

PERPETUAL "MATAN" TORAH

Parshas Trumah

By Rabbi Menachem Rokeach

The commentators elaborate on each of the components of the Mishkan, the subject of this Parsha. The very concept of building a Tabernacle, which symbolizes Hashem dwelling among us - "They shall make a Sanctuary for Me, so that I may dwell among them" (25:8) is wonder of wonders. King Solomon built the Beth Hamikdosh in Jerusalem, four hundred seventy nine years later, on a far superior sophisticated level, yet Hashem commands "Make Me a Sanctuary..."

While remaining astounded, the Midrash offers a beautiful parable to this phenomenal request. It's a metaphor of a king whose daughter, an only child, was about to be married by a prince of another country. Said he to the groom, "I cannot keep her from you as you leave to your country, but I cannot live without her; kindly build me an abode near you, so I will visit you often."

So says Hashem: I have given you the Torah, I cannot separate from her, neither can I take it back from you. Build for Me a Mikdosh where I can reside with you" (Shemos Raba 33:1). Rabeinu Ephraim is quick to point out that the passage does not read "and I shall dwell in that home", but I shall dwell "among them", i.e. among the Israelites.

The above profoundly enlightens us in a basic principle of Matan Torah on Sinai. While we DID receive the Torah on that foremost day on the sixth of Sivan, the receiving of Torah did not

cease on that day. The receiving of Torah is continuous, endlessly.

Birchas HaTorah, recited every morning, concludes "Blessed art Thou Hashem 'Nosain' haTorah, Who gives the Torah (gives in present tense). The hundreds of volumes on Torah our own generation is ZOCHEH (merits) to publish annually by contemporary scholars are felicitous testimony to the fact of an incessant Matan Torah.

It is told of the Divrei Jechezkel, of Shinove, at the Sholosh Seudoth on Shabbos, that he would not deliver Torah thoughts, which he possessed before hand. He would convey only thoughts inspired spontaneously while sitting at that sanctified Sholosh Seudoth table.

[This in no way contradicts the Yeshivish Talmud lecture, which a Rosh Yeshiva prepares for days in advance. Such a Shiur is meant to teach students how to labor in depth themselves, unravel a difficult statement in the Talmud. My revered Rebbi, R' Reuven Grozovsky zt"l in Beth Medrosh Elyon, spent days with his disciples in arduous toil until the weekly shiur was perfected as a polished jewel. The result of such mental energy is also a gift from Heaven, the uninterrupted Matan Torah.]

The Talmud teaches (Menochos 23b), When Moshe ascended Heaven to receive the Torah, he found Hashem still writing Tagim (crowns) on the letters of the Torah. "What is the purpose," Moshe inquired, "of these additions to what You have already written?" (see Rashi). Hashem replied: "Many generations

later, Reb Akiva will arise and interpret these Tagim, deriving therefrom numerous Halochos and insights.

The emphasis in the reply, that "many generations later" Reb Akiva will expound the meaning of the Tagim, reveals the ceaseless character, the endless wisdom, of the Torah. However, in addition, the fact that these crowns were added while Moshe has already ascended, instead of completing it all in advance of Moshe's ascending, demonstrates that Hashem is the CONTINUOUS Writer and Giver.

A new insight may now be gained in the above Midrash why Hashem commands us to build Him a Sanctuary. Surely Hashem loves us, and thus seeks to dwell among us, "Besochom", as Rabeinu Ephraim above points out. Thus the Cherubim placed on the ark were facing one another, symbolizing the love between Hashem and Israel. Surely, as in the parable, Hashem loves the Torah, and seeks to dwell near. Mainly, however, it is the continuous character of Matan Torah that requires the Mishkan. "It is there... that I shall speak with you ... from between the two Cherubim on the ark" (25:22). I "shall" speak in the future tense, continuously speak with you. The faces of the Cherubim resembled faces of children (Rashi ibid. quoting Talmud Sukah 5b). As learning with a child, each step is anticipation of a second step, another leap, endlessly. "Michayil el chayil" (Tehilim 84:8), from strength to strength. And as young children must have their father with them, so I shall be with them, unto eternity.

