

פרשת (ויקהל) פקודי

ביום החדש הראשון באחד לחדש תקים את משכן אהל מועד. (פרק מ' ב)
(Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying:) "On the day of the first new moon, on the first of the month, you shall erect the Mishkan, the Tent of Meeting."

Many Parshanim deal with the unusual syntax of our pasuk and why it avoids the more conventional בחדש ראשון ביום אחד לחדש.

Rav Sorotzkin, in אזנים לתורה, feels that the wordy language is hinting to the "specialness" of the day, as per פז: שבת, where we are told that the first day of Nissan claimed for itself ten "crowns" and as enumerated there.

Rav Hirsch translates our verse literally: *On the day of the first new moon, on the first of the month*. He explains the redundancy as follows*: "...if we remember the significance of new moons in Judaism,...They are not holidays marking the cosmic astronomical event; rather, through the natural phenomenon, they present us with a model and exhort us to establish and observe 'new moons,' renewals, in human society, in our own lives...The new moon of the arising of the nation was also the new moon of the dwelling of the Shechinah, the fulfillment of the promise וושכנתי בתוכם *will dwell among them*, by which alone the national redemption reached its completion. Hence, ביום החדש הראשון-that alone suffices to indicate the first of Nissan. Scripture adds באחד לחדש to distance this day, the most momentous among all firsts of Nissan, from any tinge of a pagan nature festival. Not because there is an astronomical new moon on this day, but because as a result of this new moon Israel reckons the first day of the month, was it chosen for the establishment of the Mishkan." So that Rav Hirsch too believes that pasuk's grammar is pointing to the extra qualities of this inauguration day.

Rav Meir Simcha offers his own understanding of our pasuk's excessive words. He first adds to the difficulty by pointing out that throughout תנ"ך, ביום החדש refers to ראש חדש, making באחד לחדש totally unnecessary!? He believes that ביום החדש is not referring to the twenty four hour day of the first of Nissan but rather is alluding to a rule mentioned in שבעות טו: that the Mishkan could be erected only during the daytime hours. (Rav Kupperman זצ"ל points out that in fact the גמרא in שבעות learns this from a phrase in טו' במדבר, וביום הקים את המשכן, *On the day the Mishkan was set up* i.e. it should be set up only during the day. He believes that perhaps Rav Meir Simcha felt that the דרשה is only an אסמכתא and therefore wanted to offer an alternative "source". In addition, our pasuk has the advantage of being read as a צווי, command, ביום... תקים את משכן, as opposed to וביום הקים את המשכן which is more of a סיפור, narrative.) Of note, Rav Hirsch, in his aforementioned piece also tells us that our pasuk is informing us when it is permitted to build the Mishkan. He adds a beautiful explanation to the rule*: "This law, too,... raises all work to which it applies out of the darkness of the blind forces of nature into the light of freedom of moral consciousness, whose realm begins with man's work by daylight."

Finally, in line with the other Mefarshim who believe the pasuk is highlighting the importance of the first day of Nissan, the Meshech Chochma adds that perhaps the Torah is telling us that Hashem specifically wanted ראש חדש ניסן that year to fall on Sunday, **ביום... הראשון באחד**, לחדש, for one of the crowns of that day, listed in שבת פז: is ראשון למעשה בראשית i.e. that the day the Mishkan was erected was the same day as the creation of the world began, which we know was on a Sunday. Once again, the Meshech Chochma finds a Scriptural source for the teachings of חז"ל!

*With permission of the Editors

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