

בס"ה

THE RASHI OF THE WEEK
Week of
Parshas Beha'alocho

19 Sivan, 5778 – June 2, 2018

Compiled from the works of
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THE RASHI OF THE WEEK

An Outline of the Rebbe's Explanation of Rashi Parshas Beha'uloscho

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Rashi in His Own Words

במדבר ח', ד': וְזֹה מֵעֶשֶׂה הַמְנֻרָה גו' כִּמְرָאָה אֲשֶׁר קָרָא ה' אֶת מִשְׁהָ כֹּן עָשָׂה אֵת הַמְנֻרָה:
רש"י ד"ה כֹּן עָשָׂה אֶת המנורה: מי שעשהה. ומדרש אגדה ע"י הקב"ה נעשית מלאיה:

Bamidbar 8:4: This was the form of the menorah ... according to the form that Hashem had shown Moshe, so did he construct the menorah.

Rashi Heading: so did he construct the menorah: I.e., the one who constructed it (namely, Betzalel). The Aggadic Midrash states that it was made by itself through the Holy One, Blessed be He.

Synopsis

In the beginning of this week's Torah portion, Beha'uloscho, we are told about Aharon lighting the Menorah in the Mishkan. The Torah goes on to tell us about the commandment to construct it. Commenting on the words "so did he construct the Menorah," Rashi gives two explanations, apparently explaining why the Torah says that "he" constructed the Menorah, without clarifying to whom the pronoun refers. His first explanation is that this is a short verse, which leaves out a word which we are meant to understand ourselves. Rashi explains that "he who made the Menorah" constructed it. He then cites a Midrash which says that "it was made by itself through the Holy One, Blessed be He." Why is Rashi not satisfied with the first explanation? There are many concise, elliptical verses in the Torah. If he does need a second explanation, why does he quote it from a Midrash, which is certainly not Peshat? Additionally, why does the Torah tell us about the construction of the Menorah here? It was already discussed at length earlier when we were commanded to build the Tabernacle. Furthermore, the only thing which is added here regarding the Menorah's construction, is that it was hammered out from a solid piece of gold. The Torah could have told us this earlier.

At the beginning of this portion, Rashi tells us why Aharon's command to light the Menorah is told here. "When Aharon saw the offerings brought by the leader of each tribe in order to dedicate the Mishkan (which was discussed at the end of last week's Torah portion), he was upset because neither he nor his tribe were included. Hashem swore to him that 'yours is greater than theirs, for you will light and prepare the lamps.'"

The Rebbe explains that Hashem is not consoling Aharon by telling him that his job is even better than that of the other leaders. Rather, Hashem is telling Aharon that his job with the Menorah also served to dedicate the Mishkan. The leaders of each tribe dedicated the Altar, and Aharon dedicated the Menorah, which is greater. The Menorah is the only vessel which Rashi tells us was shown to Moshe in a Divine vision. Moshe found the building of the Menorah difficult, so Hashem showed him the image of a Menorah of fire. Why did Moshe find the building of the Menorah difficult? Because it was greater, higher than the other vessels. The point here is not to teach us about the building of the Menorah, but rather to show us how great the Menorah is, hence explaining why Aharon's dedication of the Menorah

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was greater than the tribal leader's dedication of the Altar. That's why the Torah doesn't say who constructed it, because that is irrelevant. Rashi goes even further with his second explanation, by telling us that the Menorah was so great, that whoever built it could not have done so without G-d's help. As Rashi tells us, the one who made it "cast it into the fire, and out came the Menorah.

Rashi's Explanation

This week's Torah portion, Beha'alocho, begins by telling us about Hashem's command to Aharon to light the Menorah. It then continues by telling us briefly about the construction of the Menorah. The Torah tells us¹ that "This was the form of the Menorah; hammered work of gold, from its base to its flower it was hammered work; according to the form that the Lord showed Moshe, so did he construct the Menorah." Rashi comments on the words "so did he construct the Menorah," explaining to whom the pronoun "*he*" refers, with two explanations. The first is that the word "*he*" refers to "the one who made it," specifically Betzalel². In his second interpretation Rashi quotes an Aggadic Midrash which states that "it was made by itself through the Holy One, Blessed be He." According to that interpretation, the word "He" refers to Hashem, and would therefore be spelled with an upper-case "H."

A number of Rashi's supercommentaries explain that the Aggadic Midrash disagrees with Rashi's first explanation. According to the first explanation, there is a very similar verse which says³, "And (someone - no one is mentioned in the verse itself) told Yaakov." There Rashi explains these words to mean that "The *teller* (meaning the one who told) Yaakov (told him), but it is not specified who (it was). Many (Scriptural) verses are elliptical." According to this explanation, the one who was wont to make the Mishkan and all of its vessels, namely Betzalel, made the Menorah. According to the Midrashic interpretation, G-d Himself made the Menorah.

Difficulties in Understanding Rashi

As discussed numerous times, Rashi is first and foremost explaining Peshat, the simple meaning of the text. However, according to Peshat it is difficult to explain the verse according to the Midrash which Rashi cites. How can the text say that Hashem constructed the Menorah "according to the form that Hashem had shown Moshe?" If Hashem Himself made the Menorah, what is the Torah teaching us?

Additionally, there does not seem to be any need to cite this explanation at all. The first explanation seems to fully explain the verse according to Peshat. We cannot say that Rashi cites the second explanation, because according to the first explanation the verse is terse; skipping one word because it is understood. We find many such verses throughout the Torah⁴. In fact, Rashi specifically writes⁵ that "this is customary for all elliptical verses. Concerning the

1. Bamidbar 8:4.

2. Betzalel and Oholiyav were in charge of the building of the Mishkan and its vessels.

3. Bereishis 48:2.

4. Bereishis 41:13, 48:1, 48:2, just to cite just three of many such instances.

5. Bereishis 41:13.

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one who is to do a particular thing, the matter is left unspecified." Granted, we do prefer (when possible) to explain a verse in a manner which is not elliptical. However, in this instance Rashi's second explanation seems to be much further from the simple meaning of the text.

If Rashi's purpose *is* to explain the verse in a manner which is not terse, he had other options. He could have explained as does the Ramban, who says that the word "he" refers back to Moshe. The Torah introduces our verse by saying⁶ that "The Lord spoke to Moshe saying." In modern terms, Moshe was the "project manager" of the construction of the Mishkan. Rashi himself explains⁷ that there are instances where Moshe is given the credit for building the Mishkan because he "totally dedicated himself to it. He saw the exact form of each and every element of the Mishkan ... in order to instruct those that did the actual construction and did not err in even one detail."

There is a more general question which can be asked here. Why is it necessary for the Torah to tell us here that "this is the form of the Menorah?" The Torah already explained the commandment to build the Menorah and the fact that it was shown to Moshe when it discussed the building of the Mishkan and all of its vessels⁸. Moreover, the only thing which the Torah adds here to that which was stated earlier, is that the Menorah was "hammered work," meaning that it was hammered out from one solid piece of gold, as opposed to being assembled from separate parts. This could have been stated earlier. Even if something new was being taught about the Menorah here, why wasn't it stated earlier, when the Torah commanded and described the building of the entire Mishkan?

The Explanation

Our Torah Portion begins with the words "Speak to Aharon and say to him, 'When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall cast their light toward the face of the menorah.'" Rashi explains that "when Aaron saw the offerings brought by the leader of each tribe in order to dedicate the Mishkan (which was discussed at the end of last week's Torah portion), he was upset because neither he nor his tribe joined them. Hashem swore to him that 'yours is greater than theirs, for you will light and prepare the lamps.'" However, this doesn't explain the Torah's need to tell us the form of the Menorah. We also need to understand why, despite the fact that a number of other commentaries explain this, Rashi does not even allude to an answer to this question.

When G-d consoled Aharon for not participating in the dedication of the Mishkan, He told him that "yours is greater than theirs, for you will light and prepare the lamps." In other words, not only does Aharon *have* a part in the dedication of the Mishkan, but his dedication was greater than that of the leaders of all of the tribes. This means that Hashem was not merely comforting Aharon by telling him that he has the merit of preparing and lighting the Menorah. Rather G-d was saying that Aharon was dedicating the Menorah. Therefore, he did not *also* have a part in the dedication of the Mishkan, he had an even greater part.

6. Bamidbar 8:1.

7. Bamidbar 7:1.

8. Beginning with Shemos 25:31.

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We need to understand why Aharon's merit was greater than that of the leaders of the tribes. Granted, he dedicated the Menorah. However, they dedicated the Altar! We might try to explain that Aharon personally prepared and lit the Menorah, as opposed to the tribal leaders, who did not bring their offerings on the Altar themselves. However, the fact that we are taught that Hashem consoled Aharon here, must mean that Aharon's consolation had something to do specifically with the Menorah. This being the case, one may try to explain that the Menorah was in the Temple Building, the Sanctuary, whereas the Altar was in the Temple courtyard. Perhaps this makes the Menorah greater than the Altar. However, if that is the reason, why not console him with his service with the incense, which was also within the Temple building?

The answer is, that all of these questions are answered by the beginning of this verse, "This was the form of the menorah ..." The Menorah was more significant than *all of the other vessels in the Mishkan and in the Bais Hamikdosh*, in that Hashem showed Moshe a vision of the Menorah. Rashi himself notes on our verse "As God had shown him with His finger, for he had difficulty constructing it. That is why it says, "This is...." Rashi also noted earlier⁹ that "Moshe had difficulties with the construction of the Menorah, until the Holy One, blessed be He, showed him a menorah of fire¹⁰." One could say that it is clear from Rashi that G-d only showed Moshe this vision because he had difficulty with it. Nevertheless, this shows how special the Menorah was; it could not be built without the aid of a Divine vision.

What is it that made the Menorah more significant than all of the other vessels in the Temple? Rashi already explained its special importance earlier¹¹. "The western lamp of the Menorah was a testimony to all the creatures on earth that the Shechinah, the Divine presence, rested upon the Jews. The Kohen Gadol would place the same amount of oil into it which he placed into the other lamps, and from it he would begin lighting the Menorah, and with it he would finish the cleaning of the Menorah, since it continued to burn miraculously until the following evening." That is the meaning of "This was the form of the menorah" which was built in accordance with the Divine vision which Moshe was shown. Aharon's merit was indeed greater than theirs.

That is also why the one new thing we learn about the Menorah is that it was hammered out from one solid piece of gold. That was what made it so difficult. As Rashi explains here "There was a block of gold weighing a talent. He pounded it with a hammer and cut it with a chisel to extend its limbs in the prescribed manner. It was not made piece by piece and then connected together.

This also explains why in Rashi's first explanation he says that it was made by the one who made it. The Torah *made a point* of leaving out the name of the one who made the Menorah; that is irrelevant to us. Here we are being taught the greatness of the Menorah, which was made (by whomever) in accordance with a Divine vision. This also

9. Shemos 25:40.

10. The Gemorah (Menochos 29, a) does make the same statement regarding the Altar and the Table upon which the Showbread rested. However, in Rashi's commentary of the Torah, Peshat, *it is only written* regarding the Menorah.

11. Vayikroh 24:3.

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explains why Rashi cites the second Midrashic explanation as well. Aharon merited to dedicate a vessel which was not only made according to a G-dly vision but was made by Hashem Himself! That is also why Rashi says that "it was made by itself through the Holy One, Blessed be He." The verse we are discussing concludes with the words "so did he construct the menorah." How can Rashi say that it was made by itself? The explanation is that in actuality, the Midrashic explanation does not disagree with the first; rather it comes to augment it. The Menorah was so special that it could not be made by a person alone. Rather the one who made it threw it into the fire. Afterwards the Menorah emerged from the fire. In other words, both explanations are true. It was made by the one who made it, and by leaving out that person's name the Torah emphasizes that it was made together with Hashem.

A Deeper Lesson from Rashi

There are two types of G-dly revelations. One comes about as a result of one's work. In the language of Chassidic Philosophy and Kabbalah, this is called an awakening from below which causes an awakening from Above. At times there is also an awakening from Above, which comes without preparation, as a sort of Divine gift. It comes from a level which is far beyond anything one could reach on his own. Such was the case with the Menorah. It came from a level which is so transcendent, that it had to be made by Hashem; a person could not reach such a high level on his own.

This is also the deeper reason for the Torah not mentioning a name, for it comes from a level which is beyond all G-dly names, the very essence of Hashem which cannot be expressed in any name whatsoever.

This "awakening from Above" also applies to the coming of Moshiach and the building of the Holy Temple. Both the Zohar¹², and Rashi in his commentary to the Talmud¹³ tell us that the Third Bais Hamikdosh is built by Hashem and will descend from heaven. However, since building the Holy Temple is one of our 613 commandments, we must, and therefore we will be involved. May it be G-d's will that this actually be fulfilled in the complete and true redemption through our righteous Moshiach. In the words of the Rambam¹⁴, "may he speedily be revealed, Omain, such should be Hashem's will!"

(Adapted from a talk given on Shabbos Parshas Beha'uloscho 5730)

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<http://rebbeteachesrashi.org/contact-us-dedicate-an-issue>

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12. The Zohar uses the expression "the building of ... the Holy One, blessed be He in Zohar Section 3, 221, a, and Section 1, 28, a.

13. Both Rashi and Tosfos say that the Third Temple will "be revealed and come from heaven. Talmud Sukkah 41, at the end of side a.

14. The Laws of Poroh Adumah, at the end of Chapter Three.

**DEDICATED IN HONOR OF
the Lubavitcher Rebbe**

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**IN HONOR OF
Chaim and Aiden Oded שיחין Morris**

*

DEDICATED BY THEIR PARENTS

Rabbi & Mrs. Menachem M. and Chaya Mushka שיחין Morris

* * *

**IN HONOR OF
Hatomim Avrohom Moshe ben Mina Esther 'ש Gordon**

For a complete and speedy recovery

*

DEDICATED BY HIS CLASSMATES

in

YESHIVAH TORAH OHR שיחין

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR MOTHER

Mrs. Brocha bas Reb Tzvi Nechemiah Hacohen נ"ע Cohen

Passed away on 8 Shevat, 5778

May Her Soul be bound in the Eternal Bond of Life

*

DEDICATED BY HER FAMILY

* * *

IN HONOR OF

Mr. Sholom Moshe Hacohen ben Tzivia 'ש Cohen

For a complete and speedy recovery

DEDICATED BY

Hatomim Moshe Shlomo Zohar 'ש Mars

*

May he merit to be a Chossid, a Yerei Shomayim and a Lamdon

**מוקדש לזכות
כ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו מליבאוויטש**

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לזכות

חייב צבאות השם חיים ועדן עוד שיחיו מא里斯

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נדפס ע"י הוריהם

הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענдель וזוגתו מרת חי' מושקא שיחיו מאריס

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לזכות

הת' אברהם משה בן מרת מינה אסתר שי' גרדאן

לרפואה שלימה וקרובה

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נדפס ע"י חבריו התמימים

בישיבה תורה אור

* * *

לעלוי נשמת

מרת ברכה בת ר' צבי נחמי הכהן ע"ה כהן

נפטר ביום ח' שבט, ה'תשע"ח

ת. ג. צ. ב. ה.

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נדפס ע"י בני משפחתה שיחיו

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לזכות

ר' שלום משה הכהן בן צבי' שי' כהן

לרפואה שלימה וקרובה

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נתרם ע"י

הת' משה שלמה זהר שי' מארס

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יהי רצון שיזכה להיות חסיד, ירא שמים, ולמדן