

Shvilei Pinches

Parshas terumah

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Terumah 5770

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“ויקחו לי תרומה” – תורה מ

Every Jew Is Responsible to Reveal His Portion of Torah that Was Given to Moshe Rabeinu and then Forgotten

In this week's parsha, parshas Terumah, it is written: **“וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר, דבר אל בני ישראל, ויקחו לי תרומה מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את תרומתי”** (S.R. 33,1): **“הדא הוא דכתיב כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם תורתיו אל תעזבו, אל תעזבו את המקח - שנתתי לכם”** - “Do not forsake this commodity that I have given you.”

We need to explain: (a) What is the connection between **“לקח טוב נתתי לכם”**, which refers to the holy Torah that the Almighty gave us and the possuk **“ויקחו לי תרומה”**, which is not referring to the Torah? (b) Why does Hashem request from us: **“כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם תורתיו אל תעזבו”**? It is quite clear that from the moment we received the Torah on Har Sinai, we were obligated to learn, teach, observe and perform.

מ' תורה Rearrange to Form תרומה The Letters

Let us begin our journey, by introducing the words of the Baal HaTurim here: **“תרומה אותיות מ'”** **“אית תרומה מדאורייתא תורה מ', והאי תורה”**. His source is the Zohar hokadosh (Korach 179.): **“איהו תרומה, תורה דאתייהיבת בארבעים יום”**. The point is being made that the word **“תרומה”** alludes to the fact that the Torah was given over a period of forty days, **“תורה מ'”**. In this light, the Midrash's exposition on this possuk fits nicely; however, how will we explain the continuation of the possuk: **“מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את תרומתי”**? What lesson are we supposed to learn from the fact that Hashem gave Moshe Rabeinu the Torah over a period of forty days?

Let us introduce a cryptic teaching in the Gemorah (Nedorim 38.): **“אמר רבי יוחנן, בתחילה היה משה למד תורה ומשכחה, עד שניתנה לו במתנה, שנאמר ויתן אל משה ככלותו לדבר אתו”**. The Gemorah teaches that Moshe Rabeinu learned directly from the Almighty for forty whole days and kept forgetting what he had learnt, until Hashem gave him the Torah as a gift at the end of the forty days—as it is written: **“ככלותו לדבר אתו”**.

The Alshich hokadosh, in Toras Moshe (Ki Tisa, ibid.) poses the question: Since Hokadosh Boruch Hu knew from the start that Moshe Rabeinu would not be able to remember the Torah unless he received it as a gift, what was the purpose of the entire forty day process—teaching him the Torah, Moshe forgetting the Torah and, finally, bestowing it upon him as a gift?

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He explains at length, in his holy words, that the purpose of the Almighty learning Torah with Moshe for forty days, was to purify and refine his nature. It is analogous to the formation of a human embryo, which is a forty day process, as we find in the Gemorah (Bechoros 21:): **”יצירת”** הוולד באשה ארבעים יום. Similarly, a forty day purification process was necessary, before he was prepared to receive the Torah as a gift that he would not forget.

For Forty Days Moshe Learned Everything that Future Generations of Scholars Were Destined to Innovate

As is the way of Torah, to be elucidated in seventy aspects, we wish to suggest a novel interpretation for why this forty day process was necessary. We will base our interpretation on the Droschos HaChasam Sofer (part 2, page 406, column 3) explaining a verse in this week’s parsha:

”ויקחו לי תרומה מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את תרומתי. פה נרמז מה שאמרו חכמינו ז”ל (ויק”ר כב א), שבאותן מ’ יום ניתן למשה רבינו ע”ה כל מה שתלמיד ותיק עתיד לחדש, והיינו בעוסק בתורה לשמה זוכה לכוון חלקו שניתן לנשמתו בסיני... והיינו ויקחו לי תרומה - תורה מ’ מאת כל איש, כי כל העוסק בתורה מצליח, (מגילה ו: ו) ויגעתי ולא מצאתי אל תאמין, ואת אשר ידבנו לבו, ומחדש ומוציא סברא מלבו חידושי תורה, תקחו את תרומתי, כי שלי הוא וכולם ניתנו מרועה אחד.”

We are taught a very important principle by the Chasam Sofer. During Moshe’s forty day stay in the heavens, Hokadosh Boruch Hu taught him everything that future generations of scholars were destined to innovate. In addition, we are supposed to understand from this: **”מאת כל איש אשר”** – it is incumbent upon every individual Jew to reveal his own portion of the Torah that was revealed to Moshe during those forty days.

We can embellish his words based on the Midrash (V.R. 22,1):

”אפילו מה שתלמיד ותיק עתיד לומר לפני רבו כולן נאמרו למשה בסיני, שנאמר (קהלת א י) יש דבר - שיאמר ראה זה חדש הוא, חבירו משיב עליו, כבר היה לעולמים”
There are no novel interpretations in the Torah, since everything has already been taught to Moshe on Sinai.

This still conflicts somewhat with a teaching of the gaon Chida’s in Dvash L’fee (8,3): **”האחרונים”** יכולים לחדש מה שלא יכלו הראשונים, כי עדיין לא הגיע זמן החידוש ההוא” Here we are taught that novel interpretations of the Torah are revealed in every generation. So was it instituted from Above that certain interpretations only be revealed by the scholars of that specific generation. Furthermore, these interpretations could not have been revealed even by earlier generations of more heavenly scholars.

This idea of the Chida’s provides us with a new insight concerning the “mahn” (Shemos 16,4). The “mahn” is described as **”לחם מן השמים”** - bread from heaven, which symbolizes torah from heaven. The possuk continues: **”ולקטו העם דבר יום ביומו”**—every day, they were to gather and clarify the novel Torah teachings specific to that particular day. How does this coincide with the Midrash quoted above: **”אפילו מה שתלמיד ותיק עתיד לומר לפני רבו כולן נאמרו למשה בסיני”**

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Forty Days in the Heavens Correspond to the Forty Days of an Embryo's Formation

We can resolve these conflicts based on a concept found in our holy seforim. Moshe Rabeinu remained in the heavens forty days to receive the Torah, because forty days are necessary to form a new creature. These forty days represented the creation and transformation of the people of Yisroel into the nation of the Torah. We find this idea presented by the Siftei Kohen (Ekev):

“ואשב בהר ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה, מה שהיו ארבעים יום כנגד יצירת הולד, כמו שיצירת הגוף בארבעים יום כן היה צריך ארבעים יום לתורה.”

It is well-known that all six hundred thousand neshomes of Yisroel were incorporated within Moshe Rabeinu. This is taught in the Midrash Tanchuma (Beshalach): “משה ובני ישראל, משה שקול” כנגד כל ישראל. It is now clear why, during those forty days, Moshe was taught the entire Torah, including the novel interpretations of all future generations—since he embodied all the neshomes of Yisroel, he had to receive all of their portions in the Torah.

However, since the time for many of those chidushim to be revealed had not yet arrived—i.e. they would be revealed by various scholars, each in his own time—it was necessary for Moshe to forget them and not present them before their appropriate times. Nonetheless, every Jew's ability to perceive and comprehend his own portion of the Torah, is only in the merit of Moshe Rabeinu, the root of all Jewish Neshomes, who accepted that portion of the Torah on Har Sinai.

We find support for this concept in the Gemorah (Nidah 30:) concerning an unborn fetus: “ומלמדין אותו כל התורה כולה... וכיון שבא לאויר העולם בא מלאך וסטר על פיו ומשכחו כל התורה כולה” The fetus is taught the entire Torah; yet, as he is born, an angel slaps him on his mouth and he forgets it all. Once again, we might wonder, what purpose does it serve to teach the unborn child the entire Torah, if he is destined to forget it all at birth?

The answer is provided by the Noam Elimelech in Likutei Shoshanah:

“אם לא היו מלמדין אותה, לא היה באפשרי לקבל וללמוד אחר כך את התורה, לכן מלמדין אותה מתחילה כדי שאחר כך בנקל תוכל לקבל וללמוד התורה.”

If the neshome would not be taught the Torah initially, prior to birth, it would be impossible for it to achieve and comprehend the Torah by natural means, after birth, from within the confines of its physical, material body.

This also applied in a general sense to Moshe Rabeinu, the embodiment of all Jewish neshomes, during those forty days. Had he not forgotten those portions belonging to future generations, he would have been obligated to reveal them before their time. Had he not learned them at all, we would never have been able to comprehend them and, ultimately, reveal them on our own.

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How beautifully this explains the words of Hashem (Malachi 3,22): **זכרו תורת משה עבדי אשר** "צויתני אותו בחורב על כל ישראל חוקים ומשפטים" Hashem beseeches us to remember the Torah that Moshe spent forty days learning on Har Sinai and then forgot. He did so for the benefit of all future generations. By toiling and endeavoring to study Torah, we successfully return to Moshe Rabeinu those portions which he forgot while on Har Sinai.

This illuminates for us the Chasam Sofer's elucidation of the possuk: **"וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר"**—Hashem spoke specifically to Moshe, who accepted all of Yisroel's portions of the Torah on Har Sinai; **"דבר אל בני ישראל ויקחו לי תרומה"**—the word **תרומה** is the same letters as **"תורה מ"**, an allusion to the fact that Moshe was only given the Torah as a gift after he had struggled for forty days in the heavens to learn it and, still, forgot it all. The lesson we are supposed to learn: **"מאת כל"** **"איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את תרומתי"**—every Jew must devote his heart and soul to Torah study, in order to return his portion to Moshe Rabeinu, who forgot it.

We can now appreciate the meaning of the Midrash:

"ויקחו לי תרומה, הדא הוא דכתיב כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם תורתני אל תעזובו, אל תעזובו את המקח וספרתם לכם, שתהא Based on what we have learned in the Gemorah (Menachos 65:): **שנתתי לכם** "ספירה לכל אחד ואחד". Whenever the verse uses the term **"לכם"**, it refers to each individual as a separate entity.

So, when the Almighty says to us: **"כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם"**—He is telling each and every one of us, individually, that we were each given a special portion of His Torah during those forty days on Har Sinai (when He taught Moshe and Moshe forgot). Therefore, I (Hashem) request from all of you: **"תורתני אל תעזובו, אל תעזובו את המקח שנתתי לכם"**—it is up to you to reveal the portions of the Torah that Moshe forgot.