Parshat Vayakhel

March 9, 2024 | ב"ט אדר א' תשפ"ד Rabbi Mitchell Berkowitz B'nai Israel Congregation

The Power in Pluralism

1. Exodus 35:1

Moses then convoked the whole Israelite community	וַיַּקְהֵל מֹשֶׁה אֶת־כָּל־עֲדַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיּאֹמֶר
and said to them: These are the things that GOD has	אֲלֵהֶם אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר־צִוְה יְהֹוָה לַעֲשֹׁת
commanded you to do.	:אתַם

2. Ramban on Exodus 35:1

Moses then convoked the whole Israelite community. The	ויקהל משה את כל עדת בני
expression the "whole Israelite community" includes the	" ישראל יכלול "כל עדת בני ישראל
men and women, for all donated to the work of the	האנשים והנשים, כי כלם התנדבו
Tabernacle.	במלאכת המשכן.

3. Vavikra Rabbah 1:14

or raying a nabban iii i	
What is the difference between Moses and all the [other]	מַה בֵּין משֶׁה לְכָל הַנְּבִיאִים, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה
prophets? Rabbi Yehuda ben Rabbi Ilai and the Rabbis; Rabbi	בֶּן רַבִּי אָלְעָאי וְרַבָּנָן, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר
Yehuda says: The prophets would see through nine looking	מָתּוֹךְ תֵּשַׁע אִיסְפַּקְלַרְיוֹת הָיוּ הַנְּבִיאִים
glasses. That is what is written: "The appearance of the vision	רוֹאִים, הֲדָא הוּא דִּכְתִיב וּכְמַרְאֵה
that I saw" (Ezekiel 43:3). Moses saw through one looking	הַמַּרְאֶה אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי וגו', וּמשֶׁה רָאָה
glass, as it is stated: "A vision and not in riddles" (Numbers	מָתּוֹךְ אִיסְפַּקְלַרְיָא אַחַת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמֵר
12:8).	וּמַרְאֶה וְלֹא בְחִידֹת.
The Rabbis said: All the prophets saw through a murky looking	ַרַבָּנָן אָמְרִין כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים רָאוּ מִתּוֹךְ
glass. That is what is written: "I proliferated visions and	אִיסְפַּקְלַרְיָא מְלֻכְּלֶכֶת, הֲדָא הוּא דְּכְתִיב
granted imagery to the prophets" (Hosea 12:11). Moses saw	וְאָנֹכִי חָזוֹן הִרְבֵּיתִי וּבְיַד הַנְּבִיאִים אֲדַמֶּה,
through a polished looking glass	וּמשֶׁה רָאָה מִתּוֹךְ אִיסְפַּקְלַרְיָא
	מְצֵחְצַחַת

4. The Triumph of Life, Rabbi Irving "Yitz" Greenberg, p. 277-278

Pluralism in religious, educational, and cultural spheres is also important in avoiding excessive concentrations of power. Dominant cultural and religious paradigms generate great force that can decisively shape political landscapes, while limits and boundaries on them express both cultural and political pluralism.