

Parsha Pearls

FROM THE WORDS OF THE GEDOLIM

Vayechi 5769

And Yaakov called to his sons, and he said, “Gather together and I will tell you what will happen to you in the end of days.” (49:1)

Our Sages teach that when the Mishkan was first completed, Moshe Rabbeinu set it up and took it down every day for seven days. On the eighth day, he set it up and left it up (Rashi on Bamidbar 7:1). Rabbi Avraham Mordechai Alter, the Gerrer Rebbe (1866-1948), asked: Why did he have to take apart the Mishkan each day? He answered that Moshe’s actions symbolized the seven Temples that were built and destroyed: the Mishkan in the desert, the Mishkan at Gilgal, the Tabernacle at Shilo, the Tabernacle of Nov, the Tabernacle of Givon, the Temple of Solomon and the Second Temple. The eighth day symbolized the eighth Temple, which will be built by G-d Himself and will never be destroyed. Moshe wanted to teach us that anything built by human hands will ultimately not last.

It is possible that the Zionists will one day try to build a Temple, but we must not let that weaken our faith in the least. Rabbi Yaakov Teitelbaum related that his grandfather heard Rabbi Israel of Ryzhin say over 150 years ago: "Jews, you must know that before the coming of the messiah, a fire will come down from heaven like the fire that came down for Elijah the prophet on Mount Carmel (I Kings 18:38). But there will be a big difference: then the fire came down for Eliyahu Hanavi, but in the future before the coming of the messiah, it will come down for the prophets of the Baal. And Jews will have to climb up sheer walls to remain with their faith."

Rabbi Israel of Ryzhin continued: The only solution for a Jew to stay safe from heresy at that time will be to stick together with other believing Jews. This is what Yaakov Avinu told his children, “Gather together and I will tell you what will happen to you in the end of days.” The word “happen” could also be translated as “cold”, just as we find in the words “asher karcha baderech” (Devarim 25:18) which Rashi translates as “he [Amalek] made it cold for you on the way.” In the end of days, when Amalek tries with all his might to “cool off” the Jewish people and lead them astray from their faith, the only road to safety is to gather together and discuss the true emunah. (Kol Yaakov pp. 81-82)



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