



## The Wonderful Connection between the Parshiyos of Mattos and Masei Moshe Rabeinu Perceived the Source of the Torah as "זה הדבר" Yet He Presented the Respective Parts to Yisrael as "כה אמר ה' "

Next Shabbas Kodesh, we will read from the Torah the two parshiyos of Mattos and Masei. Hence, it is fitting that we establish a connection between the two parshiyos. We will begin by citing the opening passuk of parshas Mattos (Bamidbar 30, 2): **"וידבר משה אל ראשי המטות לבני ישראל לאמר, זה "זה הדבר אשר צוה ה'—Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes of Bnei Yisrael, saying, "This is the matter that Hashem has commanded."** Rashi comments in the name of the Sifre: **Moshe prophesied with (Shemos 11, 4): "So said Hashem, 'At midnight . . ."; whereas the other neviim prophesied with "so said Hashem." Moshe was superior to them in that he also prophesied with the expression "this is the matter."**

The various commentaries struggle to make sense of this. What is the difference between the prophecies of all the other neviim, who used the expression **"כה אמר ה'—"so said Hashem"**—and the prophecies of Moshe Rabeinu who also prophesied with the expression **"זה הדבר אשר צוה ה'—"this is the matter that Hashem has commanded"**? Additionally, we will endeavor to clarify when Moshe prophesied with the expression **"כה אמר ה'—"so said Hashem"**—like the other neviim and when he prophesied with the exclusive expression **"זה הדבר אשר צוה ה'—"this is the matter."**

We will now introduce the opening passuk of parshas Masei (ibid. 33, 1): **"אלה מסעי בני ישראל אשר יצאו מארץ מצרים לצבאותם ביד משה ואהרן. ויכתוב משה את מוצאייהם למסעיהם על פי ה' ואלה מסעיהם למוצאייהם."** These are the journeys of Bnei Yisrael,

**who departed the land of Mitzrayim, according to their legions, led by Moshe and Aharon. Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys at the bidding of Hashem, and these were their journeys according to their goings forth.** Several commentaries (such as the Baal HaTurim, Ohr HaChaim, Kli Yakar, Chasam Sofer and others) take note of the fact that the passuk begins by mentioning their **"goings forth"** before their **"journeys"** but concludes with the reverse order—mentioning their **"journeys"** before their **"goings forth."**

The Panim Yafos provides us with a wonderful explanation. He refers to the Gemara (Megillah 18b) that teaches us that it is prohibited to write even one letter in a scroll of Scripture unless it is copied from a text. The Gemara challenges this ruling based on an incident involving Rabbi Meir. According to a Baraisa, Rabbi Meir wrote a Megillah from memory. The Gemara answers: **"שאני רבי מאיר דמיקיים—Rabbi Meir is different, since he epitomizes the passuk (Mishlei 4, 25): "And the pupils of your eyes shall look straight in front of you."** The Gemara explains the meaning of this statement: **"אלו דברי תורה דכתיב—this refers to the words of Torah of which it is written (ibid. 23, 5): "Close your eyes from it, and it is gone." And even so (despite the ease with which words of Torah are forgotten by everyone else), they were always directly in front of Rabbi Meir.**

Based on this premise, the Panim Yafos explains: **The Torah preceded the world; the upper and lower worlds were created with it; the spiritual level (quality) of the Torah is related to the level of the particular world; it eventually reached Olam Hazeh, where in materialized in physical letters man seen by man.** In other words, there are other higher worlds that were created with the Torah, and which are more spiritual than this world—Olam HaZeh. Olam HaZeh is material (physical, worldly), because as the spiritual concepts of the Torah descended progressively downwards from the upper worlds, they became more and more material and took the form of the letters which we see.

In this manner, the Panim Yafos explains how the holy Avos perceived the entire Torah before it was actually given. They perceived it in its original, root form, as it exists in the upper worlds before it transformed into the letters we now see. At Matan Torah, however, Yisrael received the Torah in a more material, physical form—after it took the form of letters. Subsequently, they were privileged to learn the essential meaning of the Torah from Moshe Rabeinu—every individual according to his spiritual level and capacity.

### Moshe Rabeinu Received the Torah from HKB”H in Its Original Form

The Panim Yafos goes on to explain the greatness of Moshe Rabeinu. He ascended to the heavens to learn the pure, original, spiritual Torah from HKB”H as it appears above. He also learned how to embed all of its spiritual concepts within the letters of the Torah as we perceive them today.

Similarly, he explains the greatness of Rabbi Meir. He was permitted to write a sefer Torah by heart—without copying it from another text—without erring, because his neshamah perceived the roots of the Torah. First, he perceived the spiritual roots of the Torah; then, he understood how to embed those spiritual concepts within the physical letters of the Torah.

With this understanding, we can interpret a fascinating Midrash (B.R. 20, 12): **כתורתו של רבי מאיר מצאו כתוב כתנות אור.** In the Torah scrolls we are familiar with, we find the following passuk (Bereishis 3, 21): **”ויעש ה' אלקים לאדם ולאשתו: כתנות עור וילבישם**

**wife garments of “ohr,” and He clothed them.** Here, the word “ohr” is spelled with an “ayin,” meaning (garments of) leather or skin. According to the Midrash, however, in Rabbi Meir’s sefer Torah, the word “ohr” was spelled with an “aleph,” meaning (garments of) light. It is implausible that Rabbi Meir actually changed the word, since we know that if even one letter of a sefer Torah is incorrect, the entire sefer is invalidated.

Now, according to the Zohar hakadosh (Bereishis 36b), before the “cheit Eitz HaDa’as,” Adam HaRishon was enclothed by **”כתנות אור”** with and **“aleph”**—a **garment of light**. After the fateful sin, however, he fell from his lofty spiritual level and received instead **”כתנות עור”** with an **“ayin”**—a **garment of skin**. So, with respect to Rabbi Meir, it is conceivable that the sefer Torah he wrote for himself reflected his perception of the original roots of the Torah before it took the form of letters. He perceived the words **”כתנות אור”** with an **“aleph,”** as they appeared prior to the “cheit Eitz HaDa’as.” Nevertheless, in a kosher sefer Torah to be read down below, he most certainly wrote the words **”כתנות עור”** with an **“ayin.”**

This also explains the following Midrash (ibid. 9, 5): **In the Torah of Rabbi Meir, they found it written (ibid. 1, 1): “And, behold, it was very good.” And behold, death was good.** Once again, we can suggest that he wrote in his own personal sefer Torah what he perceived at the source of the Torah—that death for a human being after he has completed his task in Olam HaZeh is a very good thing. As the Chasam Sofer brings down in Toras Moshe (Eikev), the Rambam wrote to his son: **Praiseworthy is the man who completes his days quickly.**

We will now return to the passuk: **“Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys at the bidding of Hashem.”** In keeping with what we have learned, he explains that Moshe Rabeinu recorded the journeys in the Torah as he first saw them and perceived them spiritually in the upper world. From there, the journeys descended progressively to Olam HaZeh and took on actual, physical characteristics. So, Moshe initially wrote **“their goings forth”**—referring to journeys that originated in the upper, spiritual world; **“to their journeys”** refers to their actual journeys as they materialized in Olam HaZeh. Yet, the following depiction: **“And these were their journeys according to their goings**

forth” reflects Yisrael’s perception in Olam HaZeh. They were only cognizant of the physical journeys in this world, although, in reality, they emanated from the upper, spiritual world.

### **HKB”H Reviewed the Torah Four Times before Conveying It to Yisrael**

It gives me great pleasure to elaborate on this profound and fascinating subject. Let us refer to the Midrash (S.R. 40, 1) related to the passuk (Iyov 28, 27): **”אז ראה ויספרה הכינה וגם ויאמר לאדם...”** **—then He saw it and He counted it; He prepared it, and He also established its limits. And He said to man . . .** The Rabbis taught that man should follow G-d’s example when preparing to present Scriptures or Aggadah or Midrash that he learned to the public. He should not think that since he knows the material so well, he can just go in extemporaneously and begin to expound and teach. Rabbi Acha said that we learn this fact from the Almighty. When He wished to teach the Torah to Yisrael, He reviewed it by Himself four times before presenting it to Yisrael, as it says: **”Then He saw it and He counted it; He prepared it, and He also established its limits. And He said to man.”** Similarly, this is the implication of the passuk (Shemos 20, 1): **”וידבר אלקים את כל הדברים האלה לאמר:—G-d spoke all these words, saying.**

At first glance, this is extremely surprising. Clearly, human beings are apt to forget; therefore, it is appropriate to suggest that a person should review his words of Torah before delivering them publicly. But how can we even suggest that HKB”H, Who is omniscient and omnipotent, needed to review the Torah by Himself four times prior to conveying it to Yisrael? The Maggid of Dubno, ztz”l, explains the matter magnificently in Ohel Yaakov (Yisro):

**It is known that the Torah incorporates four types of exegesis—pshat, remez, drash and sod. Now, HKB”H’s Torah was only “sod”; it was a spiritual black fire inscribed on white fire. Nevertheless, He wished to give the Torah to material, physical human beings. Hence, it was necessary to present it to them in a format that they would be able to receive and comprehend. Therefore, He reviewed it over and over until it was reduced to the format of “pshat.”**

**This is what our blessed sages were alluding to in the Midrash above. When HKB”H planned to deliver the**

**Torah to Yisrael, He reviewed it with Himself four times before delivering it to Yisrael. This is the implication of the passuk in Iyov: “Then He saw it and He counted it; He prepared it, and He also established its limits. And He said to man.” In other words, he refined it from one level to the next, from the top to the bottom—from sod to drash, from drash to remez, and from remez to pshat—until it was suitable to convey to mankind, with his limited capacity.**

In this manner, the Maggid of Dubno explains what we have learned in the Gemara (Shabbas 88a): **”בשעה שעלה משה למרום, אמרו מלאכי השרת לפני הקב”ה, רבונו של עולם מה לילוד אשה בינינו, אמר להן לקבל תורה בא. אמרו לפניו חמודה גנוזה שגנוזה לך תשע מאות ושבעים וארבעה דורות קודם שנברא העולם אתה מבקש ליתנה לבשר ודם מה אנוש כי תזכרנו וכן אדם כי תפקדנו ה’ אדוננו מה אדיר שמך בכל הארץ, אשר תנה הודך על השמים.”** **When Moshe ascended to the heights, the ministering angels said to HKB”H, “Master of the Universe! What is someone born of a woman doing amongst us?” He replied, “He has come to receive the Torah.” They said to Him, “The coveted treasure that was stored by You for nine hundred and seventy-four generations before the world was created! You intend to give it to flesh and blood?!”** (Tehillim 8, 5) What is a mortal that You should remember him or the son of man that You should recall him? (ibid. 2) Hashem, our Lord, how grand is Your name in all the earth that You bestow Your glory upon the heavens.”

Let us explain. When Moshe ascended to the heavens to receive the Torah on behalf of Yisrael, it did not yet exist in the simple format of “pshat”; it still existed solely in the heavenly format of “sod.” Only at Matan Torah, when Hashem descended onto Har Sinai to convey the Torah to Yisrael did it take on the form of “pshat.” Hence, the malachim were confounded that HKB”H intended to deliver this precious treasure—the Torah of “sod”—to mere creatures of flesh and blood. So, they protested: **“What is a mortal that You should remember him or the son of man that You should recall him?”** They are incapable of perceiving and comprehending the Torah of “sod” as the heavenly malachim are. Therefore, we beseech You: **“Bestow Your glory on the heavens”**—present the glory of the Torah of “sod” to us; for, we are able to do receive it and do it justice.

Moshe Rabeinu responded to their objection as follows: **“Master of the Universe, what is written in the Torah that You are giving me?”** While it is true that the heavenly malachim are more capable of comprehending the heavenly configuration of the Torah, nevertheless that is not true regarding **“the Torah You are giving me”** — to take down to earth. That Torah contains mitzvos that can only be performed by human beings made of flesh and blood in Olam HaZeh. As such, the malachim’s claim to the Torah is effectively null and void. That is what will truly glorify Hashem—that even corporeal beings of flesh and blood will rise to serve Hashem in all matters of Olam HaZeh. This concludes his sacred remarks.

### The Four Methods of Exegesis Relate to the Four Worlds אבי"ע

It is worthwhile adding an invaluable point based on what the Ohr HaChaim hakadosh (Bereishis 1, 1; 13) writes on the first passuk in the Torah in the name of the kabbalists: **“בראשית ברא אלקים—in the beginning, G-d created . . .** The Almighty created four worlds from the top down: **Atzilus, Briah, Yetzirah and Asiyah.** This is alluded to by Chazal in the Mishnah (Avos 6, 14): **“כל מה שברא הקב"ה בעולמו לא בראו אלא לכבודו, שנאמר כל הנקרא בשמי ולכבודי בראתיו יצרתיו אף עשיתיו”** **Everything HKB”H created in His world, He created solely for His glory. As it is stated (Yeshayah 43, 7): “All that is called by My name** (alludes to the world of Atzilus, where HKB”H’s name and essence are revealed), **and for My glory, I created it** (alludes to the world of Briah), **formed it** (alludes to the world of Yetzirah), **also I made it** (alludes to the world of Asiyah, which is Olam HaZeh).”

Additionally, let us introduce what is taught in our sacred sefarim based on the Arizal’s Sha’ar HaGilgulim (Introduction 17). The four types of Torah exegesis, symbolized by the mnemonic **בשט רמז ברד"ס**—which is an abbreviation for **בשט רמז ברד"ס**—relate to the four worlds from the bottom to the top. **“Pshat”** relates to the world of Asiyah, Olam HaZeh, the lowest of the four worlds; **“remez”** relates to the world of Yetzirah; **“drash”** relates to the world of Briah; and **“sod”** relates to the world of Atzilus. When a person studies Torah with all four types of exegesis, he is able to rectify and connect all four worlds.

We can now appreciate to a greater degree why HKB”H reviewed the Torah four times before delivering it to Yisrael. Initially, He learned the Torah with the methodology of **“sod,”** as it exists in the world of Atzilus. Next, He contracted Himself, so to speak, and learned it a second time with the methodology of **“drash,”** as it exists in the world of Briah. Afterwards, He contracted Himself even more to learn the Torah a third time with the methodology of **“remez,”** as it exists in the world of Yetzirah. Ultimately, He contracted Himself one more time and reviewed the Torah a fourth time with the methodology of **“pshat,”** as it appears to us in Olam HaZeh, the world of Asiyah. Only then did HKB”H give the Torah to the entirety of Yisrael on Har Sinai with the methodology of **“pshat.”**

This explains magnificently the fact that HKB”H segregated Yisrael into four levels of ascent at Har Sinai. This is documented in parshas Yisro (Shemos 19, 24): **“ויאמר אליו ה' לך רד ועלית אתה ואהרן עמך והכהנים והעם אל יהרסו לעלות אל ה' בן יפרוץ בם—Hashem said to him, “Go, descend. Then you shall ascend, you, and Aharon with you, but the kohanim and the people, they shall not destroy (break their formation) to ascend unto Hashem, lest He will make a breach against them.** Rashi provides the following clarification: **One might think that they** (Aharon and the kohanim) **are also “with you”** (on the same level of the mountain). **Hence, the Torah says, “Then you shall ascend”** (you specifically). **Now, you can say that you** (Moshe) **are to be in an area by yourself, and Aharon is to be in an area by himself, and the kohanim are to be in an area by themselves. Moshe approached closer than Aharon; Aharon closer than the kohanim. But the majority of the people “shall not destroy” their positions at all “to ascend unto Hashem.”**

In keeping with our current discussion, we can propose that HKB”H segregated them intentionally into four distinct groups corresponding to the four worlds. Moshe Rabeinu stood in a separate area corresponding to the Torah of **“sod”** in the world of Atzilus; Aharon HaKohen stood alone in an area corresponding to the Torah of **“drash”** in the world of Briah; the kohanim stood by themselves in an area corresponding to the Torah of **“remez”** in the world of Yetzirah; lastly all of Yisrael stood in an area of their own corresponding to the Torah of **“pshat”** in the world of Asiyah.

With this understanding, we can begin to comprehend HKB”H’s remark to Aharon and Miriam extolling the superiority and uniqueness of Moshe’s prophecy (Bamidbar 12, 6): **“ויאמר שמעו נא דברי אם יהיה נביאכם ה’ במראה אליו אתוודע בחלום: אדבר בו, לא כן עבדי משה בכל ביתי נאמן הוא, פה אל פה אדבר בו ומראה ולא יביט.”** He said, **“Please hear My words. If there shall be a navi among you, in a vision shall I make Myself, Hashem, known to him; in a dream, shall I speak with him. Not so is My servant Moshe; in My entire house he is trusted. Mouth to mouth do I speak to him, in a vision and not in riddles, and at the image of Hashem does he gaze.”**

It appears that we can explain the matter based on a teaching of the Arizal’s. He explains that in order to relate to these four worlds and manage them, HKB”H must contract Himself, limit Himself, and express Himself within the ten midos of the world of Atzilus. In the introduction to Sha’ar HaHakdamos, Rabbi Chaim Vital, zy”a, the devoted disciple of the Arizal, describes this phenomenon: **In the world of Atzilus, there HKB”H sits and engages in Torah-study.**

This then is the message conveyed by HKB”H with the remark: **“In a vision shall I make Myself, Hashem, known to him; in a dream, shall I speak with him.”** The prophecies of the other neviim (other than Moshe) appear to them in the terms of the lower worlds. This is not the case with Moshe’s nevuah: **“Not so is My servant Moshe; in My entire house he is trusted.”** “My house” refers to the world of Atzilus; there HKB”H reveals Himself. Moshe is the only navi privy to prophecy emanating from there without any modification: **“Mouth to mouth do I speak to him, in a vision and not in riddles, and at the image of Hashem does he gaze.”** This is also the implication of the passuk (Devarim 34, 10): **“ולא קם נביא עוד בישראל כמושה אשר ידעו: ה’ פנים אל פנים—never again has their arisen a prophet in Yisrael like Moshe, whom Hashem had known face to face—without any masks or disguises.**

### **“This is the matter that Hashem has commanded” Corresponds to All Four Aspects of the Torah**

We will now address the opening passuk of this week’s parsha, parshas Mattos: **“וידבר משה אל ראשי המטות לבני ישראל: לאמר, זה הדבר אשר צוה ה’**

**tribes of Bnei Yisrael, saying, “This is the matter that Hashem has commanded.”** Rashi explained that all of the other neviim prophesied with the formula **“So said Hashem”**; whereas Moshe also prophesied with the formula **“This is the matter that Hashem has commanded.”** As we have learned, at Matan Torah, Moshe merited a private area of his own; he alone ascended Har Sinai to attain the Torah of “sod” in the world of Atzilus. This enabled him to perceive his nevuah and deliver it precisely as it was given to him by HKB”H in the world of Atzilus—without any modifications. This is the significance of the formula: **“This is the matter that Hashem has commanded.”**

The prophecies of the other neviim, however, were generally forms of rebuke, exhorting Yisrael to abide by the precepts of the Torah. They delivered nevuah in terms of “pshat,” the simple, literal terms understood in the world of Asiyah. Clearly, they were not entitled to use the formula **“This is the matter that Hashem has commanded,”** because they were not on Moshe Rabeinu’s spiritual level; they did not merit perceiving nevuah as it emanated from the world of Atzilus—without any distortions or modifications. Hence, they prophesied exclusively with the formula **“So said Hashem,”** indicating that their nevuah did not mirror the word of HKB”H precisely as it emanated from the world of Atzilus. On the contrary, it was distilled to the level and terms of “pshat” in the world of Asiyah. This is the difference between the two formulas of nevuah: **“כה”** implies that the nevuah being delivered is only a semblance—a modified representation—of the original word of Hashem; it is not **“זה הדבר”—the actual, unadulterated word of Hashem.**

This explains beautifully why Moshe Rabeinu employed both formulas of nevuah; sometimes he prophesied with **“כה אמר ה’”** and sometimes he prophesied with **“זה הדבר אשר צוה ה’”**. When his nevuah and words of Torah were directed to the general populace of Yisrael, he employed the formula **“So said Hashem.”** In those circumstances, it was essential that he employ the methodology of “pshat,” to ensure that they would understand the matter. As we explained above, after HKB”H reviewed the Torah four times, with each of the four methods of exegesis respectively, he embedded the Torah within the letters before us today with the methodology of “pshat.” So, when Moshe said, **“So said**

**Hashem,**” he was indeed conveying the words of HKB”H to the people but only after they had been modified, as indicated by the term **”כה”**.

When he addressed the leaders of Yisrael, however, who were men of stature and on a higher spiritual level, he prophesied with the formula **”This is the matter that Hashem commanded.”** Due to their increased kedushah, they were able to perceive the source of the Torah emanating from the world of Atzilus. In other words, he transmitted the full gamut of the Torah, encompassing all four methods of exegesis, from the bottom rung in the world of Asiyah to the top rung in the world of Atzilus. Thus, they ultimately

perceived **”the matter that Hashem commanded”** without any modifications.

This distinction is implicit in the words of the passuk: **”Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes of Bnei Yisrael, saying, ”This is the matter that Hashem has commanded.”** Here Moshe specifically addressed the leaders of Yisrael, men of stature capable of a higher level of comprehension. Hence, he employed the formula **”זו הדבר אשר צוה ה’—this is the matter that Hashem commanded.** He delivered all four aspects of the Torah to them, so that they might perceive Hashem’s command without any modification.



Our thanks and blessings are given to those who donated for the publication of our weekly dvar Torah for the merit of **אחינו בני ישראל**

Family Madeb - לעילוי נשמת  
their dear mother  
Lea bat Virgini ע”ה

Arthur & Randi Luxenberg לזכות  
of their wonderfull parents, children and grandchildren  
לעילוי נשמת His Father ר’ יצחק יהודה בן ר’ אברהם ע”ה

To receive the mamarim by email: [mamarim@shvileipinchas.com](mailto:mamarim@shvileipinchas.com)