

Parshat Re'eh Dwelling of G-d: Shilo vs. Jerusalem

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Hershel Reichman

In Parshat Re'eh, we read about the various resting places of the Holy Ark. The Torah refers to the final resting place of the Ark as "Menucha V'Nachala". Chazal say, "Menucha"-tranquility, refers to Shilo and "Nachala"-a resting place, signifies Yerushalayim, the final destination of the Aron Hashem.

The Shem MiShmuel asks why the Mishkan needed to sojourn first in Shilo before coming to Yerushalayim. He writes that Hashem created the world with various energies. These are manifested in our world in triple form - time, place, and the human soul. The soul is a combination of Moach-intellect and Lev-emotions. Torah study engages the Moach and performing mitzvot develops the Lev-an awareness and closeness to Hashem.

Moach and Lev are each emphasized in time. Shabbat is Moach and Yom Tov is Lev. On Shabbat, the seventh day of the week, there are seven aliyot. Seven symbolizes completion. The Gemara writes that Shabbat is a day dedicated to the study of Torah. In addition, there is a mitzvah of oneg-pleasure. This is characterized by a feeling that one has achieved completion. Whereas Shabbat involves Moach-intellectual pursuit and satisfaction, Yom Tov exudes simcha-happiness. It is Lev-an emotional experience expressing the joy of existence, not just of man but of the miracle of nature. Each festival celebrates a different aspect of nature. Pesach is the time of new beginnings, Shavuot is the holiday of the first fruits-bikurim, and Sukkot celebrates the completion of the harvest.

There is exhilarating energy in the air as we rejoice with the changing seasons of nature.

Shilo is the place of Moach-intellect and was Hashem's first resting place. Yerushalayim, the Lev-the emotional center of the Jewish people, was the final destination. Shilo is in the portion of Ephraim, the son of Yosef. Yosef symbolizes the power of the mind. According to Kabbalah, Yosef's encounter with the wife of Potiphar was a trial of the Moach. Yosef knew intellectually that the act was wrong. Passion, anger, and fear were all at work to make him sin. Yet his exceptional power of Moach helped him overcome this incredibly difficult test. The first level of holiness is when the mind defeats the sinful passionate heart. According to Jewish law, one who brought up a sacrifice in Shilo was permitted to eat it at a distance as long as one could still see the Mishkan. There were no walls which constricted the person. This signified that there was a certain confidence that holiness could spread. In contrast, one who brought a sacrifice to Yerushalayim needed to eat it within its walls. The holiness of Yerushalayim was limited as opposed to the kedusha of Shilo which was boundless. This is the power of the mind. Torah learning helps one achieve the level of Yosef which can defeat all evil. This is the power of Shilo and that is why it was the first resting place of the Mishkan.

The Beit Hamikdash, the final stop for the Aron Habrit, was the emotional center of the Jewish nation and was in the portion of Binyamin and Yehuda. Binyamin represents the power of the Moach. Yehuda is royalty,

the heart of the nation. This was the second stage. It is much more difficult to channel one's emotional passions towards the service of Hashem than to convince the mind of the logic of Torah. The power of

Yerushalayim is the invisible energy, the yearning hovering in the air, which draws us close to Hashem. We need to physically be there to sense it. It is the power of the Lev-the heart of Israel, which is a lot greater and more difficult to achieve than Moach. Yerushalayim is also called Zion, the identical numerical value of Yosef. Yerushalayim is the power of mind and heart working in perfect synch. When the Mishkan moved from Shilo, we did not lose Moach. On the contrary, in addition to gaining heart, the power of the mind increased in Yerushalayim. The Shem MiShmuel explains that Shilo is Menucha and Yerushalayim is Nachalah. Menucha is temporary. The mind is a fickle thing and flits from one thing to the next. In contrast, the heart, the desire to be close to Hashem, remains eternal. Throughout our long years of exile, the Jewish nation's strong bond with the Creator was never severed. The physical trappings of Yerushalayim were destroyed but its spiritual holiness lives on forever. Similarly, Shabbat is associated with Menucha-a transient dream. In contrast, Yom Tov, the joyous emotional experience of Lev, remains with us throughout the year.

Let us use the power of our own minds and hearts to build a personal Mishkan, a Mishkan of Lev and Moach dedicated solely to the service of Hashem and His Torah.

Baruch Shem Kavod Malchuto

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Michael Taubes

When Yaakov perceived that his death was near, he summoned all of his sons to gather around his bedside. Chazal say he wanted to reveal matters related to the future of the Jewish people. Hashem's presence departed momentarily from Yaakov and he thought that perhaps something was wrong with one of his children that they were not worthy of hearing his prophecy.

The Gemara says that the tribes responded by saying Shema Yisrael. They affirmed their belief in the one Hashem and were following in the ways of the forefathers. This is the origin of Shema Yisrael, which was later incorporated by Moshe into the Torah. Yaakov responded with the words, "Baruch shem kavod malchuto l'olam v'aed."

The Midrash in Devarim Rabbah says that Moshe heard the angels say Baruch shem when he was in heaven but he didn't include it in the Torah. The Gemara asks, if we say this phrase in the Shema it would be a slight to Moshe. If we ignore it would be a slight to Yaakov. So we compromise by saying it quietly. On Yom Kippur we say it aloud because then we are considered like angels.

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The Yerushalmi in Brachot says that one can remedy a bracha levatala (blessing uttered in vain) by reciting the phrase Baruch shem. The Rosh adds that if a person only says the first part of the blessing stopping after the name of Hashem he can end with the words, lamdeini chukecha.

In Hilchot Shevuot, the Rambam says that not only is swearing in the name of Hashem prohibited but even mentioning one of Hashem's name in vain. If a person made a mistake and said a bracha l'vatala he should immediately say Baruch shem as a form of praise to correct the slight brought about by empty usage of His name.

The Chiddah offers another reason. When a person says a bracha lavatala it causes a chillul Hashem (desecration of Hashem's name). The world's equilibrium is upset on a

cosmic level. Saying Baruch shem restores that balance. The Panim Meiros writes that Baruch shem eliminates the bracha lavatala by making it as though one never said the bracha. Similarly, the Aruch Hashulchan explains that if one said Hashem's name in vain one can undo the damage by accepting the yoke of heaven and giving the Almighty honor with Baruch shem.

The verse in the Haazinu says, "Ki shem Hashem ekra havu godel lelokeinu." When I call out the name of Hashem, ascribe greatness to him. Baruch shem is a form of sanctifying Hashem's name. The Gemara in Taanit writes that in the beit hamikdash the Jews didn't answer amen to a bracha. Rather they responded with Baruch shem and other phrases of praise. On Yom Kippur when the high priest would utter the ineffable name the Jewish people would bow and fall on their face

and say Baruch shem.

If you say the name of Hashem several times in vain how many times do you have to say Baruch shem? The Aishel Avraham says you have to say Baruch shem for each mistake. Rav Shlomo Zalman maintains that saying Baruch shem once suffices since it only serves as a form of praise. Repeating the praise does not add to it.

The Rambam rules that one should hurry to say Baruch shem after the bracha levatala. The Aishel Avraham holds that although it's preferable to say it right away you can fix your mistake later too. The Chayei Adam and Rav Shlomo Zalman maintain that the praise must be related to the blessing right away, otherwise it loses its address and cannot be said anymore.

Serving Hashem For the Right Reasons

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Yitzchak Cohen

In the 4th chapter of *Avot D'rav Nosson*, Shimon Hatzadik taught, "The world stands on three things, *Torah*, *avodah* and *gemilat chasadim*." In the 5th chapter, Antigonus ish Socho, a student of Shimon Hatzadik, further expounds- "He used to say: Do not be as servants who serve the Master to receive reward (*peras*). Rather, be as servants who serve the Master not to receive reward. And let the fear of heaven be upon you." The commentators differentiate between the words *peras* and *sechar*. *Sechar* is something that a person deserves, such as wages for work done. *Peras* is receiving something you don't deserve. Our relationship with Hashem is not about doing *mitzvot* and awaiting compensation. The Gemara says, "*Sechar mitzva b'hai alma lekah*- There is no reward for *mitzvot* in this world." We may see some form of reward, but the true *sechar* is in the Next World.

The Zohar teaches that there are levels of *yirat Hashem*. There's *yirat ha'onesh*-fear of punishment and *yirah m'toch ahavah*-fear out of awe and respect. Worshipping Hashem at

this loftier level will bring greater reward. Rav Chaim Volozhiner explains, there are two types of workers. There's the professional experienced worker who knows his job well who expects to get paid. And there's the unskilled worker who cannot demand payment because he's still learning on the job. We should try to work towards the level of being worthy of receiving *sechar*.

When Boaz encountered Ruth he said, "May the Lord reward your deeds, and may your reward be full from the Lord God of Israel, under Whose wings you have come to take shelter." The Gra asks, what was the bracha Boaz gave Ruth? When Hashem freed *Klal Yisrael* from Mitzrayim, they went from serving Pharaoh to serving Hashem. They remained servants to Hashem and the Torah and *mitzvot*. Chazal say, "What a servant acquires belongs to his master." A slave cannot expect payment. *Klal Yisrael* remained *avadim* to Hashem. Ruth, whose family origin was not Jewish, never experienced *Yetziat Mitzrayim*. What she earned she could keep. Therefore, Boaz could say that she could get *sechar*. We

went through *Yetziat Mitzrayim*. Therefore our *sechar* is not a naturalistic reward, but *yirah m'toch ahavah*, which is how the *Avot D'rav Nosson* tells us to worship Hashem.

The Gemara in Bava Basra discusses the difference between *banim* (sons) and *avadim* (servants). Are we servants or children of Hashem? The Gemara answers at times, if we don't do the will of Hashem we are servants and at times when we do His will we are sons. What is the difference between them? A servant does what he's told, a son goes beyond that without being asked. The first step is to be an eved. But we must always strive to become more by going *lifnim meshurat hadin*, so that we can reach a higher level of *banim l'makom*.

This is perhaps what *Avot D'rav Nosson* is telling us. Antigonus ish Socho heard what his Rebbe said. How do you fulfill *Torah*, *avodah* and *gemilat chasadim*? With feeling and passion, not on account of receiving reward, but with *yirah m'toch ahavah*.