

QUESTIONS ON PARASHAT PEKUDEI

Q-1. (a) How does the phrase “*Eileh pekudei*” (these are the [*Mishkan*’s] accountings) relate to (1) *yetziat Mitzrayim*? (2) the *cheit ha’eigei*? **(b)** (1) Why does the *Torah* repeat “*Mishkan*”, saying, “these are the accountings of the *Mishkan*, *Mishkan* of the Testimony?” (2) Which items were and were not included in the accounting (2 views)? **(c)** Why does the *Torah* say, “*Betzalel ... made everything Hashem commanded*”, since 31:6, 36:1-2, and 36:8 say that “wise-hearted” craftsmen did the work (2 views)? **(d)** (1) What did *Shlomo haMelech* do with the *Mishkan* after building the 1st *Beit haMikdash*? (2) What happened to the *Mishkan*’s *aron* and other vessels when the 1st *Beit haMikdash* was destroyed? **(e)** What will eventually happen to the *Mishkan*? **(f)** While *Bnei Yisrael*’s enemies destroyed the 1st and 2nd *Betei haMikdash*, the *Mishkan* was never destroyed – what 4 of its merits prevented its ruin? (*Shemot* 38:21-31)

A-1. (a) (1) When *Hashem* introduced Himself to *Moshe*, He told him about the *geula* from *Mitzrayim* using the phrase “*pakod pakaditi*” (I have surely remembered [*Bnei Yisrael*] – 3:17) – the *pekudei* of the completed *Mishkan* culminated the *geula* of *yetziat Mitzrayim* (*Zohar*). (2) “*Eileh*” teaches that constructing the *Mishkan* atoned for the sin of the *eigel* worshippers who said “*eileh eholhecha Yisrael*” (these are your gods, *Yisrael*) (*Medrash Tanchuma*). **(b)** (1) “*Mishkan*” can refer either to the whole structure or to its curtains (as in 26:1,36:8) – “*Mishkan ha’Eidut*” specifies the whole structure, for which the accounting is given here (*Ramban*). (2) (i) The items listed in 36:8-38 and 38:9-20, which were carried under *Itamar*’s supervision were included, but not the *aron*, *shulchan*, *menorah* and *mizbechot* carried under *Elazar*’s supervision (*ibn Ezra*). (ii) The silver and copper items listed in 38:24-31 were included; **(c)** (1) While the craftsmen did make the vessels, it was all done at *Betzalel*’s command – he instructed them and approved all their handiwork (*Ramban*). (2) *Betzalel* did even those things that *Moshe* did not command him – those things coincided with what *Hashem* commanded *Moshe* at *Sinai*, but *Moshe* never told him (*Yerushalmi Pe’ah* 1:1). **(d)** (1) *Shlomo* hid the *Mishkan* in the tunnels below the *Beit haMikdash* (*Sotah* 9a). (2) Anticipating the *Beit haMikdash*’s destruction, King *Yoshiahu* hid the *aron*, the flask of *mun*, the anointing oil, *Aharon*’s staff and other *Mishkan* items below the *Dir ha’Eitzim* (the chamber in the *Ezrat Nashim* where wood for the *mizbei’ach* was kept) (*Yoma* 52b,54a). **(e)** The *Mishkan*’s acacia wood never rotted, and the *Mishkan* will be brought back when the 3rd *Beit haMikdash* is built (*Yoma* 72a). **(f)** The *Mishkan* was built through the merits of (1) the tablets, (2) *Moshe*, (3) *Itamar* and (4) *Betzalel* – it (1) contained the *edut*, the tablets, testifying to *Hashem*’s eternal covenant with *Bnei Yisrael*; (2) was built through *Moshe*’s greatness, making it worthy of *Hashem*’s eternal protection; (3) was put together under the charge of *Itamar*, an outstanding man of piety and integrity; and (4) was constructed by *Betzalel*, *Ahaliav* and other outstanding *tzadikim* – whereas, the *Betei haMikdash* were built by non-Jewish workers (*Sforno*).

Q-2. (a) Why does the *Torah* list what was made with the contributed silver and copper and the amounts used, but does not specify the items made with the contributed gold and the amounts used to make them (2 explanations)? **(b)** What is the significance of there being 100 *adanim* (silver sockets) that supported the planks of the *Mishkan*? (*Shemot* 38: 24, 27)

A-2. (a) (1) Since the gold was used for coating the *aron*, *shulchan* and *planks*, it was impossible to give the exact weights of the coatings; (2) *Hashem* commanded *Moshe* to give an accounting of the items under the supervision of *Itamar* (as stated in verse 21) which were carried by *Bnei Gershon* and *Merari*, i.e., the items made of silver and copper – but He did not command an accounting of the gold objects, the *aron*, *shulchan*, *menorah*, and *mizbei’ach ha-zahav*, which were carried by *Bnei Kehat* (*Oznayim leTorah*). **(b)** The word *adanim* corresponds to the similarly pronounced Name of *Hashem* – the 100 *adanim* represent the 100 blessings that we are required to recite daily — by reciting 100 blessings daily, we can share in the blessings that *Hashem* provided to the *Mishkan* (*Ba’al haTurim*).

Q-3. (a) Why does the *Torah* here add how the *bigdei kehuna*’s thread was made, unlike the other *Mishkan* items for which the methods are not stated here? **(b)** 39:42 says, “All the work of the *Mishkan* – the *Ohel Moed* – was finished”, then, “*Bnei Yisrael* did all that *Hashem* commanded *Moshe*” – should it not have stated this in reverse; i.e., *Bnei Yisrael* did all that *Hashem* commanded – then, the work of the *Mishkan* was finished (2 explanations)? **(c)** Why does the word “*beri-chav*” ([the *Mishkan*’s] wooden “beams”) not have a 2nd *yud*, as it should be spelled? **(d)** Why is the work of making the *Mishkan* first called “*avoda*” (39:42), then called “*melacha*” (39:43) (2 views)? (*Shemot* 39:32-33, 42-43)

A-3. (a) This is stated because the craftsmen innovated making gold threads in the same way one makes wool or flax – it was unheard of till then to do this (*Ramban*). **(b)** The *Torah* is telling us that (1) the *Mishkan* was complete not as a result of *Bnei Yisrael*’s doing the work – rather, *Hashem*’s Will completed the *Mishkan*, and He completed it only because *Bnei Yisrael* did their utmost to do the work – this teaches that we must do what we can in any endeavor, but the final product is in *Hashem*’s hands; (2) *Bnei Yisrael* did all that *Hashem* commanded, i.e., they did all of the *mitzvot* – doing the *mitzvot* of the work on the *Mishkan* led them to do the other *mitzvot* that *Hashem* commanded *Moshe* (*Zohar*). **(c)** Without the *yud*, it can be pronounced “*beri-cho*” (“its beam” in the singular) – while there appeared to be 3 horizontal center beams to hold up the vertical planks on 3 walls, actually a single beam was inserted in the southern wall that miraculously curved around along the western wall and curved again along the northern wall (*Shabbat* 98b). **(d)** (1) “*Avoda*” refers to spiritual work, while “*melacha*” is physical work – interchanging the word teaches that the *Mishkan*’s physical construction was a Divine service (*Rabeinu Bechaya*). (2) The “*avoda*” refers to making the tools, e.g., hammers, that *Bnei Yisrael* made in preparation for doing the *melacha* of constructing the *Mishkan* (*Ramban*).

Q-4. (a) (1) How many times does the *Torah* use phrases in *Parashat Pekudei* to say that the components of the *Mishkan* were made “as *Hashem* commanded *Moshe*”? (2) What is the total number of words contained in these phrases? (3) Why does the *Torah* keep repeating this phrase (5 explanations)? (4) Why is this phrase not used concerning the erection of the *chatzeir* (the Courtyard)? **(b)** (1) How does “as *Hashem* commanded *Moshe*” relate to our daily *tefila*? (2) What is it about the nature of *tefila* that relates it to the *Mishkan*? (*Shemot* 40:21,33)

A-4. (a) (1) 19 times; (2) 113 words (*Ba'al haTurim*). (3) (i) It indicates that the *Shechina* hovered above the *Mishkan* and dwelt among *Bnei Yisrael* only because *Bnei Yisrael* did the Divine commands as explained by *Moshe*; (ii) the *Torah* begins stating this phrase at *Shemot* 39:1, which portrays the *bigdei kehuna* – when the *bigdei kehuna* are described in *Parashat Tetzaveh*, *Moshe*'s name is not mentioned, and the continual repetition here of “as *Hashem* commanded *Moshe*” compensates for the omission (*Medrash Tanchuma*). (iii) After examining each item that was made, *Moshe* appended a “seal of approval” by stating that it was made “as *Hashem* commanded [him]” (*Vayikra Raba*). (iv) This phrase indicates that the thoughts and motivations of the construction corresponded fully with not only the written law but with the oral law as well (*Ohr haChaim*). (v) Since there are details here concerning the construction that are not specified in *Terumah* and *Tetzaveh*, the phrase tells us that the items were made according to *Betzalel*'s prophetic vision, which conformed with what *Hashem* commanded *Moshe* (*Netziv*). (4) The *chatzeir* is not one of the items that *Hashem* commanded in *Teruma*, *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa* – there, only the construction of the *Mishkan* itself, its utensils and the *bigdei kehuna* had been described (*Oznayim leTorah*). **(b)** (1) The *Shemoneh Esrei* contains 19 blessings, and the concluding phrases of the 19 blessings, e.g., “*Baruch Ata Hashem Magein Avraham*”, contain a total of 113 words – saying our *tefila* is comparable to *Bnei Yisrael*'s fulfilling *Hashem*'s command to build the *Mishkan*; (2) *tefila*, in *Ta'anit* 2a, is called “*avoda she-hee be-leiv*” (service which is in the heart) and the word “*leiv*”, referring to the heart as the seat of intellect, occurs in the *Torah* 113 times (*Ba'al haTurim*).

Q-5. (a) Since the *Mishkan*'s construction was completed on 25 *Kislev*, why did *Hashem* delay its erection until *Rosh Chodesh Nisan* (2 reasons)? **(b)** (1) Why did *Moshe* erect, do the *avoda*, and disassemble the *Mishkan* for 7 days, and permanently erect it on the 8th day? (2) Which time did *Moshe* erect the *Mishkan* on *Rosh Chodesh Nisan* (2 views)? **(c)** When the *Torah* says, “the Cloud rested on it, and *Hashem*'s Glory filled the *Mishkan*”, how did (1) “the Cloud” differ from (2) “*Hashem*'s Glory”? **(d)** After the erection of the *Mishkan*, when and where was *Moshe* able to speak with *Hashem* (2 opinions)? (*Shemot* 40:2,35)

A-5. (a) (1) *Rosh Chodesh Nisan* was the anniversary of *Yitzchak*'s birth, who dedicated himself as a *korban* at the *akeida* (*Yalkut Shimoni*). (2) It marked a new era for *Bnei Yisrael* as a free people and was distinguished by 10 “crowns” – it was the 1st day (i) of the week, a Sunday, the anniversary of Creation's 1st day; (ii) that the *nesi'im* offered *korbanot*; (iii) that the *kohanim* performed the *avoda*; (iv) of the daily *olah* sacrifices; (v) that the Heavenly fire descended; (vi) that the *kohanim* could eat the *korbanot*'s meat; (vii) that the *Shechina* dwelled on the *aron*; (viii) that the *kohanim* blessed *Bnei Yisrael*; (ix) that *korbanot* were not allowed on *bamot*; (x) that the counting of the months, with *Nisan* first, began (*Shabbat* 87b). **(b)** (1) It familiarized the *kohanim* and *levi'im* with the *Mishkan*'s operation, and they followed what *Moshe* had done; (2) (i) He erected it first on 1 *Nisan*, as stated here, and the final time on 8 *Nisan* (*ibn Ezra*). (ii) He erected it first on 23 *Adar*, and finally, as stated here, on 1 *Nisan*; **(c)** (1) the *Shechina*'s Cloud covered and completely enveloped the *Mishkan*, and (2) *Hashem*'s Glory filled the *Mishkan*'s interior (*Ramban*). **(d)** (1) *Moshe* could not enter the *Mishkan* when the *Shechina* was there, but he entered to speak with *Hashem* when the Cloud lifted (*Rashi*). (2) While the *Shechina* was in the *Mishkan*, *Moshe* stood outside the *Mishkan* to speak with Him and entered when He called him in (*Ramban*).

Q-6. (a) (1) What 12 things were bought with the ½-*shekels*? (2) How did the ½-*shekel* requirement benefit *Bnei Yisrael*? **(b)** (1) Did Jews living outside of *Eretz Yisrael* have to pay the ½-*shekel*? (2) Could women contribute ½-*shekels*? (3) Could non-Jews contribute? (*Shemot* 30:16)

A-6. (a) (1) The (i) daily *korbanot ola*; (ii) *korbanot musaf*; (iii) other communal *korbanot*; (iv) *korban* libations; (v) salt for the *korbanot*; (vi) wood to burn on the *mizbei'ach*; (vii) *lechem ha-panim* (showbread) ingredients; (viii) *omer*; (ix) *she-tai ha-lechem* ingredients (2 bread loaves for *Shavuot*); (x) *parah aduma*; (xi) goat dispatched to *Azazel*; and (xii) cloth strip tied to the goat's horns; (2) all of *Bnei Yisrael* gained the communal *korbanot*'s merits; **(b)** (1) yes; (2) if they gave the ½-*shekel*, it was accepted; (3) no (*Sefer haChinuch*, *Mitzvah* 105).

Q-7. In the *haftara*, since the *shekalim* were supposed to pay for the *Beit haMikdash*'s communal sacrifices and 11 other specific things, why did King *Yehoash* order some of the *shekalim* be used to repair the *Beit haMikdash*? (II *Melachim* 12:5)

A-7. For the 6 years of Queen *Ataliah*'s reign, no *shekalim* were collected, no sacrifices were offered in the *Beit haMikdash*, which fell into disrepair. King *Yehoash* asked the people to donate all the *shekalim* they should have contributed during the 6 years. As a result, there was sufficient money both for all of the communal purchases and for the necessary repairs (*Radak*).