

Devarim

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Light points

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE ON THE
WEEKLY TORAH PORTION

Lightpoints
לזיכרון ולעילוי נשמת
הרה"ח הרה"ת
הר"ר ישעי' זושא
ב"ר אברהם דוד ע"ה ווילהעלם
גלב"ע ביום ד' שבט ה'תשפ"ב
תנצב"ה



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דברים

Devarim

1:1 | 8:8

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל כל ישראל

*These are the words that Moshe spoke to all Israel.**Filtered, Not Altered*

Although the Book of Devarim is the word of G-d just as the other four books of the Torah are, we are told that Moshe transmitted it differently to Bnei Yisrael. In the first four books, “Moshe spoke on behalf of the Almighty,” but in the book of Devarim, “Moshe spoke in his own name”—“by Divine inspiration.”¹

This means that in the first four books, Moshe served merely as a messenger to transcribe G-d’s words and convey them to Bnei Yisrael as he received them.² Due to the Torah’s inherent transcendence of creation³—the finite, mortal mind

1. Megillah 31b; see Tosafos ad loc.

2. See Rashi, Megillah ibid.

3. See Bereishis Rabbah 8:2.

included—if G-d had transmitted all of the Torah in this manner, then anything we might ever grasp from the Torah would at best *reflect* the Divine truth, but inherently could not be the essential Divine wisdom, which transcends the created being.

In the Book of Devarim, however, G-d communicated His word to Moshe in a manner that Moshe could internalize, and Moshe in turn “spoke in his own name,” conveying the Divine wisdom that his mind had perceived. Thereby, the Divine wisdom of the Torah itself became graspable by the human mind.

The Book of Devarim is called “*Mishneh Torah*—the repetition of the Torah,”⁴ because it is a review of the previous four books. Since the book of Devarim has the dual quality of being the word of G-d yet “descending” into the realm of human comprehension, by extension, every other part of the Torah has this quality as well.

In addition, since Moshe’s role was to connect *every* member of the Jewish community with G-d,⁵ this became the reality of Torah study for every Jew. By virtue of the Book of Devarim (which “Moshe spoke in his own name,” but is still the word of G-d like the other books of the Torah), any Jew, regardless of his spiritual state or level of comprehension, by studying and comprehending *any* part of the Torah, can ingest the very word of G-d—its divinity neither tainted nor diminished.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 19, pp. 9–12

4. Devarim 17:18.

5. See Devarim 5:5.

 א:ה | 1:5

בְּעֵבֶר תִּירְדֵּן בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב הוֹאִיל מֹשֶׁה
בַּיּוֹם אֵת הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת לֵאמֹר

*On the other side of the Jordan, in the land of Moav,
Moshe began explaining this teaching, saying...*

War of Words

Before his passing, Moshe began to prepare Bnei Yisrael for their entry into the Land of Israel by recounting all that they had experienced during their 40 years in the desert. The Torah adds that, as part of this address, Moshe “explained this teaching.” Rashi interprets this to mean that he taught Bnei Yisrael the Torah in 70 languages.

Why did Moshe translate the Torah at this point? Bnei Yisrael were about to begin their conquest of the land of Canaan, a process that would involve seven years of battle and another seven years dedicated to dividing and settling the land. Why did Moshe find it necessary to translate the Torah specifically now, as Bnei Yisrael prepared to enter this phase?

By translating the Torah, Moshe was carrying out a crucial component of Bnei Yisrael’s conquest of the seven nations who occupied the Land of Israel. For everything in the physical world has a spiritual source, and any change that takes place on the physical plane must first be executed in a spiritual sense. According to Kabbalah, the seven nations who occupied the land of Canaan represented the 70 original nations of humanity and contained their spiritual source. Moshe’s translation of the Torah, which breached the language barrier between the Torah and the 70 nations, constituted a spiritual

victory for the Torah over any opposition it faced from the other nations of the world. Only once Moshe had achieved a spiritual victory over the nations could Bnei Yisrael succeed in defeating them physically.

—*Sichos Kodesh 5730, vol. 1, pp. 358–359*

 1:6 | 1:8

ה' ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ דִּבֶּר אֵלֵינוּ בְּחֹרֵב לֵאמֹר רַב לָכֶם שְׁבֹת בְּהַר הַזֶּה

Hashem, our G-d, spoke to us in Chorev, saying, "Your stay at this mountain has been much for you."

Being Productive isn't Enough

As Bnei Yisrael prepared to enter the Land of Israel, Moshe recounted the experiences that had brought them to that point. He began by reminding them that if not for the episode of the spies, G-d would have brought them into the Land of Israel 39 years earlier: "Hashem, our G-d, spoke to us at Chorev (Mount Sinai), saying, 'Your stay at this mountain has been plenty for you. Turn away and journey... Go in and possess the land that G-d promised to your fathers.'"

Rashi explains that the phrase "Your stay has been much" can be understood literally. That is to say, "Not only has your stay been sufficient, it has already been excessive."⁶ In other words, G-d so strongly desired to hasten Bnei Yisrael's arrival at the Land of Israel that He regarded their stay at Mount Sinai as *too long*.

Granted, their eleven months at Mount Sinai were not wasted. In addition to receiving the Torah and growing in their knowledge and understanding of its precepts throughout their stay, their very residence at the foot of the mountain reminded them constantly of the extraordinary Divine revelation they had witnessed there. Nevertheless, G-d's desire for them to

6. See Rashi's comments on Bamidbar 16:3 regarding a similar phrase.

proceed to the Promised Land was so great that He regarded any additional time spent at Sinai as excessive.

From here we understand the extent to which the Torah demands constant advancement in our service of G-d. “Your stay has been much!” No matter how admirable our current spiritual state may be, for a Jew to “stay put” is unnecessary and undesirable; even the slightest pause in growth is already too much.

—*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 24, pp. 14–18*

1:8 | א:ח

רָאָה נָתַתִּי לְפָנֶיכֶם אֶת הָאָרֶץ בְּאֵז וּרְשׁוֹ אֶת
הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע ה' לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק
וּלְיַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר לְתֶת לָהֶם וּלְזֶרְעָם אַחֲרֵיהֶם

*See, I have given the land before you; come and possess
the land that G-d swore to your forefathers, to Avraham,
to Yitzchak and to Yaakov, to give them and their
descendants after them.*

Jewish Nationality

Moshe reminded Bnei Yisrael that if not for the episode of the spies, G-d would have brought them into the Land of Israel 39 years earlier. “Hashem, our G-d, spoke to us at Chorev (Mount Sinai), saying, ‘Your stay at this mountain has been much for you. Turn away and journey... Come and possess the land that G-d promised to your fathers.’”

According to one explanation offered by Rashi, the phrase “Your stay at this mountain has been much for you” alludes to the spiritual wealth that Bnei Yisrael accumulated at Mount Sinai.

“Your residence at this mountain has brought you significant greatness and reward. You built the Mishkan, the menorah and other furnishings; you received the Torah; you appointed a Sanhedrin for yourselves...”

This explanation complements the simple meaning of the phrase, which is that G-d regarded Bnei Yisrael’s continued stay at Mount Sinai as excessive because He was eager for them to advance and enter the Promised Land. For unlike other nations, which are formed when a group of people take

possession of a particular territory and inhabit it, Jewish nationality is defined by our spiritual identity as “a holy nation,”⁷ in reward for which G-d grants us the Land of Israel. Thus, the spiritual “much” that Bnei Yisrael amassed at Mount Sinai led directly to G-d’s eagerness to bring them into the Land.

Moreover, the verse continues, “Come and possess the land!” As Rashi explains, this means, “No one will contest the matter, and you will not need to go to war.”⁸ For in the words of the Midrash, “G-d chose the Land of Israel as His portion... and the Jewish people as His portion... It is befitting that His portion inherit in His portion.”⁹ Therefore, having established themselves as a holy nation through the spiritual wealth they acquired at Mount Sinai, Bnei Yisrael were ready to enter the Land unopposed, and to easily take possession of the land that was essentially theirs.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 24, pp. 14–19

7. Shemos 19:6.

8. Devarim 1:8.

9. Tanchuma, Re’eh 8.

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