

Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

Parshas Bamidbar 5785

D. Mordechai Schlachter

Hashem talked to Moshe from the Ohel Moed.

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה בַּמִּדְבָּר סִינַי בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִית
לְצֵאתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם לֵאמֹר:

“And Hashem spoke to Moshe in the Sinai wilderness, through the Ohel Moed, during the second month of the second year that they left the Land of Egypt, saying.” (Bamidbar 1:1).

The Torah spares no important details. Often one needs to look at several different pesukim to get the picture. When the Torah gives details, they are important. This pasuk gives several details. Hashem spoke to Moshe. Hashem spoke to Moshe in the Sinai wilderness. Also, Hashem spoke to Moshe through the Ohel Moed. The time that this instruction was given is the second month (Iyar) of the second year in the wilderness. I.e., this is twelve and half months after Bnei Yisroel left Egypt. Each of these details are important.

The very last pasuk of Sefer Vayikra is, “These are the commandments that Hashem commanded Moshe to relay to Bnei Yisroel on Mount Sinai.” (Vayikra 27:34). Noticeably absent from that pasuk is a “vav” at its beginning, that would connect it to the previous psauk. That means it is a standalone pasuk. However, nothing follows it. Therefore, what were the commandments that Hashem commanded Moshe on Har Sinai? Lest one respond the entire Sefer Vayikra, the Torah teaches that much of the beginning of Sefer Vayikra was taught to Moshe at his tent. “And it called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him, from the Ohel Moed, saying.” (Vayikra 1:1). This is not the Ohel Moed of the Mishkan.

At the end of Sefer Shmos it says, “And the cloud covered the Ohel Moed, and Hashem’s Honor filled the Mishkan.” (Shmos 40:34). It mentioned that Moshe erected the Mishkan. However, we know that the construction actually took place on the first of the first month (Nisan) of the second year. (Ibid 40:2). It does not follow logically that Moshe built the Mishkan, and only then did Hashem teach Moshe all about korbanos from the Ohel Moed of the Mishkan. There would be little time for that when Moshe was also supposed to be training Aharon and his sons during that same time. Also, it says, “it called to Moshe.” What was the “it” that called to Moshe?

The clue is given earlier. “Moshe would take his tent and carry it outside the camp, far from the camp, and he called the tent Ohel Moed. And it was when anyone would seek Hashem, he would go out to the Ohel Moed that was outside the camp.” (Ibid 33:7). Moshe’s tent outside the camp was called the Ohel Moed for the period between him descending Har Sinai the first time and the building of the Mishkan. “A cloud pillar would descend on the tent and would stand at the entrance of the tent, and He would speak to Moshe.” (Ibid 33:9). Hashem would call to Moshe through the cloud. The Torah

already stated the Moshe talked to Hashem through a Heavenly Angel that looked like a cloud pillar. (Ibid 23:20). Therefore, it was the Heavenly Angel, the cloud pillar, that called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to Moshe from Moshe's tent, called the Ohel Moed. It is much more logical that the laws of korbanos were taught to Moshe from there.

It is the latter parts of Sefer Vayikra that Hashem taught Moshe on Har Sinai. Moshe was on Har Sinai two times. These rules, statutes, laws, and commandments were given to Moshe during those visits. It says "Command Bnei Yisroel...." (Vayikra 24:2). Then it says "these are the commands." (Ibid 27:34). It is these to the end that Hashem taught Moshe on Har Sinai.

After the Mishkan was built, Hashem taught Moshe from the Mishkan's Ohel Moed, from within the curtains. "And Moshe would come to the Ohel Moed to speak with Him, and he heard a voice that would speak to him, from on top of the cover that was on the Ark of Testimony, between the two Cherubim, and He would speak to him." (Bamidbar 7:89). Moshe would stand outside and he would hear the voice coming from within the inner Kodesh.

Later, the Torah says the Hashem spoke to Moshe from the wilderness of Sinai. (Ibid 9:1). It does not say from the Ohel Moed. Although, that would seem implied, it would have had to be from Moshe's Ohel Moed, not the Mishkan Ohel Moed. The Torah, there, gives the instructions involving the korban Pesach. (Ibid 9:2). That means, it would have been during the inaugural days and/or training days of the Mishkan. During those two sets of seven days, Moshe would have been inside the Mishkan training Aharon and his sons. The Torah says, only after the training was done was Moshe not allowed or unable to enter the Mishkan anymore. (Shmos 40:35). After the Mishkan was assembled and the training was completed, the cloud and Glory of Hashem filled the Ohel Moed. (Ibid 40:34). It was only after Hashem's Glory filled the Mishkan would Hashem talk to Moshe from between the Cherubim. Therefore, until the initial training was done, Hashem continued to call Moshe to his own tent. The instruction about korban Pesach was given in the first month of the second year. It would have to be some time between the first of the month and the 13th to give Moshe time to pass along the instructions to Bnei Yisroel, as the korban would be given on the 14th. The Torah does not say "Ohel Moed" because it would be confusing *which* Ohel Moed this was. By leaving Ohel Moed out, it actually seems to confirm that it was from Moshe's tent.

At the end of Moshe's life, Hashem spoke to Moshe, again from the entrance of his tent. "And Hashem appeared at the tent in a cloud pillar, and the cloud would stand over the entrance of the tent." (Devarim 31:15). From the wording of this pasuk, we learn that Hashem moved from the Mishkan to Moshe's tent. The wording is very similar to and reflects the working in Shmos. There it says, "the cloud pillar would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent." (Shmos 33:9). Both places call it a tent and both places call the Holy Presence, or Heavenly Angel that appeared, a cloud pillar. It could be that the Torah merely calls it tent because the Torah has referred to the Mishkan many times. However, whenever the Torah refers to the Mishkan it says Ohel Moed. This use of just tent means Moshe's tent. As a symbol of respect for Moshe, so to speak. Hashem moved from His house to Moshe's, to give him the news about his impending passing.