

Make for Me a Sanctuary...

וַעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכְנָתִי בְתוֹכָם.	They shall make for me a sanctuary and I shall dwell among them. (Exod. 25:8)
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This verse from the beginning of our parasha is quoted often to honor those who have contributed funds for the building of synagogues. We find it on plaques and awards. But when we give such inordinate attention to that verse, we tend to overlook the one after it, which is no less significant:

כָּל אֲשֶׁר אֶנִּי מְרָאֶה אוֹתָהּ אֶת תְּבִנֹתֶיהָ הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת תְּבִנֹת כָּל כֵּלָיו וְכֵן תַּעֲשׂוּ.	Exactly as I show you—the pattern of the Tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings—so shall you make it. (Exod. 25:9)
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The idea that God **shows** the Tabernacle and its items to Moses is a theme that occurs in several places here in the Tabernacle instructions, and elsewhere:

וְרָאִה וַעֲשֵׂה בְתִבְנִיתָם אֲשֶׁר אֶתָּה מְרָאֶה בְּהָרִי. (שׁמ' כה:מ)	Now see and make (the menorah), according to their building-pattern which you have been shown upon the mountain. (Exod. 25:40)
וְהָקַמְתָּ אֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן כַּמִּשְׁפָּטוֹ אֲשֶׁר הָרָאִיתָ בְּהָרִי. (כו:ל)	So erect the Tabernacle, according to its plan, as you have been shown upon the mountain. (Exod. 26:30)
נָבֹב לַחֹת תַּעֲשֵׂה אוֹתוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר הָרָאֶה אֹתָהּ בְּהָרִי כֵן יַעֲשׂוּ. (כז:ח)	Hollow, of planks, are you to make it (the altar); as he has shown it on the mountain, thus are they to make it. (Exod. 27:8)
וְזֶה מַעֲשֵׂה הַמִּנְרָה מִקְשֵׁה זָהָב עַד יְרֵכָהּ עַד פְּרָחֶיהָ מִקְשֵׁה הוּא כַּמְרָאֶה אֲשֶׁר הָרָאֶה ה' אֶת מִשְׁכָּנוֹ כֵּן עָשָׂה אֶת הַמִּנְרָה. (במ' ח:ד)	Now this [was] the constructed-pattern of the menorah-lampstand: hammered-work of gold, [even] up to its stem, up to its petals, it was hammered-work. According to the vision that God showed Moses, thus the lampstand was made. (Num. 8:4)

Umberto Cassuto (1883-1951) identifies this as prophecy:
 חָזָה מֹשֶׁה בְּמַחְזָה גְבוּאִי אֶת מוֹשֵׁב הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בְּשָׁמַיִם, וּמוֹטֵל הָיָה עָלָיו
 לְהַקִּים בְּתוֹךְ מַחְזָה יִשְׂרָאֵל מִשְׁכָּן דּוֹמֶה לְצוּרָה שֶׁרָאָה בְּמַחְזָהּוּ
Moses saw the heavenly divine sanctuary in a prophetic vision and endeavored to create a similar one within the Israelite camp. This is not terribly unusual. There are other examples of sanctuary visions in the Bible: David conveys God's vision of the Temple to Solomon (1 Chron. 28:11-19) and Ezekiel also has an elaborate vision of a rebuilt Temple (Ezek. 40-48). In rabbinic and kabbalistic literature, there is a rich motif of the **מִקְדָּשׁ שֶׁל מַעְלָה - heavenly sanctuary**:¹

מִקְדָּשׁ שֶׁל מַעְלָה מְכוּן כְּנֻגָּד בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ שֶׁל מַטֵּה. The heavenly sanctuary is situated directly opposite the earthly sanctuary. (Midrash Tanhuma Vayakhel 7)
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Prophetic vision, and the earthly temple as a human-made replica of the heavenly temple are very compelling ways to interpret God's **showing**. But let's examine some others. For example, contrast this with God's instructions to Noah. No **showing**. When it comes to the Ark, Noah gets no vision.

עָשֵׂה לָךְ תֵּבַת עֲצֵי גֹפֶר קָנִים תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת הַתֵּבָה... (Gen. 6:14)	Make yourself an ark of gofer wood; of reeds make the ark... (Gen. 6:14)
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Nowhere does God show Noah what the Ark is supposed to look like. He gets some basic details: coat it with pitch on the inside and on the outside. Dimensions: length, width and height: 300 x 50 x 30 cubits. He is told to put a skylight and an entrance in it, and to build it with a lower, middle and upper decks (Gen. 6:15-16). A description is one thing, but would Noah have known how to put it together? Would he have had the basic engineering skills to build it so that it would not have fallen apart the minute say, one of the elephants walked in? In the end, the Torah is not as concerned about the engineering and seaworthiness of the Ark as it is about the moral depravation of humanity leading up to its construction. The story of Noah and the Ark is about God restarting human civilization because he was so disappointed with how it turned out after Adam. God instructs Noah, **but does not show Noah the Ark, because God has a limited relationship with him. I'm going to tell him what to do, but he'll have to figure out how to do it by himself.** It is transactional and not much more. He indeed needs Noah to restore humanity, but in order to break through to humanity with a unique message of justice and righteousness, and a mission to be a blessing, God will need someone of the caliber of an Abraham who will create a family and then become a nation. God does not have as deep a relationship with Noah as he does with Moses. **When God shows Moses the Tabernacle and all of its furnishings it tells us how important the Tabernacle is for Israel, but more importantly, it tells us how special the relationship is between God and Moses.**

Consider these two analogies. **1. The Curious Tourist.** Imagine that you are wandering in a picturesque medieval town. As a tourist, you only get to see these remarkable homes from the narrow streets. You stop at one and you admire its intricate details from the outside. All of a sudden, the owner, who has been watching you from an upstairs balcony, strikes up a conversation with you. "How would you come in and see what it looks like from the inside?" And you say, "Absolutely!" And so, the owner comes downstairs and invites you in, and shows you room after room, and tells you stories about the history of the home and all of its furnishings. **All of a sudden, you've not only learned about a magnificent house, but you've created a new relationship.** Now anytime you visit that town, you are

¹When Jacob dreams of the angels ascending and descending from heaven he wakes up and declares, **This is none other than the abode of God, and that is**

the gateway to heaven (Gen. 28:17). According to the midrash, cited by Rashi this is because the heavenly temple was situated directly above Beit El.

invited to drop by for coffee on the balcony! Now if God is showing the Tabernacle and its furnishings to Moses, is he only trying to convey architectural information about materials, dimensions and the functionality each space? Each item has a story and a purpose. **Showing** means going over each item and relating its history. And in the process of **showing**, God deepens his relationship with Moses. Up until now it had consisted of the plagues, the exodus, the revelation at Sinai. Now it consists of something very deep and private.

The showing in other words, is not a revelation of content as much as it is an experience of contact.

2. The Master and the Apprentice. Imagine that you are a young carpenter, and you have been working with a master carpenter for some time. As you gain confidence, a client decides to commission you with an important project. But you are still not fully ready to take it on. Your mentor knows this. Together with your skills and deficits, he also knows your character very deeply. Throughout your years of apprenticeship, he has imparted valuable information to you, but now he has the opportunity to reveal some of his own personal, private techniques and elevate you to become a master craftsman in your own right, second only to him. He certifies your competence and gives you total confidence. **God's showing the Tabernacle to Moses does not only convey content but shapes Moses into the confident shepherd that he must become in order to lead Israel to the promised land.**

Other Instances of Showing in the Torah

Case 1: The Land

לך לך מארצך וממולדתך ומבית אביך אל הארץ אשר אראך.	Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you. (Gen. 12:1)
ויראהו ה' את כל הארץ. את הגלעד עד דן.	and God showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan... (Deut. 34:1)

God **shows** the land to both Abraham and Moses, Abraham close to the beginning of the Torah, and Moses, close to the end. When God **shows** the land to Abraham, it can mean that God leads him on his journey to the land, telling him where to turn at every junction and **shows him the way**. Alternatively, when God says, **to the land that I will show you it means that when Abraham arrives in the land, God will literally show it to him**. Read Genesis 12:6-7 closely and note that when Abraham arrived in the area of Shechem, at Elon Moreh, God

appeared to him and said: **לְרַעְךָ אֶת הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת I give this land to your seed!** meaning that God made that declaration to Abraham while actually **showing** him the land. In Moses' case, God explicitly takes Moses up to the top of Mount Nebo, which is outside the land of Israel and, acting as tour guide, **shows** him the land. He directs Moses to see everything of the land that is visible, while most likely identifying the different regions for him. These are highly emotional moments, and there is more going on in both of them than mere scouting.

The showing of the land is part of God's relationship with both of them. For Abraham showing the land is part of the promise that is at the foundation of their relationship. For Moses, showing the land is compensation for not allowing him to cross over the Jordan and enter it. God's moment with Abraham contains within it an intimate disclosure of their shared future. **This is the land that your descendants will inhabit and from which they will radiate blessing to humanity.** God's moment with Moses contains within it an intimate reflection on their shared past. **I redeemed the people, and you were my loyal servant. As you stand at the very edge of the Land, I cannot let you go there. It is as difficult for me as it is for you. But in showing you the Land in our final moment together, I am inviting you to cement our relationship and model something that will be so vital for everyone who will every have to face their own mortality: acceptance of my decree.**

Case 2: God's Attributes

ויאמר הראני נא את כבודך.	And he said: 'Show me, I pray, your glory.' (Exod. 33:18)
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The Tabernacle and its furnishings, as well as the Land are visible objects. But when Moses asks for God to **show** him his **Glory**, we move beyond the visible. **Moses desires a relationship with God that is not available to any human being, even to someone as extraordinary as he.** Nevertheless, God devises a way for Moses to apprehend God's presence without "seeing" him thereby shielding him from danger. **Here is a place next to me; station yourself on the rock, and it shall be: when my Glory passes by, I will place you in the cleft of the rock and screen you with my hand until I have passed by.** (Exod. 33:21-22). What ensues is one of the most dramatic and enigmatic moments in the entire bible as God passes before Moses, **showing** him his ways by declaring his attributes of mercy and compassion.

Whenever God **shows** something, be it the Tabernacle, the Land, or his Glory, he is certainly conveying content and information. But in each case, God's **showing** is part of something else: a relationship. **Showing** is God's way of deepening his relationships - to Moses, to Abraham, and perhaps also, to all of us. Shabbat Shalom.

Today is Day 512 of the war. We pray for the speedy release of the remaining live hostages, and the return for proper burial, of those who were cruelly murdered in Gaza. May God comfort the bereaved families together with all those who grieve in the House of Israel. May God heal the wounded and shield Israel from terror.

This Parasha Sheet is sponsored by Paula and Aaron Kondioti remembering their son, Adam Marc Kondioti z'l, on the 22nd anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah.



The four murdered hostages who were returned to Israel for burial. Clockwise: Shlomo Mantzur, 85, Kissufim. Itzik Algarat, 68, Nir Oz. Ohad Yahalomi, 50, Nir Oz. Tzahi Idan, 49, Nahal Oz. May their memories be a blessing.