

Beit Chachamin

PARSHAT VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI

13 MARCH, 2026

COME & LEARN

THE BIG RECAP [PARSHA SUMMARY]

1 – Moses gathers the whole community and reminds them they must keep Shabbat; even the urgent work of building the Tabernacle cannot override it. He then invites everyone with a generous heart to bring materials—metals, fabrics, skins, wood, oil, spices, and precious stones—for the Tabernacle and the priestly garments. Men and women respond enthusiastically, each contributing what they can, from spinning, weaving, to crafting, to support the project.

2 – Moses names Bezalel and Oholiab as the divinely inspired chief artisans, filled with wisdom, skill, and the ability to teach others. They and all the skilled workers receive so many donations that Moses has to tell the people to stop bringing more. Under their direction, they construct the core Tabernacle structure including its curtains, coverings, boards, bars, and partitions. Then they build the ark, cover it with gold, add the poles and cherubim, and make the table for the bread of display with its utensils.

3 – The craftsmen make the pure gold menorah with its branches, cups, and decorative details hammered from one piece. They then make the golden incense altar, its rings and poles, and the special anointing oil and fragrant incense for use in the sanctuary alone. Everything is crafted according to the precise instructions given earlier, highlighting both beauty and holiness.

4 – They build the copper altar for burnt offerings with its grating, poles, and all its tools, and they fashion the copper washbasin from the mirrors of the women who served at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. The courtyard is then completed with its hangings, posts, and gates. A detailed accounting lists all of the metals donated and used. They begin making the sacred garments for Aaron and his sons, starting with the priestly vestments.

5 – The artisans weave the ephod (apron) for the high priest out of gold thread, blue, purple, and crimson yarn and fine linen, and they attach shoulder straps. They set two onyx stones in gold frames on the shoulders, engraved with the names of the tribes of Israel. Next they make the choshen (breastpiece) with four rows of precious stones, also engraved with the tribal names, and fasten it securely to the ephod with gold chains and cords so it rests over the high priest's heart.

6 – They complete the rest of the priestly garments: the robe with its pomegranate and bell decorations, the headplate engraved “Holy to the Lord,” and the tunics, turbans, sashes, and linen pants for Aaron and his sons. All the work of the Tabernacle is now finished exactly as God commanded Moses. Moses inspects everything, sees that it has been done properly and with care, and blesses the people for their faithful work.

7 – God tells Moses to set up the Tabernacle on the first day of the first month and specifies where each item should go, including the ark behind the curtain, the table and menorah, the altars, and the basin. Moses anoints and consecrates the Tabernacle and everything inside, and he anoints and dresses Aaron and his sons to serve as priests. When the sanctuary is fully set up, a cloud covers the Tent of Meeting and God's glory fills the Tabernacle so strongly that Moses cannot enter. From then on, the cloud and the fire above the Tabernacle guide Israel on all their journeys. When the cloud lifts, they travel; when it rests, they encamp.

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As the Israelites go to build the Tabernacle each gives as they can, whether it be physical gold or artisan skill.

EXODUS 35:5

קָחוּ מֵאִתְּכֶם תְּרוּמָה לַיהוָה כֹּל נְדִיב לִבּוֹ יְבִיאֶהָ אֶת תְּרוּמַת הַזָּהָב וְכֶסֶף וְנְחֹשֶׁת:

Take from among you gifts to GOD; everyone whose heart is so moved shall bring them—gifts for GOD: gold, silver, and copper;

EXODUS 35:21-22

**יָבֹאוּ כָל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׂאוֹ לִבּוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר נְדָבָה רוּחוֹ אֹתוֹ הֵבִיאוּ אֶת־תְּרוּמַת הַלְמַלְאכָת אֲהֵל מוֹעֵד וְלִכְל־עֲבֹדָתוֹ וְלִבְגְדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ:
וְיָבֹאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים עַל־הַנְּשִׁים כֹּל | נְדִיב לֵב הֵבִיאוּ חַח וְזָמָּה וְטַבַּעַת וְכוּמָז כָּל־כְּלֵי זָהָב וְכָל־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֵנִיף תְּנוּפֶת זָהָב לָהּ:**

And everyone who excelled in ability and everyone whose spirit was moved came, bringing to GOD an offering for the work of the Tent of Meeting and for all its service and for the sacral vestments. Men and women, all whose hearts moved them, all who would make an elevation offering of gold to GOD, came bringing brooches, earrings, rings, and pendants—gold objects of all kinds.

EXODUS 35:25–26

**וְכָל־הַנְּשִׁים אֲשֶׁר נָשָׂא לִבָּן אֶתְנָהּ בְּחִכְמָהּ טוּוּ אֶת־הַעֲזִים:
וְהַנְּשִׂאִים הֵבִיאוּ אֶת אֲבְנֵי הַשֹּׁהַם וְאֶת אֲבְנֵי הַמְּלֵאִים לְאַפּוֹד וְלַחֹשֶׁן:**

And all the women who excelled in that skill spun the goats' hair.
And the chieftains brought lapis lazuli and other stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece;

EXODUS 36:4

וְיָבֹאוּ כָל־הַחֲכָמִים הַעֲשִׂים אֶת כָּל־מְלַאכַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ אִישׁ־אִישׁ מִמְּלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־הִמָּה עֲשִׂים:

every single one of the artisans who were engaged in the tasks of the sanctuary came from the task in which they were engaged,

EXODUS 36:5

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר מְרֻבִּים הָעָם לְהֵבִיא מִדֵּי הָעֲבֹדָה לְמַלְאכָה אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת אֹתָהּ

and said to Moses, “The people are bringing more than is needed for the tasks entailed in the work that GOD has commanded to be done.

Their attitude of readiness to serve God is so strong that in the end the Israelites give so much that Moses has to ask them to stop giving. However, it is through each individual gift that the Tabernacle is ultimately built.