



“And I shall speak with you from atop the Kapores from between the two keruvim” In Every Generation the Voice of Hashem Goes Out from the Heavenly Beis HaMikdash to Moshe Rabeinu Who Influences All Those Who Study Torah

On the upcoming, auspicious Shabbas Kodesh, we will read parshas Terumah. It is the Shabbas preceding the seventh of Adar, the day on which we commemorate the passing away of Moshe Rabeinu. Thus, it is fitting that we establish a connection between this week's parsha and the greatness and kedushah of this loyal shepherd. Let us cite a teaching in the Gemara concerning the lot--“pur”—cast by Haman HaRasha (Megillah 13b): **“תנא כיון שנפל: פור בחודש אדר שמח שמחה גדולה, אמר נפל לי פור בירח שמת בו משה, ולא היה יודע שבשבעה באדר מת ובשבעה באדר נולד.”** The wicked Haman was extremely pleased and happy when the lot fell out on the month of Adar. He reasoned that it was fortuitous that the lot fell out on the month in which Moshe died. He did not realize, however, that Moshe not only died on the seventh of Adar, but he was also born on the seventh of Adar.

The commentaries, such as the Ma'or Einayim, note that in this statement, our blessed sages mention the day of death before the day of birth. This is odd, seeing as a person's birth precedes his death. They should have said: **“He (Haman) did not realize that he (Moshe) was born on the seventh of Adar, and he also died on the seventh of Adar:”**

In his own inimitable way, the Ma'or Einayim explains this oddity based on a teaching in the Tikunei Zohar (Tikun 69) related to the passuk (Tehillim 144, 15): **“אשרי העם שככה לו: בגימטריא מש”ה... והתפשטותו היא בכל דור ודור, בכל צדיק וחכם שמתעסק בתורה עד שישים רבוא.”** **“Praiseworthy is the people for whom this is so”— has the same numerical value (gematria) as Moshe . . . his spirit pervades every generation, in every tzaddik and scholar who engages**

in Torah-study, until 600,000. We can now explain why Chazal mention Moshe's death prior to his birth. It is because even after he passed away, his influence lives on in the Torah-scholars of every subsequent generation. This is the gist of his sacred remarks.

Moshe Continues His Sacred Role from the Heavens

It appears that we can expand on this notion by introducing an exposition in the Gemara (Sotah 13b) related to the passuk (Devarim 34, 5): **“וימת שם משה עבד ה', לא מת משה, כתיב הכא וימת שם, וכתיב התם ויהי שם עם ה' מה להלך עומד ומשמש, אף כאן עומד ומשמש.”** **“And Moshe, the servant of Hashem, died there” . . . And some say: Moshe did not die. It is written here: “And he died there”; and it is written there (Shemos 34, 28): “He remained there with Hashem (for forty days and forty nights).” Just as there, he was standing and serving; so, too, here, (he did not die) he is standing and serving.**

I was struck by a wonderful idea concerning the comparison made in this passage. Referring to this week's parsha, we find that HKB”H chose to communicate with Moshe from in between the two keruvim (ibid. 25, 18):

“ועשית שנים כרובים זהב, מקשה תעשה אותם משני קצות הכפורת, ועשה כרוב אחד מקצה מזה וכרוב אחד מקצה מזה... והיו הכרובים פורשי כנפים למעלה סוככים בכנפיהם על הכפורת ופניהם איש אל אחיו... ונתת את הכפורת על הארון מלמעלה, ואל הארון תתן את העדות אשר אתן אליך, ונועדתי לך שם ודברתי אתך מעל הכפורת מבין שני הכרובים אשר על ארון העדות את כל אשר אצוה אותך אל בני ישראל.”

You shall make two “keruvim” (cherubim) of gold—beaten shall you make them—from both ends of the lid. You shall make one “keruv” from this end and one “keruv” from this end . . . The “keruvim” shall be with wings spread upward, sheltering the lid with their wings with their faces toward one another . . . You shall place the lid on the Aron from above, and into the Aron you shall put the Testimony that I shall give you. It is there that I shall arrange audience with you, and I shall speak with you from atop the lid, from between the two “keruvim” that are on the Aron of the Testimony, and it is all that I shall command you pertaining to Bnei Yisrael.

Rashi comments (Shemos 25, 22): **“And I shall speak to you from atop the Kapores.” Yet, elsewhere it says, “And Hashem spoke to him from the Ohel Mo’ed saying.” This refers to the section of the Mishkan that was outside the parochet (whereas the Aron with the keruvim was behind the parochet). Thus, we find that these two pesukim contradict each other. So, a third passuk comes and resolves the discrepancy between them. (Bamidbar 7, 89) “And when Moshe would come to Ohel Mo’ed . . . he would hear the voice communicating with him from atop the Kapores, etc.” Moshe would enter the Mishkan; as soon as he came into the entrance, a voice would descend from the heavens to a point between the keruvim, and from there it would go forth and be heard by Moshe in the Ohel Mo’ed.**

Now, we have a well-established principle that everything that is written in the Torah is eternal and is relevant in every single generation. That being the case, what is the lesson that is incumbent upon us to learn from the fact that HKB”H chose to communicate with Moshe from in between the keruvim? Even today, when the Beis HaMikdash has been destroyed on account of our iniquities, and we do not have an Aron with the two keruvim spreading their wings on its lid, it must still be relevant to us!

In the Ohel Mo’ed HKB”H Returned to Teach Yisrael the Torah

We will begin to shed some light on the subject by focusing on the words: **“And it is all that I shall command you pertaining to Bnei Yisrael.”** This is seemingly difficult to comprehend. After all, HKB”H already transmitted the entire

Torah to Moshe during the forty days and forty nights that he was on Har Sinai. So, what are the commands that HKB”H would now be communicating to Moshe from in between the two keruvim pertaining to Bnei Yisrael?

The answer is simple. For, we have learned in the Gemara (Chagigah 6a): **“רבי ישמעאל אומר כללות נאמרו בסיני ופרטות באהל מועד, ורבי עקיבא אומר כללות נאמרו בסיני ופרטות באהל מועד.”** Rabbi Yishmael says: **The general principles (of the mitzvos) were transmitted (to Moshe) at Sinai, while the details were transmitted (to him) in the Ohel Mo’ed. But Rabbi Akiva says: Both the general principles and their details were transmitted at Sinai and were reiterated in the Ohel Mo’ed.** According to both opinions, HKB”H reviewed the entire Torah with Moshe Rabeinu in the Ohel Mo’ed via the ethereal voice of Hashem that came forth from in between the two keruvim.

We will now introduce the fascinating words of the Ramban at the beginning of this week’s parsha (Shemos 25, 1). He elaborates on the comparison between the dwelling of the Shechinah on Har Sinai at Matan Torah and the dwelling of the Shechinah in the Mishkan. For, in the Mishkan, the voice of Hashem also came down from the heavens; it entered the Kodosh HaKodashim and came forth from in between the keruvim.

The secret of the Mishkan is that the Glory which rested on Har Sinai (openly) rests on it in a concealed manner. For just as it said there (Shemos 24, 16): “And the glory of Hashem rested on Har Sinai” . . . so it is written of the Mishkan (ibid. 40, 34): “And the glory of Hashem filled the Mishkan.” . . . Thus, the glory that appeared to them at Har Sinai was always present with Yisrael in the Mishkan. And when Moshe entered, the divine utterance came to him just as it was spoken to him on Har Sinai.

Thus, just as it is said at Matan Torah (Devarim 4, 36): “From heaven, He made you hear His voice that He might instruct you; and on earth, He showed you His great fire.” So, too, of the Mishkan it is written (Bamidbar 7, 89): “He heard the voice speaking to him from atop the Kapores from between the two keruvim; and He spoke to him. The expression “and He spoke to him” is mentioned twice to convey that which they taught in kabbalah—that the voice would come from heaven to Moshe from atop the Kapores, and from there, He spoke with him. For, every

divine utterance with Moshe came from heaven during the day and was heard from between the two keruvim. In the manner of (Devarim 4, 36): “And you heard His words from amidst the fire” . . . Now, if one looks carefully at the pesukim mentioned at Matan Torah, and understands what we have written about them, will comprehend the secret (relationship) of the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdash.

The Keruvim Faced Each Other like Two Fellows Studying Torah

Following this line of reasoning, we will proceed to explain how the voice of Hashem emanating from between the two keruvim is eternal and present in every generation. Let us refer to the commentary of the Ba'al HaTurim: שנים כרובים וגו'—**the two keruvim faced each other like two friends analyzing words of Torah.** Now, we know that the Aron of the Covenant represents the Torah, since it housed the two luchos; the Aseres HaDibros which were transmitted by HKB”H to Yisrael at Matan Torah were inscribed on the luchos.

Therefore, we find the following teaching in the Midrash (S.R. 34, 2) in relation to the passuk (Shemos 25, 10): ויעשו ארון עצי שטים, מפני מה בכל הכלים כתיב ויעשית' ובארון כתיב ויעשו ארון. אמר להם הקב"ה, יבואו הכל ויעסקו בארון, כדי שיזכו כולם לתורה. With regards to all of the other vessels in the Mishkan, it says ויעשית'—**and “you” shall make**—in the singular; however, regarding the construction of the Aron, it says ויעשו"—**and “they” shall make.** HKB”H was indicating to Moshe that everyone should participate in the building of the Aron, so that they would all merit the gift of Torah. This explains very nicely why HKB”H wanted them to fashion two keruvim to sit on top of the Aron. They represented two fellows facing each other and discussing words of Torah. HKB”H wants all Jews to study and cherish the Torah.

Furthermore, this was HKB”H’s rationale for resting His Shechinah between the two keruvim. This teaches us that HKB”H rests His Shechinah between two scholars studying Torah, who resemble the two keruvim. This concurs with the following teaching (Berachos 6a): וימנין לשנים שיושבין ועוסקין בתורה ששכינה עמהם, שנאמר (מלאכי ג-טז) אז נדברו יראי ה' איש אל רעהו. From where do we know that two people who are sitting and studying Torah (together) that the

Shechinah is with them? For, it says (Malachi 3, 16): “Then those who fear Hashem spoke to one another, and Hashem listened, etc.”

This is also taught by the following exposition in the Gemara (Berachos 63b) related to the passuk (Devarim 27, 9): “הסכת ושמע ישראל, עשו כתות כתות ועסקו בתורה, לפי שאין התורה נקנית אלא בחבורה, כדרבי יוסי ברבי חנינא, דאמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא, מאי דכתיב חרב אל הבדים וגואלו, חרב על שונאיהם של תלמידי חכמים שיושבים בד בבד. The word “הסכת” teaches that you must form groups (a play on the word “haskeit”: “asu kitot”) upon groups to engage in Torah-study. For Torah is only acquired in groups. This accords with the words of Rabbi Yossi the son of Rabbi Chanina. For Rabbi Yossi the son of Rabbi Chanina said: What is the meaning of that which is written (Yirmiyah 50, 36): “There will be a sword against those who are alone, ‘v’noalu”? There will be a sword against the enemies of those Torah scholars who each sit alone and engage in Torah-study.

It appears that these comments of the Ba'al HaTurim were the basis for what the Chasam Sofer, zy”a, teaches in Toras Moshe in the name of his mentor and Rav, the brilliant Rabbi Nasan Adler, zy”a, in relation to the details of the Aron: The Aron represents the Torah; the two keruvim facing each other represent two Torah-scholars. They faced the Kapores indicating that they sought the truth concerning that which is written on the luchos (housed beneath the Kapores). The two staves represent those who support those who study Torah. But in truth (Sotah 35a), the Aron carries those who carry it. Although it appears that they are supporting and financing the Torah-scholars. In reality, the opposite is true. The entire world is sustained by the study of Torah.

The Beis HaMikdash Below Is Aligned with the Beis HaMikdash Above

Let us continue on this sacred pilgrimage. We will now elaborate on the comparison the Gemara makes between Moshe Rabeinu standing before HKB”H for forty days on Har Sinai and the fact that he continues this service of Hashem even after having passed away. We will rely on a precious, illuminating teaching from our holy master, Rabbi Yehoshua of Belz, zy”a. He reconciles a contradiction in Rashi considering the Beis HaMikdash down on earth.

In parshas Beshalach, in Shiras HaYam, Moshe Rabeinu prays (Shemos 15, 17): **”תביאמו ותטעמו בהר נחלתך מכון לשבתך—פעלת ה' מקדש ה' כוננו ידיך”**—**You will bring them and implant them on the mount of Your heritage, a foundation for Your dwelling-place that You, Hashem, have made—a Sanctuary, my Lord, that Your hands established.** Here Rashi comments on the words **”מכון לשבתך”**: **The earthly Mikdash is aligned with the Heavenly Throne which You made.** He insinuates that the Beis HaMikdash below on earth is aligned with the Beis HaMikdash above in the heavens.

However, in parshas Mishpatim, it says (ibid. 23, 20): **”הנה: אנכי שולח מלאך לפניך לשמורך בדרך ולהביאך אל המקום אשר הכינתי”**—**behold! I am sending a malach before you to protect you on the way, and to bring you to the place that I have prepared.** Here Rashi comments: **Its Midrashic interpretation is “to the place which I have already prepared,” My place is already (recognizable) opposite it. This is one of the pesukim that states that the Heavenly Beis HaMikdash is directly aligned with the earthly Beis HaMikdash.** Why does Rashi alter his wording? In the latter, he states that the Beis HaMikdash above is aligned with the Beis HaMikdash below, whereas in the former, he states that the Beis HaMikdash below is aligned with the Beis HaMikdash above.

Rabbi Yehoshua of Belz provides a wonderful explanation. When HKB”H decided to build the Beis HaMikdash on Har HaMoriah, He decided to first build the heavenly Beis HaMikdash to align with Har HaMoriah. Thus, when Yisrael were privileged to receive the kedushah of the Beis HaMikdash on Har HaMoriah in the times of Shlomo HaMelech, it was aligned with the Beis HaMikdash above that already existed.

After the churban of the Beis HaMikdash, and Yisrael were exiled from place to place, even though they were deprived of the kedushah of the Beis HaMikdash on Har HaMoriah; nevertheless, they still had Batei Kenesses and Batei Midrash. These houses of prayer and study halls possess a semblance of the kedushah of the Beis HaMikdash. The Gemara (Megillah 29a), expounding on the passuk (Yechezkel 11, 16), expresses this fact as follows: **”ואהי להם למקדש מעט, אמר רבי יצחק אלו בתי—”****Yet, I have been for them a ‘Mikdash m’aht’ (a miniature Sanctuary).”** **Rabbi Yitzchak said: These are the synagogues and study halls in Bavel.** Therefore, on account of HKB”H’s great love of Yisrael, (when

Yisrael are in galus) He moves the heavenly Beis HaMikdash from its original abode, so to speak, so that it will always be aligned with the miniature sanctuaries where Yisrael pray and study Torah.

In Times of Galus the Heavenly Beis HaMikdash Is Aligned with Batei Kenesses and Batei Midrash

We can now better appreciate Rashi’s incredible profundity. In parshas Beshalach, he states that the earthly Beis HaMikdash is aligned with the heavenly Beis HaMikdash. This accords with Moshe Rabeinu’s tefilah in Shiras HaYam: **”תביאמו ותטעמו בהר נחלתך מכון לשבתך פעלת ה' מקדש ה' כוננו ידיך”**—**that Yisrael should be deserving to have the Beis HaMikdash in its proper location on Har HaMoriah, in Eretz Yisrael.** Therefore, Rashi comments on the words **”מכון לשבתך”**: **The earthly Mikdash is aligned with the Heavenly Throne which You made.** This implies that when Bnei Yisrael would ultimately enter the land and erect the Beis HaMikdash on Har HaMoriah, it would be aligned with the Beis HaMikdash in the heavens.

Parshas Mishpatim, however, depicts periods of time when Yisrael would sin and be exiled from Eretz Yisrael. As Rashi explains: **”Behold! I am sending a malach before you.” Here they (Yisrael) were informed that were destined to sin (with the “cheit ha’eigel”), and the Shechinah would then say to them, “For, I will not ascend in your midst.”** Hence, regarding the words **”to the place which I have already prepared,”** Rashi says **that the Heavenly Beis HaMikdash is directly aligned with the earthly Beis HaMikdash.** In other words, HKB”H was consoling them. He was informing them that even though they would sin and be exiled from Eretz Yisrael, nevertheless, due to His infinite “rachamim” and kindness, He would keep the Beis HaMikdash above aligned with the semblances of the Beis HaMikdash below—the Batei Kenesses and Batei Midrash.

In this light, we can begin to appreciate the deeper significance of the description **”Mikdash m’aht.”** Why is it vital that HKB”H move the heavenly Beis HaMikdash around and keep it aligned with the Batei Kenesses and Batei Midrash? Because, in this manner, the kedushah of the heavenly Beis HaMikdash imparts its kedushah to those on earth who study Torah and offer their tefilos. They are imbued with a semblance of the kedushah of the actual Beis HaMikdash.

This coincides very nicely with that which we learned in the Gemara (Berachos 26b): רבי יהושע בן לוי אמר תפלות כנגד תמידין: "רבני יהושע בן לוי אמר תפלות כנגד תמידין"—**Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: The tefilos were instituted to correspond to the (daily) "Tamid" offerings.** Shacharis corresponds to the morning korban "tamid"; Minchah corresponds to the afternoon korban "tamid"; Arvis corresponds to the limbs and fats that remained unconsumed by the mizbeiach during the day and were sacrificed throughout the night. Therefore, by drawing kedushah from the heavenly Beis HaMikdash, our tefilos achieve the status of "Tamid" offerings in the Beis HaMikdash.

The Voice of Hashem Emanates from between the Keruvim in the Heavenly Beis HaMikdash

Now, with sincere reverence and love, I dare propose a novel interpretation of HKB"H's statement to Moshe Rabeinu: ונועדתי לך שם ודברתי אתך מעל הכפורת מבין שני הכרובים אשר על ארון—**it is there that I shall arrange audience with you, and I shall speak with you from atop the lid, from between the two "keruvim" that are on the Aron of the Testimony, and it is all that I shall command you pertaining to Bnei Yisrael.** We already presented above the explanations of Rabbi Yishmael and Rabbi Akiva in the Gemara. They taught us that HKB"H reiterated all that he had taught Moshe Rabeinu on Har Sinai, so that Moshe would now teach the Torah to all of Yisrael. We also presented the insight of the Ramban: **The voice would come from heaven to Moshe from atop the Kapores, and from there, He spoke with him. For, every divine utterance with Moshe came from heaven during the day and was heard from between the two keruvim.**

Thus, it is not so far-fetched to suggest that the voice of Hashem that came to Moshe Rabeinu from above actually originated from between the two keruvim that stood atop the Aron in the heavenly Beis HaMikdash. It descended from there to the earthly Beis HaMikdash and emanated from between the two keruvim below to Moshe Rabeinu. He then taught everything that he learned directly from HKB"H in the earthly Beis HaMikdash to all of Yisrael.

With this understanding, we can begin to comprehend how this promise applies to every generation of Jews: **It is there that I shall arrange audience with you, and I shall**

speak with you from atop the lid, from between the two "keruvim" that are on the Aron of the Testimony, and it is all that I shall command you pertaining to Bnei Yisrael. Additionally, according to the Ba'al HaTurim, the two keruvim "faced each other" in the same manner that two fellows debating a point of Torah face each other.

This then is the implication of the promise that HKB"H promised Moshe Rabeinu. This would hold true in every generation, even after the churban, even when Yisrael were dispersed among the nations of the world. Whenever two Torah-scholars study and debate points of Torah—facing each other like the two keruvim—HKB"H convenes with Moshe Rabeinu. Thus, Moshe Rabeinu hears His voice emanating from the heavenly Beis HaMikdash from between the two keruvim. He can then teach those studying Torah novel interpretations and insights.

"Moshe would speak and G-d would respond to him in a voice"

It is with great pleasure that we will now extend what we have learned to a passuk related to Matan Torah (Shemos 19, 19): "ויהי קול השופר הולך וחזק מאד משה ידבר והאלקים יענגו בקול"—**the sound of the shofar grew continually much stronger; Moshe would speak and G-d would respond to him in voice.** In Beis Aharon (end of parshas Yisro), the great Rabbi Aharon of Karlin, zy"a, comments:

"משה ידבר, דיבר אין כתיב כאן, רק ידבר בלשון עתיד, כי עתיד הוא בכל דור ודור לדבר עם כל אחד ואחד, לכל מי שבא לטהר ולקבל עליו עול תורה מדבר משה עמו. והאלקים יענגו בקול, להכניס הקול בהדיבור ולייחד הקול עם הדיבור והמוחשבה, וצריכין מאד לשמוח בקבלת התורה, כי כל אחד ואחד מקבל לפי כוחו וערכו, וצריך להאמין כי בוודאי עתה ישוב מאיוולתו ויזדכך ויהיה זך."

The passuk does not say "Moshe spoke" but rather "will speak," in the future tense. This indicates that he is destined to speak with every individual in every generation. Moshe will speak with anyone who wishes to refine himself and accept upon himself the yoke of Torah. "And G-d will respond to him in a voice," imbuing the spoken words and thoughts with the divine voice. Thus, we should rejoice when we receive these teachings and insights, since each person receives according to his own individual strengths and abilities. Therefore, every person should rest assured that he will be able to recover from his foolishness and be refined.

Let us explain what he means in keeping with our current discussion. The passuk says (Devarim 5, 19): **את הדברים האלה**—**דיבר ה' אל כל קהלכם בהר מתוך האש העגן והערפל קול גדול ולא יסף**—**these words Hashem spoke to your entire congregation on the mountain, from the midst of the fire, the cloud and the fog—a powerful voice that was never-ending.** Rashi interprets the end of this passuk as the Targum does: **“קל רב ולא פסק”**—a powerful voice that never ceases. Rashi concludes: **“כי קולו חזק וקיים לעולם”**—**for, His voice is strong and lasts forever.** The words of HKB”H are eternal, constant and do not stop even for a second. This is also the implication of the passuk: **“The sound of the shofar grew continually much stronger.”** The sound of HKB”H’s shofar sounded at Matan Torah never ceased; it continues and gets stronger with every new generation. Why? Because **“Moshe will speak”**—he continues to teach Yisrael Torah in every generation; he never stopped. Why? Because **“G-d would respond to him in voice”**—the voice of HKB”H urges him to transmit what he has learned to those who exert themselves and toil in the study of Torah.

Let us now revisit the excerpt from the Gemara introduced at the beginning of this essay: **“And Moshe, the servant of Hashem, died there.” . . . And some say: Moshe did not die. It is written here: “And he died there”; and it is written**

there: “He remained there with Hashem (for forty days and forty nights).” **Just as there, he was standing and serving; so, too, here, (he did not die) he is standing and serving.** Based on what we have learned, this means that just as Moshe Rabeinu learned the entire Torah from the mouth of HKB”H at Matan Torah, so that he could teach it to Yisrael; so, too, after he passed away, he continued to serve HKB”H in the same manner. He continues to learn Torah from the voice of Hashem emanating from between the two keruvim in the heavenly Beis HaMikdash.

This enlightens us as to the statement of Chazal regarding Haman: **A Baraisa taught: When the lot fell on the month of Adar, he (Haman) was extremely happy. He thought, “The lot fell for me on the month in which Moshe died.” He did not realize, however, that while he (Moshe) died on the seventh of Adar, he was also born on the seventh of Adar.** Our blessed sages intentionally mentioned the day of death before the day of birth. They wished to convey to us the fact that after he passed away from Olam HaZeh, he was reborn in the heavenly world above, so that he could continue his sacred service. He continued to hear the fiery, inspirational voice of Hashem emanating from between the two keruvim urging him to influence all Torah scholars, facing each other like the two keruvim, with his Torah.



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