

וַיִּקְהַל

VAYAK'HEL/AND HE ASSEMBLED  
Shemot/Exodus 35:1-38:20

פְּקוּדֵי

PEKUDEI/NUMBERED  
Shemot/Exodus 38:21-40:38

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As the book of **Shemot** comes to an **end**, the **construction** of the **Tabernacle** and its vessels is **completed**. A few weeks ago **Moshe** was given the **plans for the project**. Now this week, the matter is **revisited** as the **actual work** is executed by **qualified craftsmen/women**. Before the project can begin, however, **Moshe** will bring the people together and **remind them** of their **priority**:

*Shemot 35:1 Then Moshe gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said to them, "These are the words which **יְיָ** has commanded you to do:<sup>2</sup> "Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to **יְיָ**. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.*

The **Shabbat** is the **starting place** for finding **unity**. The **Tabernacle** is a picture of **unity** in **Messiah**, but **Shabbat** is where we begin. **Shabbat** is the **crown of Creation**:

*Bereshith/Genesis 2:2 And on the seventh day Elohim ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.<sup>3</sup> Then Elohim blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which Elohim had created and made.*

Perhaps **acknowledging** that it is **incomprehensible** for us to **totally understand** what it means to **cease from working**, is the **reason** for the **add-on comment**:

*Shemot 35:3 "You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day."*

Many teachers understand this to **relate to the function of fire** as being the **precondition** to **all forms of creative work**. The **Creator rested** from **creative activities**, thus **we should rest** from similar activities. **Aviva Zornberg** continues to explore the **metaphor of fire**, suggesting that the **enflamed passions** of the people that led to the creation of the golden calf by **fire** should be **remembered**. Now as the **chastened people** stand **ready to contribute** both their **goods** and their **energies** to the **creation of the Tabernacle**, they are told to **hold their fire**, to **temper their passions**, to **understand their fervor** in **light of something greater**....**Shabbat!** **Shabbat** comes before even the **work of the Tabernacle**. **Shabbat** is the **simple place in time** where the Holy One has **promised to meet with us!**

**Shabbat** is the **gift** given to us! **Yeshua** told us:

*Mark 2:27 And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."<sup>28</sup> "Therefore the Son of Man is also Adonai of the Sabbath."*

The writer of **Hebrews** makes it clear to us that the **Seventh Day** is **still valid**:

*Hebrews 4:4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And Yah rested on the seventh day from all His works..."<sup>9</sup> There remains therefore a rest for the people of Yah.<sup>10</sup> For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as Yah did from His."<sup>11</sup> Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.*

After focusing on the Sabbath, the process of **building the Tabernacle** begins with the **cheerful giving** of **everyone** from the **congregation of Israel**. A **special artesian** was appointed by **יְהוָה** to be **in charge** of all the **design work**:

**Shemot 35:30** And Moshe said to the children of Israel, "See, **בְּזַלְלֵי** has called by name **Bezalel** (**בְּזַלְלֵי**) the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the **tribe of Judah**; <sup>31</sup> "and **He** has filled him with the **Spirit of Elohim, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship**, <sup>32</sup> "to design artistic works, to work in gold and silver and bronze, <sup>33</sup> "in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of artistic workmanship.

**Bezalel's name** means "in the shadow of El". Throughout the Scriptures, living in the "shadow of Elohim" is the best place to be. His **shadow** (tsel - **צֵל**) is **His Spirit**:

**Psalm 17:8** Keep me as the apple of Your eye; **Hide me under the shadow** (tsel - **צֵל**) of Your wings,

**Psalm 57:1** ... A Michtam of David when he fled from Saul into the cave. Be merciful to me, O Elohim, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; And **in the shadow** (tsel - **צֵל**) of Your wings I will make my refuge, Until these calamities have passed by.

**Psalm 63:7** Because You have been my help, Therefore **in the shadow** (tsel - **צֵל**) of Your wings I will rejoice.

**Psalm 91:1** He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the **shadow** (tsel - **צֵל**) of the Almighty. <sup>2</sup> I will say of **יְהוָה**, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My Elohim, in Him I will trust." <sup>3</sup> Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler And from the perilous pestilence. <sup>4</sup> He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

We can find safety "under the shadow of His wings"... "covered with His feathers". Where does the **bird imagery** come from?

**Bereshith/Genesis 1:2** The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of Elohim was **hovering over the face of the waters**.

**Devarim/Deuteronomy 32:11** As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, Spreading out its wings, taking them up, Carrying them on its wings,

It is the **Spirit of Elohim** that is doing the "hovering". In one of the most well known stories of the Gospels, **Miriam/Mary** is **overshadowed** by the **Spirit of the Almighty**:

**Luke 1:35** And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the **power of the Highest will overshadow you**; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of Yah.

Just like **Bezalel** was a **builder**, for the next nine months **Miriam** would build the earthly **Tabernacle** that **Yeshua** would dwell in during **His time on earth**. Awesome! In **Shemot 35:31**, we are told that **יְהוָה** filled **Bezalel** with the **Spirit of Elohim**, and in **Isaiah** we see a **similar filling** of the **Spirit upon Messiah**:

**Isaiah 11:1** There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a **Branch shall grow out of his roots**. <sup>2</sup> The Spirit of **יְהוָה** shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of **יְהוָה**.

**Bezalel and Miriam worked to bring together the spiritual and the physical worlds. The Tabernacle and Yeshua are both pictures of what was built through the Spirit. When we keep the commandments, we also are builders of Messiah's Tabernacle. Let's take another look at what was given to Bezalel in order for him to be able to accomplish his goal:**

*Shemot 35:31 "and He has filled him with the Spirit of Elohim, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship,*

A few years ago, I saw a person do a demonstration that helped me to understand these words – **wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. Knowledge came from a pitcher of water. The water was poured into a glass, which was understanding. First a little was poured in, then a little more. We become that glass as we take in the knowledge as we are able. Then the water-filled glass was handed off to a needy person to drink from. That is wisdom...using what's in the glass for its intended purpose.**

The **demonstration continued. More water (knowledge) was poured into the glass and it overflowed the edges and made a big mess. That's what happens when all we do is take in knowledge. Taking in knowledge should be more than just filling your brain. It needs to be acted on, or we won't be able to handle more.**

Now let's work on the **application. Torah knowledge is like building materials. If it's only kept up in our brains (our glasses), it's only an imaginary structure. It's only like reading about the Tabernacle. Understanding is the ability to see the purpose and meaning beyond the Torah knowledge that we have gained. Wisdom puts knowledge and understanding to work with the proper heart attitude and exactly according to the Master's plan. The Spirit of the Tabernacle becomes alive.**

With those **illustrations in mind, let's take a look at how the Bible defines these words:**

#### **KNOWLEDGE:**

- *Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the Torah of your Elohim, I also will forget your children.*
- *Malachi 2:7 "For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, And people should seek the Torah from his mouth; For he is the messenger of יְהוָה of hosts.*
  - We belong to the **priesthood**. It is our job to **gain knowledge** and to **teach Torah**
- *Habakkuk 2:14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of יְהוָה, As the waters cover the sea.*
  - A prophetic view of the **Messianic age** and the **abundance of knowledge**
- *2 Peter 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Adonai and Savior Yeshua the Messiah. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.*

#### **UNDERSTANDING:**

- *Proverbs 15:21 Folly is joy to him who is destitute of discernment, But a man of understanding walks uprightly.*
- *Proverbs 8:1 Does not wisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice?*
  - **Understanding** seen as the **teaching voice**

- **1 Kings 3:9** "Therefore give to **Your servant an understanding heart** to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?
  - **Understanding is what Solomon asked for** (he too built a dwelling for Elohim)
- **1 Chronicles 12:32** of the sons of Issachar who had **understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do**, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command;
- **Psalms 111:10** The fear of יהוה is the beginning of wisdom; **A good understanding have all those who do His commandments**. His praise endures forever.

#### WISDOM:

- **Devarim/Deuteronomy 4:5** "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as יהוה my Elohim commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess.<sup>6</sup> "Therefore **be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom** and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'
- **Proverbs 4:11** I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths.
- **Proverbs 9:10** "The fear of יהוה is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
  - The fear of יהוה leads to **wisdom**
  - **To know Yeshua is to have understanding**. This **understanding** must still be **combined with wisdom**.
- **James 3:13** Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.
  - **Wisdom expresses itself in action**

It took **wisdom, understanding, and knowledge** to build the Tabernacle...the earthly dwelling for the Almighty. Why? Because we know that the Tabernacle was a picture of Yeshua – both the head and the body of Messiah...and He is the personification of those characteristics:

**1 Timothy 3:15** but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of Yah, which is the congregation of the living Elohim, the pillar and ground of the truth.

**Colossians 2:1** For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh,<sup>2</sup> that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of **understanding**, to the **knowledge** of the mystery of Yah, both of the Father and of Messiah,<sup>3</sup> in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

During the time of Solomon, יהוה would give to Hiram the same gifts of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom to enable him to build the Temple:

**1 Kings 7:13** Now King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre.<sup>14</sup> He was the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a bronze worker; **he was filled with wisdom and understanding and knowledge** in working with all kinds of bronze work. So he came to King Solomon and did all his work.

In the commentary on **Terumah**, we saw how the people were put under a **tremendous yoke** during the **building of the Temple**. This contributed to a **later rebellion** that **divided the nation of Israel**. So what was the **difference** between **Bezalel and Hiram**? I think the **Torah tells us** as it gives us this **little extra tidbit of information** about **Bezalel**:

*Shemot 35:34 "And He has put in his heart the ability to teach (l'horot - לְהוֹרֹת)....*

While both **Hiram and Bezalel** possessed **knowledge, understanding, and wisdom**, **Bezalel** was **given the ability to instruct others**. The word we are looking at is **"l'horot"** (לְהוֹרֹת). This word has the **same root** (yarah - יָרָה) as **"teacher"** (moreh - מוֹרֶה) and **"instruction/Torah"** (תּוֹרָה). Therefore, what the **Almighty** had **put in the mind of Bezalel** was the **ability to teach and instruct Torah!** He was **more than a project manager...he was a teacher!** He was **able to take his knowledge, understanding, and wisdom** and use those gifts to **empower others**. This is what a **teacher of Torah** does! While he was **teaching others to cover acacia wood with gold, sew curtains, set stones in gold settings, make linens, anointing oil, and incense**, he was **also helping them to understand why** these **special instructions** were **necessary to make a building holy** enough for **יהוה Elohim** to  **dwell in**. How would you like **Bezalel** to be **your boss?!!** So we see that even the **structure itself** was alive with **Torah. Amazing!**

Okay, let's change our focus again. This week we are covering both **Vayak'hel** and **Pekudei**. You may have noticed a **striking difference** between the **two readings**. In **Pekudei** which covers **Shemot 38:21 through 40:38**, the phrase **"as יהוה commanded Moshe"** appears **14 times**. In addition, it appears **five other times** with slight adjustments (e.g. - "that יהוה had commanded Moshe") and **Pekudei ends** appropriately with:

*Shemot 40:33 ... So Moshe finished the work.*

In contrast, **Parashat Vayak'hel** does not contain this phrase – **not even once!** **Why** should this be? Did not **Bezalel**, who we have seen to be **blessed with Spirit-filled attributes** not do **"everything as יהוה commanded Moshe"**? We know that **he did**. **Why** then, would this phrase be so **conspicuously missing** from parashat Vayak'hel?

**Rav Elchanan Samet** helps us to **understand why** this is so. Let's use the **"table"** (shulcan - שֻׁלְחָן) as an example. First we have the **command** for it to be **built**:

*Shemot 25:23 " You shall also make a table (shulcan - שֻׁלְחָן) of acacia wood...<sup>30</sup> "And you shall set the showbread on the table before Me always.*

**Next** we find the **description** of its **creation** in parashat **Vayak'hel**:

*Shemot 37:10 He made the table (shulcan - שֻׁלְחָן) of acacia wood; two cubits was its length, a cubit its width, and a cubit and a half its height.<sup>11</sup> And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made a molding of gold all around it.<sup>12</sup> Also he made a frame of a handbreadth all around it, and made a molding of gold for the frame all around it.<sup>13</sup> And he cast for it four rings of gold, and put the rings on the four corners that were at its four legs.<sup>14</sup> The rings were close to the frame, as holders for the poles to bear the table.<sup>15</sup> And he made the poles of acacia wood to bear the table, and overlaid them with gold.<sup>16</sup> He made of pure gold the utensils which were on the table: its dishes, its cups, its bowls, and its pitchers for pouring.*

I've given you all the verses detailing its construction to show you that **ONE verse from Shemot 25 is entirely missing**. The “showbread” has **not yet been placed on the table**. Without the “showbread”, the “table” is **not complete**. So where do we find the “showbread”? The answer is - in **parashat Pekudei**:

*Shemot 40:22 He (Moshe) put the **table** in the tabernacle of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil;<sup>23</sup> and he set the bread in order upon it before יהוה, as יהוה had commanded Moshe.*

After Moshe sets the bread on the Table, we can finish with the phrase “as יהוה had commanded Moshe”. This same process applies to the Ark which is built according to the pattern, but completed by Moshe when he places the Testimony inside. And it also applies to the Menorah which, without the preparation of its lights (by Moshe), cannot be a shining Lampstand. In fact, parashat Pekudei follows Moshe around through the Tabernacle as he completes each vessel.

So we've seen Bezael make the vessels, but Moshe gets the credit for their completion because he sets them up and finishes them with bread, water, light, and the Word. Oh, my! Can you see that it is the Messiah that is necessary for completion? Torah is fulfilled (Moshe did everything as commanded by יהוה), when the Messiah is brought into the picture...through the bread, water, light and the Word of the Testimony by the hand of Moshe. Without these items, the vessels of the Tabernacle are absolutely nothing but furniture! It is not the objects that are holy. It is human action and intention in accordance with the will of יהוה that creates holiness and brings Messiah into the picture.

Okay...moving on. After so much information concerning the construction of the Tabernacle, we finally come to its completion. Moshe takes a look at everything:

*Shemot 39:43 Then Moshe looked over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as יהוה had commanded, just so they had done it. And Moshe blessed them.*

Are you curious about the blessing? The sages believe they have figured out what Moshe said. Psalm 90 is the only Psalm that is attributed to Moshe. Read how it begins and seems to point to the Tabernacle, His dwelling place:

*Psalm 90:1 A Prayer of Moshe the man of Elohim. Adonai, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.*

Now read how the Psalm ends and read it as a blessing that Moshe may have given to the children of Israel:

*Psalm 90:17 And let the beauty of יהוה our Elohim be upon us, And establish the work of our hands for us; Yes, establish the work of our hands.*

The phrase “the work of our hands” must surely refer to the Tabernacle. This was the only “work” that the Israelites performed in Moshe's day. Therefore this “Prayer of Moshe” may be understood to be the prayer/blessing he pronounced at the completion of the Tabernacle.

There is another phrase in this verse that is quite interesting – “let the beauty of יהוה our Elohim be upon us”. This is quite similar to another Psalm:

*Psalm 27:4 One thing I have desired of יהוה, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of יהוה All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of יהוה, And to inquire in His temple.*

Therefore, it seems that **both psalms** are references to the **Sanctuaries** of יהוה.

Now that the **Tabernacle** has been **completed**, let's take a **walk through**. We begin at the **door** (John 3:5; 10:9) and **enter into the courtyard** where we encounter the **brazen altar**. Without that **altar** and the **death that it represents**, **no one could come into the Presence** of יהוה. It is the **place of judgment** and we can **continue on** because of the **sacrifice Yeshua** has made for us there.

Next we move to the **laver of water**. We know the **washing by the water of the Word** matures us and **allows us to wear those clean, spotless garments** (Ephesians 5:25-27, Revelation 19:8). We **walk through that first veil as priests of the Most High** for the **purpose of service**. The **Table of Showbread** on the right with its **12 loaves of bread** symbolizes the **unity of the 12 tribes of Israel** and the **Messiah who is our Manna**. If you have walked into this **Holy room** you have **ceased** to be an **individual** and are **now part of the body of the priesthood**. **Ezekiel 44:23-24** details the **duties of the future priesthood**:

*Ezekiel 44:23 "And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean."<sup>24</sup> "In controversy they shall stand as judges, and judge it according to My judgments. They shall keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed meetings, and they shall hallow My Sabbaths.*

We are still in this **Holy place**. The **light of the Menorah** floods this room symbolizing both the **head (Yeshua)** and the **body (bride) shining the light of Torah**. We step up to the **Altar of Incense** where we are able to **pray knowledgeably** having **partaken of the bread** and having the **light of the Menorah** to **guide us in our prayers**.

We are very close now to the **Holy of Holies**. Only a **veil separates us**. The **Gospel accounts** say that the **veil was torn**. However, there were **two veils** in the **Temple**. **Passing through the first veil** brought the **priests** into the **Holy area** where the **Menorah**, the **Table**, and the **Altar of Incense** stood. The **second veil** separated the **Holy** from the **Holy of Holies** where the **Ark of the Covenant** was kept.

According to **Alfred Edersheim** in his book *The Temple*, the **first entrance** into the **Holy Place** was "**two-leaved doors**, with a gold plating, and **covered by a rich Babylonian curtain of the four colors of the Temple (fine linen, blue, scarlet, and purple)**." Edersheim also writes that "**a wooden partition separated the Most Holy from the Holy Place, and over the door hung a veil**." So which veil was actually torn? Let's look at a few verses in the book of **Hebrews**. This is the NIV translation:

*Hebrews 10:19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place (ἅγιος) by the blood of Yeshua,<sup>20</sup> by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,<sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of Yah,<sup>22</sup> let us draw near to Yah with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

The Greek word is "**hagios**" (ἅγιος) and according to the translation, it seems clear that the **veil** to the **Holy of Holies** has been **torn**. However, let's see how the **same Greek word** is used in other verses:

*Hebrews 9:2 For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary (ἅγιος);<sup>3</sup> and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All (ἁγία ἁγίων)*

"**Hagios**" refers to the **Holy area** where the **Menorah** and the **Table of Showbread** are in **verse 2**, and in **verse 3** "**hagios**" is **repeated in order to point to the Holy of Holies**. I would like to **suggest** that it was the

**1<sup>st</sup> veil...this Babylonian curtain, not the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies that was torn.** The reason I believe this is that **when Yeshua died, it opened the way for us to come in and serve as priests in the order of Melchizedek (King of Righteousness).** **Only Yeshua, however, entered the Holy of Holies as our High Priest and King.** Today, that is where **He is interceding for us in the heavenly Tabernacle on behalf of His people Israel:**

*Romans 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is **Messiah who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of Yah, who also makes intercession for us.***

We see the **entrance to the Holy of Holies open in Revelation** when the time has come for **judgment and rewards.** We will be **judged** (for our works, **not our salvation**) based on the **Testimony (the Word) housed in the Ark of the Covenant:**

*Revelation 11:18 The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth." <sup>19</sup> Then the temple of Yah was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.*

*Revelation 15:5 After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. <sup>6</sup> And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. <sup>7</sup> Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of Elohim who lives forever and ever. <sup>8</sup> The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of Yah and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.*

**Only the bride will enter the Holy of Holies, the place of intimacy with the Bridegroom.** She is **still preparing for that day.** We get a **glimpse** of that in **Revelation 21:**

*Revelation 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from Yah, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

When **Moshe (Torah) “finished” the Tabernacle,** he gave us a **picture of the completed bride:**

*Shemot 39:32 Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished (kalah - כָּלָה). And the children of Israel did according to all that יְיָ had commanded Moshe; so they did.*

*Shemot 40:33 And he raised up the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the screen of the court gate. So Moshe finished (kalah - כָּלָה) the work.*

The word for **finished** is “kalah” (כָּלָה). The **nearly identical word for bride is “kallah” (כַּלָּה).** What is the **connection** between these words? A bride “**completes**” her husband, as the **two become one (echad).** And don’t miss **how the work is “finished” in Shemot 40:33.** **Moshe (Torah) has the responsibility to take all the parts of the Tabernacle, put them all in their proper places, and make them into one (echad) Sanctuary.** Then she will be **ready** for the **Shekhinah glory!**

Okay, I’ve got just “one more thing” to share about the **concluding verses of Shemot:**

*Shemot 40:36 Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would go onward in all their journeys. <sup>37</sup> But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey till the day*

that it was taken up.<sup>38</sup> For the cloud of אֲרָלָה was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel (Beit Yisrael - בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל), throughout all their journeys.

The book of **Shemot** began with the story of the “sons of Israel” (B’nei Yisrael - בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) who came to Egypt, each with their **individual households**:

*Shemot 1:1* Now these are the names of the sons of Israel (B’nei Yisrael - בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) who came to Egypt; each man and his household came with Jacob:

Now we are **ending Shemot** and their **title** has been **changed** to the “**House of Israel**” (Beit Yisrael - בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל). **Israel** has been **transformed** from **individuals** who happened to share a common history to a **community with a common destiny**. There were **also strangers** along the way who were **grafted into the community** to become **one with them** that they too might be considered part of the “**House of Israel**”. There have been and there will continue to be **disagreements** and **rebellions**, but the **fundamental identity** has been **established** as “**Beit Yisrael**”, the **House of Israel**.

Here is how **Bruce Kadden** describes a “**house**”: (emphasis mine)

“The word ‘**house**’ signifies **unity** and implies that those who are part of it share a **common purpose**. Though **members of a house** do not always get along or agree, they have an **implicit commitment** to each other and **to the house as a whole**. A house also signifies **stability and structure**. Though their designs and sizes may vary, houses are **physical entities** that symbolize the **strength** and **substance** of **those who live within them**. Houses signify **permanence as well**. Although **houses can be destroyed** by fire, earthquakes, and tornadoes, the **utter devastation that families experience** at such loss **testifies to the permanence we expect of our houses**.”

**How** is it that a **people** who have **often been rebellious** during their short time in the wilderness are **now unified**? **How** can a people who **demonstrated their apostasy** so recently, by building the Golden Calf, **now deserve to be called Beit Yisrael**?

**Rabbi Shlomo Riskin**, chief rabbi of Efrat, offers a midrash suggesting that the **building of the Tabernacle** plays a key role in **restoring the people’s relationship to God** and in **unifying the people**. Drawing on a mystical metaphor that **describes the relationship between God and the Jewish people as a marriage**, **Riskin** observes that the **greatest tangible expression** of their **mutual, undying love** for each other is the **building of the home – the Tabernacle – together**. Thus, at the **end of the Exodus**, the people can **rightly be called Beit Yisrael**, the **House of Israel**, and can rest assured that **God’s presence will remain** with them **throughout their journeys**.” (end of quote)

Friends, when the Bible refers to the “**House of Israel**”, we are **included**! The **renewed covenant** that we know we are a part of was given to the “**House of Israel**”:

*Hebrews 8:10* "For **this is the covenant** that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says אֲרָלָה: **I will put My Torah in their mind and write them on their hearts**; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.

**Yeshua** also said the “**House of Israel**” was **who He came** to earth to **find**:

*Matthew 15:24* But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

**Moshe** was the **builder** of the **physical Tabernacle**, but Hebrews speaks of **Yeshua** as the **builder** of a **house that is greater**. And we are that house!

*Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Yeshua the Messiah,<sup>2</sup> who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moshe also was faithful in all His house.<sup>3</sup> For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moshe, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.<sup>4</sup> For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is Yah.<sup>5</sup> And Moshe indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward,<sup>6</sup> but Messiah as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.*

**Baruch HaShem!**

**Shabbat Shalom!**

**Ardelle**

**Be strong! Be strong! And may we be strengthened!**

חזק חזק ונתחזק