

Parsha Paths: Behaalotcha: The Journey Begins?

Menorah

דַּבֵּר אֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ אֶת־הַנֵּרוֹת אֶל־מִוֶּלֶךְ פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה יְאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנְּרוֹת: וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן אַהֲרֹן אֶל־מִוֶּלֶךְ פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה הָעֵלָה נִרְתְּיָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: אֲשֶׁר הִרְאָה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה כֵּן עָשָׂה אֶת־הַמְּנֹרָה:

Speak to Aaron and say to him, “When you mount the lamps, let the seven lamps give light at the front of the lampstand.” Aaron did so; he mounted the lamps at the front of the lampstand, as GOD had commanded Moses.. (Bamidbar 8:2-4)

But the intention of this homiletic text is to derive an allusion from this section [of the Torah] to the Chanukah (“Dedication”) of lights which occurred in the period of the Second Temple through Aaron and his sons, namely [Matithyahu] the Hasmonean, who was High Priest, and his sons. And I have found this explanation in the following text of Megillath Setharim of Rabbeinu Nissim, who mentions this tradition, saying: “I have seen in the Midrash: When [the princes of] the twelve tribes brought the dedication-offerings and the tribe of Levi did not etc., the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Moses, *Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him: When thou lightest the lamps.* There is another Dedication in which there will be lighting of the lamps, when I will perform through your sons miracles and salvation for Israel, and a Dedication which will be called by their name, namely, ‘the Chanukah of the sons of the Hasmonean.’ (Ramban to BaMidbar 8:2)

וְאֶת־הַמְּנֹרוֹת חֲמֵשׁ מִיְמִין וְחֲמֵשׁ מִשְּׂמָאוֹל לִפְנֵי הַדְּבַיִר זָהָב סָגוּר וְהַפָּרַח וְהַנְּרוֹת וְהַמְּלַקְחִים זָהָב: the lampstands—five on the right side and five on the left—in front of the Shrine, of solid gold; and the petals, lamps, and tongs, of gold; (Kings I 7:49)

In the time of the Hasmoneans the Candelabrum was not fashioned from wood but from spits [*shappudim*] of iron, and they covered them with tin. Later, when they grew richer and could afford to fashion a Candelabrum of higher-quality material, they fashioned the Candelabrum from silver. When they again grew richer, they fashioned the Candelabrum from gold. (Menachot 28b)

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָי מָה אַתָּה רֹאֶה וַיֹּאמֶר [וְאָמַר] רָאִיתִי | וְהִנֵּה מְנוֹרַת זָהָב כְּלָה וְגִלְגָּה עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ וְשִׁבְעָה נִרְתְּיָהּ עָלֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה וְשִׁבְעָה מוֹצְקוֹת לְנֵרוֹת אֲשֶׁר עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ: וְשִׁנָּיִם זֵיתִים עָלֶיהָ אֶחָד מִיְמִין הַגִּלְגָּה וְאֶחָד עַל־שְׂמָאלָהּ: וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָי לֵאמֹר זֶה דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־זַרְבָּבֶל לֵאמֹר לֹא בְּחֵיל וְלֹא בְּכֹחַ כִּי אִם־בְּרוּחִי אֶמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:

He said to me, “What do you see?” And I answered, “I see a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl above it. The lamps on it are seven in number, and the lamps above it have seven pipes; and by it are two olive trees, one on the right of the

bowl and one on its left.” Then he explained to me as follows: “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit—said the LORD of Hosts. (Zechariah 4)

Pesach Sheni: How Far is Too Far?

**דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אִישׁ אִישׁ כִּי-יְהִי-טִמָּא | לְנַפְשׁ אֹו בְּדֶרֶךְ רַחֲקָה לָכֶם אֹו לְדַרְתֵּיכֶם
וְעָשָׂה פֶסַח לַיהוָה:**

Speak to the Israelite people, saying: Regarding anyone—whether you or your posterity—who is defiled by a corpse or is on a long journey and would offer a Passover sacrifice to God: They shall offer it in the second month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight. (Bamidbar 9:10-11)

What is the definition of a distant journey? from the city of Modi'im and beyond, and from anywhere located an equal distance from Jerusalem and beyond in every direction; this is the statement of Rabbi Akiva. Rabbi Eliezer says: From the threshold of the Temple courtyard and beyond (Mishnah Pesachim 9:2)

The Sages taught: If one was standing outside the city of Modi'im and was able to enter Jerusalem on horses or mules, I might have thought he would be liable; therefore, the verse states: “And is not on a journey” (Numbers 9:13). This person was on a distant journey (Pesachim 94a)

And when we are worthy to celebrate Passover in our time, when they invented the trick of traveling quickly by iron tracks, Eisenbahn [railways] and there were Eisenbahn [trains], then the law of a journey far different from that established by the Mishnah, according to the Sanhedrin, which would then be in Jerusalem. But now I have changed my opinion because I remembered the Gemara (Pesachim 94a) "Our rabbis taught: If he stood outside the Modiim and could enter on horses and mules, could he be obligated? The Talmud says, 'And on the road he was not' (Tiferet Yisrael, Rav Yisrael Lifshutz, 19th century)

Trumpets

**עֲשֵׂה לָךְ שְׁתֵּי חֲצוֹצְרֹת כֶּסֶף מְקֻשָּׁה תַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם וְהָיוּ לָךְ לְמִקְרָא הָעֵדָה וּלְמַסַּע אֶת-הַמַּחֲנֹת:
Have two silver trumpets made; make them of hammered work. They shall serve you to summon the community and to set the divisions in motion.
(Bamidbar 10_2)**

One blows three sustained blasts to have the people cease from labor. How? The *hazzan* of the congregation takes the trumpets and goes up to the roof at the highest point in the city and blows. [Thereupon] whoever is far from the city leaves his work. Then [the *hazzan*] comes again and blows a second time. [Thereupon] those who are nearer enter the city. When he blows a third time,

they place the *hammin* in the oven and light the [Sabbath] lights. [If] he has finished blowing [while] the pot was on the stove, they set it on the ground. If there was a light in a woman's hand, she sets it on the ground. The Sabbath is sanctified with trumpets; and so also are new moons and festival. (Tanhuma Matot 2)

Yitro and the Kenites

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְחֹבָב בֶּן־רְעוּאֵל הַמִּדְיָנִי חֵתָן מֹשֶׁה נֹסְעִים | אֲנַחְנוּ אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אָמַר יְהוָה
אֵתוּ אֶתְּנֶן לָכֶם לְכֹה אֲתֵנוּ וְהִטַּבְנוּ לָךְ כִּי־יְהוָה דִּבֶּר־טוֹב עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Moses said to Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which GOD has said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us and we will be generous with you; for GOD has promised to be generous to Israel (Bamidbar 10:29)

Now what good did they accord to him? They said: When Israel apportioned the land, they left to him the choicest land of Jericho, five hundred by five hundred cubits. Whoever would build the Temple, would take that land, and (in the interim) it was given (as a holding) to the sons of Yithro (Sifrei Bamidbar 81)

The descendants of the Kenite, the father-in-law of Moses, went up with the Judahites from the City of Palms to the wilderness of Judah; and they went and settled among the people in the Negeb of Arad (Judges 1:16)

Now Heber the Kenite had separated from the other Kenites, descendants of Hobab, father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent at Elon-bezaananim, which is near Kedesh. (Shoftim 4:11)

Saul said to the Kenites, "Come, withdraw at once from among the Amalekites, that I may not destroy you along with them; for you showed kindness to all the Israelites when they left Egypt." So the Kenites withdrew from among the Amalekites (Shmuel 1 15)

The families of the scribes that dwelt at Jabez: the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, the Sucathites; these are the Kenites who came from Hammath, father of the house of Rechab (Divrei haYamim 1 2:55)

They replied, "We will not drink wine, for our ancestor, Jonadab son of Rechab, commanded us: 'You shall never drink wine, either you or your children. Nor shall you build houses or sow fields or plant vineyards, nor shall you own such things; but you shall live in tents all your days, so that you may live long upon the land where you sojourn (Yirmiyahu 35:6 -7)

And the parashah of Yitro was not written in its place to connect the story of Yitro with the story of Amalek, because Amalek was evil to Israel when they came out

of Egypt and afflicted them. Therefore, the Holy One, blessed be He, preserved for him the matter until the end of all generations, as it is written: "The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." And Yitro did good to Israel and rejoiced in their goodness and did good to them in His counsel, and the Holy One, blessed be He, preserved for him the good until the end of all generations. For here it says that they dwelt with the children of Judah and gave them a place to dwell in their land and returned to the religion of Israel. And in the days of Saul they dwelt with Amalek, because they dwelt in tents and traveled from place to place. And Saul said to them, "Go down from among the Amalekites," etc., "And you have shown kindness to the children of Israel," etc., behold, the kindness was preserved for them forever. (Radak to Shoftim 1:16)

Yitro, who ran away merited that some of his children's children sat in the Sanhedrin in the Chamber of Hewn Stone, as it is stated: "And the families of scribes who dwelt at Jabez, Tirathites, Shimeathites, and Sucathites, these were the Kenites who descended from Hammath, the father of the house of Rechab" (I Chronicles 2:55). And it is written: "The children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law" (Judges 1:16). (Sotah 11a)