

PARSHAT PEKUDEI  
EXODUS 38:21-40:38  
HAFTARAH EZEKIEL 45:16-46:18  
27 ADAR 5785/27 MARCH 2025



*The Human Condition*  
Oil on canvass by René Magritte

A TASTE FOR THE IMAGINITIVE

1. When Moses had finished the work, the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the Presence of God filled the Mishkan. (Exodus 40:33-34)
2. They rose early next morning and saw the pillar of cloud encompassing the Mishkan. Immediately, they rejoiced with an inordinate joy....because of God's great love for Israel. That is why it says: "His shade (*tzel*) I desired and sat in it, and his fruit was sweet to my palate" (Song of Songs 2:3). (Midrash HaGadol)

This apple tree – all others flee from it because it has no shade (*tzel*). So did all the nations flee from the Holy Blessed One at the giving of Torah, but "I in his shade (*tzel*) delighted and sat." (Rashi, citing Midrash Rabbah, on Song of Songs 2:3).

3. I have endowed Bezalel (*b'tzal'el*) with a divine spirit of wisdom, ability and knowledge of every craft. (see Exodus 31:2-3)
4. "His shade (*tzel*) I desired and sat in it, and his fruit was sweet to my palate" (Song of Songs 2:3).

"His fruit was sweet to my palate." Said Rabbi Isaac: These were the twelve months the Israelites spent facing Mount Sinai, sweetening themselves to the words of Torah. For what is the meaning of "His fruit was sweet to my palate"? To my palate it was sweet, but to the palate of the nations it was bitter as gall. (Song of Songs Rabbah 2:11)

5. When Moses had finished the work, the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the Presence of God filled the Mishkan. (Exodus 40:33-34)

When the Israelites were camped, the pillar of cloud rose straight up and stretched out over the children of Judah like a succah. It covered the Tent from inside and filled the Mishkan from outside. (Baraita d'Melekhet ha-Mishkan)

6. The meaning is given to those who are mystery-minded, not to those who are literal-minded. (Abraham Joshua Heschel)
7. Art evokes the mystery without which the world would not exist. (René Magritte)