must undergo cycles of growth and contraction. Periodically, preferably every day, one must humble oneself and reflect on what he has accomplished. Then we must grow some more and begin the cycle anew. (Source: Aarugat Habosem)

אֵלֶּה פְּקוּדֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת אֲשֶׁר פָּקַד עַל־פִּי מֹשֶׁה - *These are the reckonings of the Mishkan/Tabernacle . . .*"(38:21) Moshe said, "I know that Bnei Yisrael are complainers. Therefore, I will give an accounting of all of the donations that were given to the Mishkan." However, he forgot what he had done with 1,775 shekel, and he felt bad. Later Hashem enlightened him, and he felt better. Then he announced in a loud voice (verse 28), "And from the one thousand seven hundred seventy-five [shekel] he made hooks for the pillars, covered their tops and banded them." Why did Moshe make an accounting? He heard people saying, "If someone was in charge of thousands of talents of silver and thousands of talents of gold, is it any wonder that he is rich?" R' Chaim Moshe Reuven Elazary z"l observes: from this we learn the extent to which a public official or one who is entrusted with the public's funds should go to avoid any appearance of impropriety. Surely only a few cynics questioned Moshe's integrity! Nevertheless, even to silence those few, Moshe gave a full accounting of the Mishkan's assets. (Source: Netivei Chaim)

וּמֵתֵּהָאֵלֶּה וּשְׁבַע הַמָּאוֹת וַחֲמִשָּׁה וּשְׁבַעִים עָשָׂה יוֹמִים לְעֹמְדֵיהֶם - *And from the 1775 [talents of silver] he made hooks for the pillars . . .*" (38:28) The Midrash relates that when Moshe finished building the Mishkan and attempted to account for all of the donations, he forgot what he had done with 1,775 talents of silver, and he felt bad. Later he remembered and found peace of mind. Why did Hashem cause Moshe to forget what he had done with 1,775 shekalim and to suffer even a brief period of pain? R' Chaim Aryeh Lerner z"l explains: The Sages teach that if the Luchot had not been broken, there would be no such thing as forgetfulness.

Thus, although Hashem congratulated Moshe for breaking the Luchot, Moshe, nevertheless, had some culpability for reintroducing forgetfulness to the world. Moshe's "punishment" was that he suffered from a brief period of forgetfulness. (Source:Imrei Chaim)

בְּלֹא-אֶשְׁרֶצְנָהּ ה' אֶת-מֹשֶׁה - *As G-d commanded Moshe.* R' Eliyahu Hakohen z"l observes that the phrase "As G-d commanded Moshe" appears 18 (יח chai) times in this sidra. This alludes to the fact that Bnei Yisrael were sentenced to death for the sin of the Golden Calf, but they achieved life (chaim) because of Moshe's self sacrifice. After each time that the phrase "As G-d commanded Moshe" appears, the Torah then relates that Bnei Yisrael made another part of the Mishkan. This alludes to the fact that all of their actions were possible only because Moshe prayed for them.

וְלֹא-יָבֹל מֹשֶׁה לָּבוֹא אֶל-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד כִּי-שָׁכַן עָלָיו הָעָנָן וַיִּמְלֵא אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן (40:35) - *Moshe could not enter the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud rested upon it, and the glory of Hashem filled the Mishkan* (40:35). This is followed by three seemingly tangential verses which describe the role of the cloud in informing Bnei Yisrael when to travel, and thus ends Sefer Shmot. The next verse is Vayikra 1:1, which states: "He [Hashem] called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him from the Ohel Mo'ed . . ." R' Yehuda Herzl Henkin asks: Why does the Book of Shmot end this way? We can understand why Bereshit ends where it does - at that point a line is drawn between the history of the Patriarchs and the history of the nation that came from them. The Books of Vayikra and Bamidbar also have logical conclusions -specifically, both end with the summary, "These are the commandments that Hashem commanded Moshe to [teach] Bnei Yisrael on Har Sinai." But why is the statement at the end of Shemot that Moshe could not enter the Mishkan separated from the statement at the beginning of Vayikra that Hashem called Moshe to enter? R' Henkin explains: After all the work that Moshe did to bring about the construction and assembly of the Mishkan, we could almost take it for granted that he would be called to enter it. It was coming to him, we might say. One could even think that it was his (Moshe's) Mishkan. That is why the Torah separates the call for Moshe to enter the Mishkan from the story that came before. We are being taught that Hashem called Moshe because He wanted to, not because He had to. Hashem has no need to call to any man, not even one as great as Moshe. (Source: She'eilot U'teshuvot Bnei Banim IV p.131)

וְלֹא-יָבֹל מֹשֶׁה לָּבוֹא אֶל-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד כִּי-שָׁכַן עָלָיו הָעָנָן - *Moshe could not enter the Tent of Meeting, for the cloud rested upon it (40:35)* Rashi comments, "As long as the cloud was there, Moshe could not enter. When the cloud departed, Moshe could enter." At Har Sinai, also, there was a dense cloud which initially prevented Moshe from approaching. How did Moshe approach Har Sinai? The sage R' Eliezer says that Hashem grabbed Moshe and pulled him in. In the yeshiva of the sage R' Yishmael they said that Hashem made a path through the cloud and Moshe entered. R' Moshe Feinstein z"l comments: there are many times when a person feels that he cannot move forward because a dark cloud hangs over him. One should know, however, that nothing can stop him! Sometimes one can make a path through the cloud, i.e., he can navigate through his troubles without becoming embroiled in them. This is the preferable course, for who knows how he will emerge if he gets caught up in a struggle? If one cannot go through the cloud, he should look for a path that has no obstacles (just as Moshe waited for the cloud to depart). However, if he can neither go through the cloud nor find another path, he should push forward anyway with a firm conviction that Hashem will take him by the hand and lead him through. (Source:Darash Moshe)

שבת שלום!
Shabbat Shalom!



Shabbat starts 5.36pm



Shabbat ends: 6.40pm

לע"נ ר' מרדכי צבי ב"ר יחיאל משה וולפסון ז"ל

The *Insights into the Sedra* sheet is edited by Chazan Anthony Wolfson Online at:

http://www.wembleysynagogue.org/html/sedra_notes.html