

Zefania 1:8 teaches how God punished Jews who with distinct clothing, attempted to portray themselves as more “righteous” than their brothers. The Menora also teaches that we must not fabricate human fallacies about religiosity.



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Weekly Parsha

Terumah

RABBI BERNARD FOX

“And they shall make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell among them.” (Shemot 25:8)

Our parasha discusses the construction of the Mishcan. The Mishcan was the portable sanctuary that accompanied Bnai Yisrael in the wilderness. Once Bnai Yisrael entered and conquered the

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THE MENORA

a Lesson in Subordination

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

This week’s Torah portion “Truma” outlines the Temple and the various vessels housed therein. Of considerable detail is the Menora, the structure of which includes mandatory decorations of cups, knobs and flowers, unlike the other vessels: the Ark, the Table or the Altars. It possesses seven branches, six of which emanate from the center stem with identical design requirements; three branches on each side of the center stem. The seventh, center stem contains more designs than the others, and the entire Menora was required to be hammered from a single block of gold: it could not be made piecemeal and assembled.

Not too much information or explanation is readily available about these designs, but as we research the Menora, we start to learn of a few references to Menora in the Torah. I wish to cite these references, and try to understand their uniting theme.

The Menora is one of three institutions over which Moses was perplexed. The Talmud states that a fiery Menora descended from heaven to convey its form to Moses. (Menachos 29a) What is the meaning of this statement?

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Weekly Parsha

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land of Israel, this Mishcan – Tabernacle – was replaced by a permanent structure. This structure was the Bait HaMikdash – the Sacred Temple – constructed by King Shlomo.

Our passage contains the specific command to construct the Mishcan. However, Maimonides indicates in his Sefer HaMitzvot that this passage is also the source for the commandment to build the Bait HaMikdash. [1] Sefer Mitzvot Gadol – SeMaG – agrees that there is a commandment to build the Bait HaMikdash. However, he objects to Maimonides' contention that the mitzvah is derived from our pasuk. He suggests that the proper source for the commandment to build the Bait HaMikdash is a set of pasukim in Sefer Devarim. In these pesukim, Moshe tells Bnai Yisrael that they will cross over the Jordan and inhabit the land of Israel. Moshe then tells the people that Hashem will choose a place for His Mikdash and it is to that place that all sacrifices will be brought.[2], [3]

Rav Yosef Karo suggests that there is an obvious reason for SeMaG's rejection of Maimonides' position. Our passage is not discussing the Bait HaMikdash. It is specifically commanding the construction of the Mishcan. How can Maimonides contend that this passage is the source for the obligation to build the Bait HaMikdash?[4]

It seems that SeMaG's objection to Maimonides' position is reasonable. Why does Maimonides insist on citing our passage as the source for the commandment to build the Bait HaMikdash? Rav Yosef Karo suggests that Maimonides position is based upon a problem within the wording of our passage. What is this problem?

In our pasuk, Bnai Yisrael are commanded to build a sanctuary for Hashem. There are two terms used in the Torah for "sanctuary." These terms are Mishcan and Mikdash. The term Mishcan is generally used to refer to the Tabernacle of the wilderness. In our passage, Hashem directed Bnai Yisrael to build this Tabernacle of the wilderness. Therefore, it seems that the passage should have used the term Mishcan. However in our passage, Hashem does not tell Bnai Yisrael to build a Mishcan – a Tabernacle. He tells Bnai Yisrael to build a Mikdash. Why does the passage use the term Mikdash and not the seemingly more appropriate term Mishcan?

Rav Yosef Karo suggests that Maimonides is answering this question. According to Maimonides, the term Mikdash is a more general term than Mishcan. It includes all both the Tabernacle and the Bait HaMikdash.

The passage specifically uses the term Mikdash in order to include both forms of sanctuary – the portable Tabernacle and the permanent Bait HaMikdash.[5] It seems that according to Rav Yosef Karo, Maimonides maintains that our pasuk legislates the requirement to establish a sanctuary. This institution does not have a specific form. Instead, the structure of the sanctuary is flexible. This commandment includes the Mishcan constructed in the wilderness and the Bait HaMikdash constructed by Shlomo.

How are these different structures included in one mitzvah? Sometimes it is appropriate for this sanctuary to be a portable structure. At other times, a permanent structure is more fitting. The environment in which the sanctuary will be placed determines its form. When Bnai Yisrael were traveling in the wilderness, the nation was not permanently situated. It was appropriate for the sanctuary to travel with the camp. Once Bnai Yisrael settled in the land of Israel, the nation was permanently situated. At this point, a permanent structure became appropriate.

This is a reasonable explanation of Maimonides' position. However, SeMaG raises an important objection to this position. The Midrash Sifri enumerates three commandments that came into effect when Bnai Yisrael entered the land of Israel. These mitzvot are to appoint a king, to build a Mikdash, and to destroy Amalek. It seems that Sifri is asserting that the commandment to construct the Mikdash – a sanctuary – is comparable to the other two commandments mentioned by the Sifri. These other two commandments did not apply in the wilderness. Similarly, it appears that the commandment to build a Mikdash did not apply in the wilderness. Instead, the commandment first became operative with Bnai Yisrael's conquest of the land of Israel.[6] It is interesting that Maimonides also quotes this midrash in his Sefer HaMitzvot.[7] How can Maimonides' position be reconciled with this midrash?

Maimonides explains that there is a fundamental difference between the Mishcan and the Bait HaMikdash. He explains that the Mishcan was originally constructed in the wilderness and was intended to serve as a temporary structure. When the nation entered the land of Israel, the Mishcan was established in Gilgal. It was then moved to Shiloh. The Mishcan was subsequently replaced by a sanctuary constructed in Nov. The Nov sanctuary was also eventually replaced by a sanctuary build in Givon. In turn, the sanctu-

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Weekly Parsha



ary of Givon was replaced by the Bait HaMikdash. Once the Bait HaMikdash was constructed, its site became the permanent location for any subsequent sanctuary. The second Bait HaMikdash was constructed upon this location and the third will also be built on this site. In short, all of the sanctuaries build before the Bait HaMikdash were temporary. These sanctuaries were erected at a site for a period of time and then moved to a new location and sometimes even replaced by a new structure. However, once the Bait HaMikdash was built upon the Temple Mount in Yeshushalayim, this site became the permanent location of the structure.[8]

This distinction reflects a fundamental difference between the sanctuaries that preceded the Bait HaMikdash and the Bait HaMikdash itself. As explained above, the institution of sanctuary is expressed in different forms. In the wilderness, the sanctuary took the form of the Mishcan – a portable structure. The sanctuary took other forms once the nation entered the land of Israel. However, all of the iterations of the sanctuary were innately temporary and precursors to the Bait HaMikdash. The Bait HaMikdash represents the ultimate and final form of the sanctuary. Once the Bait HaMikdash was built, it was the final form and site for the sanctuary. All subsequent sanctuaries are reconstructions of this King Shlomo's Bait HaMikdash and built on its site.

This distinction between the Bait HaMikdash and its precursors resolves the contradic-

tion between Maimonides' position and the Sifri. Although versions of the sanctuary existed before the nation entered the land of Israel, the final and ultimate fulfillment of the commandment to build a sanctuary could not be achieved until the land of Israel was completely secured and the Bait HaMikdash was constructed.

Let us now reconsider the dispute between Maimonides and SeMaG. According to Maimonides, the mitzvah to build a sanctuary includes the Bait HaMikdash and all of its precursors. According to SeMaG, the commandment specifically instructs us to build the Bait HaMikdash. It does not include the precursor of the Bait HaMikdash. Why does SeMaG exclude the Mishcan from the commandment?

It seems that according to SeMaG, the Bait HaMikdash is a fundamental element of the sanctity of the land of Israel. In other words, the sanctity of the land of Israel has a specific structure. This sanctity requires that the land of Israel include as a central element the Bait HaMikdash. The Mishcan and the other sanctuaries that preceded the Bait HaMikdash were places for the offering of sacrifices and the worship of Hashem. But these structures were not expressions of the sanctity of the land of Israel.

Maimonides disagrees. He argues that the commandment to build a sanctuary was given in the wilderness. It was first fulfilled through the construction of the Mishcan. According to Maimonides, the sanctuary is a central

element within the national community of Bnai Yisrael. This community first emerged in the wilderness. With its emergence came the requirement to build this community around a sanctuary. The appropriate sanctuary for the nation as it traveled through the wilderness was the Mishcan. The structure of the national community evolved and did not achieve its final form until the people possessed the land of Israel. In other words Bnai Yisrael evolved from a nomadic nation into a people with a land. As the national community evolved, the institution of the sanctuary evolved. Once the people achieved possession of the land, the nation became complete. The complete community required a permanent Bait HaMikdash. In short, Maimonides and SeMaG disagree on the framework of the sanctuary. According to SeMaG the sanctuary is an expression of the sanctity of the land of Israel. Therefore, the Mishcan and the Bait HaMikdash are fundamentally different institutions. According to Maimonides, the sanctuary is a fundamental element of the national community of Bnai Yisrael. Therefore at different times in the history of Bnai Yisrael, the Mishcan and the Bait HaMikdash have served as appropriate expressions of this institution. Of course, Maimonides acknowledges that the Bait HaMikdash is the ultimate form of the institution of a sanctuary. However, this is because the nation of Bnai Yisrael is only complete once it is in possession of the land of Israel.

In memory of my dear friend and mentor Albert J. Maimon Z"L.

May his soul be bound in the bonds of eternal life. ■

[1] Rabbaynu Moshe ben Maimon (Rambam / Maimonides) Sefer HaMitzvot, Mitzvat Aseh 2.

[2] Sefer Devarim 11:10-11.

[3] Rabbaynu Moshe ben Yaakov of Coucy (SeMaG), Sefer Mitzvot Gadol, Mitzvat Aseh 163.

[4] Rav Yosef Karo, Rav Yosef Karo, Hilchot Bait HaBeChirah 1:1.

[5] Rav Yosef Karo, Rav Yosef Karo, Hilchot Bait HaBeChirah 1:1.

[6] Rabbaynu Moshe ben Yaakov of Coucy (SeMaG), Sefer Mitzvot Gadol, Mitzvat Aseh 163.

[7] Rabbaynu Moshe ben Maimon (Rambam / Maimonides) Sefer HaMitzvot, Mitzvat Aseh 20.

[8] Rabbaynu Moshe ben Maimon (Rambam / Maimonides) Mishne Torah, Hilchot Bait HaBeChirah 1:1-3.

(Menora continued from page 1)

Perhaps the most popular source of the Menora is the holiday of Channukah. After the Jews won the war, they returned to resume Temple service by lighting the Menora. Finding insufficient, pure oil to last eight days until they could press new oil, God created the famous miracle where one day's supply of oil lasted those eight days. Unable to light each day was not the Jews' fault, so we wonder the need for such a miracle, as the Jews were already victorious. It is not a miracle that saved the Jews, nor was it needed. Why then did God perform this miracle?

Parshas Beha-alosecha commences with the command of Aaron lighting the Menora. This follows the inauguration of the Tabernacle (Temple) as the first service. Why is Menora the first service?

On Shabbos Channukah we read the Haftorah of Parshas Beha-alosecha found in Zechariah. It describes God's promise to enable the reconstruction of the second Temple through Darius, Queen Esther's son. In this portion of the Prophets, Zechariah sees a vision, part of which reveals a golden Menora. Zechariah also sees olives which on their own, are miraculously pressed and provide golden oil for the Menora. The lesson according to Rashi is that just as this vision of the olives required no man to press oil from them, so too, no man will be required to create the situation where the Temple will be rebuilt, as the verse states, "not by an army and not by strength, but by My spirit, says God of hosts." Meaning, this part of the vision is an analogy to future events: just as man is unnecessary to create oil and light the Menora, man is equally unnecessary to enable the situation to rebuild the Temple; God alone will accomplish this. The question is what does the Menora have to do with God's message to Zechariah? The Menora's presence seems arbitrary. Any item could be used to convey God's message...why a Menora?

However, we notice in all three of these sections, a Menora is found, and the section is dealing with either resuming temple service (Channukah), initiating Temple service (Beha-alosecha) or the rebuilding of the Temple (Zechariah). What is this central role of the Menora, when the Ark is truly the focus of the Temple, as it houses the Torah? Additionally, while donning Tefillin each morning, we recite these words: "and the good oil pour out on the seven branches of the Menora, to spread forth Your goodness to Your creations." What is this statement's meaning? What does the Menora have to do with God pouring out His "good oil" (goodness) to His creations?

One more matter is essential to our discussion: Sforno's explanation for the very need for Temple. Of course, Temple is not "for" God, as God needs nothing. Temple is for man. But as Sforno taught,



Temple was a response to the Golden Calf. The Jews expressed an idolatrous need, as Moses presumably was dead, and the nation could not bear existing with no physical figurehead. Thus, the Jews said, "...Moses the man who took us up from Egypt, we know not what has happened to him." Why did they mention Moses "the man"? It was due to their over attachment to man, instead of God. Sforno explains that the Jews then created the Golden Calf to replace Moses. They did not truly assume the Calf was God, but that this Calf would be the means through which they could relate to God. Nonetheless, this was a grave sin. However, this sin displayed the level of the Jews, that they required a tangible method of approaching God. Temple was God's response: it would act as a controlled outlet of sorts. God would allow their tangible approach to Him, never once allowing the Jew to view God as tangible, but merely offering them a means, on their level, to worship God. If we understand God's message to the Jews here, we can now answer our main question regarding the role of the Menora.

With Temple, God teaches mankind that our own means of approaching Him – the Golden Calf – must fail in truly relating to God. Human ideas by definition are qualitatively and quantitatively less than God's perfect knowledge. But not only are our ideas flawed, the central point I wish to make is this: man cannot initiate a relationship with God, unless God makes this relationship a reality, and does so first. For the Jews to presume that creating a golden animal will realistically relate them to God, is a crime, which earned them

death. Our understanding of the true means by which we relate to God is so essential, that without it, our lives are worthless. We may now understand why Menora is so essential to Temple.

Temple, as we said, is God's allowance for mankind to relate to Him in an Earthly and tangible fashion. But since the Jews sinned, assuming they might initiate a relationship with God on their own, and with their own fabricated devices and acts, God corrects us. And not only did those Jews possess the emotion responsible for the Golden Calf's creation, we are all still the same "human" design, sharing the seeds of that sin, and in need of keeping a "lid" on those idolatrous emotions. The Talmud teaches that the Yetzer Hara – the evil instinct – emerged from the Temple's "Holy of Holies" in the form of a fiery lion. This parable means that it is in the religious sphere (Temple) that man's idolatrous emotions are most powerful. And therefore, in this religious sphere (Temple worship) we find the most exacting of laws to restrain this emotion. We find today all too often, many Jews wishing to express greater "religiosity" than others. Man's ego teams with his religious emotion, and seeks grandeur in the eyes of his fellow, instead of in God's eyes. God, having created our religious emotions, warns us not to add to the Torah, for this very reason. Radak's last "Yaish Omrim" in Zafania 1:8 explains how God punished Jews who dressed differently than the other Jews, just to present themselves as more religious. We have digressed, but for good reason. Let us return to the Menora.

Now, as Sforno taught, man sinned by assuming

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The Temple

he knew how to relate to God: he thought his arbitrary actions of creating a Golden Calf might have some real meaning before God. However, this is pure idolatry and imagination. How does God correct us? We require this vital lesson that we cannot initiate a relationship with God, but it is God who does so, and it is God's prescribed actions and laws, which are truly recognized by Him. We are taught of the Menora's essential role in our aforementioned three cases.

When reestablishing Temple service during Channukah, God made certain that the very initiation – Menora lighting – was not by natural means, but through that miracle. When God gave Zechariah his vision, again, God informed him that the Temple would be rebuilt through God: “not by an army and not by strength, but by My spirit, says God of hosts.” (Zech. 4:6) Meaning, man's relationship to God (Temple service) in these two cases, required a reminder that this relationship exists...only due to God's will, and man cannot effectuate a relationship arbitrarily, without God's will. We learn that man must subordinate his religious desires, to God's exact prescriptions of service. The honest person will ask, “How can man relate to the Creator of the universe?” And a great, honest man did already express this: “What is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you remember him? (King David, Psalms, 8:5) Humility demands this response of King David. However, God does create a relationship, for which we must be thankful. So our two cases teach that God intervened, not allowing man to assume he might relate to God, without God's will or methods. Perhaps this also explains the Talmudic portion citing the “fiery Menora” that taught Moses of its perplexing design. The concept of a “perplexing design” suggests this idea again: that we must subordinate our knowledge, to God's knowledge. Even the most perfect and intelligent man relied on God's instruction.

But now you will ask, “Where was there any act of God in the inaugural service in Beha-alosecha?” To this, I ask you, “Why did God select the Menora, and not another item, to function as His lesson in Zechariah and during Channukah?”

Again: Temple (man's service to God) demands that man recognize God's methods, and that God initiates any relationship with man. I cannot explain the Menora's knobs, cups and flowers, but I wish to suggest why it is designed with six branches emanating from a seventh. I believe this refers to Creation, from which six days emanated, and rest was established for the seventh. The very concept of creation is the most primary example of God's relationship with everything: His creation of matter's very existence is the most primary expression of His relationship with matter, with the entire universe. Perhaps for this reason, God uses the

Menora to demonstrate this lesson, that He creates this “relationship” with man, just as he forged the basis of all relationships, by granting everything existence. The act of creation is the expression of God's relationship to matter, per excellence. He therefore structured the Menora to embody an expression of “Creation” so that Temple will have an item displaying the foundation of our relationship with the Creator: an object which resembles creation, an emanating six days, paralleled by an emanating six branches. Perhaps for this reason we recite, “and the good oil pour out on the seven branches of the Menora, to

spread forth Your goodness to Your creations” as we wind the Tefillin “seven times” on our arms. Again here, when in service to God wearing His Tefillin, we remind ourselves that without His Mitzvos or His desire, we have no means to relate to Him.

Menora resembles creation, and by contemplating creation, we realize the idea of God relating to creation. And as this Menora sits in the Temple, the place where we desire to approach God, we are made aware of this truth, that only through God's methods, will we have any relationship with Him. We are thereby averted from subjective, idolatrous, religious expressions as displayed by the Jews who created the Golden Calf. Menora reminds us to rely on God's means to approach Him, so that we truly approach Him, and not imagine we do. God creates the truth that we can relate to Him, and thus, He created miracles when the temple was reestablished and rebuilt. Temple service devoid of a clear teaching that God enables such service is false. God desires we live by truth, so God teaches us with lessons as these.

This is a primary lesson for us all. We must recognize by Torah study what is true and what is false concerning our notions of God. We must then adhere meticulously to His commands, as He alone knows the only means for our relationship with Him.

Studying God's Torah is the greatest command, and where we find our true expression as intelligent beings. But although as we said, the Ark which houses the Torah is the true focus of the Temple and our lives, the

Menora teaches a vital lesson as well, regarding our relationship with God. Temple addresses the entire human being, and part of our Earthly existence encompasses not only Torah study (Ark), but also our approach to God in a relationship. Menora is the vehicle that educates man on this relationship, restraining our religious expression to only what God deems proper, and teaching that our relationship follows His methods, not our own.

To partake of reality, man must subjugate his feelings, to God's true knowledge. This, I feel, is a goal of the Menora. ■



Pirkei Avos - Ethics

TALK



TEACHERS

RABBI ISRAEL CHAIT

Written by student

Chapter 1, Mishna 5: “Yose the son of Yochanon the man of Jerusalem said: ...and do not engage in lengthy talk with women. This is said with regards to one’s own wife, certainly with another man’s wife. From here the Wise Men said: As long as one engages in lengthy discussions with women, he will cause evil for himself, remove himself from words of Torah, and come to inherit hell.”

The Rambam, in his commentary on this mishna, explains that most discussions with women are about sexual matters. It follows from this explanation that the issue in the mishna isn’t that a man is talking to a woman: it is not a question of the people involved in the dialogue. Rather, the issue at hand is the nature of the dialogue itself. The mishna’s example of the different sexes merely reflects that the nature of the discussion pertains to sexual topics. Still, we need to understand: what is the lesson our mishna is trying to teach us?

When the Torah describes the creation of man, it says “And man was living being” (Genesis Chapter 2, Verse 7). The commentator Onkelos explains this verse to mean that man was a “speaking spirit”, meaning that the capacity for speech makes man distinct from all other creatures. This leads to a unique ability for instinctual satisfaction, merely through talking. Whereas animals must perform an action in order to satisfy their instincts, man’s psyche allows for satisfaction through speech. This mechanism isn’t limited to speech: it includes all forms of fantasizing, such as movies, where words and ideas are conveyed through speech. Man’s instincts are spoken about more than actually performed. A prime example of this is ‘Lashon Hara’, when one person speaks negatively about another person. This is considered a form of ‘character assassination’ where a person can be killed, not with a weapon, but with words. The romantic feelings of love are given the same expression through words, as seen by the degree to which

people constantly joke about sexual matters or read or write about them. This is a unique ability of man that stems from his ‘speaking spirit’, the ability to express his instincts through speech.

According to the Rambam, the phrase “don’t engage in lengthy talk with women” teaches us to not cater to the instincts through speech. The idea of “lengthy talk” means that there is a greater involvement than is necessary. As much as a person needs it, there will be a necessity for expression. However, when one oversteps the boundary, the desire is awakened and will lead to a type of life, which isn’t the highest level. Our Sages are emphasizing that speech is a means to express an instinct, and if one excites the instincts too much through this vehicle, it will lead to problems.

Chapter 1, Mishna 6: “Yehoshua the son of Perachia and Nitai the Arbeili accepted from them. Yehoshua the son of Perachia said: Make for yourself a Teacher, Acquire for yourself a Friend, and Judge everyone to the side of Innocent”

“Make for yourself a Teacher” Rashi explains this to mean that one shouldn’t just learn alone but also from a teacher and those listening. We may ask why Rashi adds that one should learn from those listening also: why not just learn from the teacher?

The idea of learning from others listening to the teacher is that one should not be concerned who he is learning from. Even if one is on a lower level of wisdom, with the correct approach to knowledge, he may have the capacity to add from an intuition that you may not have.

“Acquire for Yourself a Friend” Rashi explains, that some say this means that a person should have a book to study from while others say that it means that a person should have a friend to learn with because, quoting from a verse in Ecclesiastes, “two are better than one”. There is also a statement in the Talmud that one who studies alone, even if he is a wise scholar, will start saying foolish things.

Rashi refers to two different interpretations as to what is the meaning of a “friend”, a book or an actual person. When we analyze this disagreement, we need to understand what is the reasoning of each side. Why would a book be sufficient to qualify as a friend? Why does the other opinion disagree? To be continued. ■



Egypt to Sinai

A Daily Journey

RABBI MOSHE BEN-CHAIM

We observe a very interesting parallel between the Jews' history, and the Temple's structure. We noted that the Jews left animal worship behind them upon their Egyptian exodus. God led them through a desert by way of pillars of smoke and fire, while sustaining them miraculously with the Manna. They arrived at Sinai obtaining God's Torah. These events are directly paralleled by the Temple's design: the priests enter the Temple with the animal sacrifice behind them. Inside, they encounter smoke from the Incense Altar, fire from the Menorah, and bread set on the Showbread Table. These are all in service of the primary vessel, the Ark that houses God's Torah. It too is cloaked by a Parochess curtain, as was Sinai cloaked in darkness, rain and cloud.

These phenomena of pillars of smoke, fire, and the Manna, were not simply conveniences, but precisely planned by God. Each served a lesson, not just for the Jews who left Egypt, but also for all future generations. So important are their lessons, they form the design of the Temple: God desired that the Egyptian, terrestrial journey mirror every man and woman's internal journal. We all must leave our own "Egypt". Life is a struggle to abandon our infantile and primitive natures, our own Egypt, and adhere to the truth, embodied by the Menorah's light. And as we said, we temper our knowledge with our admission of our ignorance, conveyed by the Incense Altar's cloud. And if we truly devote ourselves to this mission for which we were created, God's Manna - His providence for our physical needs - will be readily found, just as it was prepared for the Jews. And just as the Manna was miraculous, we too will not understand how God provide as we engage more hours in Torah study than in work, but He does. God wishes that man devote himself more to study, than to accumulation of wealth. The Manna was actually commanded to be on display in the Temple as a proof of God's ability to sustain us. Again we learn: the lessons of the desert are to be permanent lessons. Maimonides also teaches that for one who abandons the life of monetary concerns, devoting himself to study God's Torah, God will provide his needs. (Mishneh Torah: Laws of Shmita and Yovale, 13:13)

As the Jews eventuated at Sinai to obtain the Torah, so too, the Temple's focus is the Ark which houses the Torah. We are reminded daily of our true purpose: to arrive at an ever-increasing love of God. This may

only be accomplished by studying His creation and His Torah. We therefore learn how essential it is that we are aware of our inner natures - our primitive and instinctual tendencies. We all possess them. These emotions and drives work on us each day. We must evaluate which urges rule us, understand their destructive natures, and abandon them, or satisfy them properly. But our minds are to rule our emotions, not the reverse. This too was exemplified by the Jews' Passover sacrifice. Before being redeemed, they had to display their disbelief in the Egyptian animal

god.

For many, it was too strong a desire, and they perished with the Egyptians in Egypt. One cannot simultaneously adhere to God and an animal deity.

It ends up that all those ancient events are not quite so ancient. It would appear that God desired those events to embody mankind's mission...in each generation. It follows that God commanded our recurring Jewish Holidays to set on permanent display these educational episodes. This journey applies to us all, and Temple is the permanent reminder. There are other similar laws. The new moon for example is said to wax and wane, teaching man that he too may decrease by sin, but like the moon, he may again wax to glow in his perfection. The Rabbis indicate that this is an actual purpose in the design of the moon's orbital phases.

Our internal world is quite hidden, and rarely studied. Temple teaches that matters should be just the opposite: we must examine our natures, admitting our poor character traits, and work on improving them as outlined in the Torah. This is where the Keruvim come in.

The Keruvim, or cherubs, were the childlike, gold figurines, which form the Ark's cover. Why were such images attached to the most prized of all Temple vessels housing God's Torah? What do they have to do with the Torah? The Rabbis teach they were similar in design to an infant.

What is an infant? How is it distinguished? I



believe cherubs are to embody man who is not yet distorted; he does not yet follow the instinctual, primitive and idolatrous emotions. He is innocent. Keruvim portray man in his yet, uncorrupted state: a child. This is what the knowledge of Torah (housed under the Keruvim) target. Man should return to that state where his emotions have no affect on him. Keruvim are the focus of the Temple, as man's focus is to return to a state where he is similar to a child in this respect.

The zenith of man's existence is when he is untainted with sin, as a child. But this is joined to his other spiritual element: his soul. Man has two missions, to free himself from his instinctual, and cleave to the intellectual, the world of wisdom. But they work hand in hand: man's attachment to the world of wisdom, (the Tablets inside the Ark), is proportionate to how far he removes himself from the grips of his emotion, the Keruvim. The Ark's dual nature of Tablets and Keruvim above, embody man's dual nature of an intellectual and emotional being.

Although the ancient Jews made but one journey from Egypt to Sinai on the ground, all Jews must journey from "Egypt to Sinai" each and every day. ■

Job

the Book of Job

RABBI ISRAEL CHAIT

Transcribed by students

PART III ELIPHAZ'S ARGUMENT

Chapter 4

Eliphaz commences his words to Job, urging him to listen to some of his own preaching. Job always comforted people and maintained that others greatly exaggerated their situations. Eliphaz then accuses Job of feeling just. This would mean God is not just because He is hurting an “innocent man” (Job). Eliphaz concludes that Job must truly be guilty:

“Shall man be just before God?” Also, “In his angels he charges with folly.”

Meaning, if in his prophets (angels) sin is present, “how much more so does sin exist with you Job.” Eliphaz maintains that Job has no way to perceive God’s idea of innocence and guilt. Therefore, Job’s entire defense of his innocence is false. He tells Job that he must have sinned. (5:7 Rashi says that it is impossible for man not to sin.)

Eliphaz maintained that there are two kinds of sins: 1) an overt sin, known to the sinner, for which man is culpable, and 2) a sin due to human nature where God will act to help him overcome it, since it is not known by the sinner. Eliphaz maintained that since Job denied having sinned, Job committed the second type of sin, and was fortunate that God was punishing him so he could perfect himself. Eliphaz further maintains that once Job finds his sin, God will heal him and he will enjoy a good life.

JOB'S RESPONSE TO ELIPHAZ

Chapter 6

Until verse 11, Job states that he has not sinned. What is meant by “is my strength the strength of stones?” Job means that God’s punishments must allow man to overcome his wrong. But Job claims, “My punishment does not allow me to search out my wrong, as you say the punishment was meant to do. There must be limits to the punishment so as to make it possible for me to overcome my wrong.” In other words, Job is saying that if his punishment was meant to do as Eliphaz suggests, it is an unjust punishment. Eliphaz told Job that he must gain his composure, for he felt that Job was letting his punishment overtake him. But Job’s reply was that God’s acute pains were not allowing him to gain his composure. Job meant to say that Eliphaz’s argument was good only up until the point where Job was, that point being where the troubles make it impossible for him to function well enough to think, as Job says, “Am I made out of stone?”

What is meant by 6:21:

“For now ye are nothing; ye see my casting down, and are afraid”?

Job maintains that Eliphaz was siding with God. Job first told his friends that they are afraid that something was going to happen to them, and that is why they sided with God, afraid to side with Job. Secondly, Job maintained that

they were afraid to face the reality, which Job suggested. Their fear was that by agreeing with Job, they would have to abandon their philosophy. (Rashi, Ibn Ezra)

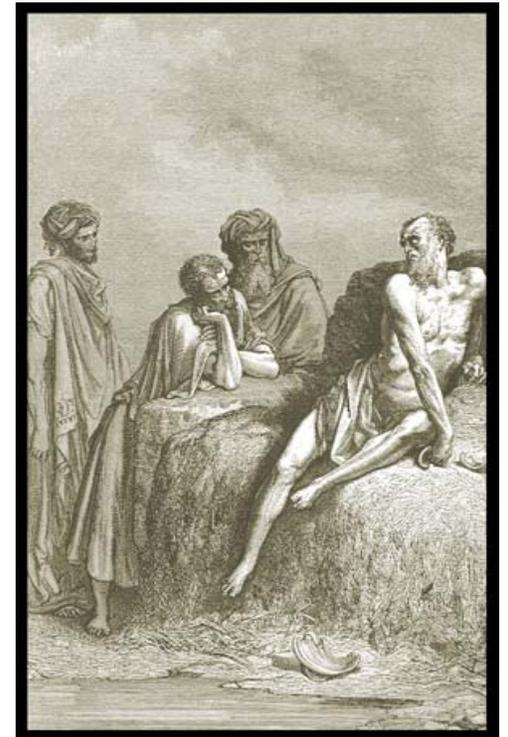
The reason why Job retorted to his friends, first by describing his pain, was to make them see that the pain was too great to do as they told him (to pull himself together). Their philosophy was one in which they desired to remain secure in their own ideas, fearful to look at reality objectively, lest they see that they are wrong.

Job continues, stating that their philosophy will “bury orphans and undermine friends” because they are not being objective.

Chapter 7 verse 12 states,

“Am I a sea, or a whale, that You set a watch over me?”

With these words, Job commences a new argument. Since Job could not find in himself any sin, and since he never denied God’s Providence, he concluded that God must be out to get him. For why else would God’s Providence relate to him? If not to help, it must be to hurt. So he questions God as to why he in particular was chosen as a target, “Why am I so important that you come against me as an enemy?” So we learn from these complaints that Job maintained, 1) there is a Creator, 2) He knows what is happening, and 3) He has the power to stop Job’s pain. Job was stuck without a reason as to why these events befell him. ■



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