

## Insights from the Meshech Chochma

רב מאיר שמחה הכהן מדווינסק זצ"ל  
פְּרָשִׁיּוֹת וַיְקַהֵל-פְּקוּדֵי תִשְׁבִּי

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(יז) וְהָאֲדָנִים לְעַמֻּדִים נְחֹשֶׁת וְיֵי הָעַמֻּדִים וְחֲשׂוּקֵיהֶם כֶּסֶף וְצַפְיֵי רִאשֵׁיהֶם כֶּסֶף וְהֵם מְחֻשְׁקִים כֶּסֶף כָּל עַמֻּדֵי הַחֹצֵר. (יח) וּמִסָּף שְׁעַר הַחֹצֵר מַעֲשֵׂה רָקִים... (יט) וְעַמֻּדֵיהֶם אַרְבָּעָה וְאֲדָנֵיהֶם אַרְבָּעָה נְחֹשֶׁת.. (פרק לח')  
*The sockets of the pillars were copper, the hooks of the pillars and their bands were silver and the plating of their tops were silver. They were banded with silver, all the pillars of the Chatzer. The Screen of the gate of the Chatzer was embroiderer's work... Their pillars four and their sockets four of copper...*

Our pesukim describe the construction, the בְּנִין of the *Chatzer*, the enclosure of the *Mishkan*, and specifically the pillars around it, upon which curtains were hung. Many Mefarshim resolve discrepancies noted between the צִוִּי, the command to build the various parts of the *Mishkan*, back in תְּרוּמָה and תְּצַנֶּה, and how the בְּנִין was actually done, here, in וַיְקַהֵל and פְּקוּדֵי and Rav Meir Simcha is no exception. Regarding the *Chatzer*, he points out that in תְּרוּמָה כז' *All the pillars of the Chatzer, all around, banded with silver; their hooks of silver and their sockets of copper.* These pillars *included* the ones that formed the entrance into the *Chatzer*, the שְׁעַר הַחֹצֵר. In our *Parsha*, however, the Torah describes the בְּנִין of the שְׁעַר הַחֹצֵר's pillars, in pesukim יח-יט, only *after* the rest of the *Chatzer's* pillars. A quite subtle and easily overlooked difference-but not by our author. To him there must be a reason for this "separation" and he proceeds to tell us his understanding of it.

He begins with a statement from R' Shmuel bar R' Yitzchak in פסחים פה: "Why, among all the gates of the Beis HaMikdash's Courtyard-the *Azara*-was Nikanor's Gate, the eastern opening into the *Azara*, not consecrated? i.e., when the *Azara* was consecrated, all its gates were accorded the sanctity of the *Azara* itself, except for Nikanor's." He answers, "Because *metzoraim* stand there on the eighth day of their purification and insert their thumbs into the *Azara*, so that the Kohen may sprinkle them with the blood of their *korban* offerings." This requires further elaboration and is incisively given to us by the editors of the Artscroll Schottenstein Talmud: "Now, one of the *metzora's* requirements is that the blood of his *Asham* be daubed on his right thumb, his right big toe and the middle part of his right ear. This creates a dilemma: On the one hand, the *metzora* may not yet enter the *Azara*, but on the other hand the blood would be disqualified if it were taken outside of the *Azara*! The solution is that the *metzora* stands in the Nikanor Gate and inserts only one limb at a time into the *Azara* so that it may be daubed." This is permitted either because inserting a limb into the *Azara*, with respect to the prohibition and *kares* penalty, is not regarded as entering it i.e., בִּיאָה בְּמִקְצַת לֹא שָׁמָּה בִּיאָה or that generally, "partial" entry into the *Azara* is regarded as entering-בִּיאָה בְּמִקְצַת שָׁמָּה בִּיאָה-but here, the Torah exempted the *metzora* from liability. Regardless, R' Shmuel bar R' Yitzchak is telling us that the area under the Nikanor Gate is of

a lower קִדְשָׁה than the Azara itself. The parallel to Nikanor's Gate in the *Mishkan* was the שַׁעַר הַחֲצָר and it would be there that the *metzoraim* would stand to be purified.

Continues Rav Meir Simcha: Midrash Vayikra Rabba tells us that one of the causes of *tzaraas* is idol worship and that this in fact was the punishment for the חֲטָא הָעֵגֶל, as it expounds the pasuk, ... פָּרַע הוּא... /Moshe saw the people, that **it was פָּרַע** to mean that there was an outbreak of *tzaraas* in their midst. In Bamidbar Rabba, on the pasuk וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ מִן ... צְרוּעֵי... /The *Bnei Yisrael* shall expel from the camp everyone with *tzaraas*..., R' Yehuda bar R' Simon asks, "From where did *tzaraas* befall them?" and he answers that it was due to the מַעֲשֵׂה הָעֵגֶל. With this in mind, if we were to say that the sequence of our *Parshiyos* is specific i.e., כִּי תִשָּׂא, the *Parsha* which contains the עֵגֶל episode is in between the צוּי for the *Mishkan's* construction-תְּרוּמָה and תְּצִנֶה, and the actual building of it-וַיִּקְהַל and וַיִּקְדְּדוּ, that would mean that the צוּי was given *before* the עֵגֶל, and there were no *metzoraim* yet. In theory then, the קִדְשָׁה of the שַׁעַר הַחֲצָר could be equivalent to the rest of the *Chatzer*, since there would be no need to perform the *metzora's* sprinkling there. The pillars of the שַׁעַר הַחֲצָר stood in a place that had the same sanctity as the rest of the *Chatzer* and therefore could be included with the rest of the *Chatzar's* pillars. Our pesukim are *after* the עֵגֶל, when *tzaraas* was a reality, and there was a need to perform the purification ritual for *metzoraim*, and so the שַׁעַר הַחֲצָר had to have a lower level קִדְשָׁה to facilitate the sprinkling. To allude to this, according to Rav Meir Simcha, the Torah separated the שַׁעַר הַחֲצָר's pillars from the rest of the *Chatzar's* pillars!

One issue remains unresolved. The timeline of events in the Torah revolves around the notion of whether וּמֵאוּחַר בְּתוֹרָה or אִין מוֹקְדִים וּמֵאוּחַר בְּתוֹרָה. It is Ramban who opines that the sequence *is* extremely specific, unless the Torah itself reveals it to be otherwise-וּמֵאוּחַר בְּתוֹרָה. According to him, the חֲטָא הָעֵגֶל occurred in between the צוּי and the actual בְּנִין of the *Mishkan*. Rav Meir Simcha's approach works nicely with Ramban's position. And yet Rav Meir Simcha tells us to look at *Rashi*, earlier, in פֶּרֶק ל"א יח, at the onset of the עֵגֶל מַעֲשֵׂה but *Rashi* there in fact tells us וּמֵאוּחַר בְּתוֹרָה-מַעֲשֵׂה הָעֵגֶל קִדְּם לְצוּי מְלֹאכֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן, יָמִים רַבִּים הָיָה?! *Rav Kupperman*, in his הַגְהוֹת, is stymied by this. *Rav Daskal* proposes that it was a colossal printer's error. I guess we will have to wait to ask the author himself, בְּבִיאַת הַמְּשִׁיחַ בְּמַהְרָה, אָמֵן!

לזכר נשמת אבי מורי ר' ישראל מנחם בן ר' שלום ז"ל  
לזכר נשמת אמי מורת רחל בת ר' אלחנן אביגדור ע"ה  
לזכר נשמת חמי מורי ר' יעקב נתן בן ר' ישראל שלמה ז"ל  
ולזכר נשמת הרב יהודה בן ר' אברהם שמחה (קופרמן) זצ"ל  
מחבר הגהות על ספר משך חכמה