

Parsha Pearls

FROM THE WORDS OF THE GEDOLIM

Terumah 5768

"And they shall make Me a sanctuary." (25:8)

The Rambam in Hilchos Beis Habechirah 1:1 states that it is a positive commandment to make a house for Hashem where sacrifices can be offered and the Jewish people can ascend three times a year. In his Hilchos Melachim 11:1 he writes specifically that regarding the future Temple, this mitzvah is the exclusive domain of moshiach: "The king moshiach will arise and restore the dynasty of David to its former state, build the Temple and gather in the exiles of Israel."

However, in Bava Kama 60b we read: "He that lighted the fire shall surely pay. Said the Holy One, blessed is He: I burned a fire in Zion and I will build it in fire, as it says (Zechariah 2:9), 'And I will be for it a wall of fire all around, and for honor I will be within it.'" A similar statement appears in the prayer "Nachem", recited on Tisha B'av afternoon, "For You, Hashem, lit it on fire, and You will one day build it in fire." If these early sources say that G-d Himself will build the future Temple, then how can the Rambam say that moshiach will build it?

The Aruch Laner (Succah 41a) answers that first the Temple will be built by moshiach, and afterwards a Heavenly Temple will descend into the humanly built Temple, just as a spiritual soul enters a physical body. In a similar way, we find that in the Tabernacle and the First Temple a fire came down from Heaven and joined the fire lit on the altar by the kohanim.

In any case, the claims of the Zionist group calling themselves the "Temple Institute" that according to the Rambam we must build the Temple ourselves, are false. The Rambam says clearly that moshiach will be the one to build it. This was also proven by Rabbi Yom Tov Lipman Heller in his commentary Tosafos Yom Tov on the fifth chapter of Yuma. He writes that since the passage in the Book of Yechezkel describing the exact dimensions of the future Temple is unclear in many places, and our Sages have not transmitted to us any explanation of these verses, we must wait for Eliyahu Hanavi to come with moshiach and clear up all doubts. This, he writes, is what the Rambam means in his Hilchos Beis Hebechirah 1:4 when he says that the

dimensions of the Third Temple are written in Yechezkel but are not clear.

The Maharam Chagiz in his work Eileh Masei, page 19, tells the story of a time when the Western Wall was covered with garbage, placed there by order of the Romans, who wanted to obliterate all memory of the Temple. A benevolent king arose later and spent much money on clearing away the garbage until the Western Wall became visible, as it is today. He greatly honored the site of the Temple, and then he called to the Jews and said, "Behold, G-d has brought about the restoration of your Temple. Its foundations are visible – go and build it, and I will pay all your expenses." The Jews were brokenhearted and they all began to cry. The king asked, "Why are you crying? You should be happy, for G-d has sent me to rebuild your Temple, which was destroyed by the Romans. And if you are worried about the cost, I have already said that I will pay all your expenses." One old Jew answered as he cried, "Long live the king! We, your servants, must bless G-d Who has given you counsel, and we must thank you for your kindheartedness in offering to pay for the restoration of our Temple. But according to our faith, we are not permitted to build the Temple; we believe that the future Temple will be built by G-d in Heaven, when He so desires." The Jews in this story took the Gemora literally, but we have noted that even according to the Rambam who says

that the physical building will be built by human hands, no one is permitted to build it before the coming of moshiach.

Even if the Zionists do, G-d forbid, succeed in building a temple, it will not be the long-awaited Third Temple of G-d, but a temple of Satanic forces. This was stated 90 years ago by Rabbi Shmuel Weinberg, the Slonimer Rebbe, on his deathbed: "Jews, you must know that before the coming of the messiah, a group of unsavory people will travel to Eretz Yisroel, and they will enjoy great victories there, and they will build a temple, and a fire will come down from heaven in this temple as it did in the First Temple. And you must know that this fire will not be from the Holy Side, but from the Other Side." The previous Skulener Rebbe told Rabbi Yaakov Teitelbaum of Queens that he heard about the Slonimer Rebbe's words from trustworthy witnesses, and was willing to swear on it.

Similarly, Rabbi Yaakov Teitelbaum related that his grandfather heard Rabbi Israel of Ryzhin say over 150 years ago: "Before the coming of the messiah, a fire will come down from heaven like the fire that came down for Elijah the prophet on Mount Carmel (I Kings 18:38). Jews, you must know that it will not come down for the true prophets, but rather for the false prophets. And Jews will have to climb up sheer walls to remain with their faith." (Kol Yaakov, p. 192)



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