



PARSHAS VAYAKHEIL PEKUDEI

SHALOSH SEUDOS TORAH
5772

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Now is an Auspicious Time for the Ultimate Redemption

Introduction

The parsha begins with Moshe Rabbeinu gathering all the Jewish people and relating to them the mitzvah of abstaining from any of the 'melachos' – work forbidden on Shabbos. Only afterwards did he relay the commandment of building the Mishkan.

From the juxtaposition of the commandment of refraining from working on Shabbos, we infer that the forms of work forbidden on Shabbos are the thirty-nine forms of work that were done for the building of the Mishkan.

We also deduce the halacha (law) that the building of the Mishkan does not supersede the restriction of working on Shabbos. It was forbidden to build even an edifice as important as the Mishkan on Shabbos.

In Parshas Terumah and Titzaveh, Hashem commanded Moshe Rabbeinu repeatedly regarding each detail of the building of the Mishkan, "ועשית", 'you shall make.'

The Midrash¹ states that when Hashem said to Moshe Rabbeinu, 'you shall make etc,' Moshe thought that it was he himself who was obligated to build it. Hashem clarified that He intended that Betzalel should be the builder of the Mishkan.

Moshe Rabbeinu was the king of the Jewish people, and it is not appropriate for a king to be the one who would actually do the building. He would only give the command, and it would be the people who would build.

The World was Created in Triplicate Form – Time, Place and Person

The Sefer Yetzirah states that everything was created in עולם; עשן – place, שנה - time, נפש – person. For everything that we find in time, we will find a corresponding point in geography, and it will be once again duplicated in a human personality. For every time, there is a person and place that corresponds to it.

The Time, Place, and Person of 'Malchus'

Hashem created this world with The Seven 'Middos' - attributes. The seventh Middah is 'Malchus' – kingship. It also encapsulates within itself all the other six Middos.

Shabbos, the seventh day, is a day of Malchus – we celebrate the kingship of Hashem. In the Shabbos morning prayers we say "ישמחו במלכותך שומרי שבת", 'the Shabbos observer will rejoice in your kingship.' The Shabbos contains within itself all the seven days of the week.

The Mishkan was the place of Malchus. Within it, the kingship of Hashem was manifest. The Mishkan was a microcosm of the world.

Moshe Rabbeinu, as king of the Jewish people, was the person of Malchus. His kingship was a reflection of the kingship of Hashem. He encompassed all of the Jewish people.

The first words in the parsha, "ויקהל משה את כל עדת בני ישראל", 'Moshe had the whole community of the children of Yisrael assemble,' can be interpreted homiletically as follows: Moshe assembled, i.e. he contained, within himself the entire Jewish people. Being the 'person' of Malchus, he encompassed all the Jewish people.

ויקהל משה is gematria (has the same numerical value as) מלכות (they both equal 496). Moshe Rabbeinu, the king, encompassed all the Jewish people, just as the Middah of Malchus encompasses all the Middos.

The Shabbos Itself Completed the Mishkan

Hashem created the world with the thirty-nine forms of work that are forbidden to do on Shabbos. Hashem ceased from His work with the advent of the seventh day. However, it was with the Shabbos that the creation of the world was completed.

The Or HaChaim² explains that the entire world was unstable until the Shabbos arrived. Although on Shabbos no actual creation was fashioned, nevertheless, it was the Shabbos that infused the entire creation with a soul.

During the six days of the week, the Jewish people built the Mishkan – which was a microcosm of creation - utilizing all the thirty-nine forms of work forbidden on Shabbos. The Mishkan, although it was not physically built on Shabbos, was nevertheless spiritually completed with the arrival of Shabbos.

Moshe Rabbeinu, being a person of Malchus, was the Shabbos in the sense of ‘person.’ He did not engage in the physical building of the Mishkan. He - like the Shabbos – infused the Mishkan with its most important component: a vibrant soul.

Purim Contains an Aspect of Shabbos

Shabbos is a day of rest. Purim is a day on which the Jewish people rested after engaging in battle with their enemies. The custom is to wear Shabbos clothes and refrain from working on Purim.

The Gemara relates that Mordechai wished to forbid working on Purim, just like on any other proper Yom Tov (holiday). However, this restriction was omitted in the formalization of the laws of Purim.

The essence of Purim is that it is a Yom Tov of annihilating Amalek. However, Amalek was not completely annihilated in the days of Mordechai; a remnant remained from which Amalek was repopulated.

When Mashiach will come, Amalek will be destroyed completely. With the Ultimate Redemption, evil will cease to exist. The nation of Amalek, which is the embodiment and propagator of evil, will also completely disappear.

Then the Yom Tov of Purim will be complete. Today we celebrate Purim; not so much as a commemoration of the past - but as an expression of faith in the future. We borrow from the joy that will be in the days of Mashiach when Amalek will completely be destroyed.

The Rambam states that after the coming of Mashiach the light of all the Yomim Tovim (holidays) will go unnoticed due to the great radiance that will glow in that era. However, the light of Purim is from the era of Mashiach and its radiance will be celebrated even after his arrival.

It is most likely that when Mashiach will come it will be forbidden to engage in any of the forms of work forbidden on Yom Tov, because Purim will be complete, since Amalek will be no more.

Rabbi Yehuda Sensed the Potential Inherent in Purim

The Gemara³ relates that Rabbi Eliezer quoted Rabbi Chanina who said that Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi planted a sapling on Purim. The Gemara questions, is it not forbidden to do Melacha on Purim? The Gemara proposes a solution that perhaps he planted the sapling on the 15th of Adar, and he celebrated Purim on the fourteenth.

The Gemara counters that Rabbi Yehuda lived in Teveria, which is a walled city, and actually celebrates Purim on the 15th of Adar. So he did plant the sapling on Purim. The Gemara concludes that in essence it is permitted to work on Purim. It is only a custom not to work on this Yom Tov, in order not to disturb the celebration.

However, since the sapling that Rabbi Yehuda planted was an 'avorniki' - a sapling of royalty, which kings would use as a canopy – it was permitted even according to the custom; as planting such a sapling does not interfere with the celebration.

This Gemara is very puzzling. Of all days of the year, why did Rabbi Yehuda chose Purim to plant the 'avorniki'? Which Jew has time for any - even minor - extracurricular activity on Purim, between the reading of the Megilah, distributing the Mishloach Manos, Matanos L'Evyonim and partaking of the Yom Tov feast?

Furthermore, be it a sapling of the commoner, or a sapling of royalty, it was still unbecoming of the leader of the Jewish people and a Torah scholar of Rabbi Yehuda's stature to engage in the activity of planting a sapling on any day.

Besides, the Gemara assumes that Rabbi Yehuda was living in Teveria during the episode of planting the sapling on Purim. Why is the Gemara so sure that Rabbi Yehuda was living in Teveria at that point in his life? Rabbi Yehuda had lived in many places throughout his life (for example Tzipori⁴).

King Shaul was from the tribe of Binyamin. Kingship belongs to Yehuda. Shaul 'borrowed' the kingship from the tribe of Yehuda in order wage war against Amalek, because it is the task of the children of Binyamin to destroy Amalek. Our sages noted that his name is שאול, which has the same root as שאלה, borrowed, because, indeed, he borrowed the kingship.

פורים is gematria שאלה, borrowed (they both equal 336) because Purim is a Yom Tov borrowed from an era of the future.

Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi was a descendant of King David, who is the soul of Mashiach. Rabbi Yehuda himself contained the soul of Mashiach and was very attuned to the signals of Mashiach. He was therefore very attuned to the vibrations of Mashiach that pulsate on Purim.

The royal sapling that Rabbi Yehuda planted was in honor of Mashiach. A deed done in an auspicious time has a lot more power than it usually would; it arouses the heavens to a very strong degree. Therefore, Rabbi Yehuda planted his sapling of Mashiach precisely on Purim, the day of Mashiach.

The Rambam⁵ writes that the Sanhedrin was exiled ten times, beginning from its position on the Temple Mount, in the Bais HaMikdash. Its final sojourn was in Teveria, where it was dismantled. With the coming of Mashiach, it will be reestablished in Teveria, and Mashiach will anoint the Sanhedrin there. From there it will be returned to the Bais HaMikdash.

Teveria is a very appropriate place to plant a royal sapling for Mashiach. It is the site where he will first arrive to anoint the new Sanhedrin.

From Purim we Begin the Ascent to Pesach

Rabbi Nachman of Breslav states that from the day of Purim our ascent toward the great Yom Tov of Pesach begins. This is hinted to in the verse discussing the holiday of Pesach, which concludes with the words, וּמִמָּצוֹתֵינוּ וְלֹא יִרְאוּ פְנֵי בְרִיקָם⁶, which are an acronym for פורים.

On our way from Purim to Pesach we pass through Parshas Parah. We read the passage which discusses the cleansing process from the most serious impurity, the impurity of a corpse. Thereby, we are spiritually cleansed in preparation for Pesach.

On each of the thirty days between Purim and Pesach we climb one of the thirty rungs of the ladder leading out of the pit of impurity until we reach the night of the Seder in complete holiness⁷.

Now is a Very Auspicious Time

This time of the year is very auspicious for the coming of Mashiach. Parshas Parah, by purifying the impure Jew, finalized the Mashiach-like Yom Tov of Purim, which was a balm on the heart of any impure Jew. (This was explained at length the last two weeks⁸.) Purim and Parah are therefore phonetically related.

The world state of affairs today seems very promising for the coming of Mashiach. There is a tremendous tumult on the world stage of nations right now. This is a sign that in heaven, too, there is a commotion.

The leaders of governments are but string-puppets in the hands of the angels that represent the nations they govern.

Right now in heaven the notion of bringing Mashiach is being debated. The angels of the nations of the world are putting up a fuss; they wish to delay the coming of Mashiach. We, for our part, have to double our efforts in Torah and chesed, and storm the heavens with prayer.

May we merit that this Nissan, which we will usher in with the coming Shabbos, will be the one in which we will be

פְּדוּיִם לְצִיּוֹן בְּרִינָה⁹, וַיִּתְקִיִּים בְּנוֹ זִרְקָתִי עֲלֵיכֶם מִיַּם טְהוּרִים וְטַהַרְתֶּם, וְנִתְּנִי
לְכֶם לֵב חָדָשׁ וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה אֶתֶן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם¹⁰, וַיִּדְעוּ הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׂאָרוּ סְבִיבוֹתֵיכֶם כִּי אֲנִי
ה' בְּנִיתִי הַנְּהַרְסוֹת נִטְעַתִּי הַנִּשְׁמָה אֲנִי ה' דִּבְרַתִּי וְעִשִׂיתִי¹¹.

Redeemed to Tzion in song, and the promise of Hashem (in the Haftorah of Parshas Parah): 'I will sprinkle upon you purifying waters and you will be purified;' and 'I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will instill within you;' and 'The nations which will remain around you will know that I am G-d; I built what was destroyed, I replanted the desolate, It is I Hashem, I spoke and I carried out;' will be fulfilled.

¹ רבה שמות מ' סימן ב'

² בראשית ב:ג

³ מגילה ה' ע"א וב'

⁴ כתובות קג ע"ב

⁵ רמב"ם ה' סנהדרין פרק י"ד וברדב"ז שם

⁶ שמות כג:טו

⁷ חסד לאברהם, לאזולאי

⁸ עיין תחילת ספר דבר המלך

⁹ הגדה של פסח

¹⁰ יחזקאל לו:כב-כו

¹¹ יחזקאל לו:לו