



Understanding the Parsha

Exodus 35:1 – 38:20

We will Learn how to

- 1) interpret the main theme (subject) of a Parsha (weekly reading from the Torah),
- 2) make thematic connections to that Parsha (study the Scriptures related by a common theme [subject], line upon line and precept upon precept)
- 3) learn how to gain greater understanding of the Parsha we are looking at through its thematic connections to other portions of Scripture.

How to Outline a Parsha

I. As you begin to study the Torah you will realize that although it may seem like it is repeating itself some times, it really is a very-organized document. If the Torah repeats words, phrases or themes, it's because it is trying to teach some important lesson. The Torah repeats things as a sign to say, "stop, look, listen!" Let's see what we can learn this week by looking at the way the Torah repeats certain words. Like we have done a few times before, let's start by making an outline of the Parsha. This time though, I will make some comments about why I'm outlining the Parsha in the way that I do. I hope, this will help you as you learn to outline.

A. **Read Exodus 35:4-9** Moses gives Am Yisrael (the people of Israel) Adonai's to take an offering **O** —from those whose heart **h** motivates them — for the construction of the Mishkan.



B. **Read Exodus 35:10-20** Moses commands the W -h people to construct the Mishkan with all of its parts.

C. Notice that verse 20 says that Am Yisrael left Moses' p — after hearing the first two commands. This would make verse 20 an end, or “bookend”, of Exodus 35:4-20. So for the first division of my outline, I'd write it this way:

1) **Exodus 35:4-20** —The Command to Build the Mishkan

II. Is there more than one train of thought in Exodus 35:4-20? Personally, I see two different thoughts, let's break them down.

A. **Exodus 35:4-9** — These verses give the command for Am Yisrael to take an O for the construction of the Mishkan.

B. **Exodus 35:10-20** — These verses commission only the W -h people to actually build the Mishkan. Exodus 35:20 is the ending verse.

Now let's tweek our outline with the above information:

1) **Exodus 35:4-20** — The Command to Build the Mishkan

A) **Exodus 35:4-9** — The command to donate materials for construction

B) **Exodus 35:10-20** — The command to build the Mishkan

C. **In 1A above, do you see any word or phrase that is repeated throughout this week's sidra (portion)?**

“whose h motivated him.”

What does the Torah say about those whose hearts motivated them?

It says that the ones whose hearts

motivated them are to bring an

O for the

construction of the Mishkan.

D. **In 1B above, do you see any word or phrase that is repeated throughout this week's sidra?**

“W -h.”

What does the Torah say about those who are wise-hearted?



They are the ones who b יבנו the Mishkan.

Thematically, can you see two types of people who are mentioned?

Those with W רצונו hearts and those with W חכמה hearts.

We also see that they each have a certain task to do, depending on the kind of they heart they have.

The W רצונו hearts give, the W חכמה hearts build.

E. Read Exodus 35:21-29. What word is repeated a lot?

w רצונו h ה hearts

What activity is described in these verses?

The offering g תנועת by the people with willing hearts.

Look at how this section that ends the Parsha, talks about the tasks of those with the willing hearts. Can you see the thematic connection between willing hearts and giving?. So we need to update our outline again:

1) **Exodus 35:4-20** — The Command to Build the Mishkan

C) **Exodus 35:4-9** — The command to freely give materials for building

D) **Exodus 35:10-20** — The command to build the Mishkan

2) **Exodus 35:21-29** — The Offering of Am Yisrael

F. Read Exodus 35:21-29 again. Although this entire section talks about how people brought material for the Mishkan, is there any other information in these verses that seems to separate it into different topics/themes?

Verse 22 says that m אנשים and W נשים came.

Verses 23-24 tells about the offerings of the m אנשים.

Verses 25-26 tells about the offerings of the W נשים.

Verses 27-28 tell about the offering of the l אנשי. Finally, we have an ending sentence in verse 29.

Now let's update the outline once more:

1) **Exodus 35:4-20** —The Command to Build the Mishkan

E) **Exodus 35:4-9** — The Command to freely give materials for building

F) **Exodus 35:10-20** — The Command to Build the Mishkan

2) **Exodus 35:21-29** — The Offering of Am Yisrael



- A) Exodus 35:21-24 — The Offerings of the Men
- B) Exodus 35:25-26 — The Offerings of the Women
- C) Exodus 35:27-28 — The Offerings of the Leaders
- D) Exodus 35:29 — Ending Verse

So what is the unique theme associated with this Parsha? Take a guess.

Did you notice that **Part 1** concerns the commands to build the Mishkan. **Part 2** is about the bringing of the offering for materials to build...

So, let's title our outline as **Preparations for Building the Mishkan**. We'll say preparations, because this particular Parsha includes

- 1) the command to collect m materials,
- 2) the commandments [mitzvot] to b build the Mishkan and
- 3) the process of c collecting the materials.

All that is needed now is to build it.
This happens to be what the rest of the sidra is about.



W Q H A Z C D L I U B
 O I P G S R E D A E L
 Y K L N N M C D A E L
 M E N L G I G K V D X
 J K L N I U R E R T U
 I O P S D N F E G E N
 R T Y F U I G O F P E
 A S F D F G H J K F M
 C O M M A N D Z C B O
 D E T R A E H E S I W

BUILD
 OFFERING
 COMMAND
 WISE-HEARTED
 WILLING
 MEN
 WOMEN
 LEADERS