

Zera Shimshon

Profound Divrei Torah culled from the writings of the Gaon and Mekubal Rav Shimshon Chaim ben Rav Nachman Michael Nachmeni zy"l, author of Sefer Zera Shimshon on Chumash and Toldos Shimshon on Pirkei Avos, who promised that all who study his words will be blessed with an abundance of good, wealth and honor, and will merit to see children and grandchildren thriving around their table.



תשכ"ד יסרו

• Zera Shimshon - the Limud that brings Yeshuos •

ז'יין 275

אמרות שמשון

Why the Women Deserved To Receive the Torah Before the Men

וּמֹשֶׁה עָלָה אֶל הָאֱלֹקִים וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו ה' מִן הַהָר לֵאמֹר כֹּה תֹאמַר לְבֵית יַעֲקֹב וְתִגִּיד לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (יט ג):

So shall you say to the House of Yaakov, and relate to the Children of Yisroel.

Rashi explains that this Passuk is coming to imply that Hashem was commanding Moshe to give over the Torah in the following order. He was first to give the Torah to בית יעקב - the 'House of Yaakov', which refers to the women, and only afterwards was he to give it over to בני ישראל - the 'Children of Yisroel', which is referring to the men.

The Yalkut Reuvaini (פ' בראשית) brings the following perplexing Midrash. שמע להקב"ה דקא. כשעלה משה לרקיע, שמע להקב"ה דקא. קרי חוה. אמר לו, רבון דעלמא האי חוה מאי היא. אמר לו, אם כל חי. אמר לו, רבון דעלמא אם כן תקראנה חיה. אמר לו, חוה במספר קטן - אם כל חי. *When Moshe ascended to Heaven he heard Hashem calling out "Chavah". Moshe asked Him, "Master of the world, why 'Chavah'?" Hashem replied, "Because she was the mother of all the living". Moshe went on to ask, "If so let her be called 'Chayah'?" To which Hashem replied, "Chavah has the numerical value of 'The mother of all the living'."*

This Midrash begs for an explanation. Firstly, why was Hashem calling out 'Chavah' when Moshe was ascending to heaven to acquire the Torah; what was the implication of that statement? Secondly, it seems from Hashem's reply, that when Moshe asked, "האי חוה מאי היא" he meant to ask why Adam called her by that name. It's hard to believe that Moshe didn't know the reason why Adam called her 'Chavah'; after all Hashem's reply is already clearly mentioned in the Torah; ויקרא האדם שם אשתו; *The man called his wife's name Chavah, because she had become the mother of all the living.*

The Maharsha in Kesubos (ס"א ע"א) says that when Adam called his wife 'Chavah', referring to her as 'the mother of all the living', he was actually alluding to her being the 'primary source of life for all

the living'.

This is hard to understand, as the Gemara in Kiddushin (ל"ט) clearly says, שלשה שותפין הן באדם הקדוש ברוך הוא ואביו ואמו - *There are three partners in the creation of a person, Hashem, his father and his mother;* accordingly, the mother is the source for only one third of the child's life, and if so how can Adam allude to her being the 'primary source for all the living'? We can explain Adam's reasoning as follows. The Gemara in Sanhedrin (י"ט ע"ב) says עליו הכתוב (י"ט ע"ב) - *Whoever raises an orphan in his home is regarded as if he had fathered him.* Because the women are the ones who primarily raise the children, Adam was correct in considering the women as the 'primary source of all the living'.



In view of this, we can understand the Midrash. When Hashem was calling out "Chavah" as Moshe was approaching to receive the Torah, He was indicating to Moshe that the Torah was to be given over first to the women.

When Moshe heard this, he asked, "האי חוה מאי היא" as if to say, "Why do the women deserve to receive the Torah before the men?" Hashem replied, "אם כל חי", alluding to the Maharsha's explanation of what Adam had in mind when he called his wife 'Chavah'; that the women are 'אם כל חי' - the 'primary source for all the living', since they are the ones who primarily raise the children. Hashem was indicating that not only are the women considered to be the 'primary source for their physical needs', but they are the 'primary source for their spiritual life', too. It is the women who primarily raise the children in the Torah way, bringing them up

as righteous Jews, showing them the beauty of the Torah and teaching them to keep its laws. As such, they deserved to receive the Torah before the Men, for they are essentially the ones who pass on the Torah torch from one generation to another, maintaining the Jewish Nation.

Upon hearing this, Moshe asked "If so let her be called 'Chayah'?", with which he meant to ask that if the women were indeed so essential to the continuity of life, physically and spiritually, why not just call her 'Chaya', the name of 'Life' itself? To this Hashem answered that the name 'חוה' too, alludes to 'Life', in that its numerical value corresponds to 'אם כל חי' - *the primary source for all the living.*

פרשת יתרו אות י"א

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Why Moshe Wasn't as Quick to Comply with Hashem's First Request as He Was with Hashem's Second Request

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה רֵד הַעֵד בְּעַם פֶּן יִהְרָסוּ וְכוּ': וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל ה' לֹא יוּכַל הָעָם לַעֲלֹת אֶל הַר סִינַי כִּי אֲתָה הַעֲדַתָּה בְּנֹנוּ לְאֹמֶר הַגִּבּוֹל אֶת הַהָר וְקִדְשָׁתוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיו ה' לָךְ רֵד וְעֲלִית אֲתָה וְאַהֲרֹן עִמָּךְ וְהַכֹּהֲנִים וְהָעָם אֶל יְהִרְסוּ וְכוּ': וַיֵּרֵד מֹשֶׁה אֶל הָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם: (י"ט כא-כה)

Hashem said to Moshe, "Descend, warn the people lest they break through..." Moshe said to Hashem, "The people cannot ascend Mount Sinai, for You have warned us to bound the mountain and to sanctify it". Hashem said to him, "Go, descend. Then you shall ascend, and Aharon with you, but the Kohanim and the people - they shall not break through..." Moshe descended to the people and said it to them.

We need to understand what exactly transpired here during this brief dialogue between Hashem and Moshe. Originally, when Hashem told Moshe to descend and warn the people lest they break through, Moshe was reluctant to descend, and replied to Hashem that there was no need for him to descend to warn the people, "for they cannot ascend Mount Sinai, for You have already warned us to bound the mountain and to sanctify it". Yet when Hashem told him once again to descend and warn the people, he immediately went down to warn them.

We can obviously answer simply that once Moshe realized that Hashem did not accept his argument and still wanted him to descend, he no longer had any reason to object. However, this answer is difficult to comprehend. For if Moshe's objection was solely based on his argument that he had already fenced off the entire area, then Moshe should have understood from the very start that Hashem would not accept his argument, as Hashem had obviously known beforehand that Moshe fenced off the area, but had nevertheless asked him to descend and warn the people.

Another difficulty is that when Hashem repeated His request to Moshe, that he descend and warn the people, it wasn't a simple repetition of the first request, but rather the second request had an additional stipulation; that Moshe should return with Aharon. What was the meaning of this additional detail? And did it have anything to do with Moshe's immediate compliance?



The Gemara in Berachos (ע"ב) teaches us the following in regard to the proper manner of

walking to and from Shul. אמר רבי חלבו אמר רב הונא היוצא מבית הכנסת אל יפסיע פסיעה גסה. אמר אביי לא אמרן אלא למיפק אבל למיעל מצוה למרטה שנא' R' Chelbo said in the name of Rav Huna: One who leaves a Bais Haknesses should not take long strides [i.e. for by doing so, he demonstrates that staying in the Bais Haknesses is a burden to him]. Abaye said: This only applies with regard to one who is leaving the Bais Haknesses, but with regard to one who is going to the Bais Haknesses, it is actually a mitzvah to run, as the Passuk says, 'Let us pursue the knowledge of Hashem'.

One of the commentaries explain that Abaye's statement was not in reference to one who is leaving a Bais Haknesses versus one who is coming to a Bais Haknesses, but rather was in reference to one who is leaving without the intention of returning shortly versus one who is leaving with the intention to return immediately. Accordingly, what Abaye meant to say was that 'the Halacha that one may not leave a Bais Haknesses while taking long strides, only applies with regard to one who is leaving a Bais Haknesses without the intention of coming back right away, but with regard to one who's leaving with the intention to return immediately it is actually a mitzvah to leave with long strides so that he may return even sooner.



According to this we can understand why originally Moshe did not want to descend. This was because all Hashem requested of Moshe at first was to go down and warn the people. Since Moshe was essentially taking leave of Hashem, it was akin to one who is leaving a Shul, in which case one is forbidden to take long strides. Moshe was therefore concerned that by the time he would descend and make his way over to the Jewish People, all while walking ever so slowly with small strides, Hashem would have begun presenting the Torah. It was for this reason that Moshe did not want to descend the mountain and make his way around warning the people, as he felt that there was no true need for the people to be warned.

Hashem understood Moshe's concern, and therefore when repeating the request for Moshe to descend and warn the people, Hashem added an additional request; that Moshe should descend, warn the people and then return once again with Aharon. Hashem was thereby teaching Moshe that because this was akin to one leaving a shul with the intention of returning immediately, he was allowed to leave with great strides. Moshe thus made his way down hastily, with great strides, and was no longer concerned that he would miss the giving of the Torah.

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