

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT VAYAKHEL

8-9 MARCH | 29 ADAR I

Sparks of Shabbat Peace



GABRIEL BOR

Youth Director at
Hampstead Garden
Suburb Synagogue

In this week's parasha, we are reminded of the holiness of Shabbat, a day of rest where we are instructed to refrain from doing 39 different types of work, which are drawn from the activities involved in building the *Mishkan* (portable Sanctuary). Interestingly, among these prohibitions, only one is explicitly commanded in the Torah itself: the act of kindling a fire on Shabbat. The question arises: why is this specific prohibition singled out from the rest?

Rashi (Torah commentator, 1040-1105) offers two insights, both rooted in the Talmud. The first perspective suggests that

lighting a fire on Shabbat is a separate commandment, with a different consequence. The second explanation suggests that this particular prohibition serves to highlight the individual importance of each type of work. If multiple types of work are performed on Shabbat, a separate offering is required to atone for each. However, these explanations fail to address why the Torah specifically emphasises the prohibition of lighting a fire.

The commentator Ibn Ezra (1089-1167) suggests that the Torah's command regarding kindling a fire on Shabbat is necessary to counter the allowance of using fire for cooking on Yom Tov. By relating the difference, the Torah highlights the uniqueness of avoiding fire-related activities on Shabbat, despite them being allowed on Yom Tov.

The Ba'al Shem Tov (1698-1760)

draws a parallel between fire and anger; he explains that the prohibition against lighting a fire on Shabbat extends beyond the physical act. We often associate fiery emotions with anger, an emotion that can disrupt the peacefulness of Shabbat. The Torah, in specifying that we are to avoid lighting fire "in your dwellings," reminds us that the sanctity of Shabbat goes beyond the external observance. It fills the atmosphere within our homes.

Shabbat, the day of peace and serenity, invites us to create a household free from the sparks of arguments and tension. The verse, in specifying the restriction within our homes, highlights the significance of nurturing harmony in our families. As we kindle the lights of Shabbat, let us also extinguish the metaphorical flames of negativity, ensuring that our homes become sanctuaries of peace each week.

Parasha Wordsearch

Words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

BETZALEL
ISRAELITES
MATERIALS
MISHKAN
MOSES
SANCTUARY
SHABBAT
SHEKALIM
VAYAKHEL

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