



PARSHA FROM THE SOURCE פרשה ממקורה

15 Iyar 5786

פרשת אמור תשפ"ו

The Torah introduces “מועדי ה' אשר תקראו אותם מקראי קודש” – “the appointed festivals of Hashem,” yet immediately shifts to “וביום השביעי שבת שבתון” – “the seventh day is Shabbat.” Why does it begin with the festivals but first discuss Shabbat?

Or Hachaim Vayikra 23:2

18 c. Morocco

It appears that the flow of the verses is as follows: at first, Hashem commands that the essence of the festivals depends on the times that are proclaimed—“which you shall designate”—and the verse was concerned that one might mistakenly think this applies as well to the sanctity of Shabbat, that if people agreed to move it from its proper day to another day, it would become sanctified based on their declaration. Therefore, the Torah clarifies: “These are the appointed times... six days...”—meaning that Shabbat is an appointed time established by the Creator and is not subject to change.

It then returns and states: “These are the appointed times of Hashem, holy convocations, which you shall designate”—these are the festivals for which you have been granted authority to proclaim: in the first month—Pesach, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot—these derive their sanctity only through the Jewish people.

אור החיים ויקרא כג:ב

רבי חיים בן עטר

ונראה כי שיעור הכתובים הוא שמתחלה צוה ה' כי עיקר המועדות תלוי בזמנים אשר יקראו אותם, וחש הכתוב שיטעו לומר שבכלל זה גם כן קדושת יום השבת אם יסכימו לדחותו מיומו ליום אחר יתקדש על פיהם, לזה חזר ופירש אלה הם מועדי ששת ימים וגו' פירוש אלה שהם שבתות הם מועדי מועדים שקבע הבורא ואינם בגדר השתנות. וחזר לומר אלה מועדי ה' מקראי קודש אשר הרשיתי אתכם שתקראו אותם אתם בחודש הראשון וגו' פסח שבועות ראש השנה יום כיפור סוכות אלו אין קדושתם אלא על פי ישראל.

According to the Or HaChaim, Shabbat is also called a “Mo'ed,” but unlike the festivals, its sanctity and timing are fixed solely by Hashem and are not dependent on human declaration or the court. The festivals, however, while established by Hashem, depend on the Jewish people to determine their exact dates, which explains why the verses first refer to Shabbat as a fixed mo'ed and then return to describe the festivals that are proclaimed by Israel.

Rashi Vayikra 23:2

11th c. France

This teaches that anyone who desecrates the festivals is considered as though they desecrated Shabbat, and anyone who observes the festivals is considered as though they observed Shabbat.

רש"י ויקרא כג:ב

רבי שלמה יצחקי

ללמדך שכל המחלל את המועדות מעלין עליו כאלו חלל את השבתות. וכל המקיים את המועדות, מעלין עליו כאלו קיים את השבתות.

Rashi explains that the Torah includes Shabbat in the section of the festivals to teach that one who desecrates the festivals is considered as if they desecrated Shabbat, and one who observes the festivals is considered as if they observed Shabbat. But this requires clarification: In what sense is one who desecrates the festivals considered “as if” they desecrated Shabbat?



Kol Ram on the Torah Vayikra 23:2

20 c. United States

It appears that the explanation is as follows: Shabbat is the foundation of belief in the creation of the world, and for this reason one who desecrates Shabbat, Heaven forbid, is considered as if he denies the work of Creation. The festivals are the belief that Hashem Himself governs the entire world and directs nature according to His will.

And here the Torah is teaching that belief in only part of the matter is nothing—for example, if one believes that Hashem created the world but mistakenly thinks that He handed over its governance to others, he is as though he does not believe in creation, since there is no benefit in such belief; for according to his error that the world is governed by others, there is no need to keep the Torah of Hashem. And if one believes that Hashem governs the world but mistakenly thinks that He did not create it Himself but others did, he is as though he does not believe in His governance either.

Therefore Shabbat is mentioned alongside the festivals, because all the fundamental principles of faith depend on one another: that we believe in the creation of the world, in the governance of Hashem, and in the giving of the Torah from Heaven.

קול רם על התורה ויקרא כג:ב

רב משה פיינשטיין

נראה בביאור הדברים, דשבת הרי היא יסוד האמונה בבריאת העולם, ומטעם זה המחלל שבת ח"ו כאילו כופר במעשה בראשית... והמועדות הם האמונה שהשם יתברך מנהיג את העולם כולו בעצמו ומסדר את הטבע כרצונו... וכאן אמרה תורה, שאמונה בחצי דבר אינו כלום, כגון, שאם יאמין שהשם יתברך ברא את העולם אבל יטעה לומר שהנהגת העולם מסר ביד אחרים... הוא כאינו מאמין בהבריאה, שאין שום תועלת באמונה זו, שהרי כיוון שלפי טעותו שהנהגת העולם ביד אחרים, הרי אין צורך לשמור תורת השם... ואם יאמין שהשם יתברך מנהיג העולם אך שיטעה לומר שלא ברא הוא אלא אחרים... הוא כאינו מאמין גם בהנהגתו. ולכן נאמרה שבת אצל מועדות, משום שתלויין כל עיקרי האמונה זה בזה, שנאמין בבריאת העולם ובהנהגת הקב"ה ובניתנת התורה מן השמים.

Rav Moshe Feinstein explains that Shabbat represents belief in creation, while the festivals represent belief in Hashem's ongoing governance of the world, and both are essential parts of complete faith. Therefore, one who denies either aspect is considered as lacking full emunah, since these core beliefs are inseparable and dependent on one another.

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Questions for Reflection:

1. If Shabbat is fixed by Hashem alone and the festivals depend on human proclamation, what does the Torah's linking of them suggest about the balance between Divine control and human participation in sanctity?
2. What does placing Shabbat and the festivals together in one parsha suggest about whether the various forms of holiness are truly distinct, or ultimately part of one unified concept?

Shabbat Afternoon
SHIURIM
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Parshat Emor
May 2

SKOKIE 5:30 PM
RABBI YAIR LICHTMAN
hosted by:
DR. YVETTE MILLER
3837 GREENWOOD ST.

WEST ROGERS PARK 5:30 PM
MRS. MINDY REISS
hosted by:
NOEMY SKIDELSKY
2851 W. COYLE

LINCOLNWOOD 5:30 PM
MRS. BETH PERKEL
hosted by:
ABBY SCHNEIDER
3360 W. NORTH SHORE AVE.

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