

Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

Parshas Teruma 5784

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Hashem wants the people to be build a Mishkan; for a specific reason.

וְנוֹעַדְתִּי לָךְ שָׁם וְדַבַּרְתִּי אִתְּךָ מֵעַל הַכַּפֹּרֶת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִים אֲשֶׁר עַל-אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת
אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה אוֹתָךְ אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

“And I will make Myself known (familiar) to you there. And I will speak to you from upon the capores between the caruvim, that are on top of the Ark of Testimony; all that I will command you to relay to Bnei Yisroel.” (Shmos 25:22).

How will Hashem make Himself known to Moshe? It is an expression that is not found many other places in Tanakh. Further, why did Hashem say He will be known there and also will speak to Moshe. Is being know more than just speaking to Moshe? Also, it goes into a very detailed description that Hashem will speak from between the ceruvim that are on the capores that is on the aron haeidus. This location is already known from the description of the aron (ibid 25:17 – capores; ibid 25:18 – ceruvim; ibid 25:20 and the ceruvin sit on the capores which sits on the aron).

The Mishkan was a long-planned tool that Hashem had already before delivering the people from Eretz Mitzrayim. Hashem told Moshe by the burning thornbush that He will have Moshe bring the people to the Mountain of Hashem so that Hashem can teach them His Laws. Hashem beckons Moshe to come onto the Mountain – Har Sinai – again, after speaking the Ten Utterances (Aseres Hadibros) to the people and the criminal laws to Moshe. “And to Moshe, He said, ‘come up to Hashem. You and Aharon, Nadav, and Avihu, and the seventy elders.’” (Ibid 24:1). Moshe alone, though, would not only approach from afar but ascend the mountain. (Ibid 24:2). Hashem then connects this ascension to the promise that Moshe would bring the people to Har Sinai to complete the deliverance. “Come up to Me on the mountain ...and I will give you the stone tablets and the Laws and the Commandments.” (Ibid 24:12).

It is during this very ascension, specifically, that Hashem also commands Moshe to build a Mishkan. The purpose of which is “So that I may dwell within them.” (Ibid 25:8). Not only does Hashem want to give His Torah – Laws – to the people, He wants to dwell within their camp. The vehicle that allows Hashem’s presence to dwell there is the Mishkan. Surely, Hashem does not need a “house” to dwell. However, it is all about “whoever’s heart is moved to give.” It is about the people saying “we will do and we will hear” (ibid 24:7) and also giving their resources. Then Hashem can dwell within them.

With this the meaning of “Make myself known” becomes clear. It is a two-step process. First, Hashem initiates. Hashem delivers them with a geula and gives them His Torah. Second, Bnei Yisroel reciprocates by accepting all of the Torah before hearing it all, and also gives from their physical resources so that Hashem can dwell among them.

The Mishkan is not just about offerings and service, it is a way for the people to know Hashem, to feel like they have a real relationship with their Lord.

The only other time the Torah uses the term וְנִעַדְתִּי is in the pasuk וְנִעַדְתִּי שְׁמִי לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִקְדַּשׁ בְּכַבְדִּי: “And I will make Myself known there to Bnei Yisroel, and it will be sanctified by My presence.” (Ibid 29:44). Hashem says this after teaching Moshe all the laws of the Mishkan and how to consecrate Aharon and his sons to the service. Hashem reiterates the purpose of the Mishkan is to be known, familiar, and understood, by Bnei Yisroel. It is so that they can have a relationship that feels two-ways, not just them serving some lofty Creator who sits in heaven.

Many of Bnei Yisroel, unfortunately, lose this privilege. After they sin by believing the scouts, Hashem banishes Bnei Yisroel to wander for forty years. וְאֲנִי ה' דִּבַּרְתִּי אִם-לֹא | וְזֹאת אֶעֱשֶׂה לְכָל-הָעֵדָה הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת הַנוֹעְדִים עָלַי בְּמִדְבָּר הַזֶּה יִתְמוּ וְשָׂם יָמָתוֹ: “I, Hashem, have spoken: If not for this, I will do to this to the entire evil congregation, that have known Me. In this very wilderness they shall surely die.” (Bamidbar 14:35). The episode of the scouts is connected to the episode of Korach and his rebellion. They occurred together and the Torah connects them through the term הָרָעָה הָעֵדָה “evil congregation.” Hashem is saying, that He made Himself known to them and they rebelled. They lose all of the privileges of that relationship and they will perish in the wilderness.

The connection of the scouts to Korach is further solidified by the wording of the pesukim in that latter episode. Moshe responds to Korach and his evil congregation by saying, לָכֵן אַתָּה וְכָל-עֵדְתְךָ הַנוֹעְדִים עָלַי וְאַתְּרֹן מֵ-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְעַל-יְדֵי: “And so it is you and your entire congregation, that has known Hashem. And Aharon, who is he to you that you should complain to him?” (Ibid 16:11). Further, when the daughters of Tzelophchod brought their claim to Moshe for inheritance (their father left only five daughters, no sons) they said to Moshe, מֵת בְּמִדְבָּר וְהוּא לֹא-הָיָה בְּתוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַנוֹעְדִים עָלַי בְּעֵדַת-קֹרַח כִּי-בִתּוֹטְאוֹ מָת וּבָנִים לֹא-הָיוּ: “Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not among that evil congregation that had known Hashem, the organization of Korach. It was because of his own sin that he died and he left no sons.” (Ibid 27:3). The daughters spoke in euphemism. They did not want to say outright that Korach committed treason and rebelled. Instead, they used the softer term that the rebels “knew Hashem” and were wiped out.

It is through the Mishkan that the people were able to “know” Hashem and create that relationship. The scouts and Korach’s organization all rebelled despite having that personal relationship. The rest of Bnei Yisroel were able to take advantage of it and grow by it.

That is why the Torah says specifically that it was between the creuvin carvings that sit on top of the capores that covers the Aron Haeidus that houses the stone luchos that have Hashem’s Torah written on it (ibid 25:16) that Hashem created a familiarity and relationship. Delivering the people was to bring them to Har Sinai; going to Har Sinai was to give the Torah; giving the Torah was for it to sit in the center of the camp and be studied and followed. From its housing would Hashem further instruct Moshe on all of the laws, statutes, ordinances, and rules. Through the Torah is how Bnei Yisroel – even Jews to this very day – create that familiar relationship with Hashem.