

CSH March Shabbat Service Schedule

March 5 | Parashat Pekudei / Shabbat Shekalim
March 26 | Parashat Shmini / Shabbat Parah

Friday, February 26, 2011 Candle Lighting 5:18 pm (Sag Harbor)

Shabbat morning 9:30

Old Whalers Church
Sag Harbor

This week's Torah reading: Vayekhel

Annual: Ex. 35:1 – 40:38 (Etz Hayim, p. 552)

Triennial: Ex. 35:1 – 37:16 (Etz Hayim p.552)

Haftarah: I Kings 7:40 – 50 (Etz Hayim, p. 574)

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### **Musings on Vayakhel –**

**"Take from among you gifts to the Lord," Moses instructs the Jews in the name of God.  
"Everyone whose heart so moves him shall bring them" (Exodus 35:5).**

When it comes to giving gifts to God--in this case for the building of a tabernacle--God wants people to donate voluntarily. God does not, after all, need gifts. When it comes to donations for the poor, however, the Torah legislates that every third year one put aside a tenth of one's income, and that during the other two years, at harvest time, "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not pick your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger" (Leviticus 19:9 - 10).

God is self-sufficient; the poor are not. For this reason, the Torah decrees that donations to the poor are not voluntary. They are an obligatory tax imposed on all Jews. Contemporary Jewish law obligates Jews to give ten percent of their net income to charity. Those who cannot afford to do so should give as near to ten percent as possible.  
(Joseph Telushkin)

<http://www.clal.org/par22.html>

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Vayakel Moshe et kol adat b'nei Yisrael "And Moshe gathered the entire community of Israel together."

The lesson of Shabbat is community. It is no accident that our parsha begins *Vayakhel Moshe et kol adat Benei Yisrael*, "And Moshe gathered the whole congregation of Israel together into a *kehillah*, a community." He gathered them together in order to instruct them first concerning Shabbat and then concerning the Mishkan. Shabbat creates community. People stop their individual busy lives and come together to pray, to eat, to sing, to hang out at the park.

The Israelites needed this message in order to build the Mishkan *together*. Indeed, the verses which follow emphasize the widespread participation of the people in this project. Again and again the Torah tells us that "all the people" came, using the word *kol*, "all," no less than 8 times here to refer to the people. They came *ha'anashim al hanashim*, literally "men on top of women," meaning everyone, all running in a jumble to participate. The lesson of Shabbat was well-learned;

the building of the Mishkan would be a truly communal project.

Where do *our* Shabbatot lead us? They led the Israelites to the creation of a space for God to dwell on earth, among them, as a community. Shabbat is not just an end but a beginning. Rashi says that Moshe came down from Mount Sinai and delivered this message right after Yom Kippur. The building of the Mishkan, suggests the Sefat Emet, was like our building of Sukkot right after Yom Kippur. We take the energy of Yom Kippur and channel it into a building project. Every Shabbat needs to be, for us, like a little Yom Kippur, an experience that energizes us to carry Shabbat's messages into our weekday lives and work.

<http://parshathoughtsmore.blogspot.com/2011/02/parashat-vayekhel-looking-forward-from.html>

This week's Torah portion begins with an instruction about working during the week but resting on Shabbat, and progresses immediately to talking about how the people who were moved to do so brought gifts to God and fashioned those gifts into the mishkan. Kedushat Levi reads this in a mystical way. This isn't just a passage about working and cessation of work, or about the building of the tabernacle and then pausing from that building. When our ancestors built the mishkan, they were really repairing human speech of its brokenness. When they paused from that building, on Shabbat, and prayed and studied Torah instead, they were repairing the world of human labor, action and physicality. In doing work, they were refining their speech; in speaking and praying, they were refining their work. We can't heal the world we inhabit while we inhabit it. Our speech on Shabbat heals the world of our work, and our work during the week heals the world of speech on Shabbat.

<http://velveteenrabbi.blogs.com/blog/2011/02/kedushat-levi-on-vayekhel.html>

History / Herstory is Made

Kol Hakavod to Robbie Kaplan whose case in NYC helped change government policy on the Defense of Marriage Act

In a major policy reversal, the Obama administration said Wednesday it will no longer defend the constitutionality of a federal law banning recognition of same-sex marriage. Attorney General Eric Holder said President Barack Obama has concluded that the administration cannot defend the federal law that defines marriage as only between a man and a woman. He noted that the congressional debate during passage of the Defense of Marriage Act "contains numerous expressions reflecting moral disapproval of gays and lesbians and their intimate and family relationships - precisely the kind of stereotype-based thinking and animus the (Constitution's) Equal Protection Clause is designed to guard against."

To read the entire article go to:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/02/23/obama-doma-unconstitutional_n_827134.html

Yom Huledet Sameach

Harvey Schrier

Herb Schottenfeld

End Quote –

Do not look for rest in any pleasure,
because you were not created for pleasure:
you were created for joy.
And if you do not know the difference
between pleasure and joy
you have not yet begun to live.

Thomas Merton

Shabbat shalom.

Stacy