SHABBOS -- COMMEMORATION OF CREATION AND G-D

by Rabbi Yissocher Frand

Parshas Pekudei

Sunken Gates Will Be Appended to Prefabricated Third Temple

The pasuk says *"Tavu b'Aretz She-areha..."* [Eicha 2:9] -- the gates of the Beis HaMikdash [the Temple] were hidden away, sunken into the ground, before the Beis HaMikdash itself was destroyed. For some seemingly inexplicable reason, G-d allowed the entire Beis HaMikdash to be destroyed, but left the doors intact. This requires explanation.

Furthermore, the last 5 parshios -- Terumah, Tezaveh, Ki Tisa, VaYakhel and Pekudei -- have been dealing with the mitzvah of "You shall make for me a Sanctuary and I will dwell therein" [Shemos 25:8]. Apparently, this is a mitzvah that none of us will ever have the opportunity to fulfill. Even if, G-d willing, we will live to see the coming of Moshiach, it seems that we will still not be able to fulfill this Commandment. The reason for this is because our Sages say that the Third Beis HaMikdash will descend from Heaven complete. This would appear to mean that in His Kindness, G-d is removing this Mitzvah from us. G-d will do it for us! If so, what are _we_ going to do? Is G-d not going to allow us to participate in this Mitzvah at all?

The Maharil Diskin (1818-1898) teaches a beautiful insight. The Talmud says [Bava Basra 53b] "If a person builds a palace on the property of a deceased convert (who has no legal heirs), and then a second person comes along and establishes doors for the palace -- the second person is the one who legally acquires the property." The person who attaches the doors is considered to have built the structure. [The Talmud explains that piling bricks one upon the other does not acquire the property beneath it. Only once one creates a complete enclosure is there an acquisition.]

Therefore -- says the Maharil Diskin -- G-d in His Mercy knew that He had to destroy the (Second) Beis HaMikdash, but He knew that ultimately he would send down a replacement (Third) Beis HaMikdash. In addition, G-d knew that by sending down a ready-made Third Beis HaMikdash, He would be removing a Mitzvah from the Jewish people. Therefore, He never destroyed the doors to the Second Beis HaMikdash.

In the future -- may it come speedily in our days -- the Third Beis HaMikdash will descend from Heaven, but it will be missing one thing. It will not have doors! The Jewish people will then attach the

doors to the Third Beis HaMikdash. As a result, it will be considered as though we fulfilled the command of "You shall make for Me a Sanctuary". This is the meaning of the prayer "Show us its building (har-eynu b'vinyono) and gladden us with its establishment (v'samchenu b'Tikuno)" [Festival Liturgy]. "Show us its building" refers to sending down the virtually completed Third Beis HaMikdash. But we will be disappointed. We will say "What about our obligation to perform the mitzvah of building the Beis HaMikdash?" To this G-d will respond: "Attach the doors". We will then "establish" the Beis HaMikdash by attaching the doors and will be gladdened by its formal establishment and by the fact that we fulfilled the command of building it.

Such is the Kindness of our Father in Heaven. Even when he punishes and burns our Temple, He has the forethought that in the future -- even if it may not be for over 2000 years -- there will be provisions made for us to rejoice in their participation of the final establishment of the Third Beis HaMikdash.

This write-up was adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tape series on the weekly Torah portion. The list of halachic topics covered in this series for Parshas Pekudei are provided below:

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