

Parshas Shmos

Rabbi Piches Friedman Shlit"a

What the Almighty Wished to Hint to Moshe Rabeinu:

"He will serve as your mouth" Alludes to Eliyahu Honavi

In this week's parsha, Shemos, we learn of the mission the Almighty assigned to Moshe Rabeinu to take the people of Israel out of Egypt (Shemos 3,10) "ועתה לכה ואשלחך אל פרעה והוצא את עמי בני ישראל" (Shemos 3,10). Moshe, however, refused to accept the mission (ibid 3,11) "ויאמר משה אל האלקים מי אנכי כי". אלך אל פרעה וכי אוציא את בני ישראל ממצרים".

Thus began a debate between Hokadosh Baruch Hu and Moshe Rabeinu, with Hashem urging him to accept the mission and Moshe resisting by asking (ibid 3,13): "And if they ask me, 'What is His name'?"

"What shall I say to them?" Hashem replied (ibid 3,14) "כה תאמר לבני ישראל אהיה שלחתי אליכם" (tell them that "I Shall Be, sent me to you. Moshe persisted to protest (ibid 4,1) "והן לא יאמינו לי ולא". Hashem replied that Moshe would perform two signs to convince the people.

Moshe remains unconvinced and says (ibid 4,13) "ויאמר בי אדוני שלח נא ביד תשלח" (send by the hand of whomever you will send. Consequently "ויחר אף ה' במשה ויאמר הלא אהרן אחיך הלוי ידעתי כי דבר", "ודבר הוא, וגם הנה הוא יצא לקראתך וראך ושמח בלבו ... ודבר הוא לך אל העם והיה הוא יהיה לך לפה ואתה תהיה לו לאלקים".

Hashem's efforts to persuade Moshe lasted seven days as indicated by Rashi, quoting the Midrash (ibid 4,10): "this verse teaches us that the Holy One, Blessed is He, spent a full seven days persuading Moshe at the thornbush to undertake His mission. . . until Hashem became angry at him, then he accepted the mission upon himself".

How bewildering? Moshe Rabeinu, the master of all prophets – whom the Almighty, Himself, testifies to his trustworthiness (Bamidbar 12,7) "ובכל ביתי נאמן הוא, פה אל פה אדבר בו ומראה ולא בחידות". Moshe steadfastly refuses Hashem's requests for seven days, until Aharon is included in the deal. "ודבר הוא לך אל העם והיה הוא יהיה לך לפה ואתה תהיה לו לאלקים".

"He will serve as your mouth" Refers to Eliyahu Hanavi Zachur Latov

Let's begin our discussion with the commentary of the holy kabbalist, the Megaleh Amukot, on the verse in our parsha (4,16) "ודבר הוא לך אל העם והיה הוא יהיה לך לפה ואתה תהיה לו לאלקים". (Here is the gist of his holy words: when the Almighty tells Moshe "He will serve as your mouthpiece," He is speaking about Eliyahu, who will resolve all the uncertainties and unanswered questions of the "oral law" in the future.

The source of this idea is found in the holy Zohar (Tzav 27 and 28) depicting a conversation between the heavenly community and the "רעיא מהימנא" representing the soul of Moshe Rabeinu, "כמו שנאמר באהרן הוא יהיה לך לפה, כך בנו יהיה לי לפה שהיא תורה שבעל פה, כי כמו שהייתי בראשונה כבד א"ה פה וכבד לשון, כך יקים אותי הקב"ה כבד פה בתורה שבעל פה וכבד לשון בתורה שבכתב, שלא יאמרו אלו שלא מכירים אותי, אחר הוא, ואליהו הוא יהיה לי לפה, ויבוא לתקן כל אלו הספיקות וליישב אותם."

The holy Zohar teaches us that our verse alludes not only to Aharon, who is specifically mentioned, but also to Eliyahu honavi who is Pinches the son of Elazar the son of Aharon hokohen; he will serve as Moshe's mouthpiece to resolve all of the uncertainties in the Torah. Here, though, we ask, curiously, why Hashem is notifying Moshe of this fact precisely when He is pressing him to accept the mission of leading the exodus from Egypt? Secondly, how is this meant to appease Moshe with regard to his refusal to accept the mission?

Moshe Rabeinu Rejects the Idea of a Temporary Redemption

It is worthwhile viewing this argument from Moshe Rabeinu's perspective. The Torah describes him as the humblest man ever to walk the Earth (Bamidbar 12,3). He certainly blamed himself for not being a worthy enough agent to facilitate the final, lasting redemption. He felt that had he been as complete and worthy as Eliyahu honavi, he would have merited redeeming the people of Israel from Egypt once and for all, without requiring any subsequent exiles. He, therefore, declined this mission and pleaded with Hashem to send Pinches, who is Eliyahu, as a more complete emissary. He reasoned that since Eliyahu will be the messenger announcing the final redemption, he would be the better choice to take the people of Israel out of Egypt—and, thus, spare them any future exiles.

This explanation ties in well with the following verses describing a disagreement, seemingly, between Moshe Rabeinu and the Almighty (Shemos 3,13 :(

"ויאמר משה אל האלקים הנה אנכי בא אל בני ישראל, ואמרת אליהם אבותיכם שלחני אליכם, ואמרו לי מה שמו מה Rashi אומר אליהם, ויאמר אלקים אל משה אהיה אשר אהיה, ויאמר כה תאמר לבני ישראל אהיה שלחני אליכם." : "אהיה אשר אהיה, אהיה עמם בצרה זאת אשר אהיה עמם בשעבוד שאר מלכות, אמר לפניו רבונו של עולם, מה אני מזכיר להם צרה אחרת דיים בצרה זו, אמר לו יפה אמרת כה תאמר לבני ישראל אהיה שלחני אליכם." : "shall be what I shall be-- I shall be with them during this trouble, what I shall be for them during their subjugation to other kingdoms. Moses said to Hashem: 'Master of the world, why am I to mention another trouble to them? This trouble is enough for them!' Hashem answered: 'You have spoken well. Thus, say to the children of Israel I Shall Be has sent me to you'".

Hashem's intention was to inform Moshe that there would be future exiles; Moshe begged Hashem to minimize the people's worries and burden.

Hashem Saw that Moshe Turned Away to See

This understanding coincides beautifully with the Bnei Yissoschar's explanation of the verses (Shemos 3,4:(

He introduces a concept of the Arizal's that the months of the calendar correspond to the anatomical parts of the head. The months of Tamuz and Av correspond to the two eyes; these months include the three weeks of mourning over the destruction of the Beis Homikdash. Concerning these months, we lament: (Eichah 1,16 . "על אלה אני בוכיה עיני עיני יורדה מים .": "Over these I weep; my eye, my eye, runs with water"-- because these months correspond to our two eyes that shed mournful tears over the churban.

The Bnei Yissoschar connects this beautifully with the gemorah (Taanis 24 .): "משל לכלה שהיא בבית אביה, כל זמן שעיניה יפות אין כל גופה צריכה בדיקה, עיניה טרוטות כל גופה צריכה בדיקה .". As long as the Beis Homikdash was standing, klal Yisroel was compared to a bride in her father's home. All the while that her eyes were pretty-- ie while the months of Tamuz and Av were devoid of churban-- the rest of her body didn't need to be examined, it is presumed to be perfect and intact; however, if she is bleary-eyed-- ie these months are overwhelmed by tears over the churban-- her entire torso requires a proper inspection to identify and rectify the flaws.

"עין"Has the Numerical Value of Two Times"ס"ר

In this manner, he elucidates Moshe Rabeinu's request . "שלח נא ביד תשלח" The Targum Yonatan ben Uziel explains that Moshe was beseeching Hashem to send Pinchas who will be the messenger at the end of days. Where, however, do we find an allusion in the text to this request concerning Pinchas/Eliyahu? We find it in the words -- "וירא ה' כי סר לראות" since ס"ר (260) has the numerical value of twice עין(130).

Moshe Rabeinu foresaw that the two months of Tamuz and Av, corresponding to the two eyes, will not be completely remedied until the arrival of Pinchas/Eliyahu heralding the redemption. Correspondingly (208+52) פינח"ס אליה"ו equals twice עין. So, when Moshe beseeches Hashem , "שלח נא ביד תשלח" the Targum Yonatan interprets his intention to be that Hashem should send Pinchas/Eliyahu to redeem Israel as a permanent remedy for the two eyes, alleviating the need for future exiles .

This is all alluded to in the words "וירא ה' כי סר לראות" . Once again ס"ר equals פינח"ס אליה"ו ; Hashem knew that Moshe would decline the mission to take Israel out of Egypt, preferring that He send Pinchas/Eliyahu (numerical equivalent of ס"ר). To this Hashem replies -- "אל תקרב הלום" -- do not come any closer-- because the time for the final redemption has not yet arrived.

Moshe Blamed Himself for Failing to Achieve the Fiftieth LevelLet us proceed along this path to obtain a better understanding of Moshe's request. Regarding the exodus from Egypt, it says (Shemos 12,39 -- "ולא יכלו להתמהמה" -- (for they could not delay. The Arizal explains that Bnei Yisroel had sunk to the forty-ninth level of tumah during their exile in Egypt; had they remained there any longer, they would have fallen to the fiftieth level and been stuck there forever .

The Shloh hokadosh (Pesachim) clarifies this idea for us based on a teaching in the gemorah שנאמר ותחסרהו מעט מאלקים . "חמשים שערי בינה נבראו בעולם , וכולן ניתנו למשה חסר אחד , (Rosh Hashanah ,

Moshe Rabeinu was only granted forty-nine out of the fifty levels of wisdom and kedushoh. As a result, he only possessed the ability to counteract forty-nine levels of tumah. Had Bnei Yisroel fallen to the fiftieth level, Moshe Rabeinu would not have been able to facilitate the exodus .

The holy seforim add another important point. The enslavement in Egypt was decreed to last four hundred years (Bereishis 15,13 ויאמר לאברם ידוע תדע כי גר יהיה זרעך בארץ לא להם ועבדום וענו אותם) : "Since they left Egypt prematurely, further exiles were necessary to complete the decree .

Now, we find endless times in the gemorah the term , "תיקו" utilized by our blessed sages whenever a dispute or query could not be reconciled. The Gaon Chida, ז"ל, writes that "תיקו" is an abbreviation for ת'שבי י'תרץ ק'ושיות ו'איבעיות .

Without the "Nun" Hashem has granted me the vision to find an amazing explanation for the term "תיקו". The Zohar hokadosh (Tzav 27 חסר נון דאיהו עלמא , חסר נון דלית ליה תיקון , חסר נון דאיהו עלמא) : "תיקו חסרן ' דלית ליה תיקון , חסר נון דאיהו עלמא , חסר נון דלית ליה תיקון , חסר נון דאיהו עלמא . The word "תיקו" is essentially "תיקו" without the final "nun", which symbolizes the world to come. The Zohar is teaching us that the reason that all of these halachos were not resolved and remained in uncertainty was due to our lack of the fiftieth level of wisdom, the "shaar hanun." This deficiency is reflected in the word "תיקו" where the final "nun" is absent. In the future, however, when all fifty levels of binah will be revealed, all of our previous halachic uncertainties will be resolved. This is even alluded to in the name משיח which can be seen as an abbreviation for מ'שיח – משיח will reveal the fiftieth level, and, then, Eliyahu will answer all of our questions.

This provides further insight into Moshe's refusal to accept this mission and his plea "שלח נא ביד" ; he wanted Eliyahu honavi to redeem the people. We've learned that Eliyahu honavi will merit to reveal the solutions to all of the previously unresolved issues in the Torah, because he will be allowed to attain the "shaar hanun"-- which was not previously revealed. Once Moshe realized that it would be necessary to take Bnei Yisroel out of Egypt before the four hundred year decree had been fulfilled – in order that they not fall to the fiftieth level of tumah-- he understood that he didn't have the power to redeem them from the fiftieth level of tumah; he knew that his powers of kedushoh were limited to the forty-ninth level of binah. Due to his extreme humility, he concluded that it was due to his shortcoming that Bnei Yisroel would not serve their full sentence and would necessarily endure further exiles. He reasoned, therefore, that Eliyahu honavi should be chosen to redeem the people from Egypt.

An allusion to this reasoning can be found in Moshe's words ; "שלח נא ביד תשלח" ; the word נ"א stands for – fifty levels of illumination, which were granted to Eliyahu. He, seemingly, would be able to extract them even from the fiftieth level of tumah and, thus, allow them to fulfill the four hundred year decree of exile and realize an eternal redemption .

We have now provided a clearer understanding of Hokadosh Baruch Hu's reply to Moshe : "ודבר הוא לך אל העם והיה הוא יהיה לך לפה" : "הקב"ה and the Megaleh Amukot's explanation based on the Zohar hokadosh : "הקב"ה , שאמר למשה, הוא יהיה לך לפה, על אליהו מדבר, שהוא כלל תורה שבעל פה לתרץ כל הספיקות לעתיד לבא."

We've introduced many times before the following teaching of the Arizal's (Likutei Torah Vaetchanan). At the time of matan Torah, Moshe Rabeinu achieved the "shaar hanun"; however, when the people sinned with the calf, he had to relinquish it. Nevertheless, before departing this world, he attained it once again .

This is learned from the verses (Devarim 34,1 , " ויעל משה מערבות מואב אל הר נבו ראש הפסגה " : (as elucidated by the Shloh hokadosh " הר נבו " .alludes to the "shaar hanun נב"ו ; "is – בו – נ' in other words, the "nun," the fiftieth level, is now within him. Furthermore מוא"ב has a numerical value of forty nine. The verse can now be interpreted as follows: Moshe rose and elevated from the "ערבות")a play on the word , ("ערבות" satisfaction and sweetness, of מוא"ב , the forty-ninth level of binah , , אל , , , and achieved the "shaar hanun . " נב"ו - נ' בו ,

We also stand enlightened with respect to the Almighty's reply , " ויהיה הוא יהיה לך לפה " which we've seen was a reference to Eliyahu honavi. The Almighty revealed to Moshe that Eliyahu honavi's ability to resolve all the unanswered Torah inquiries, utilizing the "shaar hanun," will not be based on his own merit; rather, he will learn all that is necessary from Moshe Rabeinu. Eliyahu honavi will serve as the mouthpiece and interpreter to teach ahm Yisroel the teachings of Moshe Rabeinu-- who achieved the fiftieth level of binah at the time of his death. If Moshe Rabeinu had yet to attain the "shaar hanun," Eliyahu honavi, certainly, had not attained it. The teacher must teach something, before the student can learn it. Once this was revealed to Moshe Rabeinu, he agreed to accept Hashem's mission .