

Parsha Plug: Parshat Vayakhel

Shemot 36:1-7	שמות לו:א-ז
<p>1 Bezalel and Oholiab and every wise hearted man into whom God had imbued wisdom and insight to know how to do, shall do all the work of the service of the Holy, according to all that the Lord has commanded." 2 And Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every wise hearted man into whose heart the Lord had given wisdom, everyone whose heart lifted him up to approach the work to do it. 3 So they took from before Moses all the offering[s] that the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the Holy, and they brought him more gifts every morning. 4 Then all the wise men who were doing the work of the Holy came, each one from his work, which they had been doing. 5 And they spoke to Moses, saying: "The people are bringing very much, more than is enough for the labor of the articles which the Lord had commanded to do." 6 So Moses commanded, and they announced in the camp, saying: "Let no man or woman do any more work for the offering for the Holy." So the people stopped bringing. 7 And the work was sufficient for them for all the work, to do it and to leave over.</p>	<p>א ועשה בצלאל ואהליאב וכל איש חכם לב אשר נתן ה' חכמה ותבונה בהמה לנדעת לעשות את כל מלאכת עבדת ה' דש לך ל אשר צוה ה' ב ויקרא משה אל בצלאל ואל אהליאב ואל כל איש חכם לב אשר נתן ה' חכמה בלבם כל אשר נשאו לבם לקרבה אל המלאכה לעשות אתה: ג ויקחו מלפני משה את כל התרומה אשר הביאו בני ישראל למלאכת עבדת ה' דש לעשות אתה והם הביאו אליו עוד נדבה בכ' קר בפקר: ד ויבאו כל החכמים העשים את כל מלאכת ה' דש איש איש ממלאכתו אשר היתה עשים: ה ויאמרו אל משה לאמר מרבים העם להביא מדי העבודה למלאכה אשר צוה ה' לעשות אתה: ו ויצו משה ויעבירו קול במחנה לאמר איש ואשה אל יעשו עוד מלאכה לתרומת ה' דש ויפלא העם מהביא: ז והמלאכה היתה דם לכל המלאכה לעשות אתה והותר:</p>

Masechet Taanit 29a-29b	מסכת תענית כט-כט:
<p>Just as when the month of Av arrives, we lessen our joy, so too when the month of Adar arrives, we increase our joy.</p>	<p>משנכנס אב ממעטין בשמחה כך משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה.</p>

Seforno on Shemot 36:5	ספורנו שמות לו:ה
<p>The donations of the people exceeded what was needed to perform the specific tasks which alone God had commanded to be performed. God wanted no additions, nor omissions. This is expressed by the words "to perform only this task alone." This was different from the Temples built by Shlomo and Herod.</p>	<p>למלאכה אשר צוה ה' לעשות אותה הנה נדבת העם היא יותר ממה שצריך לאותה המלאכה שצוה ה' לעשות אותה בלבד בלי תוספת וגרעון, שנתן מדה וקצב למשכן ולכל כליו, עליהם אין להוסיף ומהם אין לגרוע, לא כענין בבנין שלמה והורדוס.</p>

Rabbeinu Bachya on Shemot 36:5	רבנו בחיי שמות לו:ה
<p>The expression מרבים indicates that the people did not stop contributing. The Torah compliments the people, both men</p>	<p>מרבים העם להביא. מלת מרבים מורה כי לא היו פוסקים מלהביא והגיד לך</p>

<p>and women. The men contributed silver, copper, blue and purple wool, etc., the women contributed their golden jewelry. The principal contributions were all brought on the first day. The wording hints at the speed with which these contributions were made when the Torah writes: "all the people came out and they came (arrived)." (35:20-21). The Torah adds in 36:3 that "the people kept on bringing contributions morning after morning." One gains the impression from what is written that even after it had become clear that there was enough, some people kept on bringing gifts every morning. The moral and ethical integrity of the people engaged in that work is evident from the fact that they took time out from their work to tell Moshe that they had received more materials than they could use to complete the project. The words ויאמרו אל משה indicate that they told Moshe about this overage time and again. The Torah also testifies to the superior trust Moshe displayed in the craftsmen seeing he did not demand an accounting, nor did he make use of his legal position as their ruler to appropriate any of the leftover material claiming it was for the people's "communal treasury." This is why the Torah writes that Moshe announced throughout the camp that there were to be no more contributions.</p>	<p>הכתוב מעלה גדולה בנדבת כלל ישראל האנשים והנשים כי האנשים התנדבו הכסף והנחשת והתכלת והארגמן ותולעת שני והנשים התנדבו תכשיטי הזהב שלהם, ועקר כל הנדבה הזאת הביאוה ביום א' אצל משה כי כן לשון הפרשה מורה על לשון מהירות כלשון ויצאו כל עדת בני ישראל ויבאו, ועוד מה שאמר הכתוב והם הביאו אליו עוד נדבה בבקר בבקר. והמובן מזה כי אחר שהביאו עקר כל הנדבה ביום ההוא עוד נשארו מהם מעטים שהביאו אליו נדבה בבקר בבקר כלומר למחרתו בהשכמה, וגלה לנו הכתוב על מעלת החכמים העושים המלאכה באמונתם הגדולה כי הגידו זה למשה, והם היו טרודים ומתעסקים במלאכתם והניחו מלאכתם לאמר למשה כי כן יורה לשון איש איש ממלאכתו אשר המה עושים, וזהו לשון ויאמרו אל משה לאמר פעם אחר פעם וגם מעלת משה המולך עליהם שלא היה בוחר בכספם ובזהבם ועל כן כתיב ויצו משה ויעבירו קול במחנה למנוע הענין.</p>
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<p>Malbim on Shemot 36:5</p>	<p>מלבים שמות לו:ה</p>
<p>The additions invalidated it.</p>	<p>והריבוי פוסל בה.</p>

<p>Masechet Chagigah 12a</p>	<p>מסכת חגיגה יב.</p>
<p>Reish Lakish said: What is the meaning of, "I am Kel Shakai" (Genesis 17:1)? It means: I am He Who said to the world "Enough!" instructing it to stop expanding. Similarly, Reish Lakish said: When the Holy One, Blessed be He, created the sea, it continued to expand until the Holy One, Blessed be He, rebuked it and made it dry, as it is stated: "He rebukes the sea and makes it dry, and desiccates all the rivers" (Nahum 1:4).</p>	<p>אמר ר"ל מאי דכתיב (בראשית לה, יא) אני א-ל-ש-די אני הוא שאמרתי לעולם די אמר ר"ל בשעה שברא הקב"ה את הים היה מרחיב והולך עד שגער בו הקב"ה ויבשו שנאמר (נחום א, ד) גוער בים ויבשהו וכל הנהרות החריב.</p>

<p>Rashi on Bereshit 43:14</p>	<p>רש"י בראשית מג:יד</p>
<p>Its midrashic interpretation [of Yaakov's statement when he allows Binyanim to go down to Egypt] is: May He Who said to His</p>	<p>מדרשו מי שאמר לעולם די יאמר די</p>

<p>world, "Enough!" say to my troubles, "Enough!" for I have not enjoyed tranquility since my youth. The trouble of Lavan, the trouble of Esau, the trouble of Rachel (who died in childbirth), the trouble of Dinah, the trouble of Yosef, the trouble of Shimon (who is being detained by the ruler of Egypt), and the trouble of Benjamin (whom he demands that I send to him).</p>	<p>לצרותי, שלא שקטתי מנעורי, צרת לבן, צרת עשו, צרת רחל, צרת דינה, צרת יוסף, צרת שמעון, צרת בנימין.</p>
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Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Making Space (Vayakhel-Pekudei 5778)

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...*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.