

Vayaqhel-Pequdeiy, Shemot/Exodus 35:1 – 40:38

These notes contain the Sacred Scripture. Please treat them with respect.

Torah Portion

First verse of the portion

Shemot/Exodus 35:1

א וַיִּקְהַל מֹשֶׁה אֶת-כָּל-עֵדֻת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמֶר
אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיהֶם הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּה יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אִתְּכֶם:

Vayyaqheil Mosheh et-kal-adat beneiy Yisra'eil vayyomer eleihem 'eilah hadevariym asher-tzivvah YHWH la'asot 'otam

(CJB) And Moshe assembled the whole community of the people of Isra'el and said to them, "These are the things which *ADONAI* has ordered you to do."

(Artscroll) Moses assembled the entire assembly of the Children of Israel and said to them - "These are the things that HASHEM commanded, to do them."

Read the Torah Portion

Shemot/Exodus 35:1 – 40:38

1. Kohen: Shemot 35:1-29
 2. Levite: Shemot 35:30 – 37:16
 3. 3rd Aliyah: Shemot 37:17-29
 4. 4th Aliyah: Shemot 38:1-39:1
 5. 5th Aliyah: Shemot 39:2-21
 6. 6th Aliyah: Shemot 39:22-43
 7. 7th Aliyah: Shemot 40:1-38
- Maftir: Shemot 40:34-38

Haftorah reading: 1 Kings 7:51 - 8:21 with additional reading Ezekiel 45:18 - 46:15

Ketuvim Netzarim/Nazarene Writings/B'riyt Chadashah: Titus 3

We have reached the conclusion of the book of Shemot/Exodus. Following the Maftir, we praise YHWH, saying:

"Chazaq, chazaq, v'nit chazeq - Be strong, be strong, and let us be strengthened!"

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Mitzvot in the Torah Portion:

Shemot 35:3 "You shall not kindle fire in any of your dwelling places on the Sabbath day." One traditional interpretation of this *pasuk*: "The court must not inflict punishment on Shabbat."

Timing: When did this happen? Rashi concluded that this is the day after Yom Kippur from *Shemot 34:29*. Since Moshe assembled them to collect the gold for the *mishkan*, the gold being an atonement for the sin of the Golden Calf, he most likely did this immediately after they were forgiven, i.e., the day after Yom Kippur.

Work

Shemot/Exodus 35:2 (Artscroll) "On six days, work may be done, but the seventh day shall be holy for you, a day of complete rest for Hashem; whoever does work on it shall be put to death."

Comment: Work = מְלָאכָה *mela'khah*.

What is the definition of *mela'khah*?

Elohim rested from his *mela'khah* on Shabbat (*Bereshiyt/Genesis 2:1-3*).

- *Mela'khah* is translated as "craftsmanship" in *Shemot/Exodus 31:3* and refers to the work of the skilled craftsmen building the Tabernacle.
 - In *Shemot/Exodus 31:14-15*, the same word is used, translated as "work"
 - *Shemot/Exodus 31:14-15* (ISR'98) And you shall guard the Sabbath, for it is set-apart to you. Everyone who profanes it shall certainly be put to death, for anyone who does **work** on it, that being shall be cut off from among his people. 15 'Six days work is done, and on the seventh is a Sabbath of rest, set-apart to יהוה. Everyone doing **work** on the Sabbath day shall certainly be put to death
1. Thus, whatever "work" would be involved in "creating" (perhaps "speaking your own word" -- *Yeshayahu/Isaiah 58:13* -- is a reference to this creative work) and whatever "work" is required in making the Tabernacle are among those things not normally permitted on Shabbat.
 2. Baking and boiling/cooking of food is to be done before Sabbath (*Shemot/Exodus 16:23*). This would be a prohibited *mela'khah* on Sabbath.
 3. Kindling a fire in your *moshav* on the Sabbath is a prohibited *mela'khah*. (*Shemot/Exodus 35:3*)
 4. Carrying a burden or load is *mela'khah*: *Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 17:21-22*.
 5. Buying or selling is *mela'khah*. *Nehemiah 10:31*, *Amos 8:5*
 6. Causing others to work is *mela'khah*:
 - * Your children
 - * Any servant/employee who would serve you (this includes any stranger who would serve you)
 - * Any animal you own.
 - * Any visitor in your home.(*Shemot 20:8-10; 23:12; Devarim 5:12-15*)
 7. Doing your own pleasure/doing your own ways/speaking your own words is considered *mela'khah*. (*Yeshayahu/Isaiah 58:13-14*)

When may *mela'khah* be done on Sabbath?

1. In matters of "*chesed*" (mercy/kindness/ love) Shabbat is loosed. *Chesed* is of greater weight than sacrifice (*Hoshea 6:6*), and sacrifice is of greater weight than Sabbath (*Vayiqra/Leviticus 23:37-38; Matthew 12:5*).
2. Making clay in the process of healing and healing itself (*Yochanon/John 9*) are permitted on Sabbath as acts of *chesed*.

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3. Good deeds are permitted on Sabbath: (Matthew 12:11-12/Luke 6:9/Mark 2:28) Even reaping from a field is permitted if it is required in the course of doing good deeds on Sabbath (Matthew 12)
4. Care for the well-being of animals is permitted: (Luke 13:15)
5. Animals that fall into pits or other life threatening situations are to be helped out of their distress (Matthew 12:11-12/Luke 14:1-6)
6. Males are to be circumcised even on Sabbath (Yochanon/John 7:21-24).
7. Healing is not commanded, but it seems to have equal or greater weight than “good deeds,” so it is permitted on Shabbat (Matthew 12:11-12; Luke 13:10-17; Luke 14:1-6; Yochanon/John 7:21-24; Yochanon 5:1-17; Yochanon 9)

Comment: Saving animal’s lives is permitted on Sabbath, how much more human life?

8. “Knowledge (Da’at) of Elohim” is of greater weight than burnt offerings (Hosea 6:6). The Temple Service, of which burnt offerings are a part, has greater weight than Sabbath (Matthew 12:5), thus “Knowledge of Elohim” is of greater weight than Shabbat.

To Kindle a Fire

לֹא־תִבְעֲרוּ אֵשׁ בְּכֹל מְשֻׁבְּתֵיכֶם בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת:

Shemot 35:2 (JPCT) “You shall not kindle fire in any of your dwelling places on the Sabbath day.”

בָּעַר Root *Ba’ar* BDB Lexicon 1) to burn, consume, kindle, be kindled (verb)

תִּבְעֲרוּ *Teva’ru*, verb, *piel* form.

1a) (*Qal*)

1a1) to begin to burn, be kindled, start burning

1a2) to burn, be burning

1a3) to burn, consume

1a4) YHWH’s wrath, human wrath (*figuratively*)

1b) (*Piel*)

1b1) to kindle, burn

1b2) to consume, remove (*of guilt*) (*figuratively*)

The debate of the meaning and application of this word divides traditional Judaism and Karaite Judaism and the animosity in interpretation continues to this day. The Artscroll Chumash commentary reads: “The Oral Law makes clear that only the creation of a fire and such use of it as cooking and baking are forbidden, but there is no prohibition against enjoying its light and heat. Deviant sects that denied the teachings of the Sages misinterpreted this passage to refer to all use of fire, so they would sit in the dark throughout the Sabbath, just as they sat in spiritual darkness all their lives.”

A Karaite blogger comments: *In the early days of Karaism the Rabbanites taunted us and accused us of being ‘Sitters in the Dark,’ a reflection of some of Anan’s early laws in which he would not permit a fire to be lit before the Sabbath so that there would be light in the home during the Sabbath evening. Perhaps a little too zealous in his interpretation and preserved for a long time by those that were part of the Ananite sect, at least common sense prevailed and by the time of Kirkisani the acceptance of candles lit before the Sabbath was reinstated.*

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Another Karaite view: *Karaites traditionally interpret the verses forbidding the burning of a fire on the Shabbath [Exodus 35:3] as meaning that no fire whatsoever may remain lit once the Shabbath comes in and until the Shabbath goes out. From this traditional Karaite interpretation comes the Rabbinical tradition to make hamin (cholent) on Shabbath. Hamin is a stew that is placed on the fire before the Shabbath and left to cook throughout the Shabbath. Said the Rabbis, if one refuses to make hamin on Shabbath, one is suspected of being a Karaite. (We should all be so lucky!) Is the traditional Karaite understanding correct? Is the Rabbinical way of seeing it correct? It is hard to know. One possible compromise in our modern age is to completely refrain from the use of fire on the Shabbath but to permit the use of electricity. This is the approach that this website recommends.*

Haftorah

1 Kings 7:51 - 8:21 (Vayaqhel-Pequidey) additional reading: Ezekiel 45:18 - 46:15

Commentary from Chabad.org, “Haftorah in a Nutshell”

This week's *haftorah* describes the dedication of Solomon's Temple, following the theme of this week's Torah reading: the dedication of the desert Tabernacle.

The construction of the Holy Temple was completed. King Solomon assembled the leaders and elders of the tribes to Jerusalem, and amidst great fanfare the Levites transported the Ark from its temporary location in the City of David and installed it in the Holy of Holies chamber in the Holy Temple. Immediately, G-d's presence appeared in the Temple, in the form of a smoky cloud.

King Solomon then blessed G-d. He recalled the history of the sanctuary, how his father, King David, had wanted to build it--but was told by G-d that it would be his son who would accomplish this feat. "And the L-rd has established His word that He spoke, and I have risen up in the place of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the L-rd spoke, and have built a house for the name of the L-rd, the G-d of Israel. And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein (is) the covenant of the Lord, which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt."

Ketuvim Netzarim (Titus 3)

Commentary by J. K. McKee: It is easily observed that among the three Pastoral Epistles, the letter to Titus is the least examined and considered by today's Messianic Believers. There is often a struggle with statements that are sometimes perceived as being either anti-Torah (Titus 3:9) or anti-Jewish (Titus 1:14). Yet, when it is recognized that the Jewish troublemakers on Crete were likely not your average, synagogue-attending Jews—but rather opportunists who abused Moses' Teaching and used it as a means to confuse the Believers via some kind of esoteric or just made up ideas—Titus becomes much easier to understand. This would mean that Titus was overseeing the spiritual maturity of many new Believers, who needed to be rooted in a lifestyle of holiness and demonstrating good works, contrary to the behavior modeled by the opponents. Apollos, who was strong in the Tanach (Acts 18:24), and Zenas who was trained in the Law (Titus 3:13), would be able to further assist. The Epistle to Titus presents no major challenges for the Messianic community today when placed in its historical context, although we are surely admonished to beware of any Cretan-type troublemakers we may encounter. (McKee, J. K., 2018. *The Apostolic Scriptures: Practical Messianic Edition*, p. 499).