

עץ חיים

ETZ HAYIM

TORAH AND COMMENTARY

THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY
THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM



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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 עֲבַדְתָּ הַלְוִיִּם בְּיַד
אִיתָמָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן: ²² וּבְצִלְאֵל בֶּן־
אוּרִי בֶן־חֹר לְמִטֵּה יְהוּדָה עָשָׂה אֶת
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ²³ וְאֵתוֹ
אֹהֲלִיאָב בֶּן־אַחִיסָמָךְ לְמִטֵּה־דָן חָרַשׁ
וְחָשֵׁב וְרָקֵם בַּתְּכֵלֶת וּבְאַרְגָּמָן וּבְתוֹלַעַת
הַשָּׁנִי וּבְשֵׁשׁ: ^ס

²⁴ כָּל־הַזָּהָב הָעָשׂוּי לְמִלְאכָה בְּכֹל
מִלְאכַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וַיְהִי זֶהב הַתְּנוּפָה תִּשְׁעַ
וָעֶשְׂרִים כֶּפֶר וּשְׁבַע מֵאוֹת וּשְׁלֹשִׁים שֶׁקֶל
בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ: ²⁵ וּבַכֶּסֶף פְּקוּדֵי הָעֵדוּה

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 head 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 וְאֶלְף וְשִׁבְעַת מֵאוֹת וַחֲמִשָּׁה
וְשִׁבְעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ: ²⁶בְּקַע
לְגִלְגָּלֶת מַחְצִית הַשֶּׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ
לְכֹל הָעֵבֶר עַל-הַפְּקָדִים מִבֶּן עֶשְׂרִים
שָׁנָה וְמוֹעֵלָה לְשֵׁשׁ-מֵאוֹת אֶלְף וְשִׁלְשֵׁת
אֲלָפִים וַחֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת וַחֲמִשִּׁים: ²⁷וַיְהִי
מֵאֵת כֶּכֶר הַכֶּסֶף לְצָקֶת אֵת אֲדָנֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ
וְאֵת אֲדָנֵי הַפְּרֹכֶת מֵאֵת אֲדָנִים לְמֵאֵת
הַכֶּכֶר כֶּכֶר לְאֶדָן: ²⁸וְאֶת-הָאֶלְף וְשִׁבְעַת
הַמֵּאוֹת וַחֲמִשָּׁה וְשִׁבְעִים עָשָׂה וַיְהִי
לְעִמּוּדִים וְצִפָּה רָאשֵׁיהֶם וַחֲשֵׁק אֲתָם:
²⁹וַנְּחַשֵׁת הַתְּנוּפָה שִׁבְעִים כֶּכֶר וְאֲלָפִים
וְאַרְבַּע-מֵאוֹת שֶׁקֶל: ³⁰וַיַּעַשׂ בָּהּ אֶת-
אֲדָנֵי פֶתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְאֵת מִזְבַּח
הַנְּחֻשֶׁת וְאֶת-מִכְבַּר הַנְּחֻשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ
וְאֵת כָּל-כְּלֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ: ³¹וְאֶת-אֲדָנֵי
הַחִצֵּר סָבִיב וְאֶת-אֲדָנֵי שַׁעַר הַחִצֵּר וְאֵת
כָּל-יִתְדֹת הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת-כָּל-יִתְדֹת הַחִצֵּר
סָבִיב:

לט וּמִן-הַתְּכֵלֶת וְהָאֲרָגְמָן וְתוֹלַעַת
הַשָּׁנִי עָשׂוּ בְּגָדֵי-שָׂרָד לְשָׂרֵת בְּקֹדֶשׁ
וַיַּעַשׂוּ אֶת-בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר לְאֹהֶרֶן
כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה: פ
²וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת-הָאֶפֶד זָהָב תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן
וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ מְשֻׁר: ³וַיִּרְקְעוּ אֶת-
פָּחֵי הַזָּהָב וְקִצָּץ פְּתִילִם לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּתוֹךְ
הַתְּכֵלֶת וּבְתוֹךְ הָאֲרָגְמָן וּבְתוֹךְ תוֹלַעַת
הַשָּׁנִי וּבְתוֹךְ הַשֵּׁשׁ מַעֲשֵׂה חֹשֶׁב: ⁴כִּתְּפַת

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 חֲבֵרָה: ⁵וְחָשֵׁב אֶפְדָּתוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו מִמְנוֹ הוּא כְּמַעֲשֵׂהוּ זָהָב תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ מְשֻׁזָּר כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה:

⁶וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת-אֲבְנֵי הַשֹּׁהַם מְסֻבֹּת מִשְׁבָּצֹת זָהָב מִפְתָּחֹת פְּתוּחֵי חוּתָם עַל-שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ⁷וַיִּשֶׂם אֹתָם עַל כְּתֹפֶת הָאֶפֶד אֲבְנֵי זָכָרוֹן לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה: ^פ

⁸וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת-הַחֹשֶׁן מַעֲשֵׂה חֹשֵׁב כְּמַעֲשֵׂה אֶפֶד זָהָב תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ מְשֻׁזָּר: ⁹רְבֹעַ הָיָה כְּפּוֹל עָשׂוּ אֶת-הַחֹשֶׁן זֶרֶת אֶרְבֹּו וְזֶרֶת רְחִבּוֹ כְּפּוֹל: ¹⁰וַיִּמְלְאוּ-בּוֹ אַרְבַּעַה טּוּרֵי אֲבָן טוּר אֶדָם פְּטָדָה וּבִרְקָת הַטּוּר הָאֶחָד: ¹¹וְהַטּוּר הַשֵּׁנִי נִפְךְ סַפִּיר וַיְהִי־לָם: ¹²וְהַטּוּר הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְשֵׁם שָׁבוּ וְאַחֲלָמָה: ¹³וְהַטּוּר הָרְבִיעִי תִרְשִׁישׁ שֹׁהַם וַיִּשְׁפֹּה מוֹסְבֹת מִשְׁבָּצוֹת זָהָב בְּמִלְאָתָם: ¹⁴וְהָאֲבָנִים עַל-שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל הִנֵּה שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה עַל-שְׁמוֹתָם פְּתוּחֵי חוּתָם אִישׁ עַל-שְׁמוֹ לְשָׁנִים עֶשֶׂר שָׁבֵט:

¹⁵וַיַּעֲשׂוּ עַל-הַחֹשֶׁן שְׁרָשְׁרֹת גְּבֻלַת מַעֲשֵׂה עֶבֶת זָהָב טְהוֹר: ¹⁶וַיַּעֲשׂוּ שְׁתֵּי מִשְׁבָּצוֹת זָהָב וּשְׁתֵּי טְבָעוֹת זָהָב וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶת-שְׁתֵּי הַטְּבָעוֹת עַל-שְׁנֵי קְצוֹת הַחֹשֶׁן: ¹⁷וַיִּתְּנוּ שְׁתֵּי הָעֶבֶתוֹת הַזֹּהָב עַל-שְׁתֵּי הַטְּבָעוֹת עַל-קְצוֹת הַחֹשֶׁן: ¹⁸וְאֵת שְׁתֵּי קְצוֹת שְׁתֵּי הָעֶבֶתוֹת נָתְנוּ עַל-שְׁתֵּי הַמִּשְׁבָּצוֹת וַיִּתְּנֵם עַל-כְּתֹפֶת הָאֶפֶד אֶל-מוֹל פְּנָיו: ¹⁹וַיַּעֲשׂוּ שְׁתֵּי טְבָעוֹת זָהָב וַיִּשְׂימוּ עַל-שְׁנֵי קְצוֹת הַחֹשֶׁן עַל-שְׁפָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר אֶל-עֵבֶר הָאֶפֶד בֵּיתָה: ²⁰וַיַּעֲשׂוּ שְׁתֵּי טְבָעוֹת זָהָב וַיִּתְּנֵם עַל-שְׁתֵּי כְּתֹפֶת

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 מִלְמָטָה מִמּוֹל פָּנָיו לְעִמַּת
מִחֲבֵרָתוֹ מִמַּעַל לְחֹשֶׁב הָאֶפֶד: ²¹ וַיִּרְכְּסוּ
אֶת־הַחֹשֶׁן מִטְּבַעְתָּיו אֶל־טְבַעַת הָאֶפֶד
בְּפִתִּיל תְּכֵלֶת לְהִיטֵל עַל־חֹשֶׁב הָאֶפֶד
וְלֹא־יִזַּח הַחֹשֶׁן מֵעַל הָאֶפֶד כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה
יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה:

²² וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־מַעֲוֵל הָאֶפֶד מַעֲשֵׂה אַרְגָּ
כְּלִיל תְּכֵלֶת: ²³ וּפִי־הַמַּעֲוֵל בְּתוֹכוֹ כְּפִי
תַּחְרָא שֶׁפָּה לְפָיו סָבִיב לֹא יִקְרַע:
²⁴ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ עַל־שׁוּלַי הַמַּעֲוֵל רִמּוֹנֵי תְּכֵלֶת
וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי מְשֻׁזָּר: ²⁵ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ
פַעֲמֹנֵי זָהָב טְהוֹר וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶת־הַפַּעֲמֹנִים
בְּתוֹף הָרִמּוֹנִים עַל־שׁוּלַי הַמַּעֲוֵל סָבִיב
בְּתוֹף הָרִמּוֹנִים: ²⁶ פַּעֲמָן וְרִמֹן פַּעֲמָן וְרִמֹן
עַל־שׁוּלַי הַמַּעֲוֵל סָבִיב לְשֵׁרֶת כַּאֲשֶׁר
צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ס

²⁷ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הַפְּתִיחַ שֶׁשׁ מַעֲשֵׂה אַרְגָּ
לְאַהֲרֹן וּלְבָנָיו: ²⁸ וְאֵת הַמְּצַנֶּפֶת שֶׁשׁ
וְאֶת־פְּאַרְי הַמְּגַבֶּעֶת שֶׁשׁ וְאֶת־מִכְנָסֵי
הַבָּד שֶׁשׁ מְשֻׁזָּר: ²⁹ וְאֶת־הָאֲבִיט שֶׁשׁ
מְשֻׁזָּר וְתְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי
מַעֲשֵׂה רֶקֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־
מֹשֶׁה: ס

³⁰ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת־צִיץ נֹר־הַקֹּדֶשׁ זָהָב טְהוֹר
וַיִּכְתְּבוּ עָלָיו מִכְתָּב פְּתוּחֵי חוֹתָם קֹדֶשׁ
לַיהוָה: ³¹ וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלָיו פִּתִּיל תְּכֵלֶת לְתַת
עַל־הַמְּצַנֶּפֶת מִלְמַעְלָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה
אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ס

³² וַתֵּכֵל כָּל־עֲבֹדַת מִשְׁכַּן אֱהִל 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 בְּכָל עֲשׂוֹ: פ

רביעי ³³ וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אֶת־
הָאֹהֶל וְאֶת־כָּל־כְּלָיו קְרָסָיו קְרָשָׁיו בְּרִיחוֹ
בְּרִיחָיו וְעַמֻּדָיו וְאֹדְנָיו: ³⁴ וְאֶת־מִכְסֵה
עוֹרֹת הָאֵילִם הַמְאֻדָּמִים וְאֶת־מִכְסֵה
עֹרֹת הַתְּחָשִׁים וְאֶת פְּרֹכֶת הַמָּסָךְ:
³⁵ אֶת־אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְאֶת־בַּדָּיו וְאֶת
הַכַּפֹּרֶת: ³⁶ אֶת־הַשְּׁלֶחָן אֶת־כָּל־כְּלָיו
וְאֶת לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים: ³⁷ אֶת־הַמְנֹרֶה
הַטְּהוֹרָה אֶת־נִרְתִּיהָ נֹרֹת הַמְעַרְכָּה וְאֶת־
כָּל־כְּלֵיהָ וְאֶת שֶׁמֶן הַמָּאֹר: ³⁸ וְאֶת
מִזְבַּח הַזָּהָב וְאֶת שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וְאֶת
קְטֹרֶת הַסַּמִּים וְאֶת מָסַךְ פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל:
³⁹ אֶת | מִזְבַּח הַנְּחֹשֶׁת וְאֶת־מִכְבַּר
הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ אֶת־בַּדָּיו וְאֶת־כָּל־כְּלָיו
אֶת־הַכִּיּוֹר וְאֶת־כַּנּוֹ: ⁴⁰ אֶת קְלַעֵי הַחֲצָר
אֶת־עַמֻּדֶיהָ וְאֶת־אֹדְנֶיהָ וְאֶת־הַמָּסָךְ
לְשַׁעַר הַחֲצָר אֶת־מִיתְרָיו וִיתְדֹתֶיהָ וְאֶת
כָּל־כְּלֵי עֲבֹדַת הַמִּשְׁכָּן לְאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד:
⁴¹ אֶת־בְּגָדֵי הַשָּׂרָד לְשָׂרְתָּ בִקְדָשׁ אֶת־
בְּגָדֵי הַקְּדָשׁ לְאֹהֶרֶן הַכֹּהֵן וְאֶת־בְּגָדֵי בָנָיו
לְכַהֵן: ⁴² כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה
בְּכָל עֲשׂוֹ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת כָּל־הָעֲבֹדָה:
⁴³ וַיִּרְא 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:
2 בְּיוֹם־הַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ
תָּקִים אֶת־מִשְׁכַּן אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: 3 וְשַׂמְתָּ
שָׁם אֶת אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְסִכַּת עַל־הָאָרֶץ
אֶת־הַפְּרָכֶת: 4 וְהִבַּאתָ אֶת־הַשְּׁלֵחָן
וְעִרְכַתָּ אֹתוֹ וְהִבַּאתָ אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה
וְהַעֲלִיתָ אֶת־נִרְחִיהָ: 5 וְנָתַתָּה אֶת־מִזְבַּח
הַזֹּהֵב לַקְּטֹרֶת לִפְנֵי אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְשַׂמְתָּ
אֶת־מָסַךְ הַפֶּתַח לַמִּשְׁכָּן:
6 וְנָתַתָּה אֶת מִזְבַּח הָעֹלָה לִפְנֵי פֶתַח
מִשְׁכַּן אֹהֶל־מוֹעֵד: 7 וְנָתַתָּה אֶת־הַכִּיֹּר בֵּין־
אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּבֵין הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְנָתַתָּ שָׁם מַיִם:
8 וְשַׂמְתָּ אֶת־הַחֹצֵר סָבִיב וְנָתַתָּ אֶת־מָסַךְ
שַׁעַר הַחֹצֵר:
9 וְלָקַחְתָּ אֶת־שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וּמִשַּׁחְתָּ
אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֵׁר־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:
13 וְהִלְבַּשְׁתָּ אֶת־אֶהֱרֹן אֶת בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ

חמישי
[שביעי]

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.

וּמִשַׁחְתָּ אֹתוֹ וְקִדַּשְׁתָּ אֹתוֹ וְכִהֵן לִי:
¹⁴ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו תִּקְרִיב וְהִלַּבַשְׁתָּ אֹתָם
 בְּתַנִּיּוֹת: ¹⁵ וּמִשַׁחְתָּ אֹתָם כַּאֲשֶׁר מִשַׁחְתָּ
 אֶת־אָבִיהֶם וְכִהְנֹו לִי וְהָיְתָה לְהֵיטֵל לָהֶם
 מִשַׁחְתָּם לְכַהֲנַת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתָם:
¹⁶ וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֹתוֹ
 בְּן עֲשָׂה: ס

¹⁷ וַיְהִי בַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִיית
 שִׁי בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ הוּקַם הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ¹⁸ וַיִּקַּם
 מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־אֲדָנָיו
 וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־קַרְשָׁיו וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־בְּרִיחָיו וַיִּקַּם
 אֶת־עַמּוּדָיו: ¹⁹ וַיִּפְרֹשׂ אֶת־הָאֹהֶל עַל־
 הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־מַכְסֵה הָאֹהֶל עָלָיו
 מִלְּמַעְלָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־
 מֹשֶׁה: ס
²⁰ וַיִּקַּח וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־הָעֵדוּת אֶל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשֶׂם
 אֶת־הַבְּדָיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּתֵּן אֶת־הַכַּפְּפֹת
 עַל־הָאָרֶץ מִלְּמַעְלָה: ²¹ וַיָּבֵא אֶת־הָאָרֶץ
 אֶל־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת פְּרֻכַת הַמָּסָךְ וַיִּסָּךְ
 עַל אֲרוֹן 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 יָרֵךְ
הַמִּשְׁכָּן צָפֹנָה מֵחוּץ לַפְּרֹכֶת: ²³ וַיַּעֲרֹךְ
עָלָיו עֵרֶף לֶחֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר
צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ²⁴ וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־
הַמְּנֹרֶה בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד נֹכַח הַשְּׁלֶחָן עַל
יָרֵךְ הַמִּשְׁכָּן נֹגֵבָה: ²⁵ וַיַּעַל הַנֵּרוֹת לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ²⁶ וַיִּשֶׂם
אֶת־מִזְבֵּחַ הַזָּהָב בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד
לִפְנֵי הַפְּרֹכֶת: ²⁷ וַיִּקְטֹרַע עָלָיו קְטֹרֶת סַמִּים
כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ^פ

²⁸ וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־מָסַךְ הַפֶּתַח לַמִּשְׁכָּן: ²⁹ וְאֵת
מִזְבֵּחַ הָעֹלָה שָׁם פֶּתַח מִשְׁכָּן אֹהֶל־
מוֹעֵד וַיַּעַל עָלָיו אֶת־הָעֹלָה וְאֶת־
הַמִּנְחָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ^ס
³⁰ וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־הַכִּיֹּר בֵּין־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּבֵין
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיִּתֵּן שָׁמָּה מַיִם לְרַחֲצָה:
³¹ וְרַחֲצוּ מִמֶּנּוּ מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן וּבְנֵיהֶם אֶת־
יְדֵיהֶם וְאֶת־רַגְלֵיהֶם: ³² בְּבָאֵם אֶל־אֹהֶל
מוֹעֵד וּבִקְרַבְתֶּם אֶל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ יְרַחֲצוּ
כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: ³³ וַיִּקֶּם
אֶת־הַחֲצֵר סָבִיב לַמִּשְׁכָּן וְלַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיִּתֵּן
אֶת־מָסַךְ שַׁעַר הַחֲצֵר

וַיִּכַּל מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַמְּלָאכָה: ³⁴ וַיִּכַּס
הָעָנָן אֶת־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וּכְבוֹד יְהוָה מָלֵא
אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ³⁵ וְלֹא־יָכֹל 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’khullu*) 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 embodi-
ments of holiness in the Israelite camp: the

Tent of Meeting (*Ohel Mo-ed*) and the taberna-
cle (*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-שָׁבַן עָלָיו הָעֲנָן וַיִּכְבֹּד
יְהוָה מִלֵּא אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן: ³⁶ וּבַהֲעֵלֹת
הָעֲנָן מֵעַל הַמִּשְׁכָּן יִסְעוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל
מִסְעֵיהֶם: ³⁷ וְאִם-לֹא יַעֲלֶה הָעֲנָן וְלֹא
יִסְעוּ עַד-יוֹם הָעֲלֹתוֹ: ³⁸ כִּי עֲנָן יְהוָה
עַל-הַמִּשְׁכָּן יוֹמָם וְאֵשׁ תִּהְיֶה לַיְלָה בּוֹ
לְעֵינֵי כָל-בֵּית-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָל-מִסְעֵיהֶם: *

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

חֹזֶק חֹזֶק וְנִתְחַזַּק

occurred 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).

representing 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 *parashiyyot* 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).