

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE

VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI/PARAH

Haftarah: Yehezkel 36:16-38

MARCH 9-10, 2018 23 ADAR 5778

DEDICATION: In memory of Margie Gindi Kassir 29th Adar

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EDITORS NOTES

This week as we end the book of Shemot / Exodus, we read a double portion of Vayakhel and Pekudei.

One is drawn to focus on the opening word *Vayakhel Moshe et kol a' dat beney Yisrael*, Moses assembled the entire assembly of the Children of Israel, and said to them. Here Moses is gathering all of men, women and children and we are told that this is taking place on the 11th of Tishrei, on the day following Yom Kippur. Why?

About 4 months prior during the first week of Sivan, all of the Jewish people were again gathered together; men, women and children. Rashi tells us that they were completely unified, as a single person, of one heart and one mind. There they heard directly from Hashem the first two of the Aseret HaDibrot, what we call the Ten Commandments and the remaining ones from Moses. They experienced the Divine revelation as a nation, something never seen before nor since.

Then Moses bid the people farewell, leaving Aaron and his nephew Hur in charge and went up the mountain for 40 days to receive the tablets. The day before his return, the people again gather, but this time thinking Moses is not returning they hope to find a new leader or intermediary. Although they may have had good intentions at first, with their sacrifices and merriment, they quickly descend into licentious behavior. Moses returns and in the aftermath of the golden calf, we have death, destruction and disunity. Moses returns again to Heaven begging for forgiveness and finally a third time for a second set of tablets, returning on Yom Kippur and informing the people that Hashem has forgiven them.

In this state of forgiveness and new beginnings, the people are gathered again and unified they make their commitment to build the Mishkan from their own donations and the work of their own hands, men, women and children. The quality of unity is one of the greatest we can express. The Rabbis tell us that unity

protects us even when we sin. This united effort recalls the unity at Sinai and through this effort they will build a sanctuary of which Hashem states, And I will dwell within THEM.

Psychologists tell us that to create camaraderie among coworkers; we assign projects for them to do together. Working together brings people together. Additionally people value what they do with their own hands many times more than what they can buy from others. Unity of purpose brings a level of holiness and the building of the Mishkan was a labor of love, where people gave of themselves both materially and physically. I think we see proof of that in the longevity of the Mishkan. While Solomon's Temple, which was built by drafted and foreign workers and supported by unpopular taxes was destroyed after about 410 years by the Babylonians, and while the second Temple built for the most part by Herod and his slaves was destroyed by the Romans after 420 years, the Mishkan was never destroyed and never fell into enemy hands.

The unified actions, the brotherly deeds and the united commitment of the people who built the Mishkan and insured its longevity is a message to each and every one of us

Judaism is not a spectator sport. Most of our institutions run on the power, strength and commitment of volunteers; volunteers who often have day jobs and who must join together with other volunteers to make things work.

The rabbis tell us that the Mishkan may have been a way to make up for or repair the sin of the golden calf. Perhaps that sin was in the disunity created. The repair may have been in coming together to build the Mishkan giving it their all. The rabbis tell us the sin of the calf visits us in every generation. And that means the potential for repair does as well. And that repair comes when we give of ourselves together with those around us to help create a better world for our children, our grandchildren, our parents and the entire congregation. The secret is in VaYakהל – gather with a single purpose and a single heart.

If we are spending time just watching from the background, from the bleachers or from the nosebleed seats, it's time to get into the game, onto the court and to volunteer. We must give of our money, our expertise and our time. There are many

things you can do and the community needs you to do. Push your way into a job and help! And maybe, just maybe through a true communal effort we will be worthy to be a part of the Third and everlasting Temple build by Heaven, BimHerah BeYameynu Amen.

Shabbat Shalom,

David Bibi

Summary of the Perasha Nathan Dweck

Parashat Va'yakhel and Pekudei are very similar to what we read in Teruma and Tesaveh. The distinction in Vayakhel and Pekudei is that these parshiot discuss the actual making of the mishkan, kelim and kohen's clothing while Teruma and Tesaveh merely discuss the commandment to make these items.

Quick summary of the 2nd half of Sefer Shemot

- 1- **Teruma**- Mishkan and Kelim (the commandment to make it)
- 2- **Tesaveh**- Kohen's Clothing (the commandment to make it)
- 3- **Ki Tisa**- Golden Calf
- 4- **Va'yakhel**- Mishkan and Kelim (the actual making of it)
- 5- **Pekudey**- Kohen's Clothing (the actual making of it)

Vayakhel - Betzalel makes the mishkan and kelim

- 1- Moshe instructs Benei Israel about the Shabbat. Moshe instructs Benei Israel to build the mishkan and its kelim
- 2- Benei Israel donates materials for the mishkan
- 3- Bezalel, Aholiab and the hachmey lev begin making the mishkan and kelim
- 4- The yeriot are made
- 5- The kerashim, parochet, masach of the ohel moed, aron, kaporet, and shulchan are made
- 6- The menorah, golden mizbeyach, oil and incense are made
- 7- The copper mizbeyach, kiyor & kano, courtyard and masach for the courtyard are made

Pekudey - Bezalel and others make the bigdey kehuna. Moshe erects the mishkan

- 1- The parasha gives tallies of all the gold, silver and copper collected for making the mishkan, kelim, and bigdey kehuna
- 2- The efod, abney shoham and hoshen are made
- 3- The me'iyil, ketonet and sitz are made
- 4- The parsha recounts all the parts of the mishkan, kelim, and bigdey kehuna that were made

- 5- Hashem tells Moshe to erect the mishkan and to anoint / sanctify the mishkan and kelim as well as Aharon and his sons with the bigdey kehuna
- 6- Moshe erects the mishkan
- 7- Moshe completes erecting the mishkan setting up all the kelim in their places. Hashem's glory fills the ohel moed

FROM THE RABBIS OF THE JERSEY SHORE

“You shall not light a fire in any of your dwellings on the Shabbat day.” (Shemot 35:3)

Although the Torah forbids kindling a fire on Shabbat, the Shlah Hakadosh writes that there is also a hint in this pasuk to a different idea. He says it also means, do not kindle the fire of arguments on Shabbat. During the week, a person is busy working and doesn't have time to get into arguments in his home. But on Shabbat, he has time and he begins saying things that lead to arguments in his home. The Torah reminds us to be careful not to kindle the fire of arguments on Shabbat. Peace in the home is the most important.

A person named Chaim walked into the shul of the Satmar Rav, Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum zt"l. He wished to be the chazzan for minhah because he had a yahrtzeit (the Ashkenazim call it a “hiyuv”. They have the custom to be the chazzan on the date of the yahrtzeit). The time to start the prayers was a few minutes away, so he stood at the tebah waiting.

After a few minutes, a second man, Yosef, approached and explained that he'd like to be chazzan because he had a hiyuv. “I'm really sorry,” said Chaim. “But I also have a hiyuv and I have already been standing here for a few minutes.”

“For whom are you a hiyuv?” asked Yosef.

“I am praying for the zechut of my wife's father, whose yahrtzeit is today,” said Chaim.

“Your father-in-law, you say?” remarked Yosef. “Today is the yahrtzeit of my father, so I have a bona fide obligation to be the chazzan, which takes precedence over your desire to pray for the zechut of your father-in-law.”

“But I was here first,” countered Chaim.

“Please go find a different minyan where you can be the chazzan.” So it went with each fellow staking his claim to be chazzan.

No resolution was on the horizon when in walked the Satmar Rav. Observing the disagreement at the tebah, he asked what the issue was. Each party explained his argument why he should be the chazzan.

“Listen,” responded the Rebbe, “your father”, he said to one, “and your father-in-law”, he said to the other, “are both gone from this world. We can't do anything about that. But we can do something that

will ensure that there is shalom bayit in your homes. You see, when Chaim goes home after prayers, his wife will immediately ask him, 'were you the chazzan today for the zechut of my father in the Rebbe's minyan?'"

The Rebbe smiled to the men who understood the point clearly. "So let Chaim pray so that peace will reign as it should." Rabbi Reuven Semah

The Midrash says that the construction of all the components of the Mishkan, Tabernacle, was completed in only three months, but it was not actually erected until Rosh Hodesh Nisan, a few months later. When we study all the different parts of the Mishkan, we see that it was a very intricate and detailed project. The fact that all the work was completed in such a short time was miraculous, especially when we consider the fact that the people had absolutely no training for this type of work. If so, why did Hashem help them to miraculously complete the job so quickly, if they wouldn't actually erect the Mishkan right away?

The Rabbis teach that the Mishkan was meant to serve as an atonement for the sin of the Golden Calf. The Ramban, Ibn Ezra and others explain that the nation desired something on which the Shechinah, the Divine Presence, can rest. When Moshe did not return from Mount Sinai on schedule (according to their incorrect calculation), they could not control their intense desire to have the Shechinah dwell amongst them, and they made the Golden Calf hoping that it would serve that purpose. Their primary error was that they did this without any command from Hashem, and they did not have the patience to wait for Moshe to return.

Therefore, since the Mishkan's purpose was to rectify the sin, Hashem made them prepare all of its components, and then wait for it to be erected. Only after waiting a few months would they finally be able to construct the Mishkan, bringing the Shechinah to dwell in their midst. This was to teach them the lesson of patience, even when the desire is for something spiritual.

We live in a world where everything is instantaneous. When we send an email, we get nervous if we don't get an immediate reply. When we pray for something and we don't get answered right away, we get discouraged. We need to train ourselves to be patient and to understand that sometimes things don't happen as quickly as we might want them to happen. Impatience is the cause of many arguments and bad feelings between people. By remaining patient, we can avoid many uncomfortable situations, and promote peace and good feelings with our fellow man. Rabbi Shmuel Choueka

Urgent Reply - (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Impatience is a personality trait of the young. True even in simpler, slower times, this fact definitely cannot be denied in our high-speed, fiber-optic, DSL world of email, electronic transfer of funds, and wireless communication. Indeed, today the inability to wait has spread to the older, usually more patient age groups as well.

Some things are, in fact, so time-sensitive that we could legitimately label them "urgent," but most issues are just not that important. The fact that an instant answer is possible does not mean that a quick response is necessary, or even beneficial. Often people answer unimportant e-mails as if they were high priority, just because they have gotten used to the concept of instant response.

Admittedly, getting everything off the desk and back in the other party's domain has its benefits, despite the pressure it creates. However, an answer given on the fly lacks consideration and evaluation. Recognizing this can make you decide to delay your electronic response and answer a question only after thinking it through carefully. You might even have the chance to get another's opinions and insights on the matter, and may ultimately come to see the issue from a totally different perspective.

Immediacy is the enemy of reflection, and reflection is the mother of success. Before you rush to reply, think about that for a minute. Then decide whether your need to reply is really urgent.

Night Vision

"The occurrence of night is a tremendous benefit to mankind. During the period of darkness, the earth recycles the materials that were used up during the daytime. In addition, mankind needs that period of darkness to obtain sleep, so they will have the alertness to face a new day".

During challenge a situation may appear to be dark and hopeless. Night vision is faith in Hashem, to believe the sun will shine and bring about new opportunities. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller, Duties of the Mind)

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

Parashat Vayakhel opens up with the law of Shabbat. It tells us 6 days we go to work, and on Shabbat we rest, we take off, and we are not allowed to do Melacha (work.) Following that, we read about the Mishkan. We read about the funds that were collected, and what they did with the monies of the Mishkan, and actually the whole story is reviewed. All the Rabbis ask, what is the connection between Shabbat and the Mishkan? Why does the Torah juxtapose them next to each other?

There's a Midrash that approaches this subject. The Midrash starts off and says that the Torah came in front of G-d and asked a question. The Torah asked, what is going to be with me once the Jewish people enter the land of Israel. Some Jews will be dealing with their vineyards, and other Jews will be dealing with their fields and will become land owners. So how will it be, the Torah asks, that the Jews will have time to study Torah? The Torah asks, 'What is going to be with me?' In the desert people had time on their hands. Nobody owned real estate. There was nothing for them to do except to learn Torah. The Torah was getting concerned what would happen once the Jews enter the land of Israel, since the Jews would need to attend to their properties, and they will not have time learn Torah anymore. G-d answered that he has a mate for the Torah, a partner for Torah. And it is called Shabbat. Because on that day the Jewish people are not allowed to work and therefore they are going to have no choice but to sit and study Torah.

The Yerushalmi writes on this topic. It writes that Rabbi Chagai says that the purpose of Shabbat and Yom Tov is so people can sit down and eat well and drink well. But Rabbi Ben Achaya argues on this and says that Shabbat was given to immerse oneself in the study of Divre Torah. So our Rabbis come and say that in fact there is no argument between these two opinions. The opinion that says Shabbat was given for eating and drinking, that is referring to Talmide Chachamim, scholars that sit and study the whole week long. For them on Shabbat they can take a little break and eat a little longer than they normally do, and drink a little longer than they normally do. But businessmen who are all week long involved in physical pursuits, for them Shabbat is a spiritual haven where they have to indulge themselves in the study of Torah.

And maybe that's the connection between Shabbat and the Mishkan. The Mishkan was a place where the people would go and recharge their batteries as they felt the Shechina presence concentrated in the Mishkan. Mishkan was that place where people can go and feel a closeness to G-d. And the Torah is telling you that Shabbat is like a Mishkan in the sense that it's the day that we spiritually recharge our batteries. Through the study of Torah we get closer to Bore Olam, and that Kedusha of Shabbat which is like the Kedusha of the Mishkan carries us throughout the whole week until the next Shabbat.

There is an important lesson here for many of the businessmen who think that Shabbat is about catching up on lost sleep that was incurred during the

week. There is something to say about sleeping on Shabbat, but of course there are more lofty ideals and ideas that Shabbat represent. Shabbat is a day of study of Torah and spiritual growth.

Let us take advantage of this modern day Mishkan called Shabbat, and use it to the right reasons for the study of Torah.

**VICTOR BIBI
SOD HAPARASHA**

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Rabbi Wein

Since all of us are still in a somewhat post--Purim frame of mind, I am taking the liberty of commenting on costumes, past and present that mark the holiday. I received many pictures of my blessed great-grandchildren, all of them dressed in costume. Some were airline pilots and flight attendants while others were mail carriers and even letters. There were a number of Queen Esthers, police people and monkeys, rabbits and other assorted wildlife. Naturally, wearing costumes on Purim is one of the traditions of the joyous holiday.

But as the Lord has blessed us with affluence beyond our imagination just 70 years ago, costumes have become more ornate and creative than they were in my youth in Chicago. Back then wearing a mask over your eyes was considered to be a sufficient costume to where in order to mark the day. The entire concept of wearing a costume or disguise is based on the fact that the holiday is one of hidden guidance and to emphasize that what appears to us may not be the reality.

The Talmud teaches us that even judges can only rule upon the facts as they appear to one's eyes. That is the human limitation that our finite nature imposes upon us. But we are all aware that what appears before our eyes may not be the true reality of the matter and that we are being fooled by a costume or a disguise, or even by our own gullibility. That is certainly one of the more important messages that the holiday of Purim impresses upon us.

When we are young children, we delight in wearing costumes. In our imagination we can still be whatever we want to be – a fireman, a policeman, a queen, even an astronaut. However as we grow older these dreams and this imagery fade before the realities of life. Our choices in life become much narrower and much less exotic.

Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks

We shed our youthful costumes but we replace them with others. We wear suits, ties and dresses and pretend that these garments truly represent and reveal who we are. But there is always the still small voice within us that yearns to be someone different than what our outside represents to the world. This in turn always creates a sense of tension and frustration within us.

There are entire sections of the Jewish people whose dress and clothing are imposed upon them by society, both secular and religious, but which may not truly be representative of the person who is inside the costume. Most of life is a struggle to try and be what we really are. This is very difficult to achieve, for the constraints of the societies that we live in are great and powerful.

My only experience in escaping from a costume was that when I was very young rabbi the officers of that synagogue wanted me to wear a robe during the Sabbath service. They said that it would lend dignity to the congregation and to me as well. I refused to do so because I knew that that certainly was not who I was. Eventually the congregation became accustomed to a rabbi who did not wear a robe. I reckon this to be one of my small triumphs in my rabbinic career.

The Torah describes for us that our great teacher Moshe had to wear a mask while addressing the Jewish people. His face shone with such a godly radiance that human beings found it difficult to be in his presence and to witness the light that emanated from within him. But Moshe without the mask was the true Moshe. When he communicated with Heaven, so to speak, he did so with his true interest and therefore his face shone with rays of light.

Many times in being the leader of the people, circumstances intervene and force the leader to wear a mask and even a disguise in order to relate to his people and guide them in the path of goodness and righteousness. There is no matter of dishonesty or subterfuge in wearing this mask. The leader must be relevant to his generation and his people in order to be effective. But the leader must always realize that he is wearing a mask and that his true essence may be different than his public persona or outside costume.

Rare are the people who are able to say that their inside and outside match perfectly. Most of us are always in costume but we should realize that this is the reality and that we are dressed up

With this week's double parsha, with its long account of the construction of the sanctuary – one of the longest narratives in the Torah, taking a full 13 chapters – comes to a magnificent climax:

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the Sanctuary. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the Glory of the Lord filled the Sanctuary. (Ex. 40:34-35)

That is what the building of the sanctuary was about: how to bring God, as it were, from heaven to earth, or at least from the top of the mountain to down in the valley, from the remote God of awe-inspiring power to the Shekhinah, the indwelling Presence, God as shakhen, a neighbour, intimate, close, within the camp, in the midst of the people.

Yet for all this, we wonder why the Torah has to go on at such length in its details of the Mishkan, taking up the whole of Terumah and Tetzaveh, half of Ki Tissa, and then again Vayakhel and Pekudei. After all, the Mishkan was at best a temporary dwelling for the Shekhinah, suited to the years of wandering and wilderness. In Israel, it was superseded by the Temple. For two thousand years in the absence of a Temple its place was taken by the synagogue. Why, if the Torah is timeless, does it devote such space to what was essentially a time-bound structure?

The answer is deep and life-transforming, but to reach it we have to note some salient facts. First, the language the Torah uses in Pekudei is highly reminiscent of the language used in the narrative of the creation of the universe:

Genesis 1-2 Exodus 39-40

And God saw all that He had made and behold it was very good. (1:31) Moses saw all the skilled work and behold they had done it; as God had commanded it they had done it. (39:43)

The heavens and earth and all their array were completed. (2:1) All the work of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting was completed. (39:32)

And God completed all the work that He had done.

(2:2) And Moses completed the work. (40:33)

And God blessed... (2:3) And Moses blessed... (39:43)

And sanctified it. (2:3) And you shall sanctify it and all its vessels. (40:9)

Clearly the Torah wants us to connect birth of the universe with the building of the Mishkan, but how and why?

The numerical structure of the two passages heightens the connection. We know that the key number of the creation narrative is seven. There are seven days, and the word "good" appears seven times. The first verse of the Torah contains seven Hebrew words, and the second, 14. The word *eret*, "earth," appears 21 times, the word *Elokim*, "God," 35 times, and so on.

So too in *Pekudei*, the phrase "as the Lord commanded Moses" appears seven times in the account of the making of the priestly garments (Ex. 39:1-31), and another seven times in the description of Moses setting up the Sanctuary (Ex. 40:17-33).

Note also one tiny detail, the apparently odd and superfluous "And" at the very beginning of the book of Exodus: "And these are the names ..." The presence of this connective suggests that the Torah is telling us to see Genesis and Exodus as inherently connected. They are part of the same extended narrative.

The final relevant fact is that one of the Torah's most significant stylistic devices is the chiasmus, or "mirror-image symmetry" – a pattern of the form ABCC1B1A1, as in "(A) He who sheds (B) the blood (C) of man, (C1) by man (B1) shall his blood (A1) be shed" (Gen. 9:6). This form can be the shape of a single sentence, as here, or a paragraph, but it can also exist at larger levels of magnitude.

What it means is that a narrative reaches a certain kind of closure when the end takes us back to the beginning – which is precisely what happens at the end of Exodus. It reminds us, quite precisely, of the beginning of all beginnings, when God created heaven and earth. The difference is that this time human beings have done the creating: the Israelites, with their gifts, the labour and their skills.

To put it simply: Genesis begins with God creating the universe as a home for humankind. Exodus ends with human beings, the Israelites, creating the Sanctuary as a home for God.

But the parallel goes far deeper than this – telling us about the very nature of the difference between *kodesh* and *chol*, sacred and secular, the holy and the mundane.

We owe to the great mystic, R. Isaac Luria, the concept of *tzimtzum*, "self-effacement" or "self-limitation." Luria was perplexed by the question: If God exists, how can the universe exist? At every point in time and space, the Infinite should crowd out the finite. The very existence of God should act as

does a Black Hole to everything in its vicinity. Nothing, not even light waves, can escape a Black Hole, so overwhelming is its gravitational pull. Likewise, nothing physical or material should be able to survive for even a moment in the presence of the pure, absolute Being of God.

Luria's answer was that, in order for the universe to exist, God had to hide Himself, screen His presence, limit His Being. That is *tzimtzum*.

Now let us come back to the key words *kodesh* and *chol*. One of the root meanings of *chol*, and the related root *ch-l-l*, is "empty." *Chol* is the space vacated by God through the process of self-limitation so that a physical universe can exist. It is, as it were, "emptied" of the pure Divine light.

Kodesh is the result of a parallel process in the opposite direction. It is the space vacated by us so that God's presence can be felt in our midst. It is the result of our own *tzimtzum*. We engage in self-limitation every time we set aside our devices and desires in order to act on the basis of God's will, not our own.

That is why the details of the Sanctuary are described at such length: to show that every feature of its design was not humanly invented but God-given. That is why the human equivalent of the word "good" in the Genesis creation account is "as the Lord commanded Moses." When we nullify our will to do God's will, we create something that is holy.

To put it simply: *chol* is the space God makes for humankind. *Kodesh* is the space humankind makes for God. And both spaces are created the same way: by an act of *tzimtzum*, self-effacement.

So the making of the Sanctuary that takes up the last third of the book of Exodus is not just about a specific construction, the portable shrine that the Israelites took with them on journey through the wilderness. It is about an absolutely fundamental feature of the religious life, namely the relationship between the sacred and the secular, *kodesh* and *chol*. *Chol* is the space God makes for us. *Kodesh* is the space we make for God.

So, for six days a week – the days that are *chol* – God makes space for us to be creative. On the seventh day, the day that is *Kadosh*, we make space for God by acknowledging that we are His creations. And what applies in time applies also in space. There are secular places where we pursue our own purposes. And there are holy places where we open ourselves, fully and without reserve, to God's

purposes.

If this is so, we have before us an idea with life-transforming implications. The highest achievement is not self-expression but self-limitation: making space for something other and different from us. The happiest marriages are those in which each spouse makes space for the other to be his or her-self. Great parents make space for their children. Great leaders make space for their followers. Great teachers make space for their pupils. They are there when needed, but they don't crush or inhibit or try to dominate. They practice *tzimtzum*, self-limitation, so that others have the space to grow. That is how God created the universe, and it is how we allow others to fill our lives with their glory.

Rav Kook on the Perasha

Betzalel's Appointment

God informed Moses of Betzalel's appointment to oversee the construction of the Tabernacle, and Moses subsequently apprised the people. According to the Midrash (Berachot 55a), however, this was not just a perfunctory notification.

"God asked, 'Moses, is Betzalel acceptable to you?' 'Master of the world,' exclaimed Moses, 'if he is acceptable to You, then certainly he is acceptable to me!' 'Nevertheless, I want you to speak with the people.'

"So Moses went to the people, and asked them, 'Is Betzalel acceptable to you?' 'If he is acceptable to God and to you,' responded the people, 'then certainly he is acceptable to us!'

The Sages learned from this story a lesson in public appointments: one should seek the people's approval before assigning a leader. Still, it seems superfluous for God Himself to consult with Moses and the people. Certainly God knows who is best qualified to organize the Tabernacle construction; why bother consulting with Moses and the people? Was this just a formality, out of politeness?

Three Qualifications for a Leader

A great leader must possess three qualities. These qualities differ in relative importance and the ease by which they may be recognized.

The first trait of leadership is integrity and purity of soul. This is an inner quality, only fully revealed to the One Who examines innermost thoughts and feelings. It is also the key trait of true leadership.

The second quality sought in a leader is the wisdom needed to successfully guide the people. This quality is recognizable to people — but not to all people. Only the astute can accurately gauge a leader's sagacity. While not as crucial as the trait of personal integrity, an administrator cannot successfully lead the people without good judgment and political acumen.

The final quality that marks a successful leader consists of external talents apparent to all, such as charisma and eloquence. While these qualities are less important than the previous two, they certainly contribute to a leader's popularity and effectiveness.

The order is, of course, important. Candidates who excel only in the superficial qualifications make poor and even corrupt leaders. Good leadership is based on honesty and integrity. Upon these traits, the other two levels, political acumen and charisma, are built.

The Midrash about Betzalel reflects this prioritization. First, God affirmed Betzalel's qualifications in terms of those inner qualities that only God can truly know. While critical, these traits of integrity and purity are not sufficient. Therefore, He consulted with a wise leader — Moses — whether Betzalel also qualified in terms of the political wisdom necessary for the position. And finally, the people were consulted whether Betzalel met the qualifications that they sought in a popular leader.

(Gold from the Land of Israel, pp. 166-167. Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. II, p. 262)

AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL

Ten Aspects of Shabbat Rabbi Avigdor Miller ZT"L

1. Hashem created the world from nothing and is in full control.
Everything is in the world because He wishes it to be.
2. A double portion of Mann (food from Heaven) fell for Shabbat (Bitachon).
The 2 challot that we have at every Shabbat meal to remind us that the Jew who is loyal to Hashem's mitzvoth will not lose out by keeping them.
The Mann is the demonstration of Bitachon, showing that Hashem is in control.
3. Shabbat is the time to give thanks to Hashem.
We sing on the Shabbat day, "Tov Lehodot laShem." It is Good to give thanks to Hashem.
4. "Zecher leyetziat Mitzrayim"
Shabbat commemorates the creation of Am Yisrael.
"Beni uben Benei Yisrael ot hi le'olam" Shabbat is a sign of a covenant between Hashem and us.
Think: who are you? – a goy kadosh, a holy nation chosen by Hashem
5. "Be'Shabbat nitenah Torah le'Yisrael", The Torah was given on Shabbat.
Shabbat is the glorious opportunity to accomplish something in the knowledge of the great gift Hashem gave us-The Torah.
6. Shabbat is "Me'en Olam Haba", A preparation and a picture of Olam Haba
which will strengthen our Emunah.
As you sit at your Shabbat table enjoying the delicacies of Shabbat, think about Olam Haba.
7. Hashem rested on Shabbat, "Ki bo shabat vayinafash".
And He wants that your donkey and ox shall rest.
Hashem rested, and He wants us to do the same, so that we should emulate Him.
Shabbat teaches us that Hashem desires Kindliness.
8. Oneg Shabbat – "Anyone who causes joy to himself on Shabbat, he is going to get an estate in Olam Haba that has no bounds."
Shabbat is a day to enjoy in order to know how great is Hashem's kindness to us.
And so, we have to concentrate on enjoying Shabbat in every way.

9. "The words of the Hachamim are more beloved to Hashem than the wine of the Torah itself."

The Sages added a number of decrees to our shemirat Shabbat.

Keeping 'takanot' Hachamim shows real Yirat Shamyim by demonstrating that we keep the fences built around His laws.

!0. "Hashem blessed the Sabbath day"

The Jew has vacation with pay, one sixth of his life. Includes Shabbat & Holidays.

We can use this time to be with our families, talk to our children, associate with relatives

& friends, attend the synagogue for prayers and learning Torah and to hear the Rabbi speak.

11. To gain Da'at.

The most important thing in life is to gain True Knowledge.