

# CHABURA COMPANION #2: AFTERMATH OF CHET HAEGEL AND RECONCILIATION

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>

- Story begins Shemos Ch. 33:1-11 which discusses Moshe's newfound leadership role and spiritual level.
- Shemos 33:12-23; discusses Moshe's conversation with God about the future of the Jewish people and the existence of evil in the world.
- Shemos 34:1-10; discusses the second set of luchos and Moshe's invocation of the י"ג מדות הרחמים .
- Shemos 34:11-26-Brief tangent of some commandments after Hashem makes a new bris with the Jewish people.
- Shemos 34:27-35 (end of chapter)-Returns to the description of the second set of luchos and described Moshe's lofty level when he returns to the Jewish people.

## KEY RASHIS

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רש"י לג: ד"ה כל מבקש וע"ע ד"ה ושב

- **What's Bothering Rashi?**
  - Why does the pasuk refer to those who would visit Moshe in his tent as those who would "seek Hashem." They were going to Moshe not Hashem?!
- **Further Study**
  - Although Moshe secluded himself in the ohel moed to learn with Hashem, later in pasuk 11 it states that Moshe would return to the camp to teach the people. R' Yochanan Luria (meforshai Rashi) writes as follows to explain this phenomenon:
    - אף כי היו נזופים לפני המקום כבר אמרו לעולם תהא שמאל דוחה וימין מקרבת.
    - This is an important lesson regarding reaching out to those who have disappointed us. Even if we have warrant to be angry, effort still needs to be placed for ימין מקרבת.
  - See Ramban argues with Rashi regarding when Moshe secluded himself in the Ohel Moed.
- **Further Discussion**
  - Why is cultivating a relationship with someone more experienced considered like one who is in the presence of God?

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רש"י שם ד"ה לג: יח ד"ה ויאמר הראני וכן ד"ה ויאמר אני

- **What's Bothering Rashi?**

- What was Moshe requesting from Hashem?

- **Further Study**

- VERY important Gemorah in Brachos 7a (which Rashi alludes to) regarding what Moshe was requesting. Gemorah explains that Moshe wanted to know why good things happen to bad people and why bad things happen to good people:

- **תלמוד בבלי מסכת ברכות דף ז עמוד א**

- ואמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי יוסי: שלשה דברים בקש משה מלפני הקדוש ברוך הוא ונתן לו; בקש שתשרה שכינה על ישראל ונתן לו, שנאמר: +שמות ל"ג+ הלא בלכתך עמנו, בקש שלא תשרה שכינה על אומות העולם ונתן לו, שנאמר: +שמות ל"ג+ ונפלינו אני ועמך, בקש להודיעו דרכיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא ונתן לו, שנאמר: +שמות ל"ג+ הודיעני נא את דרכיך; אמר לפניו: רבונו של עולם! מפני מה יש צדיק וטוב לו ויש צדיק ורע לו, יש רשע וטוב לו ויש רשע ורע לו? אמר לו: משה, צדיק וטוב לו - צדיק בן צדיק, צדיק ורע לו - צדיק בן רשע, רשע וטוב לו - רשע בן צדיק, רשע ורע לו - רשע בן רשע.
- אמר מר: צדיק וטוב לו - צדיק בן צדיק, צדיק ורע לו - צדיק בן רשע. איני? והא כתיב: +שמות ל"ד+ פקד עון אבות על בנים, וכתיב: +דברים כ"ד+ ובנים לא יומתו על אבות ורמינן קראי אהדדי ומשינינן: לא קשיא, הא - כשאוחזין מעשה אבותיהם בידיהם, הא - כשאין אוחזין מעשה אבותיהם בידיהם! אלא, הכי קאמר ליה: צדיק וטוב לו - צדיק גמור, צדיק ורע לו - צדיק שאינו גמור, רשע וטוב לו - רשע גמור, רשע ורע לו - רשע גמור. ופליגא דרבי מאיר, דאמר רבי מאיר: שמים נתנו לו ואחת לא נתנו לו, שנאמר: +שמות ל"ג+ וחנתי את אשר אהן - אף על פי שאינו הגון, - ורחמתי את אשר ארחם - אף על פי שאינו הגון. +שמות ל"ג+ ויאמר לא תוכל לראות את פני, תנא משמיה דרבי יהושע בן קרחה, כך אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה: כשרציתי לא רצית, עכשיו שאתה רוצה - איני רוצה.

- It's a dispute in the Gemorah whether Hashem actually answered Moshe's question. But it is very significant that the question was asked.

- Many achronim explain that Hashem's statement ופני לא יראו was a response to Moshe's question about the existence of evil. Hashem was explaining that suffering and frustration can never be understood as it is happening (פני) but with an adequate amount of time, in retrospect (מאחרי), we can begin to understand why life has so many difficulties. Sometimes it takes a few months. Sometimes a few years. Sometimes many centuries, but only when we look back at history can we begin to understand why certain events needed to unfold (See Introduction to Responsa Kol Aryeh and Resesei Laylya #52)

- **Further Discussion**

- **NOTE:** This is a very sensitive subject and could easily become the entire focus of the chaburah. BUT, try to avoid that. Focus on the story and why this question would appear here rather than figuring out all the approaches to good things happening to bad people.

- **Remind the kids that during chugim there will be an entire chug on bad things happening to good people. Now is not the time to reconcile this theological question.**

- Why now would Moshe be compelled to ask about theodicy (fancy word meaning inquiry into God' role in the existence of evil)?

• **What's Bothering Rashi?**

- What did Moshe see? Clearly this must be a metaphor since God has no body. So what was Moshe being shown?

• **Further Discussion**

- R. Tzadok in Pokeid Akraim has a beautiful idea regarding the significance of the tefillin straps shown to Moshe:

• **ר' צדוק הכהן מלובלין - פוקד עקרים אות ד**

- וזהו הקשר של תפילין שהוא בעורף כי ישראל יש להם התקשרות בהשם יתברך אפילו כשאינו בהתגלות פנים אל פנים והיינו אפילו למראית העין הוא חוטא והופך עורף הוא רק מצד עולם הזה עלמא דשיקרא המראה היפך האמת לאדם הרואה לעינים אבל ה' אשר יראה ללבב רואה מעמקי הלב דבוקים בו יתברך אפילו בהיותם בהסתרת פנים והפיכת עורף

• **Further Discussion**

- Might be a nice time discuss briefly the importance of tefilin (for those giving Chaburas to boys).

• **What's Bothering Rashi?**

- Why was Moshe commanded to carve the second set of luchos on his own as opposed to the first set which were made by Hashem (see earlier 32:16)?

• **Further Study**

- Man's role in the development of Torah:

▪ **מקור:** ע' גמ' ב"מ נט: במח' ר"א ור"י ותנור של עכנאי שעמד ר"י על רגליו ואמר לא בשמים היא. וכן ע' גמ' ברכות ה. שלא כמדת הקב"ה מדת בשר ודם מדת בשר ודם אדם מוכר חפץ לחבירו מוכר עצב ולוקח שמח

אבל הקב"ה אינו כן נתן להם תורה לישראל ושמח

- Famous story in Bava Metziah 59b about the dispute between R. Elazar and R. Yehoshua. Even though R. Elazar hear a voice from heaven saying he was correct, R. Yehoshua didn't pay attention to it because "The Torah is not in heaven" (Devarim ch. 30)
- See introduction of R. Moshe Feinstein to Iggros Moshe. He explains the Gemorah in Menachos 29b that the letters in the torah have crowns (called tagin) because the words of Torah themselves have authority like a king. Authorial intent doesn't matter. We are not necessarily trying to figure out what Hashem meant, but rather we are taking Hashem's torah and interpreting and applying it to confront modern day problems. Though we cannot

distort the authority of the words, it is our responsibility to interpret and constantly apply the words in each generation.

- **Further Discussion**

- Discuss with your chaburah what is man's role in the creation of Torah? Moshe carved the luchos himself must imply that we have a role in the formation of Torah.

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רש"י לד: ד"ה ה'

- **What's Bothering Rashi?**

- Why is the name of Hashem repeated twice?

- **Further Study**

- Many Rishonim ask, why is rachamim needed before a person sins as well?
  - Even though Hashem knows a person will sin, he still treats him with mercy (Maharick citing Gaonim)
  - Even though some sins (such as idolatry) one is punished for them even based on thought alone so mercy is needed even before the actual action (Rivah)

- **Further Discussion**

- How does teshuva allow one to restore the exact same relationship one had before sinning? Would this work in a relationship one had with a friend?

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רש"י לד: כז ד"ה כתב לך

- **What's Bothering Rashi?**

- Hashem's command to write down "these words" seem to imply that there are other words that should not be written down.

- **Further Discussion**

- There is a very important gemorah in Gittin 60b that discusses this pasuk:

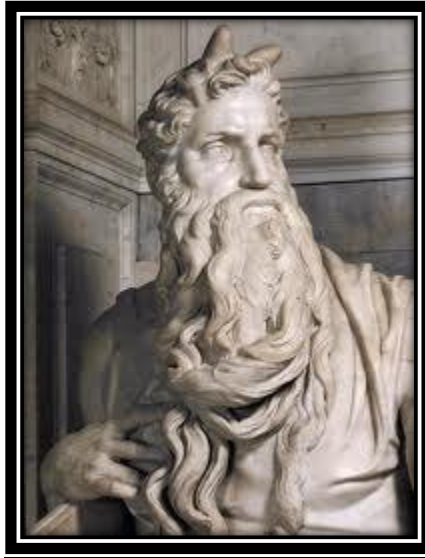
- **תלמוד בבלי מסכת גיטין דף ס עמוד ב**
- דרש רבי יהודה בר נחמני מתורגמניה דרבי שמעון בן לקיש, כתיב: (שמות ל"ד) כתוב לך את הדברים האלה, וכתיב: (שמות ל"ד) כי ע"פ הדברים האלה, הא כיצד? דברים שבכתב אי אתה רשאי לאומרן על פה, דברים שבעל פה אי אתה רשאי לאומרן בכתב.

- The split between Oral law and Written law is crucial to Judaism. Though we now allow the writing of the Oral law (See Temurah 14b) the significance of the differences between leaning through oral communication and text is still one worth considering.

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רש"י לד: ד"ה וייראו

- **What's Bothering Rashi?**
  - Why were the people suddenly afraid to approach Moshe?
- **Further Study**
  - Moshe's description at the end of the perek was an inspiration for a world famous sculpture by Michelangelo. How did he misunderstand the verses...



- The pesukim refer to the karnei Moshe. In some contexts the word keren means a horn. As you can see, Michelangelo understood keren to be literal. Many Jewish and Christian scholars have pointed out that Michelangelo clearly misunderstood the text. The word keren in this case mean his face was radiant with light. Keren in this is used to convey certain imagery. Moral of the story: Before you make a biblical sculpture-learn through the pesukim carefully. Preferably on Yarchei Kallah.
- **Further Discussion**
  - How does disappointment and failure effect the way we relate to people? Is that a good or bad?

### COMPELLING QUESTIONS

- What was the difference between the first and second set of luchos?
- What is the connection between the teshuva of the Jewish people and the Torah's elaboration on the significance of the oral law (34:37)?
- The pesukim spend a lot of time discussing the transformation of Moshe. He is the one who DID NOT sin. Why and how did he transform