

Moshe instructs Aharon and his sons at the conclusion of ordination.

וּמִפֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֹא תֵצְאוּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים עַד יוֹם מְלֵאת יָמֵי מְלֵאֵיכֶם כִּי שִׁבְעַת יָמִים יְמַלֵּא אֶת־יְדֵיכֶם:

“And from the opening of the Ohel Moed (Ten of Meeting), you shall not go out, seven days, until the ordination days are completed (lit. full). Because seven days you shall ordinate your hands.” (Vayikra 8:33).

When were these days? What do these pesukim follow – where does the narrative return to? If there is an order to how the Torah is written, why do these pesukim seem to be out of order? If there is no order to the Torah is written, then was it written haphazardly? How does this tie in to the pasuk that follows, “You shall remain in the opening of the Ohel Moed, day and night, for seven days?” (Ibid 8:35).

The Torah is written in chronological order unless it specifically states otherwise. Despite the chronology, it is not written absolutely linear. There are many times where the Torah will finish up one segment to complete the narrative and then will go back to in middle of that narrative to elaborate on some events therein. An example is this subject. Moshe is instructed to build a Mishkan, while on his first visit to Har Sinai. (Shmos 25:8). He is then given complete instructions on how to build it. To complete the narrative the Torah follows Moshe down Har Sinai, pitching his tent outside the camp, then returning to Har Sinai, and then finishing the actual completion of the Mishkan. Hashem instructed him to build the Mishkan on the first day of the first month. (Shmos 40:2). He does so. (Ibid 40:33). Then the Torah returns to instructions given to Moshe during his time on Har Sinai and in between his Har Sinai visits.

As we explained in Parshas Vayikar 5782, the Torah says, “And He called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him, from the Ohel Moed, saying.” (Vayikra 1:1). The “He” is the malakh in the form of a cloud. (Shmos 33:9). “And it would be...the Pillar of Cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent and He would speak with Moshe.” (Ibid). The cloud (a malakh) would descend, call to Moshe, and then Hashem would speak to Moshe. Moshe called his tent “Ohel Moed.” (Ibid 33:7). Thereby, the Torah is going back to this time – between Har Sinai visits – and relaying what Hashem taught.

Certainly, Hashem taught Moshe about the kobanos *before* the ordination of the Mishkah. Moshe had to be ready. The Torah also says, after teaching about the korbanos in the first seven perakim of Vayikra, “Hashem commanded Moshe on Har Sinai, on the days He commanded him regarding him instructing Bnei Yisroel to bring offerings to Hashem, in the Sinai desert.” (Vayikra 7:38). Obviously, Har Sinai is in the Sinai desert. It could mean that the Sinai desert was the location of where the korbanos were brought. They were to be brought in the Mishkan, regardless of location. Therefore, this pasuk is

split into two parts. First, the korbanos were taught about, generally, on Har Sinai – the instructions to build a Mishkan, including alters – and the actual laws of the korbanos taught in the desert. These first seven perakim of sefer Vayikra go back to Shmos 33:9 where Hashem taught Moshe in his tent, which he called *Ohel Moed*.

Similarly, the Torah continues to teach the laws about the Mishkan and it completes the instructions and laws given to Moshe. Then it returns to the first day of the first month when Moshe completed building the Mishkan and recounts the circumstances of inaugurating the mizbeach. (Bamidbar 7:1).

Here, after all the korbanos instruction, Hashem tells Moshe to actually ordain Aharon and his sons. (Ibid 8:2). He was previously taught about the ordination twice. When taught about the Mishkan, Hashem says, “You shall bring Aharon and his sons near to the opening of the Ohel Moed.” (Shmos 29:4). When the Mishkan was complete and Moshe was to inaugurate it, the Torah says, “And you shall bring Aharon and his sons near the entrance of the Ohel Moed...” (Ibid 40:12). Now, the first of the first month, Hashem is telling Moshe to do as previously instructed. “Take Aharon and his sons...and assemble the congregation leaders, to the entrance of the Ohel Moed.” (Vayikra 8:2-3). Moshe anoints Aharon and his sons in a comprehensive procedure and ends with instructing them not to leave out the entranceway to the Mishkan for seven days. (Vayikra 8:23).

Where did Aharon and his sons stay? In the Mishkan? In the courtyard within the entrance? This pasuk seems to indicate they could not leave. Then Moshe further clarifies, “You shall remain at the entrance to the Ohel Moed.” This seems to mean that they cannot go *into* the Mishkan, either. If so, how can they practice their craft? To answer, look at a previous pasuk, whereby Moshe was instructed to expiate the mizbeach. (Shmos 29:37). He was to do the priestly work for seven days. (Ibid 29:35). Then Hashem will sanctify the Ohel Moed and Aharon and his sons. (Ibid 29:44-45). This helps explain the two pesukim and a third pasuk.

The Torah says, “And Moshe completed the work and a cloud covered the Ohel Moed.” (Ibid 40:33-34). Then it says, “Moshe could not enter Ohel Moed because the cloud rested upon it.” (Ibid 40:35). If Moshe could not enter, how did Moshe perform the seven days of avodah and expiating the mizbeach? It says *Moshe* could not enter but could anyone else? The answer is, Moshe could not enter after his seven days. He did his seven days of avodah and now Aharon and his sons took over. This refers back to Hashem sanctifying Aharon and his sons. It also refers back to Moshe performing the work along with teaching Aharon and his sons. (Ibid 40:25). There on out Aharon and his sons were to remain as the exclusive residents of the Ohel Moed. Moshe did not enter the Ohel Moed any longer. He always went *to* the Ohel Moed and heard the Voice from within. (Bamidbar 7:89).

Pasuk 8:33 (do not go out) refers to the seven days that Aharon and his sons watched Moshe perform the service. They had to “fill” their days with practice to become accustomed, so they could not leave. Pasuk 8:35 (Reside at the entrance) was the seven days (either the same or additional) they had to remain to practice the service.