Between the Prophecy of Moshe and Betzalel

Rabbi David Grundland

ravdavidely@gmail.com

1. Shemot 25:10

ָוְעָשִׂוּ אֲרָוֹן עֲצֵי שִּׁטִֵים אַמָּתַּיִם וָחֵצִי אָרְכָּוֹ וְאַמֶּה וָחֵצִי רְחְבּׁוֹ וְאַמֶּה וָחֵצִי קֹמָתְוֹ:

They shall make an ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high.

2. Shemot 25:23

ָוְעָשִׂיתָ שֻׁלְחָן עֲצֵי שִּׁטֵּים אַמָּתַיִם אָרְכּוֹ וְאַמֶּה רְחְבֹּוֹ וְאַמֶּה וָחֵצִי קֹמָתְוֹ:

You shall make a table of acacia wood, two cubits long, one cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high.

3. Shemot 25:31

ָּוְעָשִׂיתָ מְנַׂרָת זָהָב טָהֵוֹר מִקְשָּׁה תִּעָשֶׂה *(בספרי ספרד ואשכנז תִּיעָשֶׂה*) הַמְּנוֹרָה יְרֵכָהּ וְקָנְּהּ גִּבִיעֵיהָ כַּפְתּּ(ֶרִיהָ וּפָרַחֵיהַ מִמֵּנַה יָהִיִּוּ:

You shall make a lampstand of pure gold; the lampstand shall be made of hammered work; its base and its shaft, its cups, calyxes, and petals shall be of one piece.

4. Shemot 26:1

ָּיְאֶת־הַמִּשְׁכֵּן תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶשֶּׁר יְרִיעֵׂת שֵׁשׁ מְשִׁזָּר וּתְכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתַלַעַת שָׁנִּי כְּרֵבְים מַעֲשֵׂה חֹשֵב תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם:
As for the tabernacle, make it of ten strips of cloth; make these of fine twisted linen, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, with a design of cherubim worked into them.

5. Shemot 27:1

ּ וְעָשִּׂיתָ אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּהַ עֲצֵי שִׁמָּוֹת קֹמְתְוֹ:
You shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide—the altar is to be square—and three cubits high.

6. Shemot 36:8

וַיּעֲשׂוּ כָל־חֲכַם־לֵב בְּעֹשֵּׂי הַמְּלָאכֶה אֶת־הַמִּשְׁבֶּן עֲשֶׁר יְרִיעֵת שֵׁשׁ מְשְׁזָּר וּתְכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִּי כְּרֵבְים מַעֲשֵׂה חֹשֵׁב עֲשֵׂה אֹתָם: Then all the skilled among those engaged in the work made the tabernacle of ten strips of cloth, which they made of fine twisted linen, blue, purple, and crimson yarns; into these they worked a design of cherubim.

7. Shemot 37:1

:וַיָּעַשֹּ בְּצַלְאֶל אֶת־הָאָרָן עֲצֵי שִׁמֶּים אַמָּתַּיִם וָחֵצִי אָרְכּּוֹ וְאַמֶּה וָחֵצִי רְחָבּׁוֹ וְאַמֶּה וָחֵצִי קֹמָתוֹ:
Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high.

8. Shemot 37:10

וַיַעשׂ אָת־הַשִּׁלְחָן עֲצִי שִׁטִים אַמַּתִים אָרָכּוֹ וְאַמֵּה רַחָבֹּוֹ וְאַמֵּה וַחַצִי קֹמַתְוֹ:

He made the table of acacia wood, two cubits long, one cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high;

9. Shemot 37:17

וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־הַמְּנֹרֶה זָהָב טָהָוֹר מִקְשָׁה אֶת־הַמְּנֹרֶה ֹיְרֵכָה וְקֵלָּהּ גְּבִיעֶיה כַּפְּתֹּרֶיהָ וּפְרָחֶיהָ מִמֶּנָּה הָיְוּ:
He made the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand—its base and its shaft—of hammered work; its cups, calyxes, and petals were of one piece with it.

10. Shemot 38:1

:וְיָעֵשׂ אֶת־מִּזְבַּח הָעֹלֶה עֲצֵי שִׁמִּים חָמֵשׁ אֲמּוֹת אָרְכּוֹ וְחָמֵשׁ־אַמְּוֹת רְחְבּוֹ רָבׄוּעַ וְשָׁלְשׁ אַמְּוֹת קֹמָתְוֹ:

He made the altar for burnt offering of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide—square—and three cubits high.

11. Talmud Brachot 55a

אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחְמָנִי אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹנָתָן: בְּצַלְאֵל עַל שֵׁם חָכְמָתוֹ נִקְרָא. בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁאָמַר לוֹ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְמֹשֶׁה: לֵךְ אֱמוֹר לוֹ לִבְצַלְאֵל "עֲשֵׂה לִי מִשְׁכָּן אָרוֹן וְכֵלִים". הָלַךְ מֹשֶׁה וְהָפַּךְ וְאָמַר לוֹ: "עֲשֵׂה אָרוֹן וְכֵלִים וּמִשְׁכָּן". אָמַר לוֹ: מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ, מִנְהָגוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם אָדָם בּוֹנֶה בַּיִת וְאַחַר כָּךְ מַכְנִיס לְתוֹכוֹ כֵּלִים, וְאַתָּה אוֹמֵר "עֲשֵׂה לִי אָרוֹן וְכֵלִים וּמִשְׁכָּן", כֵּלִים שָׁאֲנִי עוֹשֶׁה, לְהֵיכָן אַכְנִיסֵם לְּשָׁמָא כָּךְ אָמֵר לְךְ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא, "עֲשֵׂה מִשְׁכָּן אָרוֹן וְכַלִים וּמִשְׁכָּן אַל הַיִיתַ וְיַדְעַתַּ?

Rabbi Shmuel bar Naḥmani said that Rabbi Yonatan said: Bezalel was called by that name on account of his wisdom. When the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moses: Go say to Bezalel, "Make a tabernacle, an ark, and vessels" (see Exodus 31:7–11), Moses went and reversed the order and told Bezalel: "Make an ark, and vessels, and a tabernacle" (see Exodus 25–26). He said to Moses: Moses, our teacher, the

standard practice throughout the world is that a person builds a house and only afterward places the vessels in the house, and you say to me: Make an ark, and vessels, and a tabernacle. If I do so in the order you have commanded, the vessels that I make, where shall I put them? Perhaps God told you the following: "Make a tabernacle, ark, and vessels" (see Exodus 36). Moses said to Bezalel: Perhaps you were in God's shadow [betzel El], and you knew precisely what He said. You intuited God's commands just as He stated them, as if you were there.

12. Talmud Yevamot 49b

אָמֵר רָבָא מֵידָן דַּיְינֵיהּ וְקַטְלֵיהּ אֲמַר לֵיהּ מֹשֶׁה רַבְּךָ אָמַר כִּי לֹא יִרְאַנִי הָאָדָם וָחָי וְאַתְּ אָמְרַתְּ וָאֶרְאָה אֶת ה׳ יוֹשֵׁב על כּפא רַם וִנשּׂא

The Gemara expands on the events surrounding Isaiah's death: Rava said: Manasseh judged him as a false witness for issuing statements contradicting the Torah and only then killed him. Manasseh said to Isaiah: Moses your master said in the Torah: "And He said: You cannot see My face, for man cannot see Me and live" (Exodus 33:20), and yet you said: "I saw the Lord sitting upon a high and lofty throne"

וָאֶרְאֶה אֶת ה׳ כִּדְתַנְיָא כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים נִסְתַּכְּלוּ בְּאַסְפַּקְלַרְיָא שָׁאֵינָהּ מְאִירָה מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ נִסְתַּכֵּל בְּאַסְפַּקְלַרְיָא המַאירָה

The Gemara resolves the first contradiction: "I saw the Lord" is to be understood as it is taught in a baraita: All of the prophets observed their prophecies through an obscure looking glass [aspaklaria], i.e., their prophecies were given as metaphoric visions but were not a direct perception of the matter. However, Moses our master observed his prophecies through a clear looking glass, i.e., he gained a direct and accurate perception of the matter.

13. Talmud Brachot 13a

שמַע מִינַּהּ מִצְוֹת צָרִיכוֹת כַּוַונַה.

GEMARA: We learned in the mishna that one must focus his heart while reading the portion of *Shema* in the Torah in order to fulfill his obligation. From here, the Gemara seeks to conclude: **Learn from this** that **mitzvot require intent**, when one performs a mitzva, he must intend to fulfill his obligation.

14. Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim, 60:4

י"א שאין מצות צריכות כוונה וי"א שצריכות כוונה לצאת בעשיית אותה מצוה וכן הלכה:

There are those who hold that the commandments do not require intention, and there are those who hold that they do need intention in order to fulfill the doing of that commandment - and such [i.e. the latter] is the [correct] halacha.

15. Mishnah Berurah, ibid. 7

לכו"ע לכתחילה מצוה שיכוין בלבו ובדיעבד אם לא כיון יצא לבד מפסוק ראשון של ק"ש וברכת אבות של תפילה

Everyone agrees that ideally a mitzvah should have the intent of one's heart, and, after-the-fact, if one did not have intent, they have still fulfilled their obligation, other than the first verse of Kriat Shema and the Avot blessing of the Amidah.

16. Likutei Moharan 2, 12:12

פִּי "אַיֵּה" מְקוֹם כְּבוֹדוֹ – זֶה בְּחִינַת הַכָּבוֹד עֶלְיוֹן שֶׁל הַמַּאֲמָר הָעֶלְיוֹן, דְּהַיְנוּ הַמַּאֲמָר סָתוּם בְּרֵאשִׁית כַּנַּ"ל, שֶׁמְשָׁם נְמְשְׁךְּ חִיּוּת לַמְּקוֹמוֹת הָאֵלוּ. נִמְצָא כְּשֶׁמְּבַקֵּשׁ וּמְחַפֵּשׁ "אַיֵּה" מְקוֹם כְּבוֹדוֹ, בָּזֶה בְּעַצְמוֹ הוּא חוֹזֵר וְעוֹלֶה אֶל הַנְּמְשָׁךְ חִיּוּת לַמְלְיוֹן, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִינַת "אַיֵּה", שֶׁמִּגֹּדֶל הַסְתָּרָתוֹ וְהֶעְלֵמוֹ הוּא מְחַיֶּה מְקוֹמוֹת הַלָּלוּ, וְעַכְשָׁו, עַל־יְדֵי שֶׁהוּא נְפַל לְשָׁם, וַאֲזִי מְבַקֵּשׁ "אַיֵּה" מְקוֹם כְּבוֹדוֹ. וּבָזֶה חוֹזֵר וּמְדַבֵּק עַצְמוֹ לְשָׁם, וּמְחַיֶּה אֶת נְפִילָתוֹ, וְעוֹלֶה בְּתַּכְלִית הַעֵּלְיָה.

For "Ayeh (Where) is the place of His glory?" alludes to the supreme glory of the highest utterance, i.e., the Hidden Utterance/ Bereishit, from where the life-force for these places is drawn. And so, when a person seeks and searches "Ayeh is the place of His glory?"—through this itself he returns and ascends to the supreme glory, the concept of Ayeh, which, by virtue of its great concealment and hiddenness, gives life to those places. Thus now, by having fallen there and consequently sought "Ayeh is the place of His glory?" he re-connects himself to there, and so instills vitality into his downfall and rises up to the highest heights.