

PORTION	DATE	HEB DATE	TORAH	NEVIIM	KETUVIM
Vayak'el / Pekudei	10 Mar., 2018	23 Adar 5778	Exod. 35:1-40:38	Ezek. 36:16-38	Matt. 12:1-13 Luke 16:1-13

This week's portion is called *vayak'el-pekudei* which means "And he assembled – counting". Moshe descended Mount Sinai also known as Horeb for the third and last time. He gathered the people and says, "Six *yamim* (days) shall work be done, but on the seventh yom there shall be to you a *kadosh yom* (holy day), a Shabbat of rest to YHWH: whoever does work on it shall be put to death. You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings upon the Shabbat yom."¹ Many people believe that we can keep any day for Shabbat or call Sunday as the day of worship to YHWH, or call Sunday as the Lord's Day. Then the question is, "Who says that you even have the right to ask that question?" If Hashem declared the seventh day as a Shabbat and rested on the seventh day, and Hashem never intending that Adam would sin, which day would he (Adam) be resting today? He would be resting on the seventh day. However, the man has sinned and fell short of His glory that we try to get out of doing bible things and bible ways.

In Exodus 35:1 says, "And Moshe gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together." The word "assembly" also means "congregation." In Hebrew, it is *eda* (עֵדָה, Strong H5712). It means "assembly", "congregation", "company", "multitude", "people", or "swarm". When the Israelites left *Mitzrayim* (Egypt), they were a "swarm" of people. This is what Hashem wants. He desires "swarm" of people to know Him by keeping the seventh day as *kadosh* (holy). This is the reason Moshe starts immediately with the laws of Shabbat.

The instructions or guides given by Hashem is called Torah. It is written in Hebrew תורה. The letter, "tav" has a numerical value of 400, and it means "mark, sign, seal, covenant." The letter, "vav or waw" has a numerical value of 6, and it means "add, secure, hook, join, pierce." The letter, "resh" has a numerical value of 200, and it means "first, beginning, think, person, sum, top." The letter "hei" has a numerical value of 6, and it means "look, man, behold, reveal."

The gematria or numerical value of Torah is 611. How many commandments are there in the Torah? 613. So, where is the other two? In Matthew 22:40 says, "On these two commandments hang all the Torah and the *neviim*." What are two commandments? They are "You shall love the Master יהוה Your Elohim" in Matthew 22:37, and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" in Matthew 22:39.

Yahoshua said in Matthew 22:37-40, "And Yeshua answered him, and said: You shall love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your nefesh, and with all your might. This is the greatest commandment in the whole Torah. And this is the first, but the second is like it, And you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Torah and the Prophets."

The Septuagint was written in Greek 250 years before Yehoshua. When the Hebrew words were translated into the Greek, they used a reference point to connect Hebrew words with Greek words. In Strong G4864 (회당) which they connected to H5712, it is συναγωγή (*sunagōgē*; phonetic: *soon-ag-gay*); it is defined as "a bringing together, gathering (as of fruits)" and in the NT, "an assembling together of men, an assembly of men." The word, synagogue originated during the Babylonian exile. It is a place of assembly that were held every Shabbat.

In Matthew 4:23, it says "And Yahoshua went about all Galil, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the Besorah of the malchut, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people of

¹ Exodus 35:2-3

Yisrael.” The key word in this verse is “synagogues.” In Acts 18:4 says, “And he reasoned in the synagogue every Shabbat, and persuaded the Yahudim and the Greeks.” Here, we see Paul discussing the word to bring people closer to Hashem. Who are the Greeks and what are they doing in the synagogue? The Greeks are the people who are fearing of Hashem and in the process of converting to Judaism, for example Cornelius was a proselyte.

In Ezekiel 44:24 says, “And in controversy they shall stand in judgment; and they shall judge it according to my judgments: and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all mine assemblies; and they shall hallow my sabbaths.” In Isaiah 66:22-23 says, “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith YHWH, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from on Shabbat to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith YHWH.”

The Shabbat is so important that the Israelites are forbidden to build or work on the Tabernacle during the set apart day. Yahoshua said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”²

There is no question Hashem cares about Shabbat. In Exodus 20:11 says, “For in six yamim (days) YHWH made the shamayim and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh yom: therefore YHWH blessed the Shabbat yom, and set it apart.” If Hashem is the potter and we are the clay, then do we have any say to what He wants us to do? Do we need to ask why? Do we need to ask ourselves if He really meant it? Didn’t the serpent ask the same question to Chava by implying that He didn’t really meant it.

In Isaiah 58:13-14 says, “If you turn away your foot because of the Sabbath, from pursuing your business on My Set-Apart-Day, and call the Sabbath a delight, and the Set-Apart of YHWH honorable, and shall honor it, not doing your wonted ways, nor pursuing your business, nor speaking thereof: Then shall you delight yourself in YHWH. And I will make you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and I will feed you with the heritage of Ya’akov your father, for the mouth of YHWH has spoken it.”

In Acts 3:20-21 says, “And He shall send Yahoshua ha Moshiach, who before was proclaimed to you: Whom the shamayim must receive until the times of the restoration of all things, which YHWH has spoken by the mouth of all His kadosh neviim since the olam began.” At what point, will Hashem restore everything? From the very moment “the olam (world) began.”

When Hashem made the heavens and the earth, there were no flaws and that He made all things perfect. Everything that He had made in the garden was perfect and He never intended or desired for anything to change for all eternity. If Adam had not sinned, everything that was said to be “very good” would still be perfect and unchanged today.

However, Adam sinned and sent the world in constant groaning and imperfection. But, at some point in the future when the Messiah comes back, He will restore all things back to the original state of perfection as said in Acts 3:20-21. Remember Genesis 2:2 when Hashem sanctified the seventh day. We can easily assume that the Shabbat on the seventh day was never intended to change. If Hashem did not want the Shabbat sanctified, then He would not have mentioned Isaiah 66:22-23, “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make,

² Matthew 5:17-20, ESV

shall remain before me, saith YHWH, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Shabbat to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith YHWH.” And for those who are against Hashem? Verse 24 says, “And they (Torah observants) will go out and look on the dead bodies of those who rebelled (Torahlessness) against me; the worms that eat them will not die, the fire that burns them will not be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”

Moshe descended Mount Sinai for the third and final time. He ascended Mount Sinai first time to receive instructions on how to keep the commandments given by Hashem. While he was there, Hashem told him that the Israelites sinned by making a Golden Calf. Moses pleaded with Hashem by invoking Hashem’s Thirteen Attributes. Hashem changes His judgment and extends the lives of Israelites. However, their sin was not forgiven during Moses’ first ascension.

Moses descends the mountain with the two tablets written by Hashem and sees the Israelites in revelry. The sin causes the letters written on the Tablets to depart and Moses drops them to the ground because of their weight. The Israelites who participated in the sin dies and Moses forces surviving Israelites to drink water containing gold from the Golden Calf.

Moses ascends Mount Sinai for the second time to atone for the sin of Golden Calf. Hashem then tells Moses to descend and to make new Tablets to write the Ten Commandments after Moses plea. He descends the mountain and made two new Tablets and returns to the mountain for the third time.

Moses returns to the mountain for the third and last time. Moses learns the new Torah (instructions) for 40 days and descends the mountain. Once he returned, he tells the people that Hashem had forgiven them and they should reciprocate by repenting accordingly. He also explained the difference between the first and second tablets and how their relationship to Hashem and the Torah had changed in light of these differences.

Moses explained to the Israelites that the first time they received the Torah, they have reached high sanctification because of their death for the sins they committed. And the second Torah is different from the first as now they are required to *tsuvah* (repentance) for each sin they commit. And the medium for *tsuvah* is the Tabernacle.

We have explained in the previous *parasha* the spiritual difference between gold, silver, and copper, as well as the difference between the righteous and the rest of the people in relation to temptations. We will go over these concepts briefly as a reminder.

The gold represents people who have risen above the natural, physical world and overcame the stranglehold of its materialism. The silver represents people who are not concerned by the spiritual darkness of this world. Instead, he channels Divine consciousness into it. And the copper represents those who believes that he has to refine themselves first before elevating this physical world. But the Torah says otherwise. Because of their ongoing struggle qualifies to spiritualize this world.

The righteous (*tzadik*) are the people who overcame their sin and no longer commits same sin again for the rest of his life. Therefore, these are the people who became the master of their sin known as *baal tsuvah*. Whereas, the rest repeats same sin over and over again. These people have repented to some degree but they have not become master over their sin as they repeat the same sin again.

If, we, the “gold” or the “silver” turn our homes for Hashem’s presence, we must value the contribution of those of us who are still only “copper.”³ For they are the sockets and the stakes which provides stability of the division between the realms of holiness and mundaneness.

On 11th Tishrei, the day after the Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), after giving the Torah and explaining the laws of Torah to the Israelites, he sat on the judgment seat when Yitro gave an advice to establish judicial systems as we have learned in *parashat* Yitro. Here, Yitro tells him to take easy cases and give the hard one to lower courts. Yitro said, “That every great matter they shall bring to you, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for yourself, and they shall bear the burden with you.”⁴ The Sages teach that “every great matter” means petitions that involves large sum of money and “easier for you” since the petitioner has all witnesses and documents to prove their case.

And “every small matter” means petitions involving small amount of money and “they shall bear the burden” meaning difficult to solve the case as there may be no witnesses or documents to prove their case. What did Moshe do? He listened to Yitro’s advice and set up judicial system. But Moshe took up smaller cases that are difficult to solve rather than taking easy cases. Moshe did not want “the burden” on his beloved people with heavy yoke. Our Messiah, Yahoshua said, “For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”⁵

³ Likutei Sichot, vol. 6, pp. 152-160

⁴ Exodus 17:22

⁵ Matthew 11:30, NIV