

## פרשת פקודי

Three years ago my long-suffering car reached the end of its lifetime on this earth and I had to purchase a new automobile. Unexceptionally, I paid a considerable amount for the down payment and I took out a loan from the bank for the balance that I obligated myself to pay off over the next four years.

But even though the bank thought that I was worthy of receiving a loan - my financial history wasn't problematic and I paid my bills on time, they weren't satisfied with the history alone. They were concerned about that which was impending. My impeccable record could not assure my reliability for the future so they wanted some type of guarantee.

What was that guarantee? They wanted a lien on the car to be in their possession. They wanted to have legal authority to take 'my' car if I defaulted upon my obligations. In fact, they insisted that I not take out only the minimum car insurance liability mandated by law, but also purchase a policy that would insure that the value of the car, if damaged, would be repaid in full. And who was the beneficiary of that policy? The bank that lent me the money.

If you have read the opening Rashi at the beginning of this week's Parshas Pekudei or know the Midrash upon which his commentary is based, you likely know the relevance of 'my car and me' to the Parsha. If not, let us explain.

Our Parsha begins (Sh'mos Perek 38/Posuk 21):

אלה פקודי המשכן מעדת אשר פקד על פי משה עבדת הלויים ביד איתמר בן אהרן הכהן:

These are the accountings of the *Mishkan*, the *Mishkan* of testimony for which Moshe gave an accounting according to the mouth of Moshe; the labor of the Levi'im in the hand of I'somor ben Aharon the Kohen.

Rashi writes:

אלה פקודי - בפרשה זו נמנו כל משקלי נדבת המשכן, לכסף ולזהב ולנחשת, ונמנו כל כליו לכל עבודתו:

*These are the accountings* – in this Parsha, all the weights of the gifts for the Mishkan are accounted, for silver, for gold, for copper. And, all the vessels for the work of the Mishkan are numbered.

המשכן משכן - שני פעמים, רמז למקדש שנתמשכן בשני חורבנין על עונותיהן של ישראל:

*In the Mishkan, the Mishkan* – the word Mishkan is written twice. This is a hint to the Beis HaMikdosh as collateral that was collected twice for the two times when the Botei Mikdosh were destroyed because of the sins of Israel.

It is clear to us that when there is a symbolic message, in our case the Beis HaMikdosh as collateral, then the symbolism, the metaphor and its referent must be appropriate.

And thus we come to investigate the *moshol* and the *nimshol*, the symbolism and the referent in this reference to the destruction of the first and second *Botei Mikdosh* as a representation of collateral.

Since it is the borrower who provides the collateral and the lender who takes it for safekeeping, in our particular case it must be that Israel is the borrower and Hashem is the lender and thus it is Israel who extends the collateral to G-d as a guarantee of that payment

Let us examine the implication of this teaching.

First, we understand when the *Mishkan* and the first two *Botei Mikdosh* were built they were not a 'no-strings-attached' gift to Israel. The possession of the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdosh in the hands of Israel was not an event that was completed in its entirety at the time of the erection and dedication of those edifices. Rather it was an episode that was ongoing.

That is, the purpose of the Mishkan and the Botei Mikdosh was clearly defined at the outset of their command. We read that purpose in Parshas Teruma (Sh'mos Perek 25/Posuk 8):

וַעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם:

They shall make for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst.

The purpose of the Mishkan, with all of its various *avodos*-services is that Hashem should dwell in the midst of Israel. His willingness to dwell in our midst is conditional. Besides the many other sources that indicate that conditionality, both of the *tochechos*-portions of rebuke in Parshas Bechukosai at the end of Sefer Vayikro and Parshas Ki Sovo in the last part of Sefer D'vorim make that clear<sup>1</sup>.

And thus, the Mishkan is given to Israel and it itself is the collateral. If Israel does not pay its dues, it will be repossessed.

At the same time, however, we must ask two questions. In fact, the 'play on words' of *Mishkan* and *Mashkon*-collateral doesn't seem accurate. The Mishkan was never recalled completely. The Mishkan was never destroyed in its entirety since its vessels were never taken by the enemy<sup>2</sup>. The *Botei Mikdosh* were destroyed with their vessels taken captive, but not the Mishkan. Why is it, then, that the word *Mishkan* the structure that wasn't repossessed in its entirety should be associated with the repossession of the *Botei Mikdosh* when their destruction and captivity was far more inclusive?

Seforno explains at length the reasons why the *Mishkan* was not destroyed in its entirety, but the two *Botei Mikdosh* were, based on their relative inner strengths.

The Mishkan had an aspect of *עולמי עולמים*, eternal permanence that was absent from the two *Botei Mikdosh*. Even though its structure did not have that sense of eternity, its vessels did.

Seforno interprets our Parsha's opening verses as evidence to the reasons why the Mishkan, with its vessels, was not destroyed by our enemies.

As we saw earlier, those verses read:

אֵלֶּה פְּקוּדֵי הַמִּשְׁכָּן מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת אֲשֶׁר פָּקַד עַל פִּי מֹשֶׁה עֲבַדְתָּ הַלְוִיִּם בְּיַד אִיתָמָר בֶּן אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֵן: וּבְצִלְאֵל בֶּן אֹוֹרִי בֶן חוּר לְמִטֵּה יְהוּדָה עָשָׂה אֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֶת מֹשֶׁה:

These are the accountings of the *Mishkan*, the *Mishkan* of testimony that Moshe gave an accounting for according to the mouth of Moshe; the labor

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<sup>1</sup> See Ramban to the *tochecha* in Parshas Ki Sovo (D'vorim Perek 285/Posuk 15) who teaches us that the first and second *tochechos* refer respectively to the first and second destructions of the Beis HaMikdosh.

<sup>2</sup> See further on regarding the commentary of the Seforno and subsequent footnotes.

of the Levi'im in the hand of I'somor ben Aharon the Kohen. Betzalel ben Uri ben Chur of the Tribe of Yehuda did all that Hashem commanded Moshe.

Seforno writes there:

משכן העדות. ספר מעלות זה המשכן שבשבילם היה ראוי להיות נצחי ושלא ליפול ביד אויבים. ראשונה, שהיה משכן העדות, שהיו בו לוחות העדות. ב', אשר פקד על פי משה. ג', שהיתה עבודת הלויים ביד איתמר, כי אמנם משמרת כל חלקי המשכן ביד איתמר היתה. ד', ובצלאל בן אורי בן חור למטה יהודה עשה, שהיו ראשי אומני מלאכת המשכן וכליו, מיוחסים וצדיקים שבדור, ובכן שרתה שכונה במעשי ידיהם ולא נפל ביד אויבים.

*The Mishkan of testimony* – The Torah tells us of the points of greatness of the Mishkan that because of them it was worthy to be eternal<sup>3</sup> and not to fall into the hands of the enemy.

First, it was the *Mishkan of Testimony* – it had the tablets of the Ten Commandments. Secondly, it was commanded<sup>4</sup> by Moshe. Thirdly, it was the service of the Levi'im of which I'somor was in charge – because in fact the watch over all the facets of the service of the Mishkan was under the supervision of I'somor<sup>5</sup>. Fourth – Betzalel ben Uri ben Chur of the Tribe of Yehuda did [all the work]. All the heads of the crafting of the work of the Mishkan and its vessels were individuals of distinguished pedigree and were the righteous of the nation. Thus the Shechinah placed Itself over the work of their hands and the Mishkan did not fall [completely] into the hand of the enemy.

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<sup>3</sup> Of course that worthiness was insufficient and *Mishkan Shilo* was destroyed after 369 years of existence.

<sup>4</sup> The simple translation of פקד is 'accounted for' in the context of our Posuk that discusses פקודי המשכן, the accounting of the Mishkan. However, here, as is evident farther on in his discussion regarding *Bayis Sheini*, it is clear that Seforno interprets פקד by its alternative meaning of 'command'. Certainly in other contexts, that translation would be obvious. In our context, it is less so.

<sup>5</sup> See the wide-ranging commentators who discuss the reason why I'somor is singled out in this verse.

אבל מקדש שלמה שהיו עובדי המלאכה בו מצור, אף על פי ששרתה בו שכינה נפסדו חלקיו, והוצרך לחזק את בדיק הבית (מלכים ב' ב כב/ה -ו<sup>6</sup>) ונפל בסוף הכל ביד אויבים. אבל בית שני שלא היה בו גם אחד מכל אלה התנאים לא שרתה בו שכינה ונפל ביד אויבים, כי אמנם בית שני לא היה משכן העדות, שלא היו בו לוחות העדות, ולא פוקד כי אם על פי כורש (עזרא א/א -ג<sup>7</sup>) ולא היו שם בני לוי, כמו שהעיד עזרא באמרו ואבינה בעם ובכהנים, ומבני לוי לא מצאתי שם (שם ח/טו<sup>8</sup>) ומן המתעסקים בבנינו היו צידונים וצורים, כמבואר בספר עזרא (ג/ז<sup>9</sup>):

<sup>6</sup> The verses read in their entirety:

וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ עַל יַד עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה הַמְּפֻקְדִים בֵּית ה' וַיִּתְּנוּ אֹתוֹ לְעֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה אֲשֶׁר בְּבֵית ה' לְחִזְקוֹ בְּדִק הַבַּיִת: לְחַרְשִׁים וְלַבְּנִים וְלַגְּדָרִים וְלַקְּנֹת עֲצִים וְאֲבָנֵי מַחְצֵב לְחִזְקוֹ אֶת הַבַּיִת:

Chizkiya the King gave the monies to the workers who were in charge of the House of G-d and they gave it to the workers in the House of G-d to reinforce the faults of the House. [They gave the monies] to the carvers and the builders and to the fencers and to purchase would and hewn stone to reinforce the House.

<sup>7</sup> The verse read in their entirety:

וּבִשְׁנַת אַחַת לְכוֹרֶשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס לְכָלוֹת דְּבַר ה' מִפִּי יְרֵמְיָה הַעִיר ה' אֶת רוּחַ כְּרֹשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס וַיַּעֲבֹר קוֹל בְּכָל מַמְלָכוֹתָיו וְגַם בְּמַמְלַכְתּוֹ לֵאמֹר: כֹּה אָמַר כְּרֹשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס כָּל מַמְלָכוֹת הָאָרֶץ נָתַן לִי ה' אֱלֹהֵי לְקִי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהוּא פָקֵד עָלַי לְבָנוֹת לוֹ בֵּית בִּירוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בִּיהוּדָה: מִי בְכֶם מִכָּל עַמּוֹ יְהִי אֱלֹהֵי לְקִי עַמּוֹ וַיַּעַל לִירוּשָׁלַם אֲשֶׁר בִּיהוּדָה וַיְבִן אֶת בֵּית ה' אֱלֹהֵי לְקִי וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל הוּא הָאֱלֹהֵי לְקִים אֲשֶׁר בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

In the first year of Koresh, King of Persia, at the end of the Word of G-d from the mouth of Yermiya, Hashem inspired the spirit of Koresh King of Persia and he passed an announcement throughout his kingdom and also in writing saying: "Thus said Koresh King of Persia – Hashem, G-d of all the heavens gave me all the kingdoms of the land and He commanded me to build the House in Jerusalem that is in Judea. Who among you from His People and may His G-d be with him, who will ascend to Jerusalem in Judea and will build the House of Hashem G-d of Israel; He is the G-d in Jerusalem.

<sup>8</sup> The entire verse reads:

וְאָקְבָצִים אֶל הַנְּהָר הַבָּא אֶל אַהוּא וַנִּחֲנֶה שָׁם יָמִים שְׁלֹשָׁה וְאָבִינָה בְּעַם וּבִכְהֹנִים וּמִבְּנֵי לְוִי לֹא מָצָאתִי שָׁם:

And I gathered them to the river that leads to *Ahawa* and we encamped there three days and I contemplated the people and the Kohanim and I did not find Levi'im there.

<sup>9</sup> The entire verse reads:

וַיִּתְּנוּ כֶסֶף לְחַצְבִּים וְלְחַרְשִׁים וּמְאָכֵל וּמִשְׁתֵּה וְשֶׁמֶן לְצַדְנִים וְלְצַרִּים לְהַבִּיא עֲצֵי אֲרָזִים מִן הַלְּבָנוֹן אֶל יָם יָפוֹא כְּרָשִׁיוֹן כְּרֹשׁ מֶלֶךְ פָּרַס עֲלֵיהֶם:

They gave money to the woodchoppers and to the engravers and food and drink and oil to the Sidonese and the Tyrenese to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to

The first Beis HaMikdosh, the Mikdosh of King Solomon was built by workers from Tyre in Lebanon<sup>10</sup>. It is true that the Shechinah was upon it. But the building had faults and needed reinforcement, as we read in Sefer Melachim II and in the end it fell into the hand of the enemy.

The second Beis HaMikdosh, in fact, was not a *Mishkan of Testimony* because it did not have the *Aron HaKodesh* with the tablets of the Ten Commandments<sup>11</sup>. And it was only commanded by *Koresh* as we read in Sefer Ezra. And there were no *Levi'im* there as Ezra himself testifies when he said, 'And I contemplated about the people and the Kohanim but I did not find there any *Levi'im*.' Those involved in the building of the Second Beis HaMikdosh were from Sidon and Tyre, as is explicit in Sefer Ezra.

Thus, it seems out of place to use the *Mishkan* as a sign of the destruction of the two *Botei Mikdosh* when the *Mishkan* itself was impervious to the greater destruction that occurred to the *Botei Mikdosh* as Seforno teaches.

The second question revolves around the term *mashkon*, collateral, when in fact the two *Botei Mikdosh* were destroyed.

When the bank stipulated that my newly-purchased car with their loan would be collateral in case I would default, they would have repossessed the car if I failed to make my required payments. But, if they would have repossessed the car they would have sold it to recoup their financial loss. They surely would not have sent this newish car to the dump to be torn into pieces and to be used as scrap metal. That is the nature of collateral.

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the Sea of Jaffa according to the license granted to them by Koresh King of Persia.

<sup>10</sup> Since the first Beis HaMikdosh was built to a large extent by non-Jews, its inner strength was less than that of the *Mishkan* that was built by Jews who were righteous and of the highest pedigree.

<sup>11</sup> We learn in Masseches Yoma (21 b):

חמשה דברים שהיו בין מקדש ראשון למקדש שני, ואלו הן: ארון וכפורת וכרובים, אש, ושכינה, ורוח הקודש, ואורים ותומים.

There were five things in the first Beis HaMikdosh that were not in the second Beis HaMikdosh. They are: the *Aron HaKodesh* with its *kapores*-covering and its *Keruvim*, fire, *Shechinah*, *Ruach HaKodesh* and the *Urim VTumim*.

But, the treatment that is given to standard collateral is not parallel whatsoever to the treatment given to the two Botei Mikdosh. They were destroyed entirely. They were demolished and their vessels taken by the enemy. How could that demolition be referred to as collateral?

Rabbenu Bachye, in addition to bringing the *drasha* that Rashi used for our verse, tells us of two additional themes that stem from the opening verse of our Parsha. We may find them relevant for the questions that we have posed.

He writes:

ועל דעת המדרש: (תנחומא פקודי ב) "אלה פקודי המשכן משכן", למה שני פעמים "משכן", אלא ללמד שהיכל של מטה מכון כנגד היכל של מעלה, שנאמר: (שמות טו/יז<sup>12</sup>) "מכון לשבתך פעלת ה'" וגומר, אל תקרי "מכון" אלא מכון,

According to Midrash Tanchuma, the verse of 'these are the accountings of the Mishkan, the Mishkan...:' Why does it say 'Mishkan' two times? This teaches that the sanctuary of the Mishkan is directly toward the 'Heavenly sanctuary', as it says, '*machon*- the place of Your dwelling, You, Hashem, worked'. The Midrash says, 'Do not read it as מכון, its place, but as מכון, directed.

Rabbenu Bachye continues:

שקול היה המשכן כנגד בריאת העולם...

The Mishkan was equal in value to the Creation of the World.

Or as the *Rosh* writes:

בא וראה כמה חביב המשכן שהרי כנגד ברייתו של עולם

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<sup>12</sup> The entire verse reads:

תבאמו ותטעמו בהר נחלתך מכון לשבתך פעלת ה' מקדש א...דני כוננו יְדִיך:  
Bring the People and plant the people in the mountain of your inheritance; a place for Your dwelling, You did, Hashem; the Mikdosh – Hashem Your hands prepared it.

Come and see how beloved the Mishkan is because it is parallel to the Creation of the World<sup>13</sup>.

Two wonderful ideas are expressed to us here and we may find that they are not entirely disparate.

How can we understand the idea that the **מקדש של מטה**, the earthly sanctuary, is directly in-line with the **מקדש של מעלה**, the heavenly sanctuary?

I think that this means that the earthly Beis HaMikdosh is a 'drop-down' of the heavenly one.

I can think of it as the Heavenly Beis HaMikdosh having its particular DNA and that a copied RNA is 'pasted' upon the earth and became a **מקדש של מטה**. If so, it only appeared that the Beis HaMikdosh was destroyed completely with its vessels. True, it ceased to exist, but that was because the RNA was removed. The DNA remained in the **מקדש של מעלה**. The RNA structure on earth was collateral – it was on loan. When that loan was defaulted, the RNA on earth disappeared but the Beis HaMikdosh, the **מקדש של מעלה** remained completely intact.

And, perhaps, this is the explanation of an additional commentary of our verse that Rabbenu Bachye offers. He suggests that **משכן** is related to the word **מושך**, meaning to pull or to draw something near. He writes:

גם יתכן שנבין מלת "משכן" מלשון המשכה, לפי שהמשכן וכליו ציורים ודוגמא למקדש של מעלה, כי בית המקדש של מטה מושך כח ממקדש של מעלה:

Additionally, it is possible that we can understand that the word *Mishkan*-**משכן** is an expression of **המשכה**, to draw near. And that is because the Mishkan and its vessels are representative and models for the Heavenly *Mikdosh* because the earthly Beis HaMikdosh draws strength from the Heavenly Mikdosh.

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<sup>13</sup> Both the Rabbenu Bachye and the Rosh go through a day-by-day comparison between the days of Creation and the works of the Mishkan to show their parallels. However, it is worthwhile to note that their proofs do not necessarily overlap.

And the second thought, that the Beis HaMikdosh is a microcosm, a 'little universe', is no less relevant to our question. Since, as we say in the *Nachem* paragraph added to the *Sh'moneh Esreh* on Tish'a B'av:

כי באש אתה הצת ובאש אתה עתיד לבנותה...

Because with fire You ignited it and with fire you will build it in the future...

After the sin of the *Eigel HaZahav*, Hashem threatened to destroy *B'nei Yisroel*. However, He did not threaten to destroy *B'nei Avraham, Yitzchak v'Yaakov*. That is, G-d's promise to our forefathers would continue to stand. Its validity had not lost any of its weight. Rather, a different descendant of the forefathers would start all over and bring about the fulfilment of G-d's promise to the *Ovos*.

That is, the true nature of the Beis HaMikdosh is that it is an inherent part of the world, of all existence. And thus its 'soul' would exist even if its body ceased to exist.

And we are also now able to approach the question of the seemingly inappropriateness of using the *Mishkan* that wasn't destroyed completely to represent the *Botei Mikdosh* that were destroyed in their entirety.

And we can use the framework that Seforno provided for us.

If the *Mishkan* was impervious to complete destruction because of the four factors that Seforno enumerated, then when the third Beis HaMikdosh will be Divinely brought down from heaven *kal va'chomer*<sup>14</sup> it will be impervious to any destruction whatsoever.

That is, *davka* the *Mishkan* was used as the symbol of the collateral-taking of the Beis HaMikdosh, because the *Botei Mikdosh* were not really destroyed.

The *Mishkan* which was a symbol of strength serves as a promise, an uplifting one, one that provides us with hope.

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<sup>14</sup> It will be a building erected by Hashem and thus supercede all of the qualities of the *Mishkan* that Seforno enumerated.

I do not know how our ancestors understood the double-usage of *Mishkan* that opens our Parsha. Perhaps that was a hidden commentary that would only be revealed centuries later as history was realized<sup>15</sup>.

But, for us, living in the era of the exile of *Bayis Sheini*, it is frightening to read that at the very moment when the Mishkan, the Home of the Shechinah which was to dwell in our midst, was being completed, future disasters were being foretold.

By telling us that what appears to us to be destruction is, in fact, only collateral and by using the relatively impervious Mishkan as its symbol, we are being told of the *רפואה*, the healing-solution, prior to receiving the *מכה*, the doubled painful blow of the perceived *Churban Beis HaMikdosh*.

This year, Parshas Pekudei serves as our introduction to the month of *Adar Sheini*. In Masseches Megilla there is a question regarding when Purim should be celebrated when there are two months of Adar. The opinion supporting Purim's celebration in *Adar Rishon* bases itself on the well-known Halachic principle of *אין מעבירין על המצוות*. When a Mitzvah opportunity arises, one does not pass it by.

Nonetheless, the Halachah is decided according to the opinion that holds Purim is to be celebrated in Adar Sheini. The reason is:

מסמך גאולה לגאולה עדיף

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<sup>15</sup> In this vein, see B'reishis Perek 45/Posuk 14:

וַיִּפֹּל עַל צַוְאֵרֵי בְנֵימִן אָחִיו וַיִּבֶךְ וּבְנֵימִן בָּכָה עַל צַוְאֵרָיו:

Yosef fell upon the neck of Binyamin his brother and cried and Binyamin cried upon his neck.

Rashi writes:

ויפול על צוארי בנימין אחיו ויבך - על שני מקדשות שעתידין להיות בחלקו של בנימין וסופן ליחרב:

*Yosef fell upon the neck of Binyamin his brother and he cried* – He cried for the two *Botei Mikdosh* that in the future would be in the portion of Binyamin in Eretz Yisroel and their end was to be destroyed.

ובנימין בכה על צואריו - על משכן שילה שעתיד להיות בחלקו של יוסף וסופו ליחרב:

*Binyomin cried upon the neck of Yosef* - He cried for the Mishkan in Shilo was in the portion of Yosef in Eretz Yisroel and its end was to be destroyed.

Juxtaposing the redemption of Purim in Adar with the redemption of Pesach is preferable over the opposing reason.

Parshas Pekudei can be seen as presenting us with a prediction of an ominous outlook regarding our relationship with HaKodosh Boruch Hu, and of course the extreme losses of the two Botei Mikdosh were tragedies of immense proportions.

At the same time, the way that the Torah presents us with that ominous outlook provides us with a promise that Hashem will never cut us off from Him and that we are able to renew our relationship with Him because that relationship only frays and is never severed. Thus we can anticipate a further and final redemption when Hashem will erect the *Bayis Sh'lishi* and return His complete and perfect *Mishkan*, His collateral, to us and we will be ever-faithful guardians of our covenant with Him.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Pollock