

עץ חיים

ETZ HAYIM

TORAH AND COMMENTARY

THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY
THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM



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Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary
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²¹These are the records of the Tabernacle, the Tabernacle of the Pact, which were drawn up at Moses' bidding—the work of the Levites under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest. ²²Now Bezalel, son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, had made all that the LORD had commanded Moses; ²³at his side was Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, carver and designer, and embroiderer in blue, purple, and crimson yarns and in fine linen.

²⁴All the gold that was used for the work, in all the work of the sanctuary—the elevation offering of gold—came to 29 talents and 730 shekels by the sanctuary weight. ²⁵The silver of

אֵלֶּה פְּקוּדֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת אֲשֶׁר
פָּקַד עַל־פִּי מֹשֶׁה עֲבֹדַת הַלְוִיִּם בְּיַד
אִיתָמָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן: ²² וּבְצִלְאֵל בֶּן־
אוּרִי בֶן־חֹר לְמִטֵּה יְהוּדָה עָשָׂה אֶת
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ²³ וְאוֹתוֹ
אֶהֱלִיאָב בֶּן־אַחִיסַמָּךְ לְמִטֵּה־דָן חָרַט
וְחָשָׁב וְרָקַם בַּתְּכֵלֶת וּבְאַרְגָּמָן וּבְתוֹלַעַת
הַשָּׁנִי וּבְצִבְיָן: ^ס

כָּל־הַזָּהָב הָעָשׂוּי לְמַלְאכָה בְּכָל
מְלָאכַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וַיְהִי זֶהב הַתְּנוּפָה תִּשְׁעֵ
וְעֶשְׂרִים כֶּכָר וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שֶׁקֶל
בַּשֶּׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ: ²⁵ וּבְכֹסֶף פְּקוּדֵי הָעֵדוּת

THE TABERNACLE, PART II: CONSTRUCTION (continued)

A TALLY OF THE METALS (38:21–31)

Moses orders an inventory of the metals, to be undertaken by the Levites under the direction of Aaron's son Ithamar. The tally is prefaced by a restatement of the roles of the two master craftsmen Bezalel and Oholiab. The inventory described here is similar to that found among the Egyptians, whose art depicts scenes of metalworking in which a master is weighing the metals on scales, with the scribes recording the results in their ledgers, before the materials are given to the artisans.

21. Tabernacle of the Pact This once again emphasizes that the symbol of the covenant with God is the focal point of the entire tabernacle.

Ithamar His birth was recorded in Exod. 6:23, and his nomination to be installed as a

priest, in 28:1. Throughout the wilderness wanderings he directed the work of the levitical clans in connection with the tabernacle.

23. These qualifications of Oholiab repeat 35:35 and include some additional material.

24–30. The metals are listed in descending order of value.

shekel See Comment to Gen. 23:9.

half-shekel Hebrew: *beka*, mentioned as a weight in Gen. 24:22. The stem means “to split”—here, in half. Several weights from the time of the First Temple have been found inscribed in the old-Hebrew script with the word *beka* or its abbreviation, “*b.*” Their average weight is 0.210 ounces (6.019 grams).

a bead The reference is to the census that was ordered in 30:11–16.

In this *parashah*, Moses gives a detailed accounting of the expenditures for fashioning the tabernacle and its furnishings. Why did Moses feel obliged to give this detailed account? Some Israelites knew that they would have taken advantage of handling all that gold and silver for their own enrichment. They suspected Moses of being no better than they were. Thus the Midrash emphasizes that leaders of the community must be above any suspicion of personal aggrandizement. The family

that prepared the incense for the Temple services would never let their relatives wear perfume, lest some people suspect them of using Temple incense for their personal benefit. The official who supervised the shekel offering would wear a special garment with no pockets and no long sleeves when he did so, so that no one could suspect him of pocketing public funds (Song R. 3:7). “A person should strive to please people as strenuously as one strives to please God” (Exod. R. 51:2).

those of the community who were recorded came to 100 talents and 1,775 shekels by the sanctuary weight: ^{26a} half-shekel a head, half a shekel by the sanctuary weight, for each one who was entered in the records, from the age of twenty years up, 603,550 men. ²⁷The 100 talents of silver were for casting the sockets of the sanctuary and the sockets for the curtain, 100 sockets to the 100 talents, a talent a socket. ²⁸And of the 1,775 shekels he made hooks for the posts, overlay for their tops, and bands around them.

²⁹The copper from the elevation offering came to 70 talents and 2,400 shekels. ³⁰Of it he made the sockets for the entrance of the Tent of Meeting; the copper altar and its copper grating and all the utensils of the altar; ³¹the sockets of the enclosure round about and the sockets of the gate of the enclosure; and all the pegs of the Tabernacle and all the pegs of the enclosure round about.

39 Of the blue, purple, and crimson yarns they also made the service vestments for officiating in the sanctuary; they made Aaron's sacral vestments—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²The ephod was made of gold, blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine twisted linen. ³They hammered out sheets of gold and cut threads to be worked into designs among the blue, the purple, and the crimson yarns, and the fine linen. ⁴They made for it attaching shoulder-

THE MAKING OF THE
PRIESTLY VESTMENTS (39:1–31)

This section corresponds to Exod. 28. It contains some additional information and affirms—seven times in all—that each item was made in accordance with God's instructions.

1. The omission of the fine linen from the

מֵאֵת כֶּכֶר וְאֶלָּף וְשִׁבְעַת מֵאוֹת וַחֲמִשָּׁה וְשִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ: ²⁶ בְּקַע לְגִלְגָּלֹת מִחֲצִית הַשֶּׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ לְכָל הָעֹבֵר עַל-הַפְּקוּדִים מִבֶּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה וְמֵעַלָּה לְשֵׁשׁ-מֵאוֹת אֶלָּף וְשִׁלְשֵׁת אֲלָפִים וַחֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת וַחֲמִשִּׁים: ²⁷ וַיְהִי מֵאֵת כֶּכֶר הַכֶּסֶף לְצִקַּת אֶת אֲדָנֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְאֶת אֲדָנֵי הַפְּרֻכֹת מֵאֵת אֲדָנִים לְמֵאֵת הַכֶּכֶר כֶּכֶר לְאֶדָן: ²⁸ וְאֶת-הָאֶלָּף וְשִׁבְעַת הַמֵּאוֹת וַחֲמִשָּׁה וְשִׁבְעִים עֶשֶׂה וָוִים לְעִמּוּדִים וְצִפָּה רֵאשִׁיהֶם וַחֲשֵׁק אֲתָם: ²⁹ וַנְּחַשֵׁת הַתְּנוּפָה שִׁבְעִים כֶּכֶר וְאֲלָפִים וְאַרְבַּע-מֵאוֹת שֶׁקֶל: ³⁰ וַיַּעַשׂ בָּהּ אֶת-אֲדָנֵי פֶתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְאֵת מִזְבַּח הַנְּחֹשֶׁת וְאֶת-מִכְבַּר הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ וְאֵת כָּל-כְּלֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ: ³¹ וְאֶת-אֲדָנֵי הַחֲצֵר סָבִיב וְאֶת-אֲדָנֵי שַׁעַר הַחֲצֵר וְאֵת כָּל-יִתְדֹת הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת-כָּל-יִתְדֹת הַחֲצֵר סָבִיב:

לט וּמִן-הַתְּכֵלֶת וְהָאֲרָגָמָן וְתוֹלַעַת הַשָּׁנִי עָשׂוּ בְגָדֵי-שָׂרָד לְשָׂרֵת בְּקֹדֶשׁ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת-בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר לְאַהֲרֹן כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה: ^פ ² וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת-הָאֶפֶד זָהָב תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ מִשְׁוֹר: ³ וַיִּרְקְעוּ אֶת-פָּתֵי הַזָּהָב וְקִצְצוּ פְתִילִם לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּתוֹךְ הַתְּכֵלֶת וּבְתוֹךְ הָאֲרָגָמָן וּבְתוֹךְ תוֹלַעַת הַשָּׁנִי וּבְתוֹךְ הַשֵּׁשׁ מַעֲשֵׂה חֹשֶׁב: ⁴ כְּתִפְתָּ

שני
[חמישי]

list is especially puzzling because it is included in verses 2, 3, and 5.

3. The process described here is typically Egyptian. The highly malleable gold was hammered over a stone into a thin sheet from which very narrow strips were cut to make fine gold wire. Gold thread was created by cutting the sheet in spiral form.

pieces; they were attached at its two ends. ⁵The decorated band that was upon it was made like it, of one piece with it; of gold, blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine twisted linen—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁶They bordered the lazuli stones with frames of gold, engraved with seal engravings of the names of the sons of Israel. ⁷They were set on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, as stones of remembrance for the Israelites—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁸The breastpiece was made in the style of the ephod: of gold, blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine twisted linen. ⁹It was square; they made the breastpiece doubled—a span in length and a span in width, doubled. ¹⁰They set in it four rows of stones. The first row was a row of carnelian, chrysolite, and emerald; ¹¹the second row: a turquoise, a sapphire, and an amethyst; ¹²the third row: a jacinth, an agate, and a crystal; ¹³and the fourth row: a beryl, a lapis lazuli, and a jasper. They were encircled in their mountings with frames of gold. ¹⁴The stones corresponded [in number] to the names of the sons of Israel: twelve, corresponding to their names; engraved like seals, each with its name, for the twelve tribes.

¹⁵On the breastpiece they made braided chains of corded work in pure gold. ¹⁶They made two frames of gold and two rings of gold, and fastened the two rings at the two ends of the breastpiece, ¹⁷attaching the two golden cords to the two rings at the ends of the breastpiece. ¹⁸They then fastened the two ends of the cords to the two frames, attaching them to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, at the front. ¹⁹They made two rings of gold and attached them to the two ends of the breastpiece, at its inner edge, which faced the ephod. ²⁰They made two other rings of gold and fastened them on the front of the ephod, low on the two

עָשׂוּ-לוֹ חֲבֵרֹת עַל-שְׁנֵי קְצוֹתָיו קְצוֹתָיו חֲבֵר: ⁵ וְחָשָׁב אֶפְדָּתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו מִמֶּנּוּ הוּא כַּמַּעֲשֵׂהוּ זָהָב תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ מְשׁוֹר כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה:

⁶ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת-אֲבְנֵי הַשֹּׁהַם מְסַבֵּת מִשִּׁבְצַת זָהָב מִפְתַּחַת פְּתוּחֵי חוּתֶם עַל-שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ⁷ וַיִּשֶׂם אֹתָם עַל כְּתֻפֹת הָאֶפֶד אֲבְנֵי זָכָרֹן לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה: פ

⁸ וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת-הַחֹשֶׁן מַעֲשֵׂה חֹשֶׁב כַּמַּעֲשֵׂה אֶפֶד זָהָב תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ מְשׁוֹר: ⁹ רְבֹעַ הָיָה כְּפּוֹל עָשׂוּ אֶת-הַחֹשֶׁן זֶרֶת אֲרָכּוֹ וְזֶרֶת רְחִבּוֹ כְּפּוֹל: ¹⁰ וַיִּמְלְאוּ-בּוֹ אַרְבַּעַת טוּרֵי אֲבָן טוּר אֶדָם פְּטָדָה וּבִרְקַת הַטּוּר הָאֶחָד: ¹¹ וְהַטּוּר הַשֵּׁנִי נִפְךָ סַפִּיר וַיְהִלֵּם: ¹² וְהַטּוּר הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְשֵׁם שָׁבוּ וְאַחֲלָמָה: ¹³ וְהַטּוּר הָרְבִיעִי תַרְשִׁישׁ שֹהַם וַיִּשְׂפֶה מוֹסַבֵּת מִשִּׁבְצוֹת זָהָב בְּמִלְאָתָם: ¹⁴ וְהָאֲבָנִים עַל-שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵנָּה שְׁתֵּים עָשָׂרָה עַל-שְׁמוֹתָם פְּתוּחֵי חוּתֶם אִישׁ עַל-שְׁמוֹ לְשָׁנִים עָשָׂר שָׁבֵט:

¹⁵ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ עַל-הַחֹשֶׁן שְׁרָשְׁרוֹת גְּבֻלַת מַעֲשֵׂה עֲבֹת זָהָב טְהוֹר: ¹⁶ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ שְׁתֵּי מִשִּׁבְצַת זָהָב וְשְׁתֵּי טְבַעֲת זָהָב וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶת-שְׁתֵּי הַטְּבַעֲת עַל-שְׁנֵי קְצוֹת הַחֹשֶׁן: ¹⁷ וַיִּתְּנוּ שְׁתֵּי הָעֲבֹתֹת הַזֹּהָב עַל-שְׁתֵּי הַטְּבַעֲת עַל-קְצוֹת הַחֹשֶׁן: ¹⁸ וְאֵת שְׁתֵּי קְצוֹת שְׁתֵּי הָעֲבֹתֹת נָתַנוּ עַל-שְׁתֵּי הַמִּשְׁבְּצַת וַיִּתְּנֵם עַל-כְּתֻפֹת הָאֶפֶד אֶל-מוֹל פְּנָיו: ¹⁹ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ שְׁתֵּי טְבַעֲת זָהָב וַיִּשְׂימוּ עַל-שְׁנֵי קְצוֹת הַחֹשֶׁן עַל-שְׁפָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר אֶל-עֵבֶר הָאֶפֶד בֵּיתָה: ²⁰ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ שְׁתֵּי טְבַעֲת זָהָב וַיִּתְּנֵם עַל-שְׁתֵּי כְּתֻפֹת

shoulder-pieces, close to its seam above the decorated band. ²¹The breastpiece was held in place by a cord of blue from its rings to the rings of the ephod, so that the breastpiece rested on the decorated band and did not come loose from the ephod—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²²The robe for the ephod was made of woven work, of pure blue. ²³The opening of the robe, in the middle of it, was like the opening of a coat of mail, with a binding around the opening, so that it would not tear. ²⁴On the hem of the robe they made pomegranates of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, twisted. ²⁵They also made bells of pure gold, and attached the bells between the pomegranates, all around the hem of the robe, between the pomegranates: ^{26a}a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, all around the hem of the robe for officiating in—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²⁷They made the tunics of fine linen, of woven work, for Aaron and his sons; ²⁸and the head-dress of fine linen, and the decorated turbans of fine linen, and the linen breeches of fine twisted linen; ²⁹and sashes of fine twisted linen, blue, purple, and crimson yarns, done in embroidery—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³⁰They made the frontlet for the holy diadem of pure gold, and incised upon it the seal inscription: “Holy to the LORD.” ³¹They attached to it a cord of blue to fix it upon the headdress above—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³²Thus was completed all the work of the Tab-

הָאֶפֶד מִלְמַטָּה מִמּוֹל פָּנָיו לְעַמַּת
מִחִבְרָתוֹ מִמַּעַל לְחֹשֶׁב הָאֶפֶד: ²¹ וַיִּרְכָּסוּ
אֶת־הַחֹשֶׁן מִטְּבַעְתָּיו אֶל־טְבַעַת הָאֶפֶד
בְּפִתְיֵל תְּכֵלֶת לְהִיָּת עַל־חֹשֶׁב הָאֶפֶד
וְלֹא־יִנָּח הַחֹשֶׁן מֵעַל הָאֶפֶד כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה
יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה:

²² וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־מְעִיל הָאֶפֶד מַעֲשֵׂה אֲרָג
כָּלִיל תְּכֵלֶת: ²³ וּפִי־הַמְעִיל בְּתוֹכוֹ כַּפִּי
תַּחְרָא שָׁפָה לְפָיו סָבִיב לֹא יִקְרַע:
²⁴ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ עַל־שׁוּלַי הַמְעִיל רְמוֹנֵי תְּכֵלֶת
וְאֲרָגְמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי מְשׁוֹר: ²⁵ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ
פַעֲמֹנֵי זָהָב טָהוֹר וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶת־הַפַּעֲמֹנִים
בְּתוֹף הָרְמוֹנִים עַל־שׁוּלַי הַמְעִיל סָבִיב
בְּתוֹף הָרְמוֹנִים: ²⁶ פַּעֲמָן וְרִמּוֹן פַּעֲמָן וְרִמּוֹן
עַל־שׁוּלַי הַמְעִיל סָבִיב לְשָׂרֵת כַּאֲשֶׁר
צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ס

²⁷ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הַפְּתִילֵי שֵׁשׁ מַעֲשֵׂה אֲרָג
לְאַהֲרֹן וּלְבָנָיו: ²⁸ וְאֵת הַמְצַנֶּפֶת שֵׁשׁ
וְאֶת־פְּאַרְיֵי הַמְּגַבְּעַת שֵׁשׁ וְאֶת־מְכַנְסֵי
הַבָּד שֵׁשׁ מְשׁוֹר: ²⁹ וְאֵת־הָאֲבָיִט שֵׁשׁ
מְשׁוֹר וְתְּכֵלֶת וְאֲרָגְמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי
מַעֲשֵׂה רָקַם כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־
מֹשֶׁה: ס

³⁰ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־צִיץ נֹזֵר־הַקֹּדֶשׁ זָהָב טָהוֹר
וַיִּכְתְּבוּ עָלָיו מִכְתָּב פְּתוּחֵי חוֹתָם קֹדֶשׁ
לַיהוָה: ³¹ וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלָיו פִּתְיֵל תְּכֵלֶת לְתֵת
עַל־הַמְצַנֶּפֶת מִלְּמַעְלָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה
אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ס

³² וַתֵּכֵל כָּל־עֲבֹדַת מִשְׁכַּן אֱהֵל מוֹעֵד

שלישי
[ששי]

CHAPTER 39

21. the breastpiece . . . did not come loose from the ephod The breastpiece was the symbol of justice (thus it is referred to as “the breastpiece of judgment” in Exod. 28:15), of

proper relations between people and their neighbors. The ephod was the symbol of worship, i.e., of a proper relationship between people and God. When religion is properly understood, justice and worship can never be separated from each other (N. Bloch).

ernacle of the Tent of Meeting. The Israelites did so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so they did.

³³Then they brought the Tabernacle to Moses, with the Tent and all its furnishings: its clasps, its planks, its bars, its posts, and its sockets; ³⁴the covering of tanned ram skins, the covering of dolphin skins, and the curtain for the screen; ³⁵the Ark of the Pact and its poles, and the cover; ³⁶the table and all its utensils, and the bread of display; ³⁷the pure lampstand, its lamps—lamps in due order—and all its fittings, and the oil for lighting; ³⁸the altar of gold, the oil for anointing, the aromatic incense, and the screen for the entrance of the Tent; ³⁹the copper altar with its copper grating, its poles and all its utensils, and the laver and its stand; ⁴⁰the hangings of the enclosure, its posts and its sockets, the screen for the gate of the enclosure, its cords and its pegs—all the furnishings for the service of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting; ⁴¹the service vestments for officiating in the sanctuary, the sacral vestments of Aaron the priest, and the vestments of his sons for priestly service. ⁴²Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so the Israelites had done all the work. ⁴³And when Moses saw that they had performed all the

וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה בְּן עֲשׂוֹ: פ
 רביעי³³ וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הָאֵהָל וְאֶת־כָּל־כְּלָיו קְרָסָיו קְרָשָׁיו בְּרִיחוֹ בְּרִיחָיו וְעַמֻּדָיו וְאֲדָנָיו: ³⁴וְאֶת־מִכְסֵּה עוֹרֹת הָאֵילִם הַמְּאֻדָּמִים וְאֶת־מִכְסֵּה עֹרֹת הַתְּחָשִׁים וְאֶת פְּרָכֹת הַמָּסָךְ: ³⁵אֶת־אֲרוֹן הָעֵדֻת וְאֶת־בְּדָיו וְאֶת הַכַּפֹּרֶת: ³⁶אֶת־הַשְּׁלֶחָן אֶת־כָּל־כְּלָיו וְאֶת לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים: ³⁷אֶת־הַמְּנֹרָה הַטְּהֻרָה אֶת־נִרְתִּיהָ גֵרֹת הַמְּעֻרְכָה וְאֶת־כָּל־כְּלֵיהָ וְאֶת שֶׁמֶן הַמָּאֹר: ³⁸וְאֶת מִזְבַּח הַזֹּהָב וְאֶת שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וְאֶת קְטֹרֶת הַסַּמִּים וְאֶת מָסַךְ פֶּתַח הָאֵהָל: ³⁹אֶת | מִזְבַּח הַנְּחֹשֶׁת וְאֶת־מִכְבַּר הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ אֶת־בְּדָיו וְאֶת־כָּל־כְּלָיו אֶת־הַכִּיֹּר וְאֶת־כַּנּוֹ: ⁴⁰אֶת קַלְעֵי הַחֻצֵּר אֶת־עַמֻּדֶיהָ וְאֶת־אֲדָנֶיהָ וְאֶת־הַמָּסָךְ לְשַׁעַר הַחֻצֵּר אֶת־מִיתְרָיו וִיתְדֹתֶיהָ וְאֶת כָּל־כְּלֵי עֲבֹדַת הַמִּשְׁכָּן לְאֵהָל מוֹעֵד: ⁴¹אֶת־בְּגָדֵי הַשָּׂרָד לְשָׂרֵת לְבָקֻדֵשׁ אֶת־בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ לְאֶהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן וְאֶת־בְּגָדֵי בָנָיו לְכַהֵן: ⁴²כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה בְּן עֲשׂוֹ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת כָּל־הָעֲבֹדָה: ⁴³וַיִּרְא מֹשֶׁה אֶת־כָּל־הַמְּלָאכָה וְהִנֵּה

COMPLETION AND INSPECTION (vv. 32–43)

The tabernacle in all its several parts and with all its appurtenances is completed and brought to Moses for inspection. The text does not record how long the work took or the dates involved.

32. Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting A combination of the two distinct terms for the sanctuary. Together they express its dual function

as the symbol of the indwelling of the divine Presence in the camp of the Israelites and as the site of communication between God and Moses.

42. the Israelites The entire project is presented as an enterprise of all the Israelites (cf. v. 32).

43. This finale is patterned after the Creation narrative of Genesis, in which the completion of the work evoked divine approval followed by a blessing.

43. The Midrash supplies the words with which Moses blessed the people: "May it be

God's will that the divine Presence rest upon the work of your hands" (Tanḥ.).

tasks—as the LORD had commanded, so they had done—Moses blessed them.

עָשׂוּ אֹתָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה בְּן עֲשׂוֹ
וַיְבָרַךְ אֹתָם מֹשֶׁה: פ

40 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

²On the first day of the first month you shall set up the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting. ³Place there the Ark of the Pact, and screen off the ark with the curtain. ⁴Bring in the table and lay out its due setting; bring in the lampstand and light its lamps; ⁵and place the gold altar of incense before the Ark of the Pact. Then put up the screen for the entrance of the Tabernacle.

⁶You shall place the altar of burnt offering before the entrance of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting. ⁷Place the laver between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and put water in it. ⁸Set up the enclosure round about, and put in place the screen for the gate of the enclosure.

⁹You shall take the anointing oil and anoint the Tabernacle and all that is in it to consecrate it and all its furnishings, so that it shall be holy. ¹⁰Then anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils to consecrate the altar, so that the altar shall be most holy. ¹¹And anoint the laver and its stand to consecrate it.

¹²You shall bring Aaron and his sons forward to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and wash them with the water. ¹³Put the sacral vestments on Aaron, and anoint him and consecrate him,

מ וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: חמישי
[שביעי]

² בַּיּוֹם־הַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ
תָּקִים אֶת־מִשְׁכַּן אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: ³ וְשַׂמְתָּ
שָׁם אֶת אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְסַכַּת עַל־הָאָרֶץ
אֶת־הַפָּרֹכֶת: ⁴ וְהֵבֵאתָ אֶת־הַשְּׁלֵחָן
וְעִרְכָתָּ אֶת־עַרְבּוֹ וְהֵבֵאתָ אֶת־הַמִּנְרָה
וְהַעֲלִיתָ אֶת־נִרְתִּיהָ: ⁵ וְנִתְּתָהּ אֶת־מִזְבַּח
הַזֹּהֵב לְקִטְרֹת לְפָנַי אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְשַׂמְתָּ
אֶת־מָסַךְ הַפֶּתַח לַמִּשְׁכָּן:

⁶ וְנִתְּתָהּ אֶת מִזְבַּח הָעֹלָה לְפָנַי פֶּתַח
מִשְׁכַּן אֹהֶל־מוֹעֵד: ⁷ וְנִתְּתָהּ אֶת־הַכִּיֹּר בֵּין־
אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּבֵין הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְנִתְּתָהּ שָׁם מַיִם:
⁸ וְשַׂמְתָּ אֶת־הַחֹצֵר סָבִיב וְנִתְּתָהּ אֶת־מָסַךְ
שַׁעַר הַחֹצֵר:

⁹ וּלְקַחְתָּ אֶת־שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וּמִשַּׁחְתָּ
אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ וּקְדַשְׁתָּ
אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־כָּל־כֵּלָיו וְהָיָה קֹדֶשׁ:
¹⁰ וּמִשַּׁחְתָּ אֶת־מִזְבַּח הָעֹלָה וְאֶת־כָּל־
כֵּלָיו וּקְדַשְׁתָּ אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְהָיָה הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
קֹדֶשׁ קְדָשִׁים: ¹¹ וּמִשַּׁחְתָּ אֶת־הַכִּיֹּר וְאֶת־
כַּנּוֹ וּקְדַשְׁתָּ אֹתוֹ:

¹² וְהִקְרַבְתָּ אֶת־אֶהֱרֹן וְאֶת־בָּנָיו אֶל־
פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּרְחַצְתָּ אֹתָם בַּמַּיִם:
וְהִלְבַּשְׁתָּ אֶת־אֶהֱרֹן אֶת בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ

ASSEMBLY AND DEDICATION (40:1–15)

1–8. Moses is instructed by God to set up the tabernacle and put each item in its assigned place. The order of emplacement of the furnishings is from the interior outward, from the most sacred to the less sacred. The tabernacle is to be erected just two weeks short of the first anniversary of the Exodus from Egypt, and exactly nine months since the arrival at Sinai. This is New Year's day,

a date that forges another link with the Creation narrative.

3. curtain See Comments to 26:31–35.

4. lay out its due setting The 12 loaves of the bread of display set out in two rows. See Comment to 25:30.

9–11. During the next stage every item is anointed with the sacred aromatic anointing oil. See Comments to 30:22–33.

12–15. The priests are installed. See Comments to 29:1–9.

that he may serve Me as priest. ¹⁴Then bring his sons forward, put tunics on them, ¹⁵and anoint them as you have anointed their father, that they may serve Me as priests. This their anointing shall serve them for everlasting priesthood throughout the ages.

¹⁶This Moses did; just as the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

¹⁷In the first month of the second year, on the first of the month, the Tabernacle was set up. ¹⁸Moses set up the Tabernacle, placing its sockets, setting up its planks, inserting its bars, and erecting its posts. ¹⁹He spread the tent over the Tabernacle, placing the covering of the tent on top of it—just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²⁰He took the Pact and placed it in the ark; he fixed the poles to the ark, placed the cover on top of the ark, ²¹and brought the ark inside the Tabernacle. Then he put up the curtain for screening, and screened off the Ark of the Pact—just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

וּמִשְׁחָתָּ אֹתוֹ וְקִדְשָׁתָּ אֹתוֹ וְכָהֵן לִי: ¹⁴ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו תִּקְרִיב וְהִלַּבְשָׁתָּ אֹתָם כְּתַנְתָּ: ¹⁵ וּמִשְׁחָתָּ אֹתָם כַּאֲשֶׁר מִשְׁחָתָּ אֶת־אֲבִיהֶם וְכָהֵנוּ לִי וְהִיְתָה לְהֵיטָב לָהֶם מִשְׁחָתָּם לְכַהֲנַת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתָם: ¹⁶ וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֹתוֹ בֶּן עֲשָׂה: ס

וַיְהִי בַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִייתָ ¹⁷ שְׁשִׁי בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ הַיּוֹקֵם הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ¹⁸ וַיִּקֶּם מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־אֲדָנָיו וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־קַרְשָׁיו וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־בְּרִיחָיו וַיִּקֶּם אֶת־עַמּוּדָיו: ¹⁹ וַיִּפְרֹשׂ אֶת־הָאֹהֶל עַל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־מַכְסֵה הָאֹהֶל עָלָיו מִלְמַעְלָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ס ²⁰ וַיִּקָּח וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־הָעֵדוּת אֶל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־הַבְּדִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־הַפְּפֹרֶת עַל־הָאָרֶץ מִלְמַעְלָה: ²¹ וַיָּבֵא אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֶל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת פְּרֻכַת הַמִּטָּה וַיִּטֶּן עַל אָרוֹן הָעֵדוּת כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ס

FULFILLING THE INSTRUCTIONS
(vv. 16–33)

16. This Moses did This affirmation applies

to all the foregoing instructions. The details are spelled out, item by item, as though to emphasize the point.

CHAPTER 40

15. as you have anointed their father When Moses anointed Aaron as High Priest, he had no reason to be jealous of Aaron. Moses' role was at least as prominent as Aaron's. When Moses was called on to anoint Aaron's sons to follow him as priests, however, God was concerned that Moses might be jealous. He would

never see his sons succeed him in his role as leader. Therefore, God commands Moses to show his greatness of character and his love for his brother by anointing Aaron's sons in the same wholehearted fashion as he had anointed their father. We show true love when we can rejoice in the good fortune of another even though it is an experience that we ourselves will never know.

HALAKHAH L'MA'ASEH

40:16. as the LORD had commanded him, so he did As Conservative Jews, we are motivated in our commitment to Jewish observance as an expression of our allegiance to God as the divine commander with whom we live in covenant.

²²He placed the table in the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain, on the north side of the Tabernacle. ²³Upon it he laid out the setting of bread before the LORD—as the LORD had commanded Moses. ²⁴He placed the lampstand in the Tent of Meeting opposite the table, on the south side of the Tabernacle. ²⁵And he lit the lamps before the LORD—as the LORD had commanded Moses. ²⁶He placed the altar of gold in the Tent of Meeting, before the curtain. ²⁷On it he burned aromatic incense—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²⁸Then he put up the screen for the entrance of the Tabernacle. ²⁹At the entrance of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting he placed the altar of burnt offering. On it he offered up the burnt offering and the grain offering—as the LORD had commanded Moses. ³⁰He placed the laver between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing. ³¹From it Moses and Aaron and his sons would wash their hands and feet; ³²they washed when they entered the Tent of Meeting and when they approached the altar—as the LORD had commanded Moses. ³³And he set up the enclosure around the Tabernacle and the altar, and put up the screen for the gate of the enclosure.

When Moses had finished the work, ³⁴the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the Presence of the LORD filled the Tabernacle. ³⁵Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting,

וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־הַשְּׁלֶחָן בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד עַל יַרְךָ הַמִּשְׁכָּן צִפְנָהּ מִחוּץ לַפָּרֹכֶת: ²³ וַיַּעֲרֹךְ עָלָיו עֵרֶךְ לֶחֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ²⁴ וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־הַמִּנְרָה בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד נֹכַח הַשְּׁלֶחָן עַל יַרְךָ הַמִּשְׁכָּן נֹגֵבָה: ²⁵ וַיַּעַל הַנֵּרֹת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ²⁶ וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־מִזְבֵּחַ הַזָּהָב בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לִפְנֵי הַפָּרֹכֶת: ²⁷ וַיִּקְטֹרַע עָלָיו קֹטֶרֶת סַמִּים כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ^פ

וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־מִסְכַּף הַפֶּתַח לַמִּשְׁכָּן: ²⁹ וְאֵת מִזְבֵּחַ הָעֹלָה שָׁם פִּתַּח מִשְׁכַּן אֹהֶל־מוֹעֵד וַיַּעַל עָלָיו אֶת־הָעֹלָה וְאֶת־הַמִּנְחָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ^ס וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־הַלַּיִר בֵּין־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּבֵין הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיִּתֵּן שָׁמָּה מַיִם לְרִחְצָה: ³¹ וְרַחֲצוּ מִמֶּנּוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וּבָנָיו אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם וְאֶת־רַגְלֵיהֶם: ³² בְּבֹאֵם אֶל־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּבִקְרִבְתֶּם אֶל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ יִרְחֲצוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ^ס וַיִּקֶּם אֶת־הַחֲצֵר סָבִיב לַמִּשְׁכָּן וְלַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־מִסְכַּף שַׁעַר הַחֲצֵר

וַיְכַל מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַמְּלָאכָה: ^פ ³⁴ וַיִּכַס הָעָנָן אֶת־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּכְבוֹד יְהוָה מָלֵא אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ³⁵ וְלֹא־יָכַל מֹשֶׁה לָּבוֹא

29. he offered up The subject is either Moses or Aaron and his sons.

33. When Moses had finished the work The Hebrew word for “finished” (*va-y'khal*) echoes the same word in a different form (*va-y'khillu*) at the close of the story of Creation (Gen. 2:1). This is significant, because the link between shrines and Creation was traditional in the ancient world. It is echoed both in the structure of the tabernacle and in the procedure entailed in its construction.

APPEARANCE OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE
(vv. 34–38)

34. cloud . . . Presence The tabernacle was to function as a portable Sinai, a means by which a continued channel of communication with God could be maintained. As the people move away from the mountain of Revelation, they need a visible, tangible symbol of God’s abiding presence in their midst. Thus the phenomenon that oc-

35. At this point, there are two embodiments of holiness in the Israelite camp: the

Tent of Meeting (*Ohel Mo-ed*) and the tabernacle (*mishkan*). We can think of them as rep-

because the cloud had settled upon it and the Presence of the LORD filled the Tabernacle. ³⁶When the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle, the Israelites would set out, on their various journeys; ³⁷but if the cloud did not lift, they would not set out until such time as it did lift. ³⁸For over the Tabernacle a cloud of the LORD rested by day, and fire would appear in [the cloud] by night, in the view of all the house of Israel throughout their journeys.

אֶל-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד כִּי-שָׁכַן עָלָיו הָעֲנָן וּכְבוֹד
יְהוָה מָלֵא אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ³⁶ וּבִהֲעֹלֹת
הָעֲנָן מֵעַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן יִסְעוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכֹל
מִסְעֵיהֶם: ³⁷ וְאִם-לֹא יַעֲלֶה הָעֲנָן וְלֹא
יִסְעוּ עַד-יוֹם הָעֲלֹתוֹ: ³⁸ כִּי עֲנָן יְהוָה
עַל-הַמִּשְׁכָּן יוֹמָם וְאֵשׁ תִּהְיֶה לַיְלָה בּוֹ
לְעֵינֵי כָל-בְּיַת-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכֹל-מִסְעֵיהֶם: *

v. 38. למערבאי סכום הפסוקים של הספר 1,209 וחציו 22:27

חֹזֶק חֹזֶק וְנִתְחַזַּק

curred at Mount Sinai (see 24:15–17) now repeats itself.

35. It is unclear whether entry is literally blocked or is not permissible or that Moses simply dared not enter.

36–38. Henceforth, Israel's wanderings and encampments in the wilderness on the way to the

Promised Land are determined by the movements of the luminous cloud.

The Book of Exodus, which opened with a narrative of misery and oppression, closes on a note of confidence and hope. Israel is assured that, day and night, the divine spirit hovers over it, guiding and controlling its destiny (see Num. 9:15–23).

resenting a theology of encounter and a theology of presence. There are moments (a wedding, the birth of a child, an escape from danger) when God erupts into our lives with a special intensity that transforms us but that is too intense to be lived constantly. Then there are times when God is a constant presence in our lives (marriage, parenthood, years of good health) in an equally real but less intense manner. The challenge is to recognize

God's constant presence in our lives without its becoming so ordinary that we take it for granted. After all of this dedicated effort—taking up four-and-a-half *parashiyot* of the Book of Exodus—God comes down and approves of the work. The Book of Exodus ends on that note. "Our book which began in darkness concludes in the brilliant illumination of God's glory before the eyes of the entire House of Israel" (B. Jacob).

הַפְּטָרָה וַיַּקְהֵל

HAFTARAH FOR VA-YAK-HEL

1 KINGS 7:40–50 (*Ashk'nazim*)

הַפְּטָרָה פְּקוּדֵי

HAFTARAH FOR P'KUDEI

1 KINGS 7:40–50 (*S'fardim*)

This *haftarah* includes a summary of constructing furnishings for the house of the Lord. It comes after an account of building the Temple and a trade agreement for goods and services made with Hiram, king of Tyre (1 Kings 5:15–26, 6:1–7:12), as well as a description of the copper work cast for the Temple executed by another Hiram, a master craftsman also from Tyre (1 Kings 7:13–46).

The contrast between the craftsman Hiram, who works in bronze for objects found outside the most sacred area, and Solomon, the (inspired) Judean who works in gold on objects having more sacred or special status, is not accidental. In the wilderness tabernacle, degrees of sanctity are correlated with the value of metals used; the same is true in the Temple. Moreover, both the furniture and objects of the Outer Court were bronzed, whereas those in the inner holy space were plated with “pure” or refined gold. In the tabernacle, the Ark in the Holy of Holies was gold plated inside and out, whereas the Ark cover (*kaporet*) was a solid slab of pure gold. Correspondingly (according to an earlier report) King Solomon overlaid “the entire House” and its “floor” with gold, including “the entire altar of the Shrine”; “the cherubim”; and even the cherubim, palms, and calyxes on the walls of the house and on the double doors of the entrance of the Shrine and Great Hall (1 Kings 6:21–22, 28–29, 32, 35).

Pilgrims rejoiced at the thought of ascending to the Temple in Jerusalem (Ps. 122:1); the pious yearned for its glories and its spiritual benefits.

Speaking for many, one psalmist prayed: “One thing I ask of the LORD, / only that do I seek: / to live in the house of the LORD / all the days of my life, / to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD, / [and] to frequent His Temple” (Ps. 27:4).

RELATION OF THE HAFTARAH TO THE PARASHAH

This *haftarah* is recited by *Ashk'nazim* and *S'fardim* for Torah portions that focus on construction details of the tabernacle erected in the wilderness. In the *haftarah*, the language that describes the building of the Temple echoes that which described the building of the tabernacle. The tabernacle was built by Bezalel, who was “singled out” by God and “endowed” with “a divine spirit of skill (*hokhmah*), ability (*t'vunah*), and knowledge (*da-at*) in every kind of craft (*u-v'khol m'lakhah*)” (Exod. 35:31). Likewise, the brass work of the Temple is the work of Hiram, “endowed with skill (*hokhmah*), ability (*t'vunah*), and talent (*da-at*) for executing all work (*kol m'lakhah*) in bronze” (1 Kings 7:14).

The *haftarah* contains other linguistic echoes of the Torah portions *Va-yak-hel* and *P'kudei*. Thus the verb used about Bezalel in his work on the tabernacle objects and Hiram and Solomon in their work on the Temple is *va-ya-as* (he made). This verb also echoes part of the Creation account in Genesis (1:7, 16, 25). This suggests a link between the Creation, the tabernacle, and the Tem-

ple. The correlation is reinforced by the repetition of other keywords. The tabernacle report concludes with the comment that “Moses finished (*va-y'khal*) the work (*et ha-m'lakhah*)” (Exod. 40:33). The Temple description notes that “Hiram finished (*va-y'khal la-asot*) all the work (*et kol ha-m'lakhah*) he had been doing (*asher asah*) for King Solomon” (7:40). Both of these recall summaries of the Creation account: “On the seventh day God finished (*va-y'khal*) the work (*m'lakhto*) He had been doing (*asher asah*)” (Gen. 2:2). It may be added that “God blessed” (*va-y'varekh*) that day “and declared it holy” (*va-y'kaddesh*, 2:3). Correspondingly, “when Moses saw that [the people] had performed all the tasks (*kol ha-m'lakhah*) . . . Moses blessed (*va-y'varekh*) them” (Exod. 39:43), and “declared holy” (*va-y'kaddesh*) the tabernacle immediately upon its completion (Num. 7:1).

The sages of old, aware of such linguistic patterns, offered rich developments on the theme. A *midrash* suggests that the features of the tabernacle fully corresponded to the works of Creation (Tanḥ. P'kudei 2). Included are correlations of the curtains with the heavens; the brazen tank with the waters of the sea, the golden candlesticks with the lights in the firmament, and the winged cherubs with the fowl in the firmament of heaven. A more elaborate example of this symbolism occurs later in *Midrash Tadshei*, which conflates the tabernacle and the Temple into one ensemble. This establishes a correlation of the Creation, the tabernacle, and the Temple. Using other recurrent terms, a *midrash* extends this correlation to include the future Temple at the end of days (Tanḥ. Va-yak-hel 5).

7 ⁴⁰Hiram also made the lavers, the scrapers, and the sprinkling bowls.

So Hiram finished all the work that he had been doing for King Solomon on the House of the LORD: ⁴¹the two columns, the two globes of the capitals upon the columns; and the two pieces of network to cover the two globes of the capitals upon the columns; ⁴²the four hundred pomegranates for the two pieces of network, two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two globes of the capitals upon the columns; ⁴³the ten stands and the ten lavers upon the stands; ⁴⁴the one tank with the twelve

ו ⁴⁰וַיַּעַשׂ חִירֹם אֶת־הַכְּבִירֹת וְאֶת־
הַיָּעִים וְאֶת־הַמְזֻרְקוֹת

וַיַּכֵּל חִירֹם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־הַמְּלָאכָה
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בַּיִת יְהוָה:
עַמֻּדִים שְׁנַיִם וְגִלְתֵּי הַכְּתָרֹת אֲשֶׁר־עַל־
רֹאשׁ הָעַמֻּדִים שְׁתֵּי וְהַשְּׂבָכוֹת שְׁתֵּי
לְכַסּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי גִלְתֵּי הַכְּתָרֹת אֲשֶׁר
עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעַמֻּדִים: ⁴²וְאֶת־הָרְמָנִים
אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת לְשְׁתֵּי הַשְּׂבָכוֹת שְׁנַיִ־טוּרִים
רְמָנִים לְשְׂבָכָה הָאֶחָת לְכַסּוֹת אֶת־שְׁתֵּי
גִלְתֵּי הַכְּתָרֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָעַמֻּדִים:
וְאֶת־הַמְּכָנוֹת עֶשֶׂר וְאֶת־הַכְּבִירֹת
עֶשֶׂרָה עַל־הַמְּכָנוֹת: ⁴⁴וְאֶת־הַיָּם הָאֶחָד

1 Kings 7:40. Hiram The son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, whose father was a Tyrian coppersmith. Called Hiram in 2 Chron. 2:12. According to 2 Chron. 2:13, he was “the son of a Danite woman, his father a Tyrian.” In the Midrash, the genealogy in Chronicles served as the basis for a comparison between the artisans of the tabernacle and of the Temple. Just as

Bezalel the Judean, and his assistant Oholiab, from the tribe of Dan (Exod. 31:2,6), were the chief craftsmen in the construction of the tabernacle, Solomon the Judean and Hiram the Danite were responsible for the artwork of the Temple. The “two tribes [Judah and Dan] were [thus] partners” in both affairs (PR 6).

44. the . . . tank Hebrew: *ha-yam*, literally,

oxen underneath the tank;⁴⁵the pails, the scrapers, and the sprinkling bowls. All those vessels in the House of the LORD that Hiram made for King Solomon were of burnished bronze.⁴⁶The king had them cast in earthen molds, in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zarethan.⁴⁷Solomon left all the vessels [unweighed] because of their very great quantity; the weight of the bronze was not reckoned.

⁴⁸And Solomon made all the furnishings that were in the House of the LORD: the altar, of gold; the table for the bread of display, of gold;⁴⁹the lampstands—five on the right side and five on the left—in front of the Shrine, of solid gold; and the petals, lamps, and tongs, of gold;⁵⁰the basins, snuffers, sprinkling bowls, ladles, and fire pans, of solid gold; and the hinge sockets for the doors of the innermost part of the House, the Holy of Holies, and for the doors of the Great Hall of the House, of gold.

“the sea.” This was an enormous drum, about 18 feet (10 cubits) in diameter and about 9 feet (5 cubits) deep. There were also 10 smaller basins (v. 43), each called *kiyor*. The large tank was supported by 12 brazen oxen, 3 facing each of the cardinal points (vv. 23–26). Moreover, the separate basins had insets engraved with images of lions, oxen, and cherubim (vv. 28–29) and were set on the likes of “chariot wheels” (v. 33). This iconography recalls the chariot of the divine glory in Ezek. 1, supported at the corners by four beings with four faces: human, lion, bull, and eagle (1:10–11). Ezekiel calls the beings “cherubim” (10:1ff). In ancient Near Eastern art it was common for such animals, or composites of human shapes with animal faces, to serve as pedestals for images of gods or supports for divine or royal chariots. It is possible that “the sea” and its supports symbolically refer to the lower world, whereas the Throne and its supports refer to the upper realm. Alternatively, given the existence of

וְאֶת־הַבָּקָר שְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר תַּחַת הַיָּם :
וְאֶת־הַסִּירֹת וְאֶת־הַיָּעִים וְאֶת־
הַמְזַרְקוֹת וְאֶת כָּל־הַכֵּלִים הָאֵלֶּה הָאֵלֶּה
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה חִירָם לְמֶלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בֵּית יְהוָה
נְחֹשֶׁת מְמֹרֶט: ⁴⁶ בְּכִבְר הַיַּרְדֵּן יִצְקֵם
הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּמַעֲבֵה הָאֲדָמָה בֵּין סְכוֹת וּבֵין
צָרְתָן: ⁴⁷ וַיִּנְחַח שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת־כָּל־הַכֵּלִים
מְרַב מְאֹד מְאֹד לֹא נִחְקַר מִשְׁקָל
הַנְּחֹשֶׁת:

⁴⁸ וַיַּעַשׂ שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת כָּל־הַכֵּלִים אֲשֶׁר בֵּית
יְהוָה אֶת מִזְבֵּחַ הַזָּהָב וְאֶת־הַשְּׁלֵחָן אֲשֶׁר
עָלָיו לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים זָהָב: ⁴⁹ וְאֶת־הַמְנֹרֹת
חֲמֵשׁ מִיָּמִין וְחֲמֵשׁ מִשְּׂמֹאל לְפָנַי הַדְּבִיר
זָהָב סָגוּר וְהַפָּרַח וְהַנֶּרֶת וְהַמְּלָקָחִים
זָהָב: ⁵⁰ וְהַסְּפוֹת וְהַמְּזַרְקוֹת וְהַמְּחַתּוֹת
וְהַכְּפּוֹת וְהַמְּחַתּוֹת זָהָב סָגוּר וְהַפְּתוֹת
לְדַלְתוֹת הַבַּיִת הַפְּנִימִי לְקֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדוּשִׁים
לְדַלְתֵי הַבַּיִת לְהִיכָל זָהָב: פ

an upper sea in ancient Israelite cosmology (Gen. 1:7), “the sea” may have cosmic symbolism and refer to the supports and waters of the heavenly realm.

48. the altar, of gold This is the altar of incense, which was gilded.

49. the lampstands—five on the right side and five on the left According to tradition, these lampstands were set to the right and to the left of the original candelabrum of the tabernacle made by Moses (Rashi, Radak).

lamps These were receptacles for the oil and wicks (Rashi).

tongs For the removal of the wicks (Rashi).

50. sprinkling bowls Hebrew: *mizrakot*. These were the receptacles for the blood of the sacrifices (Rashi, Ralbag).

fire pans Used to carry the glowing coals from the outer altar to the inner one, on which the incense was burned (Rashi, Ralbag).

הַפְּטָרָה פְּקוּדֵי

HAFTARAH FOR P'KUDEI

1 KINGS 7:51–8:21 (*Ashk'nazim*)

(*Ashk'nazim also read this haftarah whenever the Torah portions Va-yak-hel and P'kudei are combined. S'fardim read the passage starting on p. 573 with P'kudei, or whenever Va-yak-hel and P'kudei are combined.*)

This *haftarah* describes a momentous event in ancient Israel. After the completion of the Temple, Solomon transfers to it the ancient Ark and the Tent of Meeting and its holy vessels. With the transfer of these objects, and the sacred vessels from the city of David, to the Temple of Solomon, the period of the wilderness wandering—symbolized by the moveable tabernacle—is formally brought to a close. With the symbols of Sinai deposited in its midst, Jerusalem becomes the sacred center of the nation.

Two events that stand behind the depiction of Solomon's ceremony give it an added aura of authority. First, the processional. The account of the Ark's transfer from Zion to the accompaniment of royal sacrifices echoes David's ceremonious participation in the events that first brought the Ark to Zion (2 Sam. 6:12–19). The other event takes us back to the initial construction of the Ark in the time of Moses. According to the ancient report at the end of this week's *parashah*, when the work was done “the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the Presence of the LORD filled the Tabernacle” (Exod. 40:34), making it clear that the Lord had accepted the work of human hands as a fit place for divine dwelling. Similarly, the *haftarah* announces that after the Ark was deposited in the Holy of Holies, “the cloud had filled the House of the LORD . . . for the Presence of the LORD filled the House of the LORD” (1 Kings 8:10–11). Thus Solomon is deemed the true heir of Moses as well as of David. To underscore this point the text notes that Solomon's

Temple housed “the two tablets of stone,” which were hewn by Moses on Sinai (v. 9).

The indwelling of the divine Presence or glory (*kavod*) in the shrine is a particular mark of priestly theology. It manifests God's presence in tangible terms. The *kavod* appeared before the entire congregation at the conclusion of the initiation of Aaron and his sons into the priesthood (Lev. 9:23), and it is this divine reality that will return to the shrine in the rebuilt new Temple described by Ezekiel (Ezek. 10:18–22, 43:2–4). In other accounts, the *kavod* also appears with an anthropomorphic shape. Thus when Moses at Mount Sinai asks God to reveal His *kavod*, he is graced with a glimpse of a receding figure that passes by and casts a hand over him, that he not see the divine face and die (Exod. 33:18–23). Similarly, Ezekiel in his inaugural vision discerned a “semblance of a human form” that “was the appearance of the semblance of the Presence (*kavod*) of the LORD” (Ezek. 1:26,28). Accordingly, the descent of the *kavod* into the tabernacle and the Temple conveys a visual concreteness of the divine presence. Solomon's words of prayer at this moment are a fitting sequel to that manifestation: “I have now built for You / . . . / A place where You may dwell (*makhon l'shivt'kha*) forever” (1 Kings 8:13).

The *haftarah* concludes with the fact that the holy Ark within the Temple contained the covenant that God made with the nation at Mount Sinai (1 Kings 8:21). This is of great theological significance. Following ancient tradition (Exod. 34:29, 40:20; Deut. 10:5), the Ark is no mere throne for God's indwelling Presence but the repository of a divine–human compact that binds both parties. Situated at the center of sacred space, the Covenant is concretely and symbolically the link between heaven and earth.

RELATION OF THE HAFTARAH
TO THE PARASHAH

The *haftarah* makes a connection between the ancient tabernacle and the Temple. The first, built by Moses, served as the moveable pavilion of service during the wilderness wandering and through the initial phase of settlement in the land. The second, built by Solomon with all the grandeur of oriental opulence, was designed as a place where God “may dwell forever.” The Ark’s transfer into the Temple from the tabernacle was a public sign of continuity, proclaiming that with the end of the period of unstable settlement, the Ark could rest from its service in the vanguard of the armies of God. Perhaps this is hinted at in the language chosen to indicate the end of the two labors. Of Moses we read that he “finished the work” (*va-y’khal . . . et ha-m’lakhab*, Exod. 40:33). This is a distinct allusion to God’s own ceasing from labor in Gen. 2:2 and a theological suggestion that the tabernacle finished the work of Creation. By contrast, we read of Solomon that

he “completed the work” (*va-tishlam kol ha-m’lakhab*, 1 Kings 7:51). The Hebrew is a clear play on his name (*Sh’lomo*) and a reference to the fact that in his day there was “peace” (*shalom*) in the region so that the king could build the house of God (1 Kings 5:4).

The difference between the two shrines is notable. Whereas the ancient pavilion led the people in their temporal wanderings accompanied by God (Exod. 40:37–38), the great Temple in Jerusalem marked the people’s settlement in space and the desire for God’s indwelling forever (1 Kings 8:12–13). Moreover, a movable and a permanent shrine evoke different spiritual realities. The first evokes dynamic and changing circumstances, in accordance with the symbolism of religious life as a journey. The other evokes fixed and dependable stability, in accordance with the symbolism of religiosity directed toward a sacred center. The incorporation of the ancient Tent (of Moses) within the Temple of Solomon symbolically joins these two realities, making concrete a dialectic at the heart of the religious imagination.

7 ⁵¹When all the work that King Solomon had done in the House of the LORD was completed, Solomon brought in the sacred donations of his father David—the silver, the gold, and the vessels—and deposited them in the treasury of the House of the LORD.

8 Then Solomon convoked the elders of Israel—all the heads of the tribes and the ancestral chieftains of the Israelites—before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD from the City of David, that is, Zion.

1 Kings 7:51. the sacred donations of his father David Rabbinic tradition was troubled by the plain sense of this passage, which notes the enrichment of the Temple treasuries through David’s donations. Several interpretations highlight Solomon’s ethical integrity in refusing to use Da-

vid’s wealth in the actual building of his Temple. According to one view, David should have used this money to buy food for the hungry during the famine in his day (2 Sam. 24). Because he did not, his money was tainted (Rashi). Another opinion stressed that, because David’s gain was ill-gotten,

ז ⁵¹וּתְשִׁלַּם כָּל-הַמְּלָאכָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בֵּית יְהוָה וַיָּבֵא שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת-קַדְשֵׁי אָבִיו וְדָוִד אֶת-הַכֶּסֶף וְאֶת-הַזָּהָב וְאֶת-הַכֵּלִים נָתַן בְּאֵצְרוֹת בֵּית יְהוָה: פ

ח אַז יִקְהַל שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת-זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-כָּל-רָאשֵׁי הַמְּטוֹת נְשִׂאֵי הָאָבוֹת לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה יְרוּשָׁלַם לְהַעֲלוֹת אֶת-אֲרוֹן בְּרִית-יְהוָה מֵעִיר דָּוִד הִיא צִיּוֹן:

²All the men of Israel gathered before King Solomon at the Feast, in the month of Ethanim—that is, the seventh month. ³When all the elders of Israel had come, the priests lifted the Ark ⁴and carried up the Ark of the LORD. Then the priests and the Levites brought the Tent of Meeting and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent. ⁵Meanwhile, King Solomon and the whole community of Israel, who were assembled with him before the Ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen in such abundance that they could not be numbered or counted.

⁶The priests brought the Ark of the LORD's Covenant to its place underneath the wings of the cherubim, in the Shrine of the House, in the Holy of Holies; ⁷for the cherubim had their wings spread out over the place of the Ark, so that the cherubim shielded the Ark and its poles from above. ⁸The poles projected so that the ends of the poles were visible in the sanctuary in front of the Shrine, but they could not be seen outside; and there they remain to this day. ⁹There was nothing inside the Ark but the two tablets of stone which Moses placed there at Horeb, when the LORD made [a covenant] with the Israelites after their departure from the land of Egypt.

¹⁰When the priests came out of the sanctuary—for the cloud had filled the House of the LORD ¹¹and the priests were not able to remain

וַיִּקְהֵלוּ אֶל-הַמִּלְךָ שְׁלֹמֹה כָּל-אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּירַח הָאֲתָנִים בַּחֹג הוּא הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי: ³ וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל זְקֵנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׂאוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת-הָאָרוֹן: ⁴ וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶת-אָרוֹן יְהוָה וְאֶת-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְאֶת-כָּל-כֵּלֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר בְּאֹהֶל וַיַּעֲלוּ אֹתָם הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם: ⁵ וְהַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה וְכָל-עַדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנוֹעֲדִים עָלָיו אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי הָאָרוֹן מִזְבְּחִים צֹאן וּבָקָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִסְפְּרוּ וְלֹא יִמְנוּ מִרֶב:

⁶ וַיָּבֹאוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת-אָרוֹן בְּרִית-יְהוָה אֶל-מְקוֹמוֹ אֶל-דְּבִיר הַבַּיִת אֶל-קֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדְשִׁים אֶל-תַּחַת כַּנְּפֵי הַפְּרוּבִים: ⁷ כִּי הַפְּרוּבִים פָּרְשִׁים פְּנֵפִים אֶל-מְקוֹם הָאָרוֹן וַיִּסְכּוּ הַכְּרָבִים עַל-הָאָרוֹן וְעַל-בִּדְיוֹ מִלְמַעְלָה: ⁸ וַיֵּאָרְכוּ הַבַּדִּים וַיֵּרְאוּ רֵאשֵׁי הַבַּדִּים מִן-הַקֹּדֶשׁ עַל-פְּנֵי הַדְּבִיר וְלֹא יֵרְאוּ הַחוּצָה וַיְהִיו שָׁם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ⁹ אֵין בְּאָרוֹן רֶק שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הָאֲבָנִים אֲשֶׁר הִנִּיחַ שָׁם מֹשֶׁה בַּחֲרֹב אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת יְהוָה עִם-פְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצֵאתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:

¹⁰ וַיְהִי בְצֵאת הַכֹּהֲנִים מִן-הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְהָעֲנָן מָלָא אֶת-בַּיִת יְהוָה: ¹¹ וְלֹא-יָכְלוּ

Solomon deferred his building project for years, until he could finance it on his own (Ralbag).

1 Kings 8:2. Feast The festival of Booths, or *Sukkot* (see Lev. 23:34). 1 Kings 8:2–21 is recited as the *haftarah* for the second day of *Sukkot*.

Ethanim Here identified with the seventh month, later called *Tishrei*.

4. Tent of Meeting The term used in the *parashah* for the tabernacle.

9. nothing inside the Ark Nothing but the “two tablets of stone (*avanim*).” This follows the tradition in Deut. 10:1–5. In the language of Exodus (25:16, 34:29, 40:20), Moses put into the Ark the two Tablets of the Pact (*edut*). Some Sages suggested that both the first (broken) and second

tablets were in the Ark (BT BB 14a–b). In the ancient Near East, treaty texts were regularly deposited at the feet of the gods, in the shrine. This is the custom that stands behind the deposit of the Tablets of *edut* (Exod. 25:16) or *b'rit* (Deut. 9:11,15) in the Ark of the tabernacle and the Temple. According to Deut. 31:9–13,26–29, the Torah (transcribed by Moses) was given to the levitical priests to place beside the “Ark of the Covenant of the LORD”—to be periodically read aloud and so serve as a warning and a witness to future generations. A copy of this document was to be copied by all kings as well, that they might read it and serve God with knowledge and reverence (Deut. 17:18–20).

and perform the service because of the cloud, for the Presence of the LORD filled the House of the LORD—¹²then Solomon declared:

“The LORD has chosen

To abide in a thick cloud:

¹³I have now built for You

A stately House,

A place where You

May dwell forever.”

¹⁴Then, with the whole congregation of Israel standing, the king faced about and blessed the whole congregation of Israel. ¹⁵He said:

“Praised be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has fulfilled with deeds the promise He made to my father David. For He said, ¹⁶‘Ever since I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city among all the tribes of Israel for building a House where My name might abide; but I have chosen David to rule My people Israel.’

¹⁷“Now my father David had intended to build a House for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁸But the LORD said to my father David, ‘As regards your intention to build a House for My name, you did right to have that intention. ¹⁹However, you shall not build the House yourself; instead, your son, the issue of your loins, shall build the House for My name.’

²⁰“And the LORD has fulfilled the promise that He made: I have succeeded my father David and have ascended the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised. I have built the House for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel; ²¹and I have set a place there for the Ark, containing the covenant which the LORD made with our fathers when He brought them out from the land of Egypt.”

הַפְּהַנִּים לְעַמּוֹד לְשֶׁרֶת מִפְּנֵי הָעֲנָן כִּי־
מָלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה: פ
אָז אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה ¹²

יְהוָה אָמַר

לְשָׁכֵן בְּעֶרְפֹּל:

¹³בָּנִה בְּנִיתִי

בַּיִת זָבֵל לָךְ

מְכוּן לְשִׁבְתֶּךָ

עוֹלָמִים:

¹⁴וַיִּסַּב הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־פָּנָיו וַיְבָרֶךְ אֶת־כָּל־
קְהַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכָל־קְהַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמּוֹד:
וַיֹּאמֶר ¹⁵

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּפִיו
אֶת־דָּוִד אָבִי וּבִידּוֹ מָלֵא לֵאמֹר: ¹⁶מִן־
הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־עַמִּי אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל־
מִמִּצְרַיִם לֹא־בַחַרְתִּי בְעִיר מִכָּל־שְׁבֹטֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבָנוֹת בַּיִת לַיהוָה שְׁמִי שָׁם
וְאֶבְחַר בְּדוֹד לַיהוָה עַל־עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

¹⁷וַיְהִי עַם־לִבָּב דָּוִד אָבִי לְבָנוֹת בַּיִת
לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ¹⁸וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
אֶל־דָּוִד אָבִי יַעַן אֲשֶׁר הָיָה עַם־לִבְבֶךָ
לְבָנוֹת בַּיִת לְשֵׁמִי הִטִּיבְתָּ כִּי הָיָה עַם־
לְבָבֶךָ: ¹⁹רַק אַתָּה לֹא תִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת כִּי
אִם־בְּנֶה הַיֵּצֵא מִחֻלְצֶיךָ הוֹאֵי־יִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת
לְשֵׁמִי:

²⁰וַיִּקַּם יְהוָה אֶת־דְּבָרוֹ אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר וְאָקַם
תַּחַת דָּוִד אָבִי וְאָשֵׁב אֶל־כְּפֹסֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל
כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה וְאָבְנָה הַבַּיִת לְשֵׁם
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ²¹וְאָשֵׁם שָׁם
מָקוֹם לְאָרוֹן אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם בְּרִית יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר
כָּרַת עַם־אֲבֹתֵינוּ בְּהוֹצִיאֹ אֶתֶּם מֵאֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם: ח