

PENINEI MEHKERE ERES

פניני מחקרי ארץ

HaRav HaGaon Rachamim Moshe Shayo Shlit"a

פרשת דברים תשפ"ו



ה' אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵכֶם יִסַּף עָלֵיכֶם כָּכֶם אֶלֶף פַּעַמִּים וַיְבָרֶךְ
 אֶתְכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לָכֶם

"May Hashem, the G-d of your fathers, increase you a thousand-fold, and bless you as He has spoken to you." (1:11)

Moshe Rabbenu effusively blesses the Jewish people in this *pasuk*. It is a beautiful blessing, but its placement is very curious. The entire *parashah* is devoted to *tochacha* — Moshe Rabbenu's reproof to the nation — yet here, suddenly, Moshe blesses them. This *pasuk* would seem to belong more naturally in *Parashat Vezot Haberachah* among the blessings Moshe bestowed before his passing.

The *Midrash* asks this question and explains that the blessing was a result of the rebuke. The people took the rebuke to heart and felt ashamed, and for this, they merited blessing. We see from this how great is the power of *tochacha* — for when a person accepts rebuke, he merits to be blessed; but one who rejects *tochacha* is not worthy of blessing. This aligns with the phenomenon of spiritual matters described by our *Chachamim* (*Berachot* 40a; *Sukkah* 46a): "A full vessel holds; an empty vessel does not hold." A vessel filled with *tochacha* is capable of holding blessing — but one who pushes away rebuke, "אִי־יִדִי דְפִלִיט לֹא בִלַע", "since he expels, he cannot absorb." He becomes hollow, and can no longer contain blessing, for he has trained himself to reject whatever comes his way, and so he lacks the capacity to receive.

Along these lines, the grandson of Rabbi Akiva Eiger, *zatzal* — the *Admor* of Lublin, Rabbi Leib Eiger, *zatzal* — asks why Moshe blessed them with the specific formulation "יִסַּף עָלֵיכֶם כָּכֶם" "may Hashem increase you as you are..." What is the meaning and necessity of the word כָּכֶם? He explains that it refers to children and the blessing was that your children should be like you. Why did Moshe go out of his way, so to speak, to include their children in the blessing? He was not merely blessing them with the same reward as their parents, but rather that they too should possess this admirable quality of being receptive to *tochacha*.

A second approach to understanding the placement of this *pasuk* arises from the *sefer Tiferet Shlomo* of the *Admor* Rabbi Shlomo of Radomsk. He writes that at the time of the sin of the Golden Calf, the Jewish people forfeited a thousand levels of spiritual greatness that had been theirs. In light of this, Moshe blessed them with the words "ה' אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם יִסַּף עָלֵיכֶם כָּכֶם אֶלֶף פַּעַמִּים" meaning "may Hashem restore to you the 1000 levels you lost through the sin of the Golden Calf." Based on this, we can suggest that Moshe Rabbenu intended to rebuke them, by way of allusion, for the sin of the Calf

— framing it in the language of blessing: "may Hashem increase you a thousandfold", hinting to them: "consider what you forfeited through the sin of the Calf. For though you stand today as numerous as the stars of the heavens, had you not sinned with the Calf, you would today be a thousandfold greater still." According to this approach, the placement of the *pasuk* in perfect, as its content is indeed rebuke, even as its form is a blessing.

Rashi questions the final phrase of the *pasuk*, "כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לָכֶם" "and He will bless you as He has spoken to you," wondering what this phrase is adding to the blessing Moshe already spelled out.

He explains this blessing, quoting the *Midrash*, that the Jewish people said to Moshe, "Are you placing a limit on our blessing, of a thousandfold? Hashem already promised Abraham with innumerable blessing.

Moshe replied, "This blessing [of a thousandfold] is from me, but Hashem will bless you as He promised you."

This requires explanation. What did Moshe mean by saying, "This blessing is from me"? Surely every blessing comes from Hashem. Even when Moshe blesses the people, he is merely conveying a blessing from Hashem. In what way was this blessing from Moshe himself?

This question is resolved through the teaching of the *Arizal* in *Sha'ar HaKavanot*, in his explanation of the *Shacharit* prayer of *Shabbat*, where we say, "יִשְׂמַח מֹשֶׁה בְּמַתַּנַּת חֵלְקוֹ", "Moshe rejoices in the gift of his portion."

When Moshe Rabbenu ascended *Har Sinai* to receive the Torah, he was granted one thousand portions of spiritual illumination, alluded to by the unusually large letter "א" (which indicates that it should be read with its full name "אלף" which means "one thousand") that appears at the beginning of *Sefer Divre HaYamim* in the words "Adam, Shet, Enosh."

After the sin of the Golden Calf, however, these spiritual lights were removed from him because of the nation's sin. Only a single portion remained, alluded to by the diminished "א" (which indicates that the "א" signifies only its *gematria* value of one) at the beginning of *Sefer Vayikra* in the words "וַיִּקְרָא אֶל מֹשֶׁה".

Since Moshe did not lose these lofty spiritual attainments through any failing of his own, but solely because of the sin of the nation, Hashem restored those thousand portions to him - from the portion that had originally belonged to the nation. These were the very spiritual crowns, ornaments, and illuminations that the Jewish people

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received at *Har Sinai* and forfeited through the sin of the Golden Calf, as the verse states: "ויתנצלו בני ישראל את עדיי מהר חורב" *"The Children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments at Mount Chorev."* Those spiritual crowns then passed to Moshe, making up what he had lost.

The *Arizal* further teaches that every Friday night, as *Shabbat* begins, Moshe once again receives those original thousand portions of light that had belonged to him. He receives them through the additional sanctity of *Shabbat*.

Once Moshe has recovered what is truly his, he immediately returns to the people the spiritual lights that had been taken from their portion. Thus, every *Erev Shabbat* these illuminations are once again bestowed upon the Jewish people through the added holiness of *Shabbat*.

This is the meaning of the phrase, "Moshe rejoices in the gift of his portion." Moshe rejoices because on *Shabbat* he receives back the portion that was originally his and had been lost through no fault of his own.

The *Arizal* concludes by highlighting Moshe *Rabbenu's* extraordinary greatness. Although the spiritual lights and crowns had been transferred to him from the portion of the nation, he was content simply to receive back what rightfully belonged to him. He immediately returned Israel's portion to them, rather than keeping it for himself.

Moshe could easily have argued: "I did not sin. They sinned with the Golden Calf, and because of them I lost what was mine. Why should I now return what was taken from them?" Yet he made no such claim. Instead, he rejoiced in receiving his own portion and then willingly restored theirs, for his sole desire was to bestow merit upon the people.

In light of this, we can understand Moshe's words to the Jewish people:

"May Hashem, the G-d of your forefathers, increase you a thousandfold."

When Moshe added, "This is from me," he meant: These thousandfold blessings come from my own portion. They are the thousand spiritual lights that came into my possession after the sin of the Golden Calf to compensate me for what I lost because of your sin.

Although I was not obligated to return them, once you repent, I will willingly restore to you what has become mine—the thousand spiritual illuminations that I received.

Moshe then continued and reassured them, "My limited blessing to you is not the full extent of the blessing you will receive, for Hashem will bless you as He promised you"—with blessings that are beyond all measure and without limit.

This also explains the statement of our *Chachamim* in *Masechet*

Rosh HaShanah (28b):

From where do we know that when a *Kohen* ascends the *duchan* to bless the Jewish people, he may not say: "הואיל ונתנה לי תורה רשות" — "Since the Torah has given me permission to bless Israel, I will add one blessing of my own," such as: "ה' אלקי אבותיכם יוסף עליכם" — "We learn this from the *pasuk*: "לא תוסיפו על הדבר" — "You shall not add to the command."

This wording requires careful attention. Why does the *Kohen* say, "אוסף ברכה אחת משלי" — "I will add one blessing of my own"? Are not all blessings from Hashem? Indeed, even the example he gives begins with the words "ה' אלקי אבותיכם יוסף עליכם" — "May Hashem, the G-d of your forefathers, increase you."

The explanation is that when Hashem commanded the descendants of Aharon to bless the Jewish people with *Birkat Kohanim*, that blessing already encompasses every possible blessing. Through it, Hashem bestows His blessing upon the Jewish people in its fullest

perfection, culminating with the words "וישם לך שלום" — "May He grant you peace."

What, then, could possibly be added to the blessing of Hashem?

The *Kohen* might reason: It is true that *Birkat Kohanim* contains every blessing that comes from Hashem, but I will add a blessing that originates from me.

Concerning such a *Kohen*, our *Chachamim* teach that he commits a clear transgression. He violates the prohibition of "בל תוסיף"—adding to the Torah's commandments. For in matters of Divine blessing, whoever adds, detracts, since nothing can be added to the blessing that Hashem Himself has established.

Moshe *Rabbenu*, however, did not add an independent blessing of his own to the nation.

Rather, he first declared: "I will return to you the thousand portions that I received from you." He was merely restoring to the Jewish people the thousand spiritual illuminations that had come into his possession after the sin of the Golden Calf.

Only afterward did he conclude:

"ה' אלקי אבותיכם יוסף עליכם... כאשר דיבר לכם"

"May Hashem, the God of your forefathers, increase you... as He has promised you."

That blessing was not Moshe's own addition, but the limitless blessing of Hashem Himself.

Once the Jewish people have been blessed in Hashem's Name, there is nothing further that can be added for the blessings of Hashem have neither boundary nor limit.

May it be Hashem's will that we be worthy to receive His blessings.



This weeks Divrei Torah is dedicated Is dedicated as a Refua Shelema for
Mordichai Ben Rachel
 May he have a full and speedy recovery, Amen.