

PORTION	DATE	HEB DATE	TORAH	NEVIIM	KETUVIM
Terumah	9 Feb 2019	4 Adar 5779	Exo 25:1-27:19	1King 5:12-6:13	Mark 12:35-44

With the exception of the incident of the Golden Calf (Chs. 32-33), the rest of the *Shemot* (Exodus) is devoted to the construction of the *Mishkan* (dwelling place) or Tabernacle. Sforno said that the Tabernacle was made necessary for their relapse to idolatry. He also said that the Tabernacle was not needed since all the Yisraelites achieved the level of prophecy and they were worthy of the *Shechinah* (Glory) to rest upon him.<sup>1</sup> However, as a result of the Golden Calf, it became necessary to have a “central” Sanctuary.

Rashi said that the instruction of building the Tabernacle was given only after the incident of the Golden Calf. The Tabernacle contains many details how the Ark, the Tabernacle, utensils, the curtains, sockets, and etc. to be built. Details are so important that when we pray, we face eastward as we live in America; in Australia west, and so forth. Even in Jerusalem, the people pray facing toward the *Beit Mikdash* (Temple). So, we are generally facing toward the *Beit Mikdash* when we pray; and inside the *Beit Mikdash*, we face toward the Ark.

A question is raised when Moshe was given the commandments to build the Tabernacle. We studied that Moshe went up Mount Sinai three times. He went up the mountain first time to receive the Ten Commandments and 53 other commandments as recorded in the *parashat Mishpatim*. Then, after the debacle of the Golden Calf, he ascended a second time for another forty days and forty nights, descending to the people the second time on *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement), with the message of forgiveness. *Parashat Vayak'hel* (And he assembled) begins on the day after *Yom Kippur*, in Exodus chapter 35, and that is when Moshe gathers together the whole nation in an assembly and give over to them all these commandments of the Tabernacle which Hashem taught him in our *parasha* while he was on the Mountain, and the people zealously and promptly go and donate all the materials, and construct the Tabernacle.

*Shemot* (Exodus) 25:2 says, “Speak to the children of Yisrael, that they take up a contribution for Me. From everyone whose heart moves him you shall take up My contribution.” R’ Chiya opens the discussion by citing Psalms 135:4, “For Yah has chosen Ya’akov for Himself, Yisrael for His treasured possession.” When Yisraelites were in Mitzrayim (Egypt), they were called as the Children of Yisrael or the Children of Ya’akov. However, they were called as Yisrael on Mount Sinai after they accepted the Ten Commandments. The nations who did not accept the Ten Commandments were given to the ministering angels, and Yisrael has become His possession after their acceptance as said in Devarim (Deuteronomy) 32:9, “For the portion of YHWH is His people.” We became Yisrael when we accepted by the Elohim of Abraham, Yitzchak, and Ya’akov by crossing over from an idol pagan worshipping nation.

Therefore, “you shall take up My contribution” is giving back to Hashem what belongs to Him. We belong to Him. And we are giving back what belongs to Him. In biblical times, it was gold, silver, copper, fruits, grains, and other material things. In today’s term, it is money. With *tzadikkah* (offering), we can help those who are poor and in need. When the *tzadikkah* is given to them without any expectation of receiving anything in return, we are storing up treasures in the World to Come. If we do expect any return, we might receive the gift back in this world but there will not be any treasures in the World to Come. Thus, it is said in Mattiyahu (Matthew) 6:3 says, “But when you do a kind deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.”

<sup>1</sup> Chumash, The Schottenstein Edition, Parashas Terumah, p. 177

In this week's Torah portion, we will focus on the Ark. The covering of the Ark contains two *kerubim* (Shemot 25:18) (cherubs) which Hashem will dwell in the middle (v.22). Hashem said in Shemot 20:4, "You do not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of that which is in the heavens above, or which is in the earth beneath, or which is in the waters under the earth." But, now Hashem is commanding to build two statues on the Covering. Hashem gave us prohibition of making "a carved image", yet in this week's *parasha* He commanded Moshe to build "two *kerubim*".

We learned that during the Shabbat, we are not allowed to do any "labor". Yet, in Beit Mikdash, the priests were allowed to "labor" in performance of worship to Hashem. We are also allowed to do "*brit milah*" (circumcision) on Shabbat which is a part of "labor". We are allowed to minister medical aids (labor) if an injury is life threatening on Shabbat. All these are exceptions to the rules Hashem gave us. So, there must be something we can learn as to why Moshe was commanded to make two *kerubim*.

There is a discussion amongst commentators whether the Ark has three pieces or two: three – base, cover, and two *keruv* (cherub); for two – base, cover and *kerubim* attached together. It is a classic discussion where a builder put up the cupboard with lids. Do you put the cupboard on the wall, place cups, then put a lid? Or do you put the cupboard and lid together, then place cups?

The Ark, while it had a physical form, it did not take up any space. The Ark was heavy but it was carried on the shoulder of man (Exo. 25:12-14; Num. 7:9), and not carried on the cart (Second Samuel 6:1-7; 1 Chron. 13:9-12). The Midrash explains that the Ark carried the men rather than the man carrying the Ark. The Ark was meant to be carried on the shoulders of Kohathites who were the members of Levites. When King David attempted to bring the Ark on the cart, it broke and Uzzah was killed when he touched the Ark. King David should have allowed Abinadab and his sons to bring the Ark rather than using the cart. (Second Samuel 6:1-7)

The Ark was made of acacia wood, overlaid with gold, and measured two and a half cubits by one and a half cubits by one and a half cubits (Ex. 25:10), roughly 45 inches by 27 inches by 27 inches. Within it were the Ten Commandments written by Hashem and broken by Moshe, and the second set of commandments dictated by Hashem and inscribed by Moses. A pot of manna and Aaron's rod were also have been in the Ark (Ex. 16:33, Num. 17:25). The Ark was covered by the golden *kapporet*, which was adorned with two golden *kerubim*.

So, where is the Ark today? No one knows. King Yoshiyahu (Josiah) knew that the Temple would be destroyed in the future and he hid the Ark fifty years prior to the destruction of the First Temple (1 Kings 8:3-8). The Scripture does not mention of the Ark during the second dedication of the Temple which is strange as the Ark is the most sacred object for Yisrael.

Now what do these *kerubim* looked alike? It is said, "And the *kerubim* shall be spreading out their wings above, covering the lid of atonement with their wings, with their faces toward each other, the faces of the *kerubim* turned toward the lid of atonement." (v. 20) There are many opinions as to "the faces of the *kerubim*". One is an "angel" with their wings spread. Ramban said that the images of their wings spread came from *Yehezqel* (Ezekiel).<sup>2</sup> When we think of an "angel", our thoughts go immediately to a beautiful heavenly face with their soft wings on its back. If it is an angel of evil, we see an image of horrifying face with their sharp, jagged edge wings.

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<sup>2</sup> Yehezqel (Ezekiel), 1:11

Rambam said “*kerubim*” is a type of angel. There are ten types of angels, *seraphim* as the highest of all angels who praises Hashem continuously. (Isa. 6:1-8) *Kerubim* guard the way to the tree of life in Gan Eden (Gen. 3:24) and the throne of Hashem (Eze. 28:14-16).

Another opinion is that the *kerubim* has a face of man and a woman. When the Yisraelites followed Hashem’s commandments they (man and woman) would face and hug (wings toward) each other. If the Yisraelites disobeyed Hashem’s commandments, they would face away from each other.<sup>3</sup> However, as we will see later that this cannot be. Because a married couple can get a divorce whereas we cannot with Hashem.

Third opinion, Rashi said the *kerubim* had a face of baby. When a baby is born, we cannot really distinguish whether the baby is a boy or a girl by its face alone. Ramban said that the Ark has to exist, for without it this world cannot exist as it is a source of communication with Hashem and this world. He also said that the *kerubim* had a face of babies. Ramban said that the Ark is a connection to the Torah. Rashi said that the Torah is a way to express connection to Hashem as a child is connected to his father. Thus we are like a child to Hashem and the connection is the essence of our soul. Therefore, our connection is not to the Torah but the expression (obedience to the Word of Hashem) as we are all *baal teshuvah* (owner of repentance).

The word *kaporet* (cover) comes from the word of *kapara* (to atone). Therefore, *kerubim* would bring *kapara*. It is our desire to connect with Hashem. All of us wonder and doubt whether the path we are walking is the right path in our life. The reading and study of the Torah removes such doubts. When doing so, we connect with Hashem and overcome challenges in life. For this reason, the *kerubim* has a baby’s face as we are baby in Hashem. We cannot get divorced from Hashem. Therefore, the *kerubim*’s face cannot be male nor female.

For the year of 5779, it contains additional month known as Adar Bet. In English, we call the second month as “Leap Month”. But in actuality, it should mean “pregnant month”. The “leap year” in Hebrew is “*sha.nah me. ’u.be.ref*” (שנה מעוברת) and a leap month is called “*cho.dash me. ’u.be.rer*” (חודש מעובר). The word for pregnant woman is “*me. ’u.be.ref*” (מְעוּבֶּרֶת). As we learned, every month according to the moon calendar is 29 ½ days. The twelfth month is known as Adar. We earn additional month every three years to recoup ½ days that was lost. The first month is called as Adar Aleph and the second month Adar Bet. Which is the primary Adar? Adar Bet. That is why it contain Purim. Adar Aleph is secondary month.

The month of Adar is created with the letter “*qof*” (ק) which is the 19<sup>th</sup> letter of Alephbet. It has the same numerical value as Chavah (commonly known as Eve in English translation) (חַוָּה, 5+6+8) after the sin. Her original name was Chayah (חַיָּה) with numerical value of 23 (5+10+8) meaning “life”. R’ Ginsburgh teaches that the difference between these two names is “*vav*” and “*yod*” with numerical value of 6, 10 respectively; leaving the difference of 4. The fourth position of Alephbet is “*dalet*”. So, if we add “*dalet*” to Chavah, we get “*chedvah*” (חֲדָוָה, 5+6+4+8) meaning “joy”. This teaches that we transform Chavah into Chayah, into “life,” when she can birth with joy.

The second understanding of the name Chavah focuses on its connection to the word *chavayah*, which means experience. Chavah is not only the mother of life but also represents the experience of life.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> BT, Yoma, p. 54

<sup>4</sup> [www.chabad.org](http://www.chabad.org), Chavah mother of all life