



SHABBAT ZEST

Parshat Vayakhel – Shabbat Mevorchim

24th Adar 1 5776 – 4th March 2016

Parsha In a Nutshell

Moses assembles the people of Israel and reiterates to them the commandment to observe the Shabbat. He then conveys G-d's instructions regarding the making of the Mishkan (Tabernacle). The people donate the required materials in abundance, bringing gold, silver and copper; blue-, purple- and red-dyed wool; goat hair, spun linen, animal skins, wood, olive oil, herbs and precious stones. Moses has to tell them to stop giving.

A team of wise-hearted artisans make the Mishkan and its furnishings (as detailed in the previous Torah readings of Terumah, Tetzaveh and Ki Tisa): three layers of roof coverings; 48 gold-plated wall panels, and 100 silver foundation sockets; the parochet (veil) that separates between the Sanctuary's two chambers, and the masach (screen) that fronts it; the ark, and its cover with the cherubim; the table and its showbread; the seven-branched menorah with its specially prepared oil; the golden altar and the incense burned on it; the anointing oil; the outdoor altar for burnt offerings and all its implements; the hangings, posts and foundation sockets for the courtyard; and the basin and its pedestal, made out of copper mirrors.

Haftorah

This week's *haftorah* describes the construction of several components of the Holy Temple by the wise craftsman Hiram of Tyre, paralleling the Torah portion which describes the construction of the Tabernacle by the wise Bezael and his crew of craftspeople.

King Solomon called for Hiram, an expert coppersmith, to create copper columns to flank the largest doorway of the Holy Temple. The columns were eighteen cubits (approx. 30 feet) high and were topped by two capitals which were intricately carved with pomegranates and palm leaves. The right column was named Jachin, and the left one was called Boaz. Hiram also built a copper basin -- or "sea" as it's called in the text: "It stood on twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east; and the sea (was set) upon them above, and all their hinder parts (were) inward." In this basin -- a large *mikvah* -- the priests would immerse before they served in the Temple.

SHABBAT TIMES:

Candle Lighting:
5:31m

Kabbalat Shabbat
Davening: 7pm

Pre Shacharit
Parsha
Shiur: 9:15am

Shabbat Morning
Davening:
9:30am

Mincha: Following
Kiddush

Shabbat Ends 6:38pm

TALMUD FOR
BEGINNERS CLASS
CONTACT THE RABBI
TO RESERVE YOU
PLACE

12th March
SUNDAY 8:45AM
SHACHRIT

This weeks
Hatorah will be
read by Rev
Lorraine

ANYONE CAN DO
HAFTORAH – TO
LEARN ASK THE
RABBI WHO WILL
BE DELIGHTED TO
TEACH YOU!

The community is
invited back to 3
Alderton Mews
for Kiddush
following the
service

UPCOMING EVENTS

Brand new 3 part series with Rabbi Anthony Manning Live from Jerusalem

MARCH 14TH-

APRIL 11TH-

MAY 23RD

SAVE THE DATES NOW!

Resuming this week Hebrew reading crash course – 6 week course every Sunday 10.30am. BOOK NOW FOR THE NEXT ONE.

POLAND TRIP – CONFIRMED DATES SUNDAY 19TH – MONDAY 20TH ONLY 10 SPACES LEFT.

PURIM 23RD/24TH

MARCH SAVE THE

DATE!!! 23RD: DRESSING

UP COMPETITION

CHILDRENS & ADULTS,

MEGILLA READING,

REFRESHMENTS, KIDS

ENTERTAINER, FILM &

LUCKY DIP PRIZE FOR

EVERY CHILD IN FANCY

DRESS

Purim Day 24th:

Shachrit 7am followed

by Megillah

PRE PURIM TOTS PARTY 14TH

MARCH 12:30-

2.30PM

COMMUNAL SEDER 2ND NIGHT PESACH CONTACT OFFICE FOR DETAILS.

Honoring Money

At this time of year, although not this Shabbat due to this year being a leap year, we read a special Torah portion called Parshat Shekalim. This discusses the census that would happen at this time of year in Temple times. Each person would give one half-shekel. The money would be counted, and that would determine the census. And the Torah makes very clear that "the poor person shall not give less, and the rich person shall not give more."

But surely this is obvious. If everyone gave according to their means, and hence differing amounts, it would be impossible to count the number of people! The Torah must be teaching us something deeper than simple census advice. And indeed, it is.

In today's world, a person is often judged by how much money he has. How big is his house, how fast is his car - and yes, even how much does he give to charity. It's nothing new. Jews as well seem to judge ourselves, and each other, by our bank balance. The "leaders" of our Jewish community are not necessarily those who are most able to lead, but those who are most able to give. (Even if they don't!) A cranky billionaire will sit at the top table of every charity dinner. A pauper who gives beyond his means is likely to languish in Jewish obscurity.

The Torah tells us that this is wrong. "The poor shall not give less, the rich shall not give more." When counting Jews, a rich man is not worth 10 poor men. All are equal. Each has his role to play.

We are all guilty of distorting this ideal. Somehow it is a human inclination to take a wealthy person more seriously than a poor person. We will admire even an unpleasant billionaire. While someone who can't get a job may be the nicest guy in the world, but he will struggle to earn our respect.

We respect money and we respect success. But we don't really respect human beings.

The money that was given for the census was used for the Temple. The message is clear: In the service of God, all are equal. Money may buy respect from others, but before God, the wealthy person has nothing more to offer than anyone else.

Money of a gift from God, and a tool to achieve. But having a lot of money does not make a person a good human being. The sooner we stop honouring money, and start honouring character and decency instead, the better off we all will be.