

*The Land of Israel is Designated and Prepared for to Jewish People by G-d*

On the verse, (-Exodus 23:20) “Behold, I am sending an angel... to bring you to the place that הַכְנֹסִי - *hachinosi*’ (I have prepared).” Rashi comments, “That I have prepared’: (i) Which I have designated (זַמְנֵתִי) to give to you. This is its simple meaning. (ii) Its Midrashic interpretation is: ‘That I have prepared’: My place is already recognizable opposite it. (iii) This is one of the verses that state that the heavenly Temple is directly opposite the earthly Temple.”

Commentaries explain that Rashi is responding to the verse’s lack of stating who G-d is preparing the land for, and Rashi clarifies, “to give to you.” Now Rashi is explaining why the verse doesn’t say to who by giving another interpretation, “My place is already recognizable,” as *simple* definition of, “That I have prepared,” means prepared for oneself. In Rashi’s first comment, the, “I have prepared,” is G-d prepared Israel for the Jewish people, while in the second comment, G-d has prepared for Himself, “the heavenly Temple,” to be aligned with the place of the *earthly Temple*.

*Questions on the Commentaries:* (i) Rashi is concerned only with the, “*simple meaning of the verse*,” and on that level there is no question that the verse is *continuing* to speak about Israel? (ii) Rashi could have just said, “To you,” without the elaboration of, “Which I have designated (זַמְנֵתִי) to give to you”? (iii) Why did Rashi exchange the verse’s wording of, “הַכְנֹסִי -*hachinosi*,” to, “זַמְנֵתִי -*designation*”? --Based on these questions that Rebbe will take a different approach to what Rashi is saying.

Let us now turn to the second interpretation of Rashi: *Its Midrashic interpretation is: ‘That I have prepared’: My place is already recognizable opposite it. This is one of the verses that state that the heavenly Temple is directly opposite the earthly Temple.*”

By Rashi quoting the words of the verse, ‘That I have prepared’ again Rashi is expressing that even though this is a “*Midrashic interpretation*,” nevertheless, it explains the simple meaning of why the verse states, “to the place,” and not, “to the land,” being that “I have prepared, refers to the “*heavenly Temple*” and not the Land of Israel. Nevertheless, being that the “*simple meaning*” of “place” can simply mean the entire *Land of Israel*, and on the contrary, the simple continuity of the verse leans on the “place” speaking of the entire *Land of Israel*, hence, this doesn’t negate Rashi’s first interpretation. Thus, the second interpretation, by (i) *changing* the meaning of “place”, and (ii) gives clearer meaning to the word, “*hachinosi*” (as we will soon see), therefore Rashi quotes the words “That I have prepared,” again in his *second* interpretation. --With this the Rebbe answers the obvious question of why Rashi quotes the words of the verse a second time.

*Questions on Rashi’s Second Interpretation:* (i) Why does Rashi have to add on, “This is one of the verses that state that the heavenly Temple is directly opposite the earthly Temple,” which is no novelty to Rashi’s young student, being that Rashi already taught twice *previously* (-Genesis 28:17, concerning where Jacob dreamt about the ladder going up to Heaven, and -Exodus 15:17, concerning the words in the song Israel sang after the *Splitting of the Sea*, “directed toward Your habitation”) that “the heavenly Temple is directly opposite the earthly Temple,” without adding, “This is one of the verses that state that the...”? (ii) Rashi’s source is the *Midrash Mechilta* (-Mishpatim 18). However, Rashi reverses the statement from, “the earthly Temple is directly opposite the heavenly Temple,” to, “the heavenly Temple is directly opposite the earthly Temple”? (iii) In some manuscripts of Rashi, the word, “(opposite the earthly) Temple,” is omitted?

*Explanation to What Rashi is Saying:* Rashi is questioning that we see no specific preparatory action for the Land of Israel to eventually absorb the people of Israel taking place in our verse? On the contrary, the verses go on to declare that presently the land is occupied by seven nations, which “I will expel,” and it will have to be, “*little by little*,” “lest the land become a wasteland”?! Hence, Rashi defines the word *hachinosi* to mean (not ‘preparation’, but) *hizmanti* -‘designated (; invitation)’, --which does not require an action. (Hence, we now understand why Rashi changes the verse’s word from “*hachinosi*” to “*hizmanti*” in his interpretation.) Nevertheless, Rashi doesn’t suffice with their being no action here, and therefore, brings a *Midrashic Interpretation* as well, in which there is the action of making, “My place is already recognizable opposite it.” This is why Rashi reverts the words of the midrash, being that Rashi’s focus is on the, “My place is already recognizable opposite it,” the earthly Temple.

However, even the *Midrashic Interpretation* in itself doesn't suffice, for it is impossible that G-d's action of making, "My place is already recognizable opposite it" would have no effect on the *earthly Temple*, and we find no mention at all of any change taking place here (as we see by Jacob, that upon waking up he immediately says, "How awesome is this place, this is but the House of G-d, and this is the Gateway of the Heaven!"). Therefore, Rashi continues with telling us that this verse is not when the action of making "My place is already recognizable opposite it" actually happened, but rather, this verse is but, "One of the verses that state that the heavenly Temple is directly opposite the earthly Temple," referring to an action that already took place previously. Thus, there is no change presently taking place here below. And this will as well explain the manuscript that omits the word, (earthly) Temple, pointing out that the action of making "My place is already recognizable opposite it," and that the *heavenly Temple* exists there, regardless of whether the *earthly Temple* is present at the place here below or not. Thus, this action of G-d is not contradictory to the *earthly land* presently being occupied with the seven nations, who would first have to be expelled before it can absorb the people of Israel.

*Legal Ramifications of Rashi's Two Interpretations:* Our sages teach (-Sanhedrin 47b) "Abaye says, 'mere designation of an item is a significant matter --i.e., all the relevant laws of an item already apply once an item is designated for a specific purpose, whether or not it has been used for that purpose.' (And Rava says, 'mere designation is nothing.' Even Rava's opinion, which is the ruling, agrees that in certain cases, "mere designation of an item is a significant matter.") The question, and differences in opinion thereof, is, whether, "designation by mere speech," is considered a designation or not. Rashi's first interpretation, in which there was no action, but G-d's speech of *designation*, is according to the opinion that, "designation by mere speech," is a designation, while the second interpretation, which necessitated the action of making, "My place is already recognizable opposite it," is in accordance with the opinion that, "designation by mere speech," is not a designation.