

A Tale of Two Kings: Who Truly Sanctified Yerushalayim?

Yerushalayim is the center of so much in Judaism, yet its origins are shrouded in mystery. Long after *Yehoshua's* initial conquest, this vital city ironically remained unconquered and bereft of the sanctifying presence of the Jewish people.

Who was the first to invest *kedushah* into the city of Jerusalem? At first glance, it seems that *David HaMelech* holds this distinction. The *Gemara Berachot* (48b), which we mentioned last week, dictates that the *beracha* of *Boneh Yerushalayim* must also include mention of *David's* royal line. *Rashi* explains that *David* was the one to sanctify the city. Since its holiness stems from him, it is fitting that his name and destiny be mentioned alongside *Yerushalayim*.

Other *Gemaras* go further, crediting *David* with sanctifying the future site of the *Beit HaMikdash* itself. The *Gemara Zevachim* (24a) explicitly associates *David* with sanctification of the courtyard where *korbanot* would be offered. Though personally denied permission to build the *Mikdash*, *David* eagerly prepared its grounds for his son *Shlomo*.

So far, straightforward enough. But the picture becomes murkier. The *Gemara Zevachim* (60a) also assigns the sanctity of the courtyard not to *David*, but to *Shlomo*. To make matters worse, the *Rambam* (*Beit HaBechirah* 6:14) also explicitly states that *Shlomo HaMelech* was responsible for investing an eternal *kedushah* in both the *Mikdash* and *Yerushalayim*.

This apparent historical contradiction demands a solution.

The Rav *zt'l* suggested a brilliant approach...by asking an additional question. The *Rambam* is renowned for his precision and clarity, yet when identifying the source for the *mitzvah* to build the *Beit HaMikdash*, he cites two different *pesukim*!

In *Hilchot Beit HaBechirah* (1:1), he quotes *Hashem's* initial directive to *Moshe Rabbeinu* in the desert: "ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם" – and you will make for Me a *mikdash* and I will dwell among them." But in *Hilchot Melachim* (1:1), the *Rambam* delineates three *mitzvot* that can only be performed upon entering *Eretz Yisrael*: appointing a king, destroying *Amalek*, and building the *Beit HaBechirah*. Here, he invokes a *pasuk* from this week's *parshah* as the source for the *mitzvah*: "לשכנו תדרשו ובאת שמה" – seek out His Presence and go there."

Why two sources for the same *mitzvah*?

The Rav explained (*Chiddushei HaGram VeHaGrid, Beit HaBechirah* 6:14) that, in truth, there are two different facets of the *mitzvah* to build the *Mikdash*. One is to create a sanctuary dedicated to bringing *korbanot* to *Hashem* and housing the *Shechinah*. This is *kedushat Mikdash* which is marked by sanctity of service.

However, there is another aspect to this *mitzvah*. The *Mikdash* is not only about sanctity for sacrificial service, but the sanctity of *bechirah* – Chosen-ess. This additional layer of the *Mikdash's* sanctity is to establish it as the single, exclusive location chosen by *Hashem* as His eternal home. This is *kedushas bechirah* – the sanctity of chosen-ness.

When the *Rambam* cites the desert verse about building the *Mishkan*, he is referring to the first aspect: sanctity of service, which is not limited to *Yerushalayim* or even to *Eretz Yisrael*. In fact, the *mitzvah* was first fulfilled in the desert. But in *Sefer Devarim*, as *Bnei Yisrael* approach *Eretz*

Yisrael, *Moshe* introduces a new layer of *kedushas haMikdash*: 'מקום אשר יבחר ה' – the place that will be chosen by *Hashem*. It is not just sanctified like the *Mishkan*; it is exclusively selected as His permanent home.

Now we understand why the *Rambam* invokes the verse from our *parshah* when describing the three *mitzvos* we must fulfill upon entering *Eretz Yisrael*. Once we enter into the holy land, it isn't sufficient to have a sanctified *Mishkan*. Now, we must fulfill the second layer of this *mitzvah* by building the chosen house of *Hashem*.

At this point, the contradiction we first mentioned dissolves. Who is responsible for sanctifying the *Mikdash*, *David* or *Shlomo*? The answer is...both! *David* is the first to identify *Yerushalayim*, establishing it as the sole future home for the *Shechinah*. He chooses *Yerushalayim*. But the sanctity of the sacrificial service could only be invested by *Shlomo* upon completing the *Mikdash's* construction.

Together, father and son forged *Yerushalayim* into the eternal, sanctified, and chosen abode of *Hashem*.

Next week, we will *be'ezrat Hashem* discuss the *hashkafic* ramifications of these two layers of *kedushah*.