

אפילו יראת אלוהים אינה מצדיקה כתיבה בדיונית

אבנר רמו

In the Book of Genesis we hear God telling Abraham:

ויאמר קח-נא את-בנך את-יחידך אשר-אהבת, את-יצחק, ולך-לך אל-ארץ המריה; והעלהו שם לעלה על אחד ההרים אשר אמר אליך.

“And He said: Take now your son, the only one, whom you loved, even Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of” (Gen 22:2).

The Greek translator wrote here “the high land” which suggests that he believed that מריה (*Moriah*) is a vowel letter insertion and order-type error of רמה (*ramah*) - “high” (e.g. Eze 17:22). However, it is also possible that ארץ המריה (*erets vamoriah*) is a vowel letter-substitution and order-type error of ארץ האמרי (*erets haemori*) - “the land of the Amorites” (e.g. Num 21:31; Jos 24:8; Jud 10:8; 11:21; Am 2:10).

We are told that in this place Abraham built an altar (Gen 22:9) and then:

ויקרא אברהם שם-המקום ההוא, יהוה יראה, אשר יאמר היום, בהר יהוה יראה.

“And Abraham called the name of that place Adonai-jireh; as it is said to this day: In the mount where *YHWH* is seen” (Gen 22:14).

However, a place named יהוה יראה (*YHWH yareeh*) which was translated to English as “Adonai-jireh” is never mentioned again in the Bible.

Although in this event God spoke extensively with Abraham, He never mentioned that in the future the house for the name of God will be build there. This place is mentioned in the Bible only once more by a biblical writer that lived over a thousand years later.

In the Book of Samuel we read that after David sinned by ordering to count the people of Israel and Judah:

ויתן יהוה דבר בישראל מהבקר ועד-עת מועד; וימת מן-העם מן-ועד-באר שבע, שבעים אלף איש.

“And *YHWH* gave a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed; and there died of the people from Dan even to Beer-sheba seventy thousand men” (2 Sam 24:15).

We are told that David observed the destroying messenger of God in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam 24:16-17), and then was told by the Prophet Gad to build there “an altar to *YHWH*” (2 Sam 24:18).

After buying the threshing-floor of Araunah:

ויבן שם דוד מזבח ליהוה, ויעל עלות ושלמים; ויעתר יהוה לארץ, ותעצר המגפה מעל ישראל.

“And David built there an altar to *YHWH*, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. So *YHWH* was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel” (2 Sam 24:25).

We are also told that David was contemplating to build a house for God, but God told him through the Prophet Nathan that only after David's death, his son will build the house for God's name (2 Sam 7:2-17; see also: 1 Ch 28:2-10). However, nowhere in this narrative, does God indicate where the house for his name should be erected.

In the Book of Kings we find an elaborate description of the **הבית ליהוה** - “**the house of YHWH**” that was built by King Solomon (1 Ki 6:1-38). However, oddly enough we are not told where in Jerusalem this house was built. Furthermore, while we read that Solomon assembled the heads of the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem for: **להעלות את-ארון ברית-יהוה מעיר דוד-היא ציון** - “**to bring up the ark of the covenant of YHWH out of the city of David, which is Zion**” (1 Ki 8:1), we again are not told where **הבית ליהוה** - “**the house of YHWH**” was. We should indicate that **מריה** - “**Moriah**”, and **גרן ארניה (ארונה) היבסי** - “**the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite**”, were not mentioned in this narrative.

Yet the Chronicler tells us:

ויחל שלמה לבנות את-בית-יהוה בירושלם, בהר המוריה, אשר [] נראה לדוד אביהו-אשר הכין במקום דוד, בגרן ארנן היבסי.

“Then Solomon began to build the house of YHWH in Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where [YHWH] appeared to David his father; for which [provision] had been prepared in the place of David, in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite” (2 Ch 3:1).

It appears peculiar that the Chronicler will mention here mount Moriah (in Greek “the mountain of Hamoria”) without mentioning the father of the Israelite nation- Abraham. Furthermore both the Greek and the English translators assumed that the missing word here is “*YHWH*”, but according to the Book of Samuel, David saw in the threshing-floor of Araunah only the “messenger of *YHWH*” and not God Himself.

While we read in the Book of Samuel that David bought the threshing-floor of Araunah and built there an altar to God, we have not heard that he prepared that place for anything else, nor set there provisions for the building of a house for the name of God.

We may conclude that it appears that the pious Chronicler made an effort to attribute to Solomon's “house for the name of God”, a profounder meaning as a center of the Israelite people's nationality and religion. However, unwittingly the Chronicler connected it with David who is described as **איש דמים** - “**man of blood**” (2Sam 16:7, 8; 2 Ch 28:3), the kind of man that is detested by God (Ps 5:7).

The association of the “house for the name of God” with the event at mount Moriah described in the Book of Genesis is also ill conceived, as there Abraham was about to sacrifice his son Isaac on an altar, while the Bible repeatedly strongly rejects human sacrifices (e.g. Deu 12:31; 18:10; 2 Ki 16:3; 17:17, 31; 21:6; 23:10; Jer 7:31; 19:5; Eze 20:31; 2 Ch 28:3; 33:6). It is therefore hard to believe that a house dedicated to a righteous God will be associated with a place where human sacrifice was almost carried out.