

# Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

Parshas Pekudei 5784

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After the part of the Mishkan is built, Moshe is told when and how to assemble it.

**וּשְׂמַתָּ שָׁם אֶת אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְסַכַּת עַל-הָאָרוֹן אֶת-הַפְּרָכֹת:**

“And place there the Aron of Testimony, and cover the Aron with the Peroches.” (Shmos 40:3).

The expression of literally, cover upon the Aron the curtains, is a specific expression. What is it teaching since the curtain was before the Aron, not on it? It says, place “there.” Where should Moshe place it? Did Moshe follow the instructions perfectly?

The Torah speaks at length about the Mishkan. It first talks about Moshe’s instruction to build it. Then Moshe’s instruction for the people to make it. Then it talks about the people making it and then it talks about that all the portions were built and ready to be assembled. Finally, Hashem is ready to have His Mishkan assembled by Moshe. The first thing that Moshe should do was the place the Aron. (Shmos 40:3). Then he would place the curtains around it to screen off the Aron. (Ibid). Next, Moshe was to place the Shulchan (table) and also set down the menorah (ibid 40:4) and the gold mizbeach (ibid 40:5). After that, he should put the screen up at the entrance of the Mishkan. (Ibid).

וַיַּעַשׂ מֹשֶׁה כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֹתוֹ כִּן עָשָׂה: “And Moshe did, just as all that Hashem instructed him, so he did.” (Shmos 40:16). This pasuk says Moshe did all that Hashem instructed, so he did. If he did, why does it say that he did it a second time? Also, what is the word “כְּכֹל” “like all.” Was it “like all” or all? This pasuk is indicating that Moshe, who reached heavenly status, was still human. As the Torah record here, Moshe did the work, but not exactly as Hashem instructed. It was “like” all that was instructed. He did that.

וַיִּקַּם מֹשֶׁה אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּתֵּן אֶת-הַמְּשָׁפָן וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת-קַרְשֵׁי וַיִּתֵּן אֹת-בְּרִיתָיו וַיִּקַּם אֶת-עַמֻּדָיו: “And Moshe erected the Mishkan, and he placed the sockets, and therein he placed the planks, and he put in them the bars and he erected the posts.” (Ibid 40:18). As any human builder would do, Moshe commenced with the walls. Then he spread the covering (ibid 40:19) then he took the Aron and placed it inside the curtain (ibid 40:21). Moshe brought the Aron inside the already standing Mishkan with its walls and curtains. He placed it into the Kodosh and then he drew the curtains to separate the inner holy of holies from the holies.

Obviously, there is always going to be a human element to work whenever Hashem instructs something. Hashem is perfect and One. Humans are prone to our own habits, prejudices, ideologies, and understanding. A human who is imperfect, even one as lofty as Moshe, can never follow the instructions of a perfect Creator.

In Moshe’s eyes, the work was done perfectly. When the Torah talks about the creating of the parts of the Mishkan, the Torah says, וַיִּרְא מֹשֶׁה אֶת-כָּל-הַמְּלָאכָה וְהִנֵּה עָשׂוּ אֹתָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר

צָוָה ה' בְּנֹעַם עֲשׂוּ וַיִּבְרְךְ אֹתָם מִשָּׁה: "And Moshe saw all the of labors and behold! They made it just as Hashem commanded, so they made it. And Moshe blessed them." (Ibid 39:43). The work was done as Hashem instructed. It was instructed to Moshe and Moshe instructed them. In other words, they perfectly followed Moshe's instructions. Moshe blessed them because they followed his instructions perfectly. His instructions, however, passed from Hashem, through him, to them. Further, when reading the multiple times, the Torah talks about the Mishkan, the description is repeated almost verbatim. Very little was lost between what Hashem instructed Moshe and what the people actually created.

The discrepancy between what Hashem told Moshe and what Moshe did is so nuanced and minor, it is often overlooked. Moshe did not erect the Mishkan in the exact order that Hashem instructed him. Hashem was very specific that the focal point of the Mishkan was to be the Aron. "Make for me an Aron." (Shmos 25:10). That was the first thing in the Mishkan to be constructed. Moshe then instructs that the Mishkan be made and the first vessel should be the Aron. (Ibid 35:12). He does this, though, after first mentioning the coverings and the planks. (Ibid 35:11). Already, he has an idea that the walls come first. The people followed Moshe's instructions exactly. They first brought the coverings and the planks (ibid 39:33) and then the Aron (ibid 39:35). Yet, when Hashem again instructs Moshe about the Mishkan, Hashem says, "Place the Ark of Testimony" first. (Ibid 40:3).

More than just the human preset to build the walls before the furniture, the possible confusion in order is in the initial instructions. After teaching Moshe about the Aron and then the rest of the Mishkan, the instructions seem to conclude by again mentioning the Aron. וְנָתַתָּ אֶת־הַכַּפֹּרֶת עַל אֲרֹן הַעֲדוּת בְּקֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדֶשׁ: "And place the curtain over the Aron of Testimony in the Kodesh Kedashim." (Ibid 26:34). That seems to say, have a room there already built, and put that Aron that is already built into that room and close it off with a curtain. In fact, over here, the Torah does not mention the outside walls. It only mentions the curtain that divided the Kodesh from the Kodesh Kedoshim. That appears counter-intuitive, what does the curtain hang on? Also, the pasuk says, "You shall establish the Mishkan Tent of Meeting." (Ibid 40:2). That sounds like build the tent and then put in the vessels. However, the pesukim do not say that, specifically.

The pesukim say, both there and in our parsha, to put the curtain around the Aron. The Aron is placed first and then everything else is built around it. "Place the curtain over the Aron." (Ibid 26:34). "Place the Aron and cover upon it." (Ibid 40:3). The Aron must be set first. Before anything else, the Aron has to be put in the exact place Hashem wants it to rest. Then cover it by the walls and ceiling. וְשָׂמַתָּ אֶת־הַהֲצָר סָבִיב וְנָתַתָּ אֶת־מִסְכָּה עֲרֵץ הַהֲצָר: "And place the courtyard around it, and place around it the gate of the courtyard." (Ibid 40:8). This pasuk is giving in the directions in reverse. Not to create an opening and then surround it with a courtyard, but put-up walls and make the opening last. Also, if walls of the Mishkan were up already, then the courtyard would already be established. It would say, "Surround the existing courtyard." Here it is saying to create a courtyard. That means, put the Aron first, then hang the peroches. Then put the table, menorah, and mizbeach. Then put up the walls and covers. Finally, the outer-walls. The entire Mishkan is built inside-out. The center and focal part is always the Aron.