The Season of Holidays and the Dedication of the Mikdash

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The narrative arc that culminates in the dedication of the Beit Hamikdash by Shlomo ha-Melekh begins with the expression of intent by his father David to build a permanent abode for the Aron Elokim. David felt blessed by all that God had granted him and deemed it inappropriate for the king of Benai Yisrael to live in a magnificent palace while the Holy Ark rested in a rustic tent.

The king said unto Nathan the prophet: 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.'
Shmuel II 7:2

ויאמר המלך אל נתן הנביא ראה נא אנכי יושב בבית ארזים וארון האלהים ישב בתוך היריעה:
שמואל ב ז:ב

As was his custom before undertaking any important venture, David consulted with the court prophet to secure God's approval and receives a positive reaction from Natan:

And Nathan said to the king: 'Go, do all that is in thy heart; for the Lord is with thee.'
Shmuel II 7:3

ויאמר נתן אל המלך כל אשר בלבבך לך עשה כי ה' עמך:
שמואל ב ז:ג

It would seem, however, that Natan misspoke, and God directs Natan that very night to correct his error[54].

4 *And it came to pass the same night that the word of the Lord came unto Nathan, saying:* ***5*** *'Go and tell My servant David: Thus saith the Lord: Shalt thou build Me a house for Me to dwell in? …* ***12*** *… I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy body, and I will establish his kingdom.* ***13*** *He shall build a house for My name, and I*

(ד) ויהי בלילה ההוא ויהי דבר ה' אל נתן לאמר: (ה) לך ואמרת אל עבדי אל דוד כה אמר ה' האתה תבנה לי בית לשבתי ... (יב) ... והקימתי את זרעך אחריך אשר יצא ממעיך והכינתי את ממלכתו: (יג) הוא יבנה

[54] Why the rush? Rashi and Radak (I Samuel 7:4) quote a midrash that emphasizes David's alacrity. Unless he is called off at once, he may utter a vow such as not to eat or drink until the Temple is built. Or perhaps he will hire contractors to build the Temple and will need to pay them even if the project is called off. To prevent either of these scenarios, Natan must return to David at once, and tell him that the project must be deferred.

will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.
Shmuel II 7:4-13

בית לשמי וכוננתי את כסא ממלכתו עד עולם:
שמואל ב ז:ד-יג

While David is denied permission to build the Mikdash, he is promised that his son and successor will be the one to do so. Overcoming or suppressing any feelings of disappointment, David responds to Natan's message by thanking God for continuing to shower him with kindness.

18 *Then David the king went in, and sat before the Lord; and he said: 'Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house that Thou hast brought me thus far?* ***19*** *And this was yet a small thing in Thine eyes, O Lord God; but Thou hast spoken also of Thy servant's house for a great while to come; and this too after the manner of great men, O Lord God.* ***20*** *And what can David say more unto Thee? For Thou knowest Thy servant, O Lord God.* ***21*** *For Thy word's sake, and according to Thine own heart, hast Thou wrought all this greatness, to make Thy servant know it.* ***22*** *Therefore Thou art great, O Lord God; for there is none like Thee, neither is there any God beside Thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.* ***23*** *And who is like Thy people, like Israel, a nation one in the earth, whom God went to redeem unto Himself for a people, and to make Him a name, and to do for Thy land great things and tremendous, even for you, (in driving out) from before Thy people, whom Thou didst redeem to Thee out of Egypt, the nations and their gods?* ***24*** *And Thou didst establish to Thyself Thy people Israel to be a people unto Thee for ever; and Thou, Lord, becamest their God.*
Shmuel II 7:18-24

(יח) ויבא המלך דוד וישב לפני ה' ויאמר מי אנכי אדני ה' ומי ביתי כי הביאתני עד הלם: (יט) ותקטן עוד זאת בעיניך אדני ה' ותדבר גם אל בית עבדך למרחוק וזאת תורת האדם אדני ה': (כ) ומה יוסיף דוד עוד לדבר אליך ואתה ידעת את עבדך אדני ה': (כא) בעבור דברך וכלבך עשית את כל הגדולה הזאת להודיע את עבדך: (כב) על כן גדלת אדני ה' כי אין כמוך ואין אלהים זולתך בכל אשר שמענו באזנינו: (כג) ומי כעמך כישראל גוי אחד בארץ אשר הלכו אלהים לפדות לו לעם ולשום לו שם ולעשות לכם הגדולה ונראות לארצך מפני עמך אשר פדית לך ממצרים גוים ואלהיו:(כד) ותכונן לך את עמך ישראל לך לעם עד עולם ואתה ה' היית להם לאלהים:
שמואל ב ז:יח-כד

David, craving some involvement in the process, raises funds and gathers raw materials for the Mikdash.

14 *Now, behold, in my straits I have prepared for the house of the Lord a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight, for it is in abundance; timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.* ***15*** *Moreover there are workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all men that are skilful in any manner of work;* ***16*** *of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, there is no number. Arise and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.'* ***17*** *David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son:* ***18*** *'Is not the Lord your God with you? And hath He*

(יד) והנה בעניי הכינותי לבית ה' זהב ככרים מאה אלף וכסף אלף אלפים ככרים ולנחשת ולברזל אין משקל כי לרב היה ועצים ואבנים הכינותי ועליהם תוסיף: (טו) ועמך לרב עשי מלאכה חצבים וחרשי אבן ועץ וכל חכם בכל מלאכה: (טז) לזהב לכסף ולנחשת ולברזל אין מספר קום ועשה ויהי ה' עמך: (יז) ויצו דויד לכל שרי ישראל לעזר לשלמה בנו: (יח) הלא ה' אלהיכם עמכם

not given you rest on every side? For He hath delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand; and the land is subdued before the Lord, and before His people. ***19*** *Now set your heart and your soul to seek after the Lord your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the Lord.'*
Divrei Hayamim II 22:14-19

והניח לכם מסביב כי נתן בידי את ישבי הארץ ונכבשה הארץ לפני ה' ולפני עמו: (יט) עתה תנו לבבכם ונפשכם לדרוש לה' אלהיכם וקומו ובנו את מקדש ה' האלהים להביא את ארון ברית ה' וכלי קדש האלהים לבית הנבנה לשם ה':
דברי הימים א כב:יד-יט

Talents of gold and silver, immeasurable quantities of copper and iron, wood and stone: David even lines up the masons, stone cutters and other artisans qualified to construct the Temple and instructs the leaders of the nation to assist the new king. Like Moshe Rabbeinu on the summit of Har Nebo looking out over the Holy Land in which he will not set foot, David strains to see into the future Temple.

During the month of Ziv (Iyar), in the fourth year of Shlomo's reign, construction began on what would become the Beit Hamikdash (1 Kings 6:1). Seven years later, during the month of Bul (Cheshvan) the building is complete (1 Kings 6:38)[55]. Shlomo contracts with Hiram, king of Tyre, for raw materials and for artisans. Only with the completion of the building does Shlomo send for the spoils of war gathered by his father, David, which David had presented to his son for the purpose of building the Temple.[56]

The time had come to put the finishing touch on the Beit Hamikdash, to move the Ark from the City of David to its final resting place in the Kodesh Kedoshim of the new Beit Hamikdash. Shlomo invites the elders, he invites the heads of the tribes, and he invites the entire Jewish people, to watch as the kohanim carry the Aron Kodesh. The event, described in Chapter Eight of Kings 1, takes place during the month of Eitanim, the seventh month, and lasts for seven days.

65 *So Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entrance Hamath unto the Brook of Egypt, before the Lord our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days.* ***66*** *On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they blessed the king, and*

(סה) ויעש שלמה בעת ההיא את החג וכל ישראל עמו קהל גדול מלבוא חמת עד נחל מצרים לפני ה' אלהינו שבעת ימים ושבעת ימים ארבעה עשר יום: (סו) ביום השמיני שלח את העם ויברכו את המלך וילכו

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[55] Radak I Kings 6:38

הוא מרחשון כמו שאמר הוא החדש השמיני ונקרא כן מפני הגשמים שמתחילין בו ענין מבול ובדברי רז"ל בירח בול שבו העלה נבל והארץ עשויה בולות בולות וירח שבו בוללין לבהמה מתוך הבית כלומר שמאכל הבהמה כלה מן השדה ודעת יונתן בזה שתרגם בירח מוסף אבביא:

The names familiar to us for the months are, of course, post-exilic and are not found in the Torah, nor in the early prophets. Thus "Nissan" is employed only in Esther 3:7 and Nehemiah 2:1. Since we now equate Pesach with the month of Nissan and Tishrei with the Yamim Noraim and Sukkot, I have utilized those names in what follows and the reader, I trust, will forgive my anachronisms.

[56] I Kings 7:51

א ז,נא וַתִּשְׁלַם, כָּל-הַמְּלָאכָה, אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה, בֵּית ה'; וַיָּבֵא שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת-קֳדָשֵׁי דָוִד אָבִיו, אֶת-הַכֶּסֶף וְאֶת-הַזָּהָב וְאֶת-הַכֵּלִים--נָתַן, בְּאֹצְרוֹת בֵּית ה'.

The Midrash Pesikta Rabbati suggests that Shlomo was reluctant to use these spoils, a reading that intrigued many of the rishonim such as Rashi, Radak and Abravanel.

went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shown unto David His servant, and to Israel His people.
Melachim I 8:65-66

לאהליהם שמחים וטובי לב על כל הטובה אשר עשה ה' לדוד עבדו ולישראל עמו:
מלכים א ח:סה-סו

We are not given the date on which the dedicatory ceremonies opened, but we are given a strong hint: immediately following the week of dedication of the Mikdash, Bnai Yisrael begin to celebrate the holiday of Sukkot. As we know Sukkot begins on the fifteenth day of the month; if the dedication began seven days earlier that brings us to the eighth of Tishrei. That means that from the eighth day of Tishrei, through the fourteenth, Bnai Yisrael were eating and drinking and celebrating the opening of the Beit Hamikdash. This included, as Rashi notes, the Tenth of Tishrei, otherwise known to us as Yom Kippur.

We find that that year they ate and drank on Yom Kippur.
Rashi Melachim I 8:65

שבעת ימים - חג הסוכות נמצא שאכלו ושתו ביום הכיפורים:
רש"י מלכים א ח:סה

What, we wonder, could have given Shlomo an incentive to select, of all weeks, one that included Yom Kippur? Work had been essentially completed eleven months earlier. Why the long delay and why arrange for the Mikdash to open just in time for the festival of Sukkot? What justification, moreover, could there have been for overriding the proscriptions associated with Yom Kippur?

In fact, there was precedent for Shlomo's decision. Radak, citing chazal, suggests that Shlomo based this on the week-long dedication of the Mishkan in the desert during which time peace-offerings (shelamim) were brought daily, even on Shabbat, in spite of the fact that this would normally constitute a stoning offense. (Certain sacrifices are, of course, to be brought on Shabbat in the normal course, but not these.)

Chazal understood that they did in fact eat on Yom Hakippurim that year, for it was within the days of rejoicing, and they based it on the case of the dedication of the Mishkan, for in that case they brought shelamim sacrifices on Shabbat, even though normally that would carry a penalty of stoning, so Yom Hakippurim, which carries a [lighter] penalty of karet, certainly it would be be permissible to bring shelamim sacrifices. And Chazal questioned that while they may have sacrificed the shelamim on Yom Hakippurim, perhaps they didn't eat the meat, and they answered that there is no true rejoicing without eating and drinking, and that is what is meant by the passuk "and they went to their tents happy and glad of heart.
Radak Melachim I 8:65

את החג - ...אבל רבותינו ז"ל אמרו כי אכלו אותו יום הכפורים כי בכלל ימי השמחה היה ולמדו זה מחנוכת המשכן מה שם עשו שלמים בשבת אף על פי שהוא באסור סקילה יום הכפורים שהוא אסור כרת לא כל שכן ...והקשו ואמרו ושמא עשו ביום הכפורים זה שלמים ולא אכלו ותרצו אין שמחת הגוף אלא באכילה ושתיה וזהו שאמר הכתוב וילכו לאהליהם שמחי וטובי לב.
רד"ק מלכים א ח:סה

If one may bring a peace offering on Shabbat ha-Miluim, Shlomo reasoned, one may certainly eat and drink on Yom Kippur that falls during the dedication week for the Mikdash (the penalty for this is "karet," formally a lighter penalty than stoning).

Strikingly, there is a second parallel between the two dedications that Chazal noticed. Just as Shlomo delayed the dedication for nearly a year after the primary construction was completed, Moshe delayed the dedication of the Mishkan. In both cases, Bnai Yisrael are concerned with the delay and suspect a defect- either in the building (with the Mishkan) or in the builder (with the Temple). And in both cases, God had to "compensate" the original month with another holiday.

Rabbi Chanina said: "On the twenty-fifth day of Kislev the construction of the component parts of the Mishkan was concluded and it remained disassembled until the first day of the month of Nissan… and during the entire time the Mishkan was disassembled, Bnai Yisrael were muttering about Moshe, suggesting that perhaps Moshe had not erected the Mishkan due to a defect. But Moshe wished to connect the happiness of the Mishkan with the month in which Yitzchak had been born, for Yitzchak was born in Nissan. How do we know this? For when the angels came to Avraham, Avraham instructs Sarah to knead the cakes, and the angels inform Avraham that "I will return the same time ". What is "ke'et chayah?" Rav Zavdi ben Levi says that they scratched a mark onto the wall and said that "ke'et chayah" will be when the sun will return to cast its mark on the same place. Once the Mishkan was erected the muttering ceased. Since Kislev lost out on the dedication of the work that was completed in its month, God said it behooves on Me to repay it. How did God repay the month of Kislev? The Chanukah (dedication) celebration of the Hasmoneans. Similarly, Shlomo finished the work in the month of Marchesvan … Why is the month called Bul? It is the month in which God brought the mabul (the flood). The Temple remained locked for twelve months and everyone was muttering about Shlomo to say that he was not the son of Batsheva, and therefore how could God agree to rest His Presence on the Temple that he (Shlomo) had constructed.

Psikta Rabti 6

ותשלם כל המלאכה-...אמר רבי חנינא בעשרים וחמשה בכסליו נגמרה מלאכת המשכן ועשה מקופל עד אחד בניסן ... וכל זמן שהיה מקופל היו ישראל מלמלאין על משה לומר למה לא הוקם מיד שמא דופי אירע בו, שחשב לערב שמחת המשכן בחודש שנולד בו יצחק, שבניסן נולד יצחק, ומניין אלא כשהמלאכים באים אצל אברהם מהו אומר לושי ועשי עגות (בראשית י"ח ו') שהיה פסח ואמרו לו שוב אשוב אליך כעת חיה והנה בן לשרה אשתך (שם /בראשית י"ח/ י') מהו כעת חיה אמר ר' זבדי בן לוי סריטה סרטו לו על כותל כשתבא השמש לכאן, לא עשה אלא כיון שבא ניסן והוקם המשכן עוד לא לימלם אדם אחר משה, ומעתה הפסיד כסליו שנגמרה מלאכה בו, לאו, מהו ותשלם אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא עלי לשלם לו, מה שילם לו הקדוש ברוך הוא חנוכת בית חשמנאי, אף שלמה גמר מלאכת המקדש בחודש מרחשון ובשנה אחת עשרה בירח בול כלה הבית (מלכים א' ו' ל"ח), מהו בירח בול בירח שהביא הקדוש ברוך הוא את המבול, ונעשה נעול שנים עשר חודש, והיו הכל מלמלאין על שלמה לומר לא בנה של בת שבע הוא היאך הקדוש ברוך הוא משרה שכינתו לתוך מעשה ידיו (בית המקדש)

פסיקתא רבתי (איש שלום) פיסקא ו

The dedication of the Mishkan took place in Nissan, months after the building of the components had been completed, for symbolic reasons – perhaps the anniversary of the birth of

Isaac, perhaps to connect the Mishkan to the symbols of freedom, represented by the month in which we were released from bondage in Egypt.

If Shlomo was following Moshe's lead, though, why did he not also select Nissan as the appropriate month to dedicate the Mikdash? Why choose Tishrei, a month already chock full of Moadim? Part of the answer is hinted at in the continuation of the midrash.

(Just as God wanted to connect the inauguration of the Mishkan with Yitzchak,) He wished to connect the inauguration of the Mikdash with Avraham and the month in which he has born, the month of Eitanim, which is the month of Tishrei.
Psikta Rabti 6

ותשלם כל המלאכה-...והאלקים שחשב לערב שמחת בית המקדש בחודש שנולד בו אברהם בירח האתנים (מלכים א' ח' ב') זה חודש תשרי.
פסיקתא רבתי (איש שלום) פיסקא ו

There are fundamental differences between the two months and the two holidays. If Nissan, with the holiday of Pesach, represents both the release of the Hebrews from slavery and the molding of the nation, Tishrei, with the holiday of Sukkot, reflects a more universalistic set of concerns. We celebrate the holiday of Pesach behind close doors. We celebrate the holiday of Sukkot outside where all can see. We bring the same number of korbanot every day of Pesach. On Sukkot, the number of bull offerings varies daily and, as Chazal stress, the sum total over the course of seven days is seventy, representing the seventy nations of the world and our responsibility to them. This comparison extends to the fundamental difference between Yitzchak and Avraham. Yitzchak, offered as a sacrifice on Har HaMoriah, remained in the Land of Israel and his focus remained inward. While he has some interactions with Avimelech, by and large his influence does not extend to the surrounding nations. Avraham, on the other hand, the father of many nations, interacts constantly with the outside world and dedicates his life to the spreading of God's word.

This helps to characterize the fundamental difference between the Mishkan and the Mikdash. To be sure, both the Mikdash and the Mishkan serve as symbols of the covenantal agreement executed by God and Bnai Yisrael at Har Sinai, as noted by the Ramban.

After God had given the Ten Commandments directly to Yisrael and instructed them with a sampling of the mitzvot (i.e. Parashat Mishpatim)... and Bnai Yisrael accepted these laws and entered a covenant (24:1-11)... behold they became His nation and He became their God, as was originally stipulated (with brit mila and at Har Sinai)... Now "they are worthy to have a house - His dwelling - in their midst dedicated to His Name, and there He will speak with Moshe and command Bnai Yisrael... Now the 'secret' ('sod') of the mishkan is that God's glory ('kavod') which dwelled on Har Sinai will now dwell (instead) on the mishkan 'be-nistar' (in a more hidden manner, in contrast to

כאשר דבר השם עם ישראל פנים בפנים עשרת הדברות, וצוה אותם על ידי משה קצת מצות שהם כמו אבות למצותיה של תורה ... וישראל קבלו עליהם לעשות כל מה שיצום על ידו של משה, וכרת עמהם ברית על כל זה, מעתה הנה הם לו לעם והוא להם לאלקים כאשר התנה עמהם מתחלה... והנה הם קדושים ראוים שיהיה בהם מקדש להשרות שכינתו ביניהם. ולכן צוה תחלה על דבר המשכן שיהיה לו בית בתוכם מקודש לשמו, ושם ידבר עם משה

Har Sinai)..."
Ramban Shemot 25:2

ויצוה את בני ישראל.
רמב"ן שמות כה:ב

But the Mishkan, given to Bnai Yisrael during their sojourn in the desert, remains the provenance of Bnai Yisrael and reflects their personal quest to communicate with God. The Mikdash, given to Bnai Yisrael once they have conquered the Land of Israel and made a mark for themselves amongst the other nations, reflects the their mission to spread the Name of God to the world at large. The Mishkan embodies the month of Nissan and the personality of Yitzchak, the Mikdash personifies the month of Tishrei and the personality of Avraham.

Shlomo does not rely on subtle hints. He explicitly states this message when delivering the tefila at the Chanuka HaBayit.

22 *And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven;* ***23*** *and he said: 'O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like Thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath; who keepest covenant and mercy with Thy servants, that walk before Thee with all their heart;* ***... 30*** *And hearken Thou to the supplication of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place; yea, hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place; and when Thou hearest, forgive.* ***31*** *If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be exacted of him to cause him to swear, and he come and swear before Thine altar in this house;* ***...***. ***33*** *When Thy people Israel are smitten down before the enemy, when they do sin against Thee, if they turn again to Thee, and confess Thy name, and pray and make supplication unto Thee in this house;* ***... 35*** *When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, when they do sin against Thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess Thy name, and turn from their sin, when Thou dost afflict them;* ***... 37*** *If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting or mildew, locust or caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be;* ***... 41*** *Moreover concerning the stranger that is not of Thy people Israel, when he shall come out of a far country for Thy name's sake--* ***... 44*** *If Thy people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatsoever way Thou shalt send them, and they pray unto the Lord toward the city which Thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Thy name;* ***... 46*** *If they sin against Thee--for there is no man that sinneth not--and Thou be angry with them,*

(כב) ויעמד שלמה לפני מזבח ה' נגד כל קהל ישראל ויפרש כפיו השמים: (כג) ויאמר ה' אלהי ישראל אין כמוך אלהים בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת שמר הברית והחסד לעבדיך ההלכים לפניך בכל לבם: ... (ל) ושמעת אל תחנת עבדך ועמך ישראל אשר יתפללו אל המקום הזה ואתה תשמע אל מקום שבתך אל השמים ושמעת וסלחת: (לא) את אשר יחטא איש לרעהו ונשא בו אלה להאלתו ובא אלה לפני מזבחך בבית הזה: ... (לג) בהנגף עמך ישראל לפני אויב אשר יחטאו לך ושבו אליך והודו את שמך והתפללו והתחננו אליך בבית הזה: ... (לה) בהעצר שמים ולא יהיה מטר כי יחטאו לך והתפללו אל המקום הזה והודו את שמך ומחטאתם ישובון כי תענם: ... (לז) רעב כי יהיה בארץ דבר כי יהיה שדפון ירקון ארבה חסיל כי יהיה כי יצר לו איבו בארץ שעריו כל נגע כל מחלה: ... (מא) וגם אל הנכרי אשר לא מעמך ישראל הוא ובא מארץ רחוקה למען שמך: ... (מד) כי יצא עמך למלחמה על איבו בדרך אשר תשלחם והתפללו אל ה' דרך העיר אשר בחרת בה והבית אשר בנתי לשמך: ... (מו) כי יחטאו לך כי אין אדם אשר לא יחטא ואנפת בם

and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captive unto the land of the enemy, far off or near;
Melachim I 8:22-46

ונתתם לפני אויב ושבום שביהם
אל ארץ האויב רחוקה או קרובה:
מלכים א ח:כב-מו

Shlomo tells Bnai Yisrael, you will come here when you have sinned and need to bring a korban … when you are being attacked by an enemy … when there is a drought or a hunger... and even before you go out to war. But also, adds Shlomo, you will not be the only ones to use this house. The nachri, the non Jews, will also come here when they hear of the greatness of God and come to pay homage to God.

Avraham, too, never ceased his efforts to teach all of mankind of the greatness of God. He was born in Tishrei and during that month we constantly beseech God to remember the merits of the Avot and forgive us for our sins. During that month we look beyond our society to the world at large. That broader perspective was what motivated Shlomo to select that month to dedicate the mikdash closing the book, we might say, on the Exodus from Egypt that occurred 480 years earlier.

Just as Sukkot concludes the circular cycle of pilgrim holidays and relates back to Pesach, the dedication of the Mikdash caps the linear history leading back to the events of the Exodus.