

QUESTIONS ON PARASHIOT VAYAKHEIL-PEKUDEI

Q-1. (a) Why did Moshe (1) gather all of *Bnei Yisrael* together (3 reasons)? (2) teach *Bnei Yisrael* the *Shabbat* laws immediately after his face shone at the end of *Ki Tisa*? **(b)** When Moshe said, “these are the things that Hashem commanded”, about what “things” was Moshe speaking (2 views)? (2) On what date did Moshe gather them? (3) Why did Moshe include the women in the gathering? (4) Whom did Moshe exclude from this gathering? **(c)** (1) When Moshe said, “these are the things that Hashem commanded”, about what “things” was Moshe speaking (2 views)? (2) Since Moshe said, in 35:4, “this is the word that Hashem has commanded” when he referred to building the *Mishkan*, why did he say, in 35:1, “these are the things that Hashem has commanded”, when talking about observing the *Shabbat* – he should have said, “this is the thing”, i.e., *Shabbat* observance, in the singular? **(e)** (1) After the *Torah* restates the prohibition of performing *melacha* on *Shabbat*, why does it single out the prohibition of kindling fire (5 explanations)? (2) Since Moshe already taught in 16:23 that on Friday, “bake what you wish to bake, and cook what you wish to cook”, but do not bake or cook on *Shabbat*, what did he add by again banning the kindling of a fire on *Shabbat*? **(f)** Why would we think that all kindling is not prohibited on *Shabbat*? **(g)** (1) Which of the 613 *mitzvot*, unrelated to cooking, is derived from the *Torah*'s specifying the prohibition on kindling fire on *Shabbat*? (2) How is it learned? (*Shemot* 35:3) **(h)** (1) What are the 5 times that the *Torah* gives accounts of constructing the *Mishkan* and its vessels? (2) Why the repetitions? (*Shemot* 35:1-4)

A-1. (a) (1) Moshe wanted to tell everyone (i) these 3 things – the laws of *Shabbat* and the *Mishkan*; that Hashem forgave them for the *cheit ha'eigel*; and that they were once again His beloved (*Ramban*). (ii) that future leaders of generations must gather assemblies each and every *Shabbat* to teach their congregants the *Torah* and proper behavior (*Yalkut Shimoni*). (iii) a defense for the *cheit ha'eigel*, since he gathered more than 3 million men, women and children, while the *eigel* worshippers totaled 3,000; i.e., only 1 in a 1,000 was guilty (*R. Bechaya*). (2) To teach that one's countenance glows differently on *Shabbat* than on other days (*Ba'al haTurim*). **(b)** (1) The (i) laws regarding prohibiting work on *Shabbat* (*ibn Ezra*, in the name of *Sa'adia Gaon*). (ii) The commands for constructing the *Mishkan*, its vessels and all of its work (*Ramban*). (2) On 11 *Tishrei*, the day after *Yom Kippur*, when Hashem forgave *Bnei Yisrael* for the *cheit ha'eigel*, and Moshe brought the 2nd *luchot* from *Har Sinai* (*Rashi*). (3) He wanted the women to have a role in donating for the *Mishkan* (*Ramban*). (4) Moshe separated the *eirev rav*, since they led *Bnei Yisrael* in the *cheit ha'eigel*, from assembling with *Bnei Yisrael* (*Mizrachi*). **(c)** (1) (i) The laws regarding banning work on *Shabbat* (*ibn Ezra*, in the name of *Sa'adia Gaon*). (ii) The commands for constructing the *Mishkan*, its vessels and all of its work (*Ramban*). (2) He spoke in the plural because he was referring to the 39 *av melachot*, general categories of work, and the *toldot*, which are subcategories, that are prohibited on *Shabbat* since they are the specific *melachot* that were required to build the *Mishkan* (*Rabeinu Bechaya*). **(e)** (1) (i) For the *melacha* of kindling, there is a double violation, and one is punished for two sins, i.e., (i) do not do *melacha*, and do not kindle fire on *Shabbat*; (ii) kindling fire is an example of an *av melacha*, teaching that if someone inadvertently violates several *av melachot*, he is required to bring a separate *korban chatat* for each violation (*Yevamot* 6b). (iii) The other 38 *melachot* are constructive actions related to building the *Mishkan*, and even though kindling fire is destructive, it is banned (*Sforno*). (iv) Since fire is essential to food preparation, and *melachot* related to preparing food are permitted on *Yom Tov*, we might think that they also are permitted on *Shabbat*, but the *Torah* tells us they are not permitted (*ibn Ezra*). (v) 35:3 says that kindling fire is a *melacha* banned only “*be-moshveteichem*” (in your dwellings), but in the *Mishkan* and *Beit haMikdash*, where it was necessary to keep the *mizbei'ach*'s fire lit, kindling was permitted (*Shabbat* 20a). (2) One might erroneously think that in order to enjoy the *Shabbat*, one would be allowed to warm water in order to bathe, or light a fire either to keep warm or to not sit in darkness, but this verse tells us not to make a fire no matter what its purpose; **(f)** Since the *Aseret haDibrot* says, “do not do any work on *Shabbat*” (20:10), but here it says merely, “whoever ‘does work’ shall be killed”, not “whoever does any work”, we would think that kindling for food preparation on *Shabbat* is allowed, like it is on *Yom Tov* (*Devarim* 16:8), but the *Torah* therefore specifically mentions here that work for food preparation is prohibited, even in a case where he has no food to eat (*Ramban*). **(g)** (1) On *Shabbat*, a *Beit Din* may not do the positive *mitzvah* of carrying out a judgment or punishment; (2) since a person can be executed through *sereifa* (burning), the *Torah* teaches that a *Beit Din* may not carry out this form of execution, since kindling is prohibited on *Shabbat*, any other form of execution or any other judgment or punishment on *Shabbat* (*Sefer haChinuch – Mitzvah* 114). **(h)** (1) (i) Hashem gave a detailed description of what was to be built (*Terumah* and *Tetzaveh*); (ii) after appointing *Betzalel*, He again listed the items to be made (*Ki Tisa - Shemot* 31:1-11); (iii) the *Torah* again lists the items (beginning of *Vayakheil*); (iv) the *Torah* details all the items that *Betzalel* and *Bnei Yisrael* made (*Vayakheil – 36:8-39:2*); (v) when *Bnei Yisrael* brought the objects to Moshe, the *Torah* lists them again (*Pekudei – 39:33-43*); (2) the repetitions aroused the realization among *Bnei Yisrael* of the *Mishkan*'s greatness in Hashem's eyes (*R. Bechaya*).

Q-2. (a) Why did Moshe need to command all of *Bnei Yisrael* concerning the details of what Hashem commanded concerning the utensils for the *Mishkan*, since only the “*chacham lev*” (the wise-hearted people, i.e., the craftsmen) needed to know these details? **(b)** Why are the craftsmen called “*asher nesa'o libo*” (those whose hearts inspired them)? **(c)** When Moshe asked for donations (35:5), he said that all who are motivated “*ye-vi'eha*” (he shall bring it - singular) – why does 35:22 later say “*heivi'u*” (they brought - plural)? **(d)** Why did the *nesi'im* contribute the precious stones for the *eifod* and the *choshen* (3 views)? **(e)** What happened to the leftover materials that *Bnei Yisrael* had contributed to the *Mishkan* (3 views)? (*Shemot* 35:5,22,27; 36:7)

A-2. (a) Moshe wanted *Bnei Yisrael* to be aware that they would have to bring considerable contributions, i.e., everyone who was “*nediv libo*” (whose heart motivated him to contribute generously) to obtain the necessary magnitude of each raw material for all of the work that had to be done – Moshe mentioned the specific items but gave the exact details of each item to the craftsmen later; **(b)** these craftsmen, who had been slaves in *Mitzrayim*, had neither learned from a teacher nor trained their hands in these crafts but perceived in their own nature how to do such skills, telling Moshe that they will do what Hashem inspired them (*Ramban*). **(c)** *Arachin* 24a bans a man from donating his wife's jewelry without her consent, and *Bava Kama* 118b bans a woman from donating her husband's property without his consent – “*yevi'eha*” means “he shall bring her”, meaning that a man who donated his wife's jewelry had to bring her to show her consent, and a woman donating her husband's property had to bring him for his consent – “*heivi'u*” is plural since husbands and wives brought their donations together (*Ba'al haTurim*). **(d)** (1) They waited until after *Bnei Yisrael* made their donations, and then supplied whatever was lacking, and since they underestimated *Bnei Yisrael*'s generosity, these were the only items that *Bnei Yisrael* had not given (*R. Bechaya*). (2) Due to the spiritual stature of the *nesi'im*, the Clouds of Glory rewarded them with precious gems in their daily *mun*, and they donated these gems to the *Mishkan* (*Targum Yonatan*). (3) The word “*nesi'im*” refers not to *Bnei Yisrael*'s leaders, but to the Clouds of Glory, that brought gems that were in the *Pishon* River to *Bnei Yisrael* (*Kli Yakar*). **(e)** (1) With the extra, *Betzalel* did not have to skimp in using the donated materials (*Sforno*). (2) Even with the extra, *Betzalel* miraculously used everything, with nothing that was returned to the contributors (*Or haChaim*). (3) The leftovers were saved for future repairs (*Ramban*).

Q-3. (a) Why, with respect to the *aron*, does 37:1 say “*Betzalel* made,” but for all the subsequent utensils, the *Torah* says “he made” (3 views)? **(b)** Why did the *mizbach ha-ketoret* (golden incense altar) have a rim (2 reasons)? **(c)** In describing the *shemen ha-mishcha* (anointment oil) and *ketoret* (incense), why did Moshe not detail the exact ingredients and amounts, just as he provided measurements for all of the *Mishkan*'s other items? **(d)** How did Moshe obtain copper for the *kiyor* (water basin)? **(e)** Why does the *Torah* not state the size of the *kiyor*? **(f)** Why were the mirrors called “*mar-ot ha-tzov-of*” (mirrors of legions) (4 explanations)? **(g)** Why was the *kiyor* used in the *sotah* ritual? (*Shemot* 37:1,26,29, 38:8)

A-3. (a) (1) While the “wise men” (36:1) made the *aron* and other items, the work is given *Betzalel*'s name since he devoted himself to the work more than the others (*Rashi*). (2) Each statement “he made” refers back to *Betzalel* since he alone made the items (*ibn Ezra*). (3) *Betzalel* alone made the *aron*, but the wise men, under his supervision, made the other items (*Ramban*). **(b)** The rim (1) prevented *ketoret* from falling off when it was burned (*Abarbanel*). (2) was like a crown, alluding to the crown of *kehuna* (priesthood) (*Yoma* 72b). **(c)** The *Torah* did not detail this since it was “*ma'asei roke'ach*” (a perfumer's handiwork) – perfumers knew the proper ingredients and how to mix them without being told (*Ramban*). **(d)** *Bnei Yisrael*'s wives donated the copper mirrors that they had used in *Mitzrayim* to beautify themselves for their husbands, and Moshe assembled the mirrors to make the *kiyor* (*Rashi*). **(e)** Hashem instructed Moshe to use all the mirrors, without regard to the *kiyor*'s size (*ibn Ezra*). **(f)** (1) The “legion” is the masses of women who gathered at the *Mishkan* with their mirrors (*Ramban*). (2) The mirrors caused *Bnei Yisrael* to have a “great legion” of many children in *Mitzrayim* (*Rashi*). (3) The word “*tzov-of*” means “desire”, indicating that the modest women hesitated to pray at the *Mishkan* since they did not want the men to stare at them – therefore,

they stood behind the *kiyor*, blocking the men's view, so that, while the women could see everything in the *Mishkan* with the *kiyor's* mirrors, the *kiyor* reflected sunlight towards the men, preventing them from seeing the women; (4) the *kohanim* are called "*Hashem's* legions", who used the mirrors of the *kiyor* before performing the *avoda* to assure that their clothes were not stained (*Shemot Raba*). (g) The same mirrors that the wives used to entice their husbands in *Mitzrayim* were used to end a husband's suspicion of his wife (*Rashi*).

Q-4. (a) How does the phrase "*Eileh pekudei*" (these are the [*Mishkan's*] accountings) relate to (1) the *cheit ha'eigel*? (2) *yetziat Mitzrayim*? (b) 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)? (c) What is the significance of there being 100 *adanim* (silver sockets) that supported the planks of the *Mishkan*? (d) Why does 39:32 say, "All the work of the *Mishkan*, the *Ohel Moed*, was completed", followed by "*Bnei Yisrael* did all that *Hashem* commanded *Moshe*" – should it not say the reverse, i.e., "*Bnei Yisrael* did all that *Hashem* commanded", followed by, "the work of the *Mishkan* was completed"? (e) (1) Why does 39:22 repeat the word, "*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)? (f) Why does 39:22 say, "*Betzalel* ... made everything *Hashem* commanded", since 31:6, 36:1-2, and 36:8 say that the "wise-hearted" craftsmen did the work (2 views)? (g) (1) What did *Shlomo haMelech* do with the *Mishkan* after he built the 1st *Beit haMikdash*? (2) What happened to the *Mishkan's aron* and other vessels when the 1st *Beit haMikdash* was destroyed? (h) Although both *Batei haMikdash* were destroyed, the *Mishkan* was not – what 4 characteristics of the *Mishkan* combined to prevent its destruction? (i) Why is the work of making the *Mishkan* first called (1) "*avoda*" (39:42), then called (2) "*melacha*" (39:43)? (j) What will eventually happen to the *Mishkan*? (*Shemot* 39:21, 24, 27, 32, 42-43)

A-4. (a) (1) The word "*eileh*" teaches that constructing the *Mishkan* atoned for the sin of the *eigel* worshipers who said, "*eileh eholhecha Yisrael*" (these are your gods, Israel) (*Medrash Tanchuma*). (2) *Hashem* told *Moshe* about the *geula* from *Mitzrayim* using the phrase "*pakod pakaditi*" (I have surely remembered [you] – 3:16), teaching us that the *pekudei* of the completed *Mishkan* was the culmination of the *geula* of *yetziat Mitzrayim* (*Zohar*). (b) (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 39:21) 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*). (c) 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, since by reciting 100 blessings daily, we can share in the blessings that *Hashem* provided to the *Mishkan* (*Ba'al haTurim*). (d) The *Mishkan* was completed not as a result of the effort of *Bnei Yisrael*; rather, it was *Hashem's* Will that finished it, and He finished it only because *Bnei Yisrael* did their utmost to do the work – this teaches that we must do all we can in an endeavor, but the final product is in the "Hands of *Hashem*" (*A. Twerski*). (e) (1) "*Mishkan*" can refer either to the whole structure or to its curtains (as in 26:1,36:8), and the words, "*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 which were under *Elazar's* supervision (*ibn Ezra*). (ii) The silver and copper items listed in 38:24-31 were included; (f) (1) While the craftsmen did make the vessels, it was all done at *Betzalel's* command, since *Betzalel* instructed them and approved all their handiwork (*Ramban*). (2) *Betzalel* did even those things that *Moshe* did not command him, i.e., those things coincided with what *Hashem* commanded *Moshe* at *Sinai*, even though *Moshe* never told him (*Yerushalmi Pe'ah* 1:1). (g) (1) *Shlomo* hid the *Mishkan* in the tunnels below the *Beit haMikdash* (*Sotah* 9a). (2) Anticipating the destruction of the *Beit haMikdash*, King *Yoshiyahu* 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). (h) The *Mishkan* (1) contained the *edut* (the tablets), testifying to *Hashem's* eternal covenant with *Bnei Yisrael*; (2) was built through the greatness of *Moshe* and was worthy of *Hashem's* eternal protection; (3) was assembled under *Itamar*, an man of outstanding piety and integrity; (4) was built by *Betzalel*, *Ahaliav* and other *tzadikim*, while the *Batei haMikdash* were built by non-Jewish workers (*Sforno*). (i) (1) "*Avoda*" refers to spiritual work, while (2) "*melacha*" is physical work – interchanging the words teaches that the *Mishkan's* physical construction was a Divine service, just like the spiritual work (*R. Bechaya*). (j) The *Mishkan's* acacia wood never rotted, and the *Mishkan* will be brought back when the 3rd *Beit haMikdash* is built (*Yoma* 72a).

Q-5. (a) How many times does *Parashat Pekudei* say that the components of the *Mishkan* were made "as *Hashem* commanded *Moshe*"? (b) What is the total number of words in these phrases? (c) How does this relate to our daily *tefila*? (d) What do these phrases about making the *Mishkan* tell us about the nature of *tefila*? (e) Why is the phrase not used concerning the *chatzeir's* (courtyard's) erection? (*Shemot* 40:21)

A-5. (a) 19; (b) 113; (c) the concluding phrases of the 19 blessings of *Shemoneh Esrei*, e.g., "*Baruch Ata Hashem Magein Avraham*", contain 113 words; (d) *tefila*, called "*avoda shehi be-leiv*" (service which is in the heart – *Ta'anit* 2a), requires the heart's concentration – the word "*leiv*", referring to the heart as the seat of intellect, occurs 113 times in the *Torah* (*Ba'al haTurim*). (e) This is not an item that *Hashem* commanded in *Teruma*, *Tetzaveh* or *Ki Tisa* – there, only making the *Mishkan* itself, its utensils and the *bigdei kenusa* were described (*Medrash Tanchuma*).

Q-6. Why does the *Torah* (a) specify that *Hashem* commanded the calendar laws "in the land of *Mitzrayim*"? (b) say "this month shall be '*lachem*' (for you)" (5 views)? (c) not give names to the months? (d) Why did *Bnei Yisrael* begin using Babylonian/Persian names for the months, e.g., *Tishei*, *Cheshvan*? (*Shemot* 12:1-2)

A-6. (a) *Hashem* commanded all of the other *mitzvot* to *Moshe* at *Har Sinai*, and since He commanded this *mitzvah* in *Mitzrayim* but did not repeat it at *Sinai*, the *Torah* emphasizes that this *mitzvah* was given in *Mitzrayim*; (b) "*Lachem*" (1) was addressed to *Bnei Yisrael*, indicating that they will be masters of their own calendar and holidays, unlike when the *Mitzrim* controlled their time (*Sforno*). (2) was addressed to *Moshe* and *Aharon*, since just as these leaders had the authority to declare *Rosh Chodesh*, leaders in future generations, who would have *semicha* (ordination) bestowed on them going back to *Moshe*, could declare *Rosh Chodesh* (*Rosh Hashana* 25b). (3) Since *Moshe* and *Aharon* were the representatives of *Bnei Yisrael*, (i) the *Torah* tells us that *kiddush ha-chodesh*, with *Nisan* as the 1st month, applies for all times; (ii) the leaders of the *Sanhedrin* of each generation, like *Moshe* and *Aharon*, are responsible for performing this *mitzvah*; (iii) although *Tishrei* is actually is the beginning of the year (34:22), we should look at *Nisan* as the first month of our redemption; (c) since the month of *yetzi'at Mitzrayim* is the 1st month of the calendar, any mention of a date with a numbered month, starting with *yetzi'at Mitzrayim*, recalls *yetzi'at Mitzrayim* for us, and we fulfill the *mitzvah* of *zecher* (remembering) *yetzi'at Mitzrayim*; (d) by using these names, we recall *Hashem's* redemption of us from *galut Bavel* (*Ramban*).

Q-7. (a) In the *haftara*, what are the differences between the *korbanot* (sacrifices) for *Rosh Chodesh* described by *Yechezkel* and those described in the *Torah*? (b) What do these differences tell us? (*Yechezkel* 46:6-7)

A-7. (a) In (i) *Bamidbar* 28:11-12 and in (ii) *Sefer Yechezkel*, the *korbanot* for *Rosh Chodesh* were: (1) (i) *Bamidbar* – two young bulls, (ii) *Yechezkel* – one young bull; (2) (i) *Bamidbar* and (ii) *Yechezkel* – one ram, (3) (i) *Bamidbar* – 7 lambs, (ii) *Yechezkel* – 6 lambs; (4) (i) *Bamidbar* – 3/10 of an *ephah* meal-offering for each bull, (ii) *Yechezkel* – an *ephah* meal-offering for the bull; (5) (i) *Bamidbar* – 2/10 of an *ephah* meal-offering for the ram, (ii) *Yechezkel* – an *ephah* meal offering for the ram; and (6) (i) *Bamidbar* – 1/10 of an *ephah* meal-offering for each lamb, (ii) *Yechezkel* – as much as can be afforded for the lambs; (b) if the *kohanim* had only one bull or fewer than 7 lambs that are prescribed by the *Torah*, or if they have meal-offerings for some, but not for all, of the *korbanot*, they should bring those that they have available (*Rashi*).