

In memory of all those brutally murdered in the war on Israel
and the fallen soldiers of the IDF. Praying for the safe return
of all the hostages.

בס"ד

9 MARCH 2024 | 29 ADAR I 5784

VOLUME 37 | #27

DAF HASHAVUA

ויקהל | VAYAKHEL

SHABBAT ENDS:

- London 6.41pm
- Birmingham 6.48pm
- Cardiff 6.57pm
- Dublin 7.06pm
- Edinburgh 6.57pm
- Glasgow 7.01pm
- Hull 6.47pm
- Leeds 6.47pm
- Liverpool 6.55pm
- Manchester 6.52pm
- Nottingham 6.50pm
- Sheffield 6.51pm
- Southend 6.38pm
- Southport 6.58pm
- Jerusalem 6.20pm

Parashat Shekalim

Shabbat
Mevarachim

Rosh Chodesh
Adar II is on
Sunday and Monday



SHABBAT
FOR שבת
ISRAEL
8-9TH MARCH
2024
ישראל

Sidra Summary

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – SHEMOT 35:1-20

Moshe (Moses) gathers the nation. He instructs them to keep Shabbat, mentioning specifically the prohibition to kindle a fire. He then asks them to volunteer the materials needed for the construction of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) and the priestly garments. These materials are gold, silver, copper; turquoise, purple and scarlet wool; linen, goat hair; dyed ram skins, *tachash* skins, acacia wood, oil, specific spices and particular precious stones (for placing in the *Kohen Gadol's* garments).

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 35:21-29

The people respond positively to Moshe's request and "every man and woman whose heart motivated them" brings the various materials requested.

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 35:30-36:7

Moshe announces the appointment of the wise-hearted Betzalel and Aholiav to oversee the construction, assisted by able craftsmen. When they collect the materials volunteered, they find that there is a surplus. Moshe asks that a message be sent throughout the camp not to bring any more materials.

4TH ALIYA (REVI'I) – 36:8-19

The work starts with the ten *yeriyot* (curtains) and the golden hooks joining them together. This is followed by the *ahel* (tent), draped over the *Mishkan*, with a further double *michse* (cover) on top.

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 36:20-37:16

Next the craftsmen make the *parochet* (partition) to cordon off the Holy of Holies area. Betzalel makes the *Aron* (ark) from acacia wood, plated with gold and with a gold *zer* (crown). The *kaporet* (cover) of

the *Aron* is made from pure gold, with two *keruvim* (cherubs) moulded on top. The *shulchan* (table) is made from gold-plated acacia wood, with a gold *zer* (crown) on its *misgeret* (rim).

Point to Consider: Why is only Betzalel mentioned as constructing the ark if other craftsmen were also involved? (see *Rashi* to 37:1)

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 37:17-29

The *menorah* is hammered from one piece of pure gold, with seven lamps. The gold-plated small wooden *mizbeach* (altar) is constructed for the twice-daily incense offering.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI'I) – 38:1-20

The special anointing oil and the incense spices are prepared. The workers then construct a copper *kiyar* (washstand) for the *Kohanim*, followed by the *chatzer* (courtyard) which surrounds the *Mishkan*, making its outer 'fence' of linen *yeriyot* (curtains), attached to wooden pillars.

MAFTIR (SHEMOT 30:11-16)

The special reading for *Shekalim* is from the beginning of parashat Ki Tisa, instructing the Israelites to bring a compulsory annual half-shekel contribution for the offerings brought in the *Mishkan*. This also acted as the means of conducting the national census in the desert.

HAFTARAH (II MELACHIM 12:1-17)

King Yehoash ascended the throne aged only seven. Guided by the *Kohen Gadol* Yehoyada, he successfully organised a national fundraising initiative to repair and maintain the Temple.



United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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Some are Not More Equal than Others



**RABBI
NATAN
FAGELMAN**

Allerton Hebrew
Congregation

You are probably very familiar with ‘crowdfunding’ campaigns, which have the incredible capacity to raise vast sums of money in a short space of time. Barely a week goes by without a friend reaching out to us with a request that we support a communal charity that they are involved with.

In this week’s parasha, we read about the first fundraising drive in our history – the project of building a *Mishkan*, the portable sanctuary that accompanied the Jewish people through the desert.

The parasha of Vayakhel details the practical implementation of the building project. It was a major capital project that needed large amounts of raw materials such as gold, silver and copper, and the work was done by expert artisans.

There was then an ongoing need to pay for its maintenance and for communal offerings. How was this all achieved?

There were two key elements to the fundraising strategy. The campaign began by soliciting major donations, which was incredibly successful. It was so fruitful, in fact, that Moshe (Moses) had to ask the people to stop bringing: *“The people are bringing more than is needed for the tasks... that God has commanded to be done”* (Shemot 36:5). I am yet to see this happen in a fundraising campaign today!

The second component is described in today’s reading for Maftir, *Parashat Shekalim*, the first of the four readings that are added at this time of year. Every Jewish male had to contribute half a shekel to the building of the Temple as a fixed annual donation. (We read it now to remind us that, in Temple times, the collections would begin at this time of year).

However, there is a difficulty here. If the people were so willing to

donate, why did God need to force them to give half a shekel. Would it not have been better for all the contributions to have been made as a voluntary outpouring of love and devotion?

A deeper look at the concept of the *Mishkan* will help us to understand that the project was not just a matter of raising money; it was about bringing the Jewish people together.

Shortly after the mitzvah of giving half a shekel, God commands us to combine a number of spices to make the incense. One of these is *chelbanah* (galbanum), which the Sages tell us had a foul-smelling odour. Why then is it included in the ingredients for the incense?

The Talmud explains that any communal fast that does not include sinners is not considered a proper fast (*Keritot* 6a). Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz (1902-1979) explains that when the Jewish people are not united, they are not considered one unit, and the power of the community is drastically weakened (*Sichot Mussar, Ma’amar* 54).

In other words, the *Mishkan* was about unifying the Jewish people, warts and all. The most righteous and the least virtuous had to be represented. The half shekel obligation was a message that no one is complete as an individual, and that nobody can think of themselves as independent from communal life. We are strongest when we are all in it together.



In loving memory of Harav Yitzchak Yoel ben Shlomo Halevi z"l

To mark "Shabbat for Israel" across our communities, we bring you three Israel-themed articles. We are re-printing Rabbi Sacks' iconic Daf Hashavua article to mark the State of Israel's 60th anniversary, Rabbi Jack Cohen shares his reflections on a recent Israel Mission and Rebbetzen Nechama Davis writes about finding clarity of purpose in these difficult times.

May God grant peace in the Holy Land and spread the Tabernacle of Peace over all the dwellers on earth and bring the redeemer to Zion, Amen.

Israel: The Home of Hope



**RABBI
LORD
JONATHAN
SACKS ZT"l**

The birth of the State of Israel, on 5th Iyar 5708, was an event unprecedented in history. Never before has a people survived for 2000 years in exile without losing its identity. Never before has a nation returned to its land, recovered its independence, and taken up again the reins of sovereignty after so long an interval. One thought kept echoing through my mind as I worked on the double CD, 'Israel: Home of Hope'¹. It was the line from Hallel: "This is the Lord's doing. It is wondrous in our eyes."

Four thousand years ago, Abraham heard a call: Leave your land, your birthplace and your father's house and go to the land I will show you. Those were the first syllables of recorded Jewish time, and ever since, Jewish history has been a set of variations on the theme of the journey to Israel,

exile and return, dispersion and homecoming.

Never did the Jewish people leave Israel voluntarily, and there were places which they never left at all. Wherever they were, they prayed about Israel and facing Israel. The Jewish people was the circumference of a circle at whose centre was the holy land and Jerusalem the holy city. For centuries they lived suspended between memory and hope, sustained by the promise that one day God would bring them back.

At the end of his life, foreseeing exile, Moses prophesied, "Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back." That has come true in our time.

Only in Israel can a Jew speak a Jewish language, see a Jewish landscape, live by the Jewish calendar, walk where our ancestors walked, continue the story they began. Israel is the only place on earth where, in four thousand years of history, Jews have formed a majority, been able to defend

themselves, and do what almost every other people takes for granted: live as a nation shaping its own destiny and create a society according to its own values.

A mere three years after standing eyeball to eyeball with the angel of death in the Holocaust, the Jewish people, by proclaiming the State of Israel, made a momentous affirmation of life. And a day will one day come, when the story of Israel in modern times will speak not just to Jews, but to all who believe in the power of the human spirit as it reaches out to God, as an everlasting symbol of the victory of life over death, hope over despair.

Israel has taken a barren land and made it bloom again. It's taken an ancient language, the Hebrew of the Bible, and made it speak again. It's taken the West's oldest faith and made it young again. It's taken a tattered, shattered nation and made it live again. Israel is the country whose national anthem, Hatikva, means hope. Israel is the home of hope.



¹ To mark Israel's 60th anniversary in 2008, Rabbi Sacks released "Israel: Home of Hope", using the power of words and music to tell the extraordinary and inspiring story of the modern State of Israel. You can find it here: www.rabbisacks.org/books/israel-home-of-hope

Hugs, Heroes & Oranges

Reflections on a Rabbinic Mission to Israel



**RABBI
JACK
COHEN**

Mill Hill East
Jewish Community

I was recently privileged to be part of a UK Rabbinic mission which travelled to Israel in the wake of the 7th of October. Organised by Mizrahi, we spent three packed days travelling through Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and the Gaza Envelope. We met the survivors and the bereaved, the soldiers and the volunteers, the young and the old.

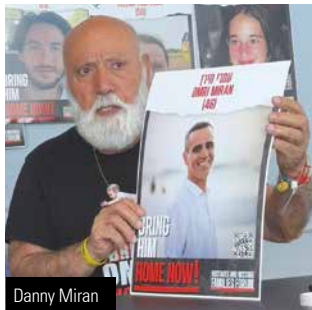
Initially I was apprehensive about going. How would I react to seeing Re'im, the site of the Nova festival? What would I say to those who had lost family and friends? Was the trip just posturing or would we be able to actually contribute in some meaningful way?

Fortunately, it turned out that we could contribute. Whilst we did not help farmers or man callcentres, we were able to sit and listen. And people wanted to talk. They wanted to share their messages - "keep our daughter's memory alive" said the parents of Adi Kaploun-Vital, a mother of two who fell fighting terrorists in a kibbutz she herself had founded. "Tell them we are strong" said Danny, a former Paratrooper, whose son Omri is a hostage in Gaza. Danny, who was growing his beard in solidarity with Omri, refused to let us leave without giving us oranges.

Beyond the messages, some



Rabbis Jack Cohen, Bentzi Mann and Mordechai Ginsbury (l-r)



Danny Miran

wanted to process what they had been through. Elad was a survivor of the massacre at Kibbutz Be'eri and as he walked us through the burned remains of his murdered mother's house, he told us that we were the sixth group to hear his story and that it helped him to talk. The sheer extent of the physical destruction was impossible to comprehend, but through Elad's measured account the travesty began to sink in on an emotional level.

All too often words were inadequate and so our time was frequently punctuated with lots of hugs. Hugs of comfort, and hugs of gratitude. Hugs for Yair, a first responder in Sderot who fought off terrorists and saved lives. Hugs for Zaka's Simcha Greiniman, and for my predecessor Rabbi Bentzi Mann, both of whom, in different ways, had looked after the bodies of the victims. They, and many like them, had worked to return some dignity and sanctity to those who had been so cruelly deprived of such things in their last moments of life.

We left Israel humbled by the unity and determination of a country at war, by the trauma that will grip our people for years to come, and by the greatness of ordinary human beings who, when called to play an extraordinary role in the most trying of circumstances, had answered, as their forebears did before them, "*hineini* – here I am."



**REBBETZEN
NECHAMA
DAVIS**

Daf Hashavua
Editorial Team

Suddenly, Clarity!

The Talmudic sage, Rava, tells us that when we reach the Next World, we will all be asked six questions. One of these questions is, *"Did you truly hope for the Redemption, that things will improve?"* (Shabbat 31a).

Now, maybe we, Jews in Israel and all over the world, will be asked another question: What did you do for your people during the war against Hamas?

Right from the beginning, I was struck how everyone was galvanized into doing their utmost for the 'war effort'. Particularly noticeable was that, very quickly, each person seemed to gain absolute clarity about what their personal mission was in this world. Suddenly we all knew what we were capable of doing (and what we were not!)

A soldier told me that, driving up North to his unit on that first night of the war, he felt, "now I have the opportunity to serve my country and play my role in Jewish history! I'm ready to do it!"

Some people immediately began raising funds for much needed equipment. Others starting writing and speaking, advocating for Israel.

Others were so moved by the plight of the hostages that they threw themselves into publicising and advocating on their behalf. Remember the empty tables set in

public places all over the world?

There were those who started cooking and packing food packages, for the soldiers or their families. Some cooked, some sent out google docs for people to fill in the days they would cook. Very different skills - each one doing what they do best! Others were more than happy to do people's laundry - for soldiers, for overwhelmed mothers, for displaced people in temporary accommodation.

And there were those who put on their 'chesed uniforms', doing anything and everything they could to console and cheer up the injured soldiers or bereaved families or children just missing their fathers terribly.

Others found ways to connect people to support online businesses run by serving soldiers, or businesses in evacuated areas. Soon we were eating cakes and challot from a bakery in Ashkelon!

And outside Israel, the scope of activities also reflected how everyone, Jew and often non-Jew, set to volunteering. Buying and

sending duffle bags of supplies - in enormous quantities. Sending donations, very large or not so large at all - but all with giving 'til it hurts', as one wise lady once told me. Yet others have offered free online English lessons to Israeli children. Some have even visited Israel for a few days, to be here, 'on the ground', to help, to share the burden.

And everywhere, in Israel and in every corner of the world, people prayed. They said Tehillim more than they had ever said in their whole lives, praying for the safety of our soldiers and the mental and physical recovery and wellbeing of every single person affected by this long and painful war.

We are told that everyone is sent by God to accomplish a 'mission' in this world, and sometimes it takes years to uncover what that mission might be. But this war has brought a blessing of a different kind: clarity. Each person knows what he or she is capable of doing and is doing so with all their heart and soul.



CRISIS ON CAMPUS



Fundraising Campaign

13th – 14th March 2024

To donate visit
charityextra.com/chaplaincy

University Jewish Chaplaincy. Registered Charity No. 1126031

Sparks of Shabbat Peace



GABRIEL BOR

Youth Director at
Hampstead Garden
Suburb Synagogue

In this week’s parasha, we are reminded of the holiness of Shabbat, a day of rest where we are instructed to refrain from doing 39 different types of work, which are drawn from the activities involved in building the *Mishkan* (portable Sanctuary). Interestingly, among these prohibitions, only one is explicitly commanded in the Torah itself: the act of kindling a fire on Shabbat. The question arises: why is this specific prohibition singled out from the rest?

Rashi (Torah commentator, 1040-1105) offers two insights, both rooted in the Talmud. The first perspective suggests that

lighting a fire on Shabbat is a separate commandment, with a different consequence. The second explanation suggests that this particular prohibition serves to highlight the individual importance of each type of work. If multiple types of work are performed on Shabbat, a separate offering is required to atone for each. However, these explanations fail to address why the Torah specifically emphasises the prohibition of lighting a fire.

The commentator Ibn Ezra (1089-1167) suggests that the Torah’s command regarding kindling a fire on Shabbat is necessary to counter the allowance of using fire for cooking on Yom Tov. By relating the difference, the Torah highlights the uniqueness of avoiding fire-related activities on Shabbat, despite them being allowed on Yom Tov.

The Ba’al Shem Tov (1698-1760)

draws a parallel between fire and anger; he explains that the prohibition against lighting a fire on Shabbat extends beyond the physical act. We often associate fiery emotions with anger, an emotion that can disrupt the peacefulness of Shabbat. The Torah, in specifying that we are to avoid lighting fire “in your dwellings,” reminds us that the sanctity of Shabbat goes beyond the external observance. It fills the atmosphere within our homes.

Shabbat, the day of peace and serenity, invites us to create a household free from the sparks of arguments and tension. The verse, in specifying the restriction within our homes, highlights the significance of nurturing harmony in our families. As we kindle the lights of Shabbat, let us also extinguish the metaphorical flames of negativity, ensuring that our homes become sanctuaries of peace each week.

Parasha Wordsearch

Words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

- BETZALEL
- ISRAELITES
- MATERIALS
- MISHKAN
- MOSES
- SANCTUARY
- SHABBAT
- SHEKALIM
- VAYAKHEL

Q	S	O	J	E	X	M	L	S	R	S
L	X	H	K	K	Z	O	L	E	A	E
I	E	J	A	P	G	A	A	N	M	T
S	Y	L	W	B	I	J	C	V	S	I
D	P	P	A	R	B	T	J	A	E	L
X	A	T	E	Z	U	A	H	Y	S	E
Y	B	T	T	A	T	R	T	A	O	A
K	A	T	R	V	K	E	T	K	M	R
M	E	Y	Y	V	E	P	B	H	P	S
N	A	K	H	S	I	M	V	E	L	I
S	H	E	K	A	L	I	M	L	Z	G



THE TRIBE SCRIBE

VAYAKHEL: TOWER OF STRENGTH!

LEGO CHAMPIONSHIPS
Best Lego tower
wins
LEGO SUPERSET!

LET'S ENTER THE LEGO CHAMPIONSHIPS - OUR CLASS IS FULL OF LEGO PROS!

LEGO CHAMPIONSHIPS

READY STEADY, LEGO!

YA KNOW WHAT, WE'RE ALL WORKING ON OUR OWN SMALL TOWERS. I BET IF WE PUT ALL OUR BRICKS TOGETHER, WE COULD BUILD THE MOST STUPENDOUS LEGO TOWER EVER!

HERE, I'VE BUILT A REALLY STRONG BASE, WE CAN USE THAT AT THE BOTTOM.

CHECK OUT MY FANCY WINDOWS, WE CAN PUT THEM IN THE SIDES.

WITH EVERYONE'S BRICKS, NOT TO MENTION ALL OUR IDEAS, WE BUILT THE MOST BRICK-TASTIC LEGO TOWER EVER! WE CAME FIRST!

IN THIS WEEK'S PARASHA OF VAYAKHEL, THE JEWISH PEOPLE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER AND GIVEN A SHARED MISSION (SHABBAT) AND SHARED PROJECT, BUILDING THE MISHKAN (TABERNACLE).

THIS WEEK'S PARASHA SHOWS US THE ORIGINAL TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY! BY COMING TOGETHER ON A JOINT PROJECT, THE JEWISH PEOPLE BECAME A KEHILLA - A COMMUNITY.

BUT THAT WASN'T ALL. WORKING TOGETHER ON A SHARED MISSION, WE BECAME SUCH A FANTASTIC TEAM.

AFTER THE SIN OF THE GOLDEN CALF, THE PEOPLE WERE A FRAGMENTED, DISCONNECTED GROUP. HOW BEST TO BRING THEM TOGETHER?

IF YOU WANT TO BUILD A TEAM, CREATE A TEAM THAT BUILDS.



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Tribe is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.