

# פרשה בעיון Parsha B'Iyun

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## פרשת פקודי תשפ"ח PARSHAT PEKUDEI 5785 ויעש בצלאל את הארן Keeping Unity in Order

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B'ezrat Hashem, on this Shabbat we will conclude Sefer Shemot – חומש הגלות והגאולה, the Book of Exile and Redemption. The **Ramban**<sup>1</sup> refers to it as ספרם של בנים – the Book of the Children, and today, we will focus on the first two Pesukim in Parshat Pekudei.

אלה פקודי המשכן משכן העדת אשר פקד עלי פי משה עבד ה' ויהי  
ביום איתמר בן-אהרן הכהן:

These are the accountings of the Mishkan, the Mishkan of Testimony, which were accounted for by the command of Moshe, the service of the Levi'im under the hand of Itamar, son of Aharon the Kohen.

What is the meaning of משכן העדת – the Mishkan of Testimony? Is it not sufficient to say, "These are the accountings of the Mishkan," full stop? **Rashi**<sup>2</sup> explains, the Mishkan served as עדות לישראל – a testimony that Hakadosh Baruch Hu forgave Bnei Yisrael for the Cheit Ha'egel, for He caused His Shechinah to dwell among them. In the Midrash (Tanchuma, Pekudei 6), Chazal offer a parable to illustrate this.

To what can this be compared? To a king who married a woman and cherished her greatly. He became angry with her, however, and left her. Her neighbors said to her, "Your husband will not return to you." After some time, he came back and entered, stood in the palace, and ate and drank with her. Yet her neighbors still did not believe he had reconciled with her. But then, when they saw the scent of spices rising from the house, everyone knew he had reconciled with her.

So too, Hakadosh Baruch Hu cherished Bnei Yisrael and gave them the Torah, calling them a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. However, after forty days, they strayed and sinned

with the calf. The nations said, "He will not return to them." Moshe then stood up and relentlessly sought mercy, until Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to him: סלחתי כדברך – *I have forgiven according to your word*. Moshe then asked, "Who will inform the nations of the world that You have forgiven Bnei Yisrael for the sin of the calf?" Hakadosh Baruch Hu replied, "Let them make Me a sanctuary." As soon as the nations saw the scent of the incense rising from the Mishkan, they knew Hakadosh Baruch Hu had reconciled with Bnei Yisrael.

The **Siftei Chachamim**<sup>3</sup> comes and asks, why was there a need to build the Mishkan? The very fact that Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave the *luchot shniyot* – the second tablets, to Bnei Yisrael is itself proof of reconciliation. Why was there a need for the command to build the Mishkan? In response, the words of the **Taz**<sup>4</sup> (Divrei David) are brought. The term עדות (testimony) indicates clarification of a matter that is evident to all, including to those who do not rely solely on hearsay. This is what was achieved through the Mishkan, as everyone saw that the Shechinah dwelt there, for the heavenly cloud was visible. But the giving of the *luchot* does not offer such clarity to the eyes of the world, and Moshe asked that it be known to them as well; they should know Hakadosh Baruch Hu harbors no resentment. The Shechinah dwelling among them resulted in that recognition – עדות.

I saw a wonderful idea, in the sefer **Zichru Torat Moshe**, that can be connected to these words. There is a Gemara in Masechet Ketubot (62b) that recounts an incident: The son of Rabbi reached the age of matchmaking and they suggested to him the daughter of Rabbi Yossi ben Zimra. As was

common practice, when people of that stature agree to have their children wed, they first meet and go over some terms. They sit down and ensure no surprises, such as unmet financial commitments, would rear their ugly heads after Sheva Brachot. Here too, the two rabbeim followed this practice. After dealing with all the financials, they agreed upon a plan for the young man following the engagement (*erusin*). These days, *erusin* consists of some mashke and herring and it's off to the chuppah, but in the past, the two milestones were not back-to-back. The Gemara relates, they arranged for him to go study in the Beit Midrash for twelve years before the marriage. The question arises – why specifically twelve years? This question is extra pertinent since it is known that Rabbi Akiva also went to study for twelve years? What is with this duration of twelve years?

Another Gemara asks (Kiddushin 30a), until what point is a person obligated to teach his son Torah? Rav Yehuda said in the name of Shmuel, the answer is learned from Zevulun ben Dan, whom his grandfather (Yaacov Avinu) taught Mikra, Mishnah, Halacha, and Aggadah. And how long must a person study until he knows he has a sign of blessing in his learning? The Gemara says (Chullin 24a), one answer comes from the Pasuk which states from the age of twenty-five and up, a Levi shall come to serve in the Mishkan, while another Pasuk says it is from the age of thirty and up. Is it twenty-five or is it thirty? The conflicting ages are reconciled as meaning: twenty-five is the age for the Levi to start learning, while thirty is the age when the Levi is fit for service. From here, we learn that for a student who has not seen a good sign in his studies after five years – for example, if he studied five years and still forgets his learning – will not see success in his studies.

This formula is for the Torah only, however; where we designate five years for a Levi to learn the laws of their Avodah, implying that a student who doesn't succeed within five years is likely not suited for it. Rabbi Yossi adds, while that applies to Torah, three years at most is the time required to learn wisdom. He learns this from a Pasuk in Sefer Daniel (1:4-5) which implies that the time required to learn the Chaldean language is three years, and the same holds for other areas of wisdom. One of the commentators thus says, if it is written that a person must learn Mikra, Mishnah, Halacha, and Aggadah – a total of four things – and for each one he must study three years, it means he must study for twelve years in total. Therefore, Rabbi's son went to study specifically for twelve years!

The Gemara continues and says, they passed Rabbi Yossi ben Zimra's daughter before Rabbi's son, and he saw her beauty. The groom said to them, "Let it be six years that I go to the Beit Midrash before the marriage." They passed her before him again, and he said, "I will marry her first, and then I will go study." He was then ashamed before his father because, due to his great affection for the bride, he went back on his condition to learn before the marriage. Rabbi then said to him, "My son, you have the mind of your Creator, for you acted similar to Hakadosh Baruch Hu. Initially, He said His

union with Bnei Yisrael would commence after a set time, but due to His great affection for them, He brought it closer." Meaning, Hakadosh Baruch Hu intended for Bnei Yisrael to first enter Eretz Yisrael and only then build Him a sanctuary: תבאמו ותטעמו בהר נחלתך מכון לשבתך פעלת ה' מקדש ה' בוננו ידיר. Twenty-one years would pass – seven for תבאמו, seven for ותטעמו, and seven for construction – after entry into the Land before the Mikash would be operational. But ultimately, the commandment of ויעשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם was given while Bnei Yisrael were still in the wilderness.

Sefer Zichru Torat Moshe asks, when did Hakadosh Baruch Hu love Bnei Yisrael more – at the time of Yetziat Mitzrayim as they stood at Yam Suf, or at the time of Cheit Ha'egel? At Yam Suf, Chazal say a maidservant at the sea saw what Yechezkel ben Buzi did not see; every individual could see Hakadosh Baruch Hu with their own eyes. Yet there, Hakadosh Baruch Hu showed His love and said (as per the above Pasuk): "You will build a sanctuary, and we will dwell together... but only in some twenty years from now." In contrast, after Cheit Ha'egel, Hakadosh Baruch Hu said He wanted the Mishkan immediately!

This proves that at the moment Bnei Yisrael did Teshuva and Moshe Rabbeinu davened for them, they reached such closeness to Hakadosh Baruch Hu that He was not willing to wait even a single moment for the building of the Mishkan. This teaches us how much the Mishkan expresses a testimony to Hakadosh Baruch Hu's love for Knesset Yisrael, and this is what is meant by אלה פקודי המשכן משכן העדת.

After this opening Pasuk, the Torah continues and says:

וּבְצִלְאֵל בֶּן-אֹרִי בֶן-חֹר לְמִשֵּׁה יְהוּדָה עָשָׂה אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּה ה' אֶת-מֹשֶׁה:

And Betzalel, son of Uri, son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehuda, made all that Hashem commanded Moshe.

Rashi notes, it is not stated here "אשר צוה" – that Bezaleel made all that he had been commanded by Moshe, but rather, that he made all that Hakadosh Baruch Hu commanded Moshe. Meaning, even regarding things his teacher (Moshe) did not tell him, his own opinion was in agreement with what had been told to Moshe by Hakadosh Baruch Hu on Har Sinai. The Gemara (Brachot 55a) says Betzalel was called so because of his wisdom:

בְּצִלְאֵל עַל שֵׁם חֵכְמוֹ נִקְרָא. בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁאָמַר לוֹ הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְמֹשֶׁה: לֹךְ אֲמֹר לוֹ לְבְצִלְאֵל "עָשֵׂה לִי מִשְׁכָּן אֲרוֹן וּבָלִים". הֵלֵךְ מֹשֶׁה וְהִפָּךְ וְאָמַר לוֹ: "עָשֵׂה אֲרוֹן וּבָלִים וּמִשְׁכָּן". אָמַר לוֹ: מֹשֶׁה רַבִּינוּ, מִנְהֵגוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם אָדָם בּוֹנֶה בֵּית וְאַחֵר כֶּף מְכַנִּיס לְתוֹכוֹ בָּלִים, וְאַתָּה אוֹמֵר "עָשֵׂה לִי אֲרוֹן וּבָלִים וּמִשְׁכָּן", בָּלִים שֶׁאֵינִי עוֹשֶׂה, לְהִיכֵן אֲכַנִּיסֶם? שָׁמָּה כֶּף אָמַר לוֹ הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, "עָשֵׂה מִשְׁכָּן אֲרוֹן וּבָלִים"? אָמַר לוֹ: שָׁמָּה בְּצִלְאֵל אֵל הֵייתָ וַיִּדְעָתָ?

After Hakadosh Baruch Hu instructed Moshe to construct the Mishkan, the Aron, and the vessels, Moshe went and reversed the order – instructing him to make the vessels, the Aron, and then the Mishkan. Betzalel responded to him, "Moshe Rabbeinu! The way of the world is that a person builds

a house and afterward brings vessels into it. If I do as you say, where will I put the vessels I make until I build the Mishkan? Perhaps what Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to you was: 'Make a Mishkan, an Aron, and vessels'?" Moshe replied, "Indeed! Perhaps you were in the *shadow of G-d* (בְּצֶל אֱלֹהִים) under the inspiration of *Ruach HaKodesh*, and therefore you knew exactly His intent." Consequently, Betzalel made the Mishkan first and afterwards the Aron and vessels.

The question must be asked – is it conceivable that Moshe Rabbeinu would invent things from his own mind?! Certainly not! For if we said that Moshe altered matters, we could not rely on his words! A servant does what his master tells him, and Moshe Rabbeinu is called עֶבֶד נֶאֱמָן – a faithful servant. So, there is no doubt Moshe Rabbeinu did not change anything, but rather, two contradictory things were said to him.

The sequence found in Parshat Teruma shows that Hakadosh Baruch Hu first commanded about the vessels and then about the Mishkan – this was the order given to Moshe Rabbeinu. **Tosfot**<sup>5</sup> asks, how could it be that Moshe Rabbeinu changes the command of Hakadosh Baruch Hu and reverses the order? Tosfot answers, in Parshat Teruma, the command about making the Aron and vessels are mentioned first, but in Parshat Ki Tisa, the command about making the Mishkan is found first and only afterwards the vessels. In Parshat Ki Tisa, Hakadosh Baruch Hu changed from what He said to Moshe Rabbeinu earlier in Parshat Teruma. So, if one time He says to make the vessels and then the Mishkan, and another time He says to make the Mishkan and then the vessels, this means that Hakadosh Baruch Hu Himself gave both options.

Rabbotai, if they ask us which option is preferable, certainly everyone would say it's better to first make the Aron. Very simply put, it is the most important element – the luchot would be placed in it as soon as Moshe Rabbeinu came down from Har Sinai. And how do we know that the vessels are more important than the Mishkan? The **Maharal**<sup>6</sup> says (Gur Aryeh, Pekudei), it is proven by the fact that the sons of Kehat (ben Levi) carried the vessels, while the sons of Merari (ben Levi) carried the Mishkan; and the sons of Kehat were more important than the sons of Merari.

Nevertheless, we see that the command of Hakadosh Baruch Hu changed – He once said to make the vessels and then the Mishkan, and another time said to make the Mishkan first and then the vessels. What changed?! The answer is: the difference lies in who makes them. In Parshat Teruma, where the vessels come first, the instruction וְעָשִׂיתָ – *And you shall make*, is repeatedly used for each vessel. In other words, Moshe Rabbeinu makes them! However, the only item he was not told to make was the Aron, where it says וְעָשׂוּ אֹרֶן – *And they shall make an Aron*. Meaning, everyone makes it, so that each person would have a share in the Aron! Then, suddenly, everything changes when Betzalel enters the picture, and it is now Betzalel who is commanded to carry out the construction rather than Moshe, and the order is reversed – the Mishkan now first and the vessels afterwards. But why this complete

switch?

The **Da'at Zekainim**<sup>7</sup> says, the initial instructions of Parshat Teruma take place within forty days of Matan Torah, and Hakadosh Baruch Hu commanded Moshe Rabbeinu where to place it all – i.e., that they should make a Mishkan and a Kodesh Kodashim, and within it an Aron, and within the Aron the Luchot, and there the Shechinah would dwell, with Bnei Yisrael surrounding it like the angels surrounding the Kisei Hakavod.

According to the Ramban, the secret of the Mishkan is that the glory that dwelt on Har Sinai would dwell upon it, albeit in a hidden manner – *b'nistar*. Just as regarding Har Sinai it says וַיִּשְׁכֵּן כְּבוֹד־ה' עַל-הָר סִינַי, regarding the Mishkan it similarly says וַיִּכְבֹּד ה' מְלֵא אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן. The glory that briefly appeared to Bnei Yisrael at Har Sinai was constantly with them in the Mishkan. And, if the making of the Mishkan is a continuation of Ma'amad Har Sinai – i.e., a continuation of actions led by Moshe Rabbeinu – then the construction order is Shulchan, Menorah, etc. Namely, all the vessels first. But in the middle, everything changed – Bnei Yisrael made the golden calf! After Cheit Ha'egel, Hakadosh Baruch Hu said: "Now everything changes! They will no longer build the vessels first and then the Mishkan, but rather, Betzalel will first build the Mishkan and only afterward the vessels!"

A wonderful idea is brought forth in sefer **Lev Tahor Al HaTorah**<sup>8</sup>. In Parshat Ki Tisa, after the Torah finishes commanding about the Mishkan and its details one section before we read about Cheit Ha'egel, Hakadosh Baruch Hu commands Moshe Rabbeinu about Shabbat. The Torah says:

וְאָתָה דִּבַּר אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אֶף אֶת-שַׁבְּתִי תִשְׁמְרוּ כִּי אוֹת הוּא בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם לָדַעַת כִּי אֲנִי ה' מְקַדְּשְׁכֶם: ... וְשִׁמְרוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַשַּׁבָּת לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בְּרִית עוֹלָם: בֵּינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹת הוּא לְעֹלָם כִּי-שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה ה' אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנָּפֶשׁ:

And you, speak to Bnei Yisrael, saying: Nevertheless, you shall keep My Sabbaths, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout generations, to know that I, Hashem, sanctify you. ... And Bnei Yisrael shall keep the Shabbat, to observe the Shabbat throughout their generations as an everlasting covenant; Between Me and Bnei Yisrael, it is a sign forever, for in six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.

First the command pertaining to the Mishkan is given, and then Shabbat follows. In Parshat Vayakhel, however, Shabbat is commanded first, and only afterward the Mishkan is mentioned. Like the order switching in the Mishkan's construction, what is the reason for the change here?

Sefer Lev Tahor answers according to how the **Meshech Chochma**<sup>9</sup> explains the change. Before Cheit Ha'egel, the Shechinah dwelt among Bnei Yisrael even without the Mishkan, and they were only commanded about the Mishkan so that there would be a designated place for Avodah and the dwelling of the Shechinah. Therefore, building the Mishkan was considered a sub-detail of the Avodah performed in the



Mishkan, and it would have been proper for it to override Shabbat for not only does the Avodah of Korbanot override Shabbat, but even the preparations for the Avodah override Shabbat (Menachot 95). Therefore, Hakadosh Baruch Hu preceded the command of the Mishkan's construction to the warning about keeping Shabbat, to say that the work of the Mishkan overrides Shabbat. But after they sinned at Cheit Ha'egel, the Shechinah did not dwell among Bnei Yisrael until after the Mishkan was established, and its construction work was therefore not worthy of overriding Shabbat. Therefore, Moshe preceded the warning about Shabbat to the work of the Mishkan, to say that it does not override Shabbat.

Now, regarding Betzalel's main claim to Moshe – i.e., “If the Mishkan only comes last, where will I place the vessels I make?” – the **Pnei Yehoshua**<sup>10</sup> writes this is not really a claim, as the construction of the Mishkan and its vessels concluded on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev, but the Mishkan was not stood up until the 1<sup>st</sup> of Nissan. Thus, in truth, Betzalel could not have placed all the vessels into the Mishkan upon their completion anyway. Rather, it must be that “Where will I put them?” was merely an expression – לִישָׁנָא בְּעֵלְמָא דְּהִיא.

And according to the words of the Meshech Chochma, it seems that Betzalel's main claim was that as long as the Mishkan – which is the place prepared for the dwelling of the Shechinah – was not built, there was no room to engage in making the vessels, which are designated for the Avodah in the Mishkan after the Shechinah dwells within it. But in truth, had Bnei Yisrael not sinned – when the Shechinah dwelt throughout the entire camp and the building of the Mishkan was only to have a designated place for Avodah – it would have been proper to first build the Aron and vessels, in which the primary Avodah is performed, and only afterward the Mishkan, which is the limited place for Avodah; for the more important comes first. Therefore, in Parshat Teruma, Moshe was commanded to make the vessels and then the Mishkan, whereas in Parshat Ki Tisa, which was said after Cheit Ha'egel, he was commanded to make the Mishkan first.

Now, it seems we can say that Moshe thought that after Hakadosh Baruch Hu forgave Cheit Ha'egel *with joy and a full heart* (Rashi), the nation returned to their previous spiritual level, and therefore there was no need to make the Mishkan first. But Betzalel knew – by virtue of the construction being transferred from Moshe down to him – that Bnei Yisrael had not returned to their original stature, and it was necessary to first prepare the Mishkan for the dwelling of the Shechinah within it, and only afterward to prepare the vessels needed for the Avodah after the Shechinah dwells among Yisrael. This may be why he said: מִשְׁכָּן אֲרוֹן וְכֵלָיו – *Mishkan, Aron, and vessels*; because through the Mishkan and the Aron, the dwelling of the Shechinah returns, and the vessels are only then needed for the Avodah. Their *dispute* was over whether, after receiving forgiveness, Bnei Yisrael returned to the level they stood at prior to Cheit Ha'egel.

The Meshech Chochma asks a profound question. At the

beginning of Parshat Teruma, it is said that the Aron is made by all Bnei Yisrael (וְעָשׂוּ). But in Parshat Vayakhel, the Torah says otherwise:

וַיַּעַשׂ בְּצִלְאֵל אֶת־הָאָרֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים אֲמֹתַיִם וְחָצִי אַרְבּוֹ וְאֹמֶה וְחָצִי רָחְבוֹ וְאֹמֶה וְחָצִי קִמְתּוֹ:

And Betzalel made the ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height.

Betzalel made the Aron? By himself? This implies yet another change! The **Ba'al HaTurim**<sup>11</sup> writes, in all the other sections (regarding the other components), Betzalel is not mentioned. He is only mentioned regarding the Aron to say that Betzalel knew the secret of the Aron and the *Merkava* (Chariot), for the Aron corresponds to the Kisei Hakavod. And why was the task of making the Aron given only to Betzalel?

The Meshech Chochma writes – based on learnings in the Gemara (Yoma 21a) from the position of the Keruvim during the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash – Hakadosh Baruch Hu was concerned that after they sinned with the calf, perhaps when someone makes the Aron, he might entertain some foreign thoughts leaning toward idolatry. This is especially true since the Aron itself has images in its design – i.e., the image of the Keruvim – which might trigger thoughts of the golden idol which was seared into the memory of even those who survived and did not worship it (but witnessed it). As a result, nobody was trusted with the Aron, and Hakadosh Baruch Hu chose only Betzalel, whose grandfather, Chur, was killed for protesting the making of that calf. Thus, due to his upbringing and nature, he hates all those who incline toward vanity and despise the depiction of any form or image (idolatry), and he would not come to any foreign thought at all. Therefore, it is explicitly written וַיַּעַשׂ בְּצִלְאֵל – that he alone made the Aron without any assistance. This helps explain why before the making of the calf, Hakadosh Baruch Hu said:

רָאֵה קִרְאֹתַי בְּשֵׁם בְּצִלְאֵל בֶּן־אֹוֹרִי בֶן־חֹור לְמִטֵּה יְהוּדָה: וְאֶמְלֵא אֹתוֹ רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בְּחֻקָּמָה וּבְתַבּוּנָה וּבְדַעַת וּבְכָל־מְלָאכָה:

I have called by name Betzalel, son of Uri son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehudah. I have filled him with Divine spirit, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge, and with all types of crafting.

Similarly, when Moshe spoke to Bnei Yisrael, it is written: לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּכָל מְלָאכַת מַחֲשָׁבָת – *To do all the work of thought*. Since this was after Cheit Ha'egel, the work then needed to be pure even in thought, so that they would not entertain any depiction of idolatry at all – and this is the meaning of מַחֲשָׁבָת – that the thought would be pure, clear, and clean.

The sefer **Ze'ev Yitraf**<sup>12</sup> (128) comes and proves that Betzalel made the Aron first, even according to those who hold he first constructed the Mishkan before its vessels. Here is his idea.

The Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni) says: When Moshe Rabbeinu said to Betzalel, “Make a Mishkan,” Betzalel responded, “What is the Mishkan for?” Moshe answered, “To cause the Shechinah to dwell within it and to teach Torah to Yisrael.” Betzalel then

asked, “And where is the Torah placed?” Moshe replied, “Once we make the Mishkan, we will make an Aron,” and Betzalel then began with the Aron: וַיַּעַשׂ בְּצִלְאֵל אֶת־הָאָרוֹן. This seemingly goes against the Gemara (Brachot 55a) which states Betzalel prioritized making the Mishkan – as per the Midrash explanation of him asking where the vessels would be stored if they were created before the Mishkan itself.

The Midrash then offers another idea based on the Pasuk פָּתַח דְּבָרֶיךָ יָאִיר – *The opening of your words gives light*; a Pasuk it says refers to Betzalel. When Hakadosh Baruch Hu sought to build the world, He wrapped Himself in light and created His world: עֲטָה־אֹר כְּשֹׁלֵמָה נוֹטָה שְׁמַיִם כִּי־יַעַה. First it says, “*He wraps Himself in light as with a garment*,” and only afterward, “*He stretches out the heavens like a curtain*”. Just like a king who seeks to build a palace in a place of darkness; first the lamps must be lit and only afterward the construction can begin. So too, the world was in darkness, and Hakadosh Baruch Hu wrapped Himself in light and then created the world.

The yesod here is that one does not build in darkness. Light must come before building, and if there is no light, there is no building. The world was in darkness, and Hakadosh Baruch Hu wrapped Himself in light and then created the world. And from Hakadosh Baruch Hu, the righteous learned to begin first with light. When Moshe said to Betzalel to make the Mishkan, the latter began with the Aron because the Aron is the place for the Torah, the light of the worlds – both this world and the next. Since the Aron is the place for the Torah, just as there is no building of the world without light preceding it, so too there is no building of the Mishkan without the Aron preceding it. And it is understood from this that the Aron is different from the other vessels of the Mishkan. All the other vessels follow the way of the world – namely, that a person first builds the house, and then the furnishings that will be brought into it. Therefore, Betzalel said to Moshe, “You say, ‘Make me an Aron and vessels and a Mishkan.’ But where will I put the vessels I make?” – as explained in the Gemara. However, the Aron follows a different practice, for it is the light of the world, and without it, חֹשֶׁךְ עַל פְּנֵי תְהוֹמֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן – there is darkness over the depths of the Mishkan.

One does not build the Mishkan in darkness, and the making of the Aron must precede the making of the Mishkan. Look closely at the wording of the Gemara (Brachot 55a), for although initially Moshe Rabbeinu said to Betzalel: עֲשֵׂה אָרוֹן וְכֵלָיו וּמִשְׁכָּן, Betzalel did not respond with a question asking where he would place the Aron and the vessels if the Mishkan was last. Rather, his response was: בָּלִים שָׂאֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה לְהִיכֵן אֲכִנִּיסָם – Where will I put the vessels I make? Why does he ask only about the vessels and not the Aron? It is because it was never a problem or doubt for Betzalel regarding anything except the vessels alone. The question of where they’d be put if their making preceded the making of the Mishkan, pertained only to the vessels. Regarding the Aron, however, it was perfectly clear. It was necessary for the light of the Aron to precede the

Mishkan, just as Hakadosh Baruch Hu wrapped Himself in light and then created the world.

And to reconcile the words of the Midrash with the words of the Gemara so that they do not contradict each other, it must be said that there were two discussions between Moshe and Betzalel regarding the making of the Aron, vessels, and Mishkan. The first time, Moshe said to him, “Make an Aron and vessels and a Mishkan.” Betzalel responded, “The way of the world is that a person first builds a house and afterward brings vessels into it, etc.” In this discussion, it was only a question for Betzalel regarding where the vessels would be placed, and not the Aron. And when Betzalel further responded, “Perhaps this is what Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to you: Make a Mishkan, an Aron, and vessels,” he did not suggest this because he thought that this was the order told by Hakadosh Baruch Hu to Moshe. He suggested it as perhaps Hakadosh Baruch Hu commanded the Mishkan last in order not to delay its making, but to prioritize it. However, in the second discussion immediately afterward, Betzalel clarified his opinion and reasoning in detail, as is stated in the Midrash: Betzalel said, “What is the Mishkan for, etc.” Moshe said to begin with the Mishkan, but he began with the Aron upon learning it was the source of Torah and light. This concludes the beautiful idea presented in Ze’ev Yitraf.

From here, I would like to move to another stage. Similar to the work of the Mishkan, Moshe Rabbeinu changed things in several other places. The first place is in Parshat Bo, where Hakadosh Baruch Hu says to Moshe to command Bnei Yisrael to slaughter the Korban Pesach and to place its blood first on the doorposts and then on the lintel:

וְלָקְחוּ מִן־הַדָּם וְנָתְנוּ עַל־שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת וְעַל־הַמַּשְׁקוּף עַל הַבָּתִּים אֲשֶׁר־יֹאכְלוּ אֹתוֹ בָּהֶם:

And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.

Moshe, however, seemingly changes this order and commands Bnei Yisrael differently:

וְלָקַחְתֶּם אֲגֻדַּת אֲזֹב וּטְבַלְתֶּם בָּדָם אֲשֶׁר־בַּסֶּף וְהִגַּעְתֶּם אֶל־הַמַּשְׁקוּף וְאֶל־שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת מִן־הַדָּם אֲשֶׁר בַּסֶּף...

And you shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin...

How was Moshe permitted to change the command?

As an aside, in Megillat Esther, we read just a couple of weeks ago about two characters who sought to kill Achashveirosh: בִּגְתָן וְתֶרֶשׁ שְׁנֵי סְרִיסֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ מִשְׁמָרֵי הַסֶּף – *Bigtan and Teresh, two of the king’s chamberlains from the guardians of the threshold*. What is the meaning of שְׁמָרֵי הַסֶּף – *guardians of the threshold*? In our language, they were simply the שׂג – the gatekeepers (שׂוֹמְרֵי דָר). If so, how could a gatekeeper poison the king, since such a guard does not move around the king but sits at the entrance of the palace?! Rabbotai, סֶף means “vessel” and not an entrance, as found in the above Pesukim

from Sefer Shemot and Rashi's explanation there. This means Bigtan and Teresh were not gatekeepers at all; they guarded the dishes of King Achashveirosh! This is how they could actually poison him!

Back to our topic, another example of Moshe deviating from an order is found in the revenge against Midian. In Parshat Matot, Hakadosh Baruch Hu commands Moshe Rabbeinu:

נָקֵם נִקְמַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֵת הַמִּדְיָנִים אַחֲרֵי תֹאסֹף אֶל־עַמִּיהֶם:

Avenge the vengeance of Bnei Yisrael from the Midianites; afterward, you will be gathered to your people.

Moshe, however, changes it up and instructs the people:

הִחַלְצוּ מֵאִתְּכֶם אֲנָשִׁים לִצְבָּא וְיִהְיוּ עַל־מִדְיָן לְתֵת נִקְמַת ה' בְּמִדְיָן:

Arm men from among you for the army, and let them go against Midian to execute Hashem's vengeance on Midian.

Moshe refers to it as Hakadosh Baruch Hu's vengeance, while Hakadosh Baruch Hu refers to it as the vengeance of Bnei Yisrael. Why did Moshe once again modify the command?

In every place where we mentioned that Moshe deviated from the command of Hakadosh Baruch Hu and reversed the steps, the **Kli Yakar**<sup>13</sup> explains the matter, and I would like to approach one of his explanations found in Parshat Tetzaveh.

In Parshat Tetzaveh, Hakadosh Baruch Hu commands to make garments. Of note to us, the first item listed is the Choshen (חֹשֶׁן) and the second is the Ephod (אֶפֹּד). What did Bnei Yisrael then do? They proceeded to make the Ephod first. The Kli Yakar writes: Here, in the general introduction of all the items, the Choshen is placed before the Ephod. Afterwards though, when each is detailed, the Ephod is prioritized and found before the Choshen. Therefore, when these items are all made, in Parshat Pekudei, the Ephod is once again prioritized over the Choshen.

The Kli Yakar then goes on to comment on the singular vs. plural nature of the instructions, including what we discussed earlier – namely, in the initial instructions given to Moshe, only the Aron was a plural commandment for all the people, while the rest were singular for Moshe. The Kli Yakar points out that in all of them, it says וְעָשִׂיתָ, but here it says וְעָשׂוּ אֶת הָאֶפֹּד – *And they shall make the Ephod*. He then asks: Why is it that all the commentators who were troubled by the same inconsistency (of plural vs singular) regarding the Aron, say nothing here regarding the Ephod?

He suggests a connection between the Ephod and the Aron, in that both are directly connected to the atonement for Cheit Ha'egel; and a direct connection exists between the two shoulder pieces of the Ephod and the two sets of five commandments within the Aseret HaDibrot written on the Luchot (placed in the Aron). This is one way to explain the justification for a plural command found in both items, and the reason nobody points out the uniqueness regarding the Ephod's command is that the same answer was just given for the Aron – it is plural because it is a collective atonement.

The Kli Yakar then continues with another idea on this matter. Chazal say (Arachin 16a), the section detailing the Korbanot was juxtaposed to the garments of the Kohen to teach us a powerful yesod: מָה קָרְבָּנוֹת מְכַפְּרִין אִם בְּגָדֵי הַקֹּהֵן מְכַפְּרִין – just as Korbanot atone, so too the priestly garments atone. The Choshen atones for judgments, the Ephod atones for idolatry, the מעיל (robe) atones for evil speech, the כְּתוֹנֶת (tunic) atones for bloodshed, the מִצְנֶפֶת (turban) atones for arrogance, the אֲבֵנֶט (sash) atones for thoughts of the heart, the צִיץ (headplate) atones for brazenness, and the מְכַנְסִים (trousers) atone for illicit relations. And based on this, we can resolve why Hakadosh Baruch Hu prioritized the Choshen over the Ephod, because He is more particular about the corruption of denim (judgments) than about idolatry. The proof is from the Dor Haflaga (Generation of the Dispersion), who rebelled against the fundamental principle of belief yet were not destroyed, while the Dor Hamabul (Generation of the Flood), were destroyed on account of violence and theft among them. But Bnei Yisrael, for the honor of Hakadosh Baruch Hu, prioritized the making of the Ephod, because the sin of idolatry is more severe for them than the corruption of judgments. Therefore, regarding the Ephod, it says “And they shall make,” also implying a prediction of the future, that this is how it will be – i.e., that they will make the Ephod first.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu has the power to forgive and overlook idolatry, but not the corruption of judgments in matters between man and his fellow, for Hakadosh Baruch Hu only forgives in matters between Him and His creations. Conversely, Bnei Yisrael said, “It is in our power to forgive and overlook what happened to us due to the corruption of judgments, but who can absolve the honor of the Omnipresent?” Therefore, they prioritized the making of the Ephod.

The Kili Yakar then connects the dots for us. This is akin to what Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to Moshe with regards to Midian, where He focused on the vengeance of Bnei Yisrael while Moshe flipped it around and emphasized the honor of Hakadosh Baruch Hu. And from this, Rashi learned to say that even though Moshe heard that his death depended on this matter – i.e., that he would die right after its completion – he nevertheless did it with joy and did not delay. For if he had not done it with joy, he would have relayed to Bnei Yisrael the exact command and wording that was given to him. Moshe thought, since Bnei Yisrael love their leaders and would hear that his death depended on this vengeance, they would surely respond, “Does Hakadosh Baruch Hu seek to exact vengeance only for our sake? We forgive what Midian did to us and there's no need to seek this vengeance so quickly!” Therefore, Moshe changed it up and said, “To execute Hakadosh Baruch Hu's vengeance on Midian... and who can absolve the honor of Hakadosh Baruch Hu?”

Based on this idea, we can now understand a wonderful thing. Hakadosh Baruch Hu commands Moshe to place the blood on the doorposts and then on the lintel – and what is in the



doorposts and the lintel? The **Tzror Hamor**<sup>14</sup> writes (Chukat): The doorposts correspond to Moshe and Aharon, and the lintel corresponds to Hakadosh Baruch Hu. Moshe Rabbeinu said: "Should they place me and Aharon before Hakadosh Baruch Hu?! It cannot be that our honor comes before His!" Therefore, he changed the order and first said the lintel and only afterward the doorposts.

If so, we can also understand very well why Hakadosh Baruch Hu prioritized the Mishkan before Shabbat. Why? Because He cares for the honor of Bnei Yisrael before His own honor. Moshe Rabbeinu then comes and commands first about Shabbat and only afterward about the Mishkan – why? Because just as he prioritized the lintel before the doorposts, so too he prioritized Shabbat before the Mishkan. He cared for the honor of Hakadosh Baruch Hu before the honor of Bnei Yisrael!

Before we dive into the wonderful explanation of the **Be'er Moshe of Ozharov**<sup>15</sup>, I'd like to add just one small addition. The words of the **Vilna Gaon**<sup>16</sup> are well-known, that the upcoming Pesach holiday is called, by us, Chag HaPesach, but Hakadosh Baruch Hu calls it differently in the Torah. He refers to it as Chag HaMatzot – and why the difference in terminology? The Vilna Gaon says it is because each one praises the other side. Hakadosh Baruch Hu praises Knesset Yisrael because the dough of our ancestors did not have time to rise, and therefore the Torah calls it Chag HaMatzot. We, on the other hand, call it Chag HaPesach because Hakadosh Baruch Hu passed over the houses of Bnei Yisrael in Egypt and thereby saved us!

With this, I would now like to approach the explanation of the "dispute" between Betzalel and Moshe Rabbeinu, according to the teachings of the Be'er Moshe of Ozharov. The Be'er Moshe says (Pekudei), the purpose of establishing the Mishkan is "the revelation of the glory of the kingdom of heaven". In other words, the Mishkan represents *Shema Yisrael*. The **Zohar**<sup>17</sup> says (Terumah 242-243):

תליסר זינין איננו, בר י"ב אבנין יקירין אלין, וכלהו סלקין לב"ה אתון, ברזא עלאה דיחודא. ולקבל אליו, גליף ואתקין משה, כ"ה אתון ברזא דפסוקא דיחודא, דכתיב שמע ישראל ה' אלהינו ה' אחד. ואינון כ"ה אתון, גליפן מחקקו ברזא דלעילא. יעקב בעא לאתקנא לתתא, ברזא דיחודא, ואתקין בב"ד אתון, ואינון ברזא שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד.

There are thirteen kinds in the Mishkan (gold, silver, etc.) besides these twelve precious stones that are the stones to be set in the breastplate. Together, they add up to 25, the 25 letters in the supernal mystery of union. Corresponding to these, Moshe engraved and arranged 25 letters in the secret of the verse of union: "Shema Yisrael..." which contains 25 letters engraved and carved in the supernal secret. Yaacov wanted to prepare below, in the secret of union, so he prepared 24 letters, which are: "Blessed is the Name of the glory of His kingdom forever and ever."

While the Mishkan represents the 25 letters of Shema and the unity of Hakadosh Baruch Hu above, Yaacov sought to be

established in the mystery of unity below and established it with the twenty-four letters of ועד מלכותו לעולם ועד. The center beam of the Mishkan (בריה התיכון) was taken from the trees that he brought down to Egypt and planted for this very purpose. Therefore, we find that in the Beit Hamikdash, they would respond "ברוך שם" instead of "Amen" (Brachot 63a). And we can hint to this with the words of the Torah regarding the Mishkan: – מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את תרומתי – whose final letters of each word add up to the same numerical value as the verse of שם ברוך שם. Additionally, אשר אתה מראה בך, אשר אתה מראה בך, שם ברוך שם equals the verse of שם ברוך שם. Moshe saw this lower unity – שם ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד – in the verse יחודא תתאה, which represents the true purpose of the Mishkan.

As an addition to his words, in the dispute of Korach and his assembly, Korach and his gang came before Moshe and Aharon and said to them: – ומדוע תתנשאו על קהל ה' – And why do you exalt yourselves above the congregation of Hashem? Moshe replied: "In all the nations, there are various kinds of sects and levels. But among Klal Yisrael, there is but one Name, one Altar, one Aron, one Torah... and one Kohen Gadol! And you now come and demand Aharon's role?! Impossible! There is but one!" The yesod of the Mishkan is one – unity.

The Be'er Moshe continues: "Know, my brother, that the Mishkan hints at the unity of Yisrael, while the vessels hint at Hakadosh Baruch Hu's unity. For in the Tefillin of the Ribbono Shel Olam, there is the praise of Bnei Yisrael, as it is written – מי כעמך בישראל גוי אחד בארץ, and in the Tefillin of Bnei Yisrael, the praise of Hakadosh Baruch Hu is what's written – שמע ישראל ה' אלהינו ה' אחד. Seemingly contradictory, in practice, the two align, as it says: והיה המשכן אחד – And the Mishkan shall be one. Meaning, the Mishkan, which is the aspect of Knesset Yisrael, hinting at the unity of Yisrael, shall be one in its connection with Hakadosh Baruch Hu, hinted at in והיה ה' אחד."

The Be'er Moshe says, Hakadosh Baruch Hu is saying: "You made Me a single entity in the world, and I will make you a single entity in the world. You made Me a single entity, as it is said: שמע ישראל ה' אלהינו ה' אחד, and I will make you a single entity, as it is said: מי כעמך בישראל גוי אחד בארץ." And behold, the Aron represents all the vessels of the Mishkan, as it is written on the Pasuk: ועשו ארון עצי שטים. The Midrash asks (Shemot Rabbah 34): Why does it say regarding all the vessels, "And you shall make," but regarding the Aron it says, "And they shall make"? – ללמדך שבתר תורה מעלה יותר מכלן – It is to teach you that the crown of Torah is superior to all of them. If a person merits Torah, it is as if he merited all of them; the Aron hints at the Torah and the unity of Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

Rabbotai, we can now understand the debate between Moshe Rabbeinu and Betzalel. For while Moshe wanted to prioritize the vessels (which correspond to the unity of Hakadosh Baruch Hu) over the establishment of the Mishkan (which corresponds to the unity of Yisrael), Betzalel reasoned that

first they must establish the Mishkan, which is the unity of Yisrael. Why? Because קְבָלָת עַל מַלְכוּתוֹ – accepting the yoke of His kingdom, cannot exist without the unity among Yisrael preceding it! Back in Egypt, Yaacov momentarily lost his Ruach HaKodesh and worried if any of his sons were not *complete*. He asked them, “Do any of you have thoughts or inclinations towards idolatry?” The answered him in unison: שָׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל ה' אֶחָד. Seeing their unity, Yaacov was then able to respond: בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

In our daily Tefillah, we juxtapose the brachot of Shema – אוֹהֵב [אֶת] עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל and הַבוֹחֵר בְּעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶהְבָּהּ itself, to teach us that the perfection of Shema depends on the unity of Yisrael. When Betzalel turned around and asked Moshe, “The vessels you spoke of, where will I put them?” the real meaning of his question is that there is no existence for the vessels without the perfection of the Mishkan – i.e., the unity of Yisrael. And especially since Yisrael made their move first, as mentioned above – “You made Me a single entity in the world, and I will make you a single entity in the world” – therefore, Moshe answered him: “You were in the shadow of G-d.” ה' צִלָּךְ עַל יַד יְמִינֶךָ – Hashem is your shadow. The Midrash (Shocheh Tov, Tehillim 121:5) explains, just as a shadow does what a person does, so too Hakadosh Baruch Hu. For if indeed the vessels – i.e., the Aron – should precede the Mishkan, since

Yisrael went first in establishing Hakadosh Baruch Hu's unity, it follows that “Hashem is your shadow,” should then come in response to their action, so to speak. Therefore, first make the Mishkan to reflect the unity in Yisrael, and afterward make the vessels, which hint at Hakadosh Baruch Hu's unity.

And now we can understand the continuation of the Gemara (Brachot 55a) regarding Betzalel. After recounting his question regarding where the vessels would be placed if the Mishkan was not built first, and Moshe responding that clearly Betzalel knew exactly what Hakadosh Baruch Hu desired, the Gemara characterizes Betzalel for us:

יֹדֵעַ הָיָה בְּצִלָּאֵל לְצַרֵּף אוֹתִיּוֹת שֶׁנִּבְרְאוּ בָהֶן שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ.

Betzalel knew how to join the letters with which heaven and earth were created.

For in essence, Bnei Yisrael is the purpose of Creation, and since Betzalel grasped the secret of their existence, it follows that he thereby understood the letters with which the heavens and earth were created.

B'ezrat Hashem, we conclude Sefer Shemot. May Hakadosh Baruch Hu grant us the merit to see the building of the Beit Hamikdash and the Geula Shleima speedily in our days!!! ◇

<sup>1</sup> **Ramban** - Nachmanides – R' Moshe ben Nachman (1194-1270), Girona, Spain, Akko; A leading Torah scholar of the middle-ages who authored commentaries on Torah and the Talmud. He was a posek who wrote responsa and stand-alone works on Halachic topics, as well as works on mysticism, science and philosophy. Immigrated to Israel at age 72 and settled in Akko.

<sup>2</sup> **Rashi** - R' Shlomo Yitzchaki (1040-1105), Troyes, France. "Rabban Shel Yisrael" - The great Rishon who wrote commentary on all areas of Torah.

<sup>3</sup> **Siftei Chachamim** - R' Shabbetai ben Yoseph Bass (1641-1718), Poland, Prague, Germany, Amsterdam; A commentary on Rashi's commentary on Chumash. Mostly a collection of other commentaries, in addition to the author's own insight meant to give a basic understanding of Rashi.

<sup>4</sup> **Taz** - R' David HaLevi Segal (1586-1667), Poland; Polish rabbi, halachic scholar and Talmudic commentator. His best-known work, Turei Zahav, is one of the basic commentaries on the Shulchan Aruch. Son-in-law of the Bach - R. Yoel Sirkes.

<sup>5</sup> **Tosfot** - Members of a school of Torah and Talmudic interpretation, 12th and 13th century France and Germany.

<sup>6</sup> **Maharal** - The Maharal of Prague - R' Yehuda Loew ben Bezalel (1520 -1609), Prague; Mystically inclined philosopher whose writings left an indelible impression on generations of Ashkenazic Jewry. His numerous philosophical works became cornerstones of Jewish thought and had a profound influence on Chassidic teaching. He also wrote halachic works, including a commentary on the Arba'ah Turim.

<sup>7</sup> **Da'at Zekainim** - The Ba'alei HaTosafot were members of a school of Torah and Talmudic interpretation in 12th and 13th century France and Germany. Their roots are in the work of Rashi and their approach is analytical, comparative and incisive. Other works emerged from their school, most notably Machzor Vitri and the Torah commentary, Da'at Z'kenim.

<sup>8</sup> **Lev Tahor** - Rav Avigdor Parnes shlit"a, Yerushalayim.

<sup>9</sup> **Meshech Chochma** - Rav Meir Simcha HaKohen of Dvinsk (1843-1926), Lithuania; Prominent leader of Orthodox Judaism in Eastern Europe in the early 20th century. Known for his writings on Rambam's Mishneh Torah, which he titled Ohr Somayach, as well as his novellae on the Torah, titled Meshech Chochma. He reputedly turned down offers for the rabbinate in various large cities, including Jerusalem, New York City and Kovno, and died in a hotel in Riga, Latvia, while

seeking medical treatment.

<sup>10</sup> **Pnei Yehoshua** - Rav Yaakov Yehoshua Falk (1680-1756), Poland. Germany.

<sup>11</sup> **Ba'al HaTurim** - Rabbi Jacob ben Asher (1269-1343), Spain; Composer of Arba'ah Turim, tracing Halacha from the Torah through Talmud and early Poskim. Many commentaries were written on the Tur, including R' Yosef Caro's "Beit Yosef" which formed the basis of the Shulchan Arukh.

<sup>12</sup> **Ze'ev Yitraf** - R' Zev Hoberman (1930-2012), Lakewood, NJ; Student of Rav Hutner.

<sup>13</sup> **Kli Yakar** - R' Shlomo Ephraim Luntschitz (1550-1619), Chief Rabbi of Prague following the Maharal. His primary work was written after becoming deathly ill and vowing to compose a commentary on the Torah if he survived.

<sup>14</sup> **Tzror Hamor** - R' Avraham Sabah (1440-1508), Spain, Portugal, and Morocco; Spanish scholar who spent much of his life fleeing persecution. With the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492, fled to Portugal, only to be expelled again in 1497. His two sons were taken from him and forcibly baptized as Christians. He was arrested in Lisbon and tortured, but eventually escaped to Fez in Morocco, having to flee without being able to recover his writings. He later rewrote from memory the works he had to abandon.

<sup>15</sup> **Be'er Moshe of Ozharov** - R' Moshe Yechiel Epstein - Ozharover Rebbe (1889-1971), Poland, New York, Israel; In 1925, went to New York where he set up his Chassidic court on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, and then in the Bronx. His entire family in Europe was murdered in the Holocaust. After WWII the remnants of the chasidim of Chentshin were left leaderless, their rebbe having been killed, and they adopted the Ozherover Rebbe, a grandson of the first Chentshiner Rebbe, as their leader. Excited by the new state of Israel, Rabbi Moshe Yechiel moved to Tel Aviv in 1952, where he spent the rest of his life. He was awarded the Israel Prize in the category of Rabbinical literature in 1968.

<sup>16</sup> **Vilna Gaon** - (The Gra) R' Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman (1720-1797), Vilnius, Poland, Lithuania. Foremost leader of misnagdic Jewry of the past few centuries. Considered the father of the stream of Lithuanian Kabbalah, and remembered as a leader of the opposition to the Hasidic movement.

<sup>17</sup> **Zohar** - Central work of mystical tradition of Kabbalah. Traditionally attributed to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. First appeared in 13th-century Spain.