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Parsha

Devarim

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Gematria on the Parshah: The Language of the Soul

By: Reb Moshe Herskovits



Sefer Devarim is Moshe's final message to Am Yisrael before his passing. The parshah tells us that Moshe began to explain the teachings of the Torah. How did he explain it? Rashi says something mysterious, that he explained it in 70 languages. But if all of Am Yisrael came out of Mitzrayim, and Chazal tells us they never changed their language from Hebrew, what is behind Rashi's explanation that Moshe taught them the Torah in 70 languages?

The number 70 is a special number that appears often throughout the Torah and Chazal. When Yaakov and his family came down to Mitzrayim, they came down as 70 people. The Arizal says this is not a coincidence. He compares souls to trees, teaching that there are 600,000 root souls, which link back to 70 main souls.

The Zohar famously says the Torah has 70 faces, 70 levels of interpretation. Perhaps this is what Rashi is alluding to: when Moshe translated the Torah, he wasn't translating it into other languages, but into the language of each Jewish soul. Remarkably, the gematria of וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה (Moshe said) is 602, exactly the same as שִׁבְעִים פְּנִים (seventy faces), the 70 faces of interpretation. Similarly, the words Rashi comments on, בְּאֵר אֵת (explain), is the gematria of 604, the same as בְּשִׁבְעִים פְּנִים (seventy faces).

What is the lesson for us? When Moshe spoke Torah, he was connecting to the depth of each of the 70 root souls. Just as a father has the deepest love for each child and learns to speak to each one in the language they need, Moshe's words were so filled with love for each Jew that every person felt he was speaking only to them.

Rebbe Nachman explains that there are 70 nations, each with a different yetzer hara, each carrying a different spark inherited from Adam and Chava's sin. Remarkably, the gematria of 70 is exactly אָדָם וְחַוָּה (Adam & Eve). Rebbe Nachman teaches that there are 70 faces of the Torah in order to combat the 70 forms of yetzer hara found among the nations, forces that live not only out in the world but within each of us as well. This is what Moshe was giving over as he translated the Torah: he was guiding each soul on how to overcome the darkness within it.

The Baal Shem Tov says that when a person gives over Torah, he must first focus on Hashem, and then focus on each soul in the room and speak to that soul individually. Moshe spoke the language of each soul. There is a famous story about the Mezritcher Maggid, who had many great and wise students, and remarkably, every time he spoke, each student felt he was speaking only to him.

This is the power of Moshe, and this is the lesson we must learn. Rebbe Nachman says a person must learn to speak the language of every human

being, meaning we must speak to the heart and soul of each person. As the Ateres Tzvi of Zidichov said, whenever he writes, he first dips his pen in his heart, and only then in his ink. To speak the language of another, we must remember that speech is a means of connecting hearts, and that loving words are the secret to penetrating the heart.

I'll conclude with a story. When Rav Mordechai of Lechovitz was young, he was a wild kid. He felt out of place, like no one understood him. When the famous Rebbe Aharon of Karlin came to town, the young man was given a private audience with him. Rav Aharon stood up and held out his arms to embrace Rav Mordechai. They remained in that embrace for thirty minutes. From that moment, Rav Mordechai grew into a legendary Chassidic Rebbe.

Rav Mordechai later said: "My first Chassidish Torah I learned from Rav Aharon of Karlin, and he taught it to me by heart."

For more, check out the **Gematria Torah** channel on YouTube!

Every Journey Has a Name

By: Reb Adam Klasner



Before the Jewish people enter the Land of Israel, Moshe does something unexpected.

He doesn't begin by giving them new mitzvos.

He doesn't speak about the future.

He tells them their story.

He revisits the failures.

The complaints.

The fears.

The missed opportunities.

Why?

Because you cannot step into a new future while living inside an old story.

Every one of us has a narrative that quietly shapes our lives.

"I'm not enough."

"I always mess things up."

"People eventually leave."

"I've always been this way."

The problem is not that we've experienced pain.

The problem is that we've mistaken our experiences for our identity.

Where can I listen more carefully to Hashem's direction?

Moshe wasn't reminding the Jewish people of their past to make them feel guilty.

He was helping them see it clearly, so they would stop carrying it into their future.

There is a profound difference between remembering and reliving.

Remembering brings wisdom.

Reliving keeps us trapped.

Many of us are still reacting to conversations that happened years ago.

Still trying to prove ourselves to people who are no longer in our lives.

Still making decisions based on wounds rather than values.

Parshas Devarim invites us to pause and ask a difficult question:

What story am I still telling myself that Hashem is asking me to outgrow?

Healing does not mean pretending the past never happened.

It means refusing to let the past have the final word.

The Hebrew word Devarim means "words."

Words have the power to build worlds.

The words we repeat to ourselves become the lens through which we experience life.

This Shabbos, perhaps the greatest preparation for redemption is not changing your circumstances.

It is changing the story.

Trade the story of shame for a story of growth.

Trade the story of fear for a story of faith. Trade the story of "this happened to me" for "Hashem has been leading me all along."

Because the moment your story changes, your future begins to change with it.

What Destroys Will Build!

By: Rabbi Avrohom Jacks



Why would the Torah find it important to record a detail about the furniture in a fallen tyrant's bedroom?

In Parshas Devarim, Moses recalls the victory over Og, king of Bashan. Then the verse lingers on a piece of furniture. Og's bed! The Torah says it was made of iron. At first glance, this seems like an unnecessary detail in a grand historical narrative. Why would the book of eternity care about



bedroom décor?

Because swords are made of metal. Og slept on iron because Og was iron. He was the raw, destructive hardness that resists holiness. He was the cruel coldness that says no to the Divine light.

But iron also exists on the side of holiness. Sacred iron represents the unbreakable core of the soul that refuses to surrender its bond with G-d no matter what the world throws at it. Same metal. Different master. In Og, hardness fights against the light. In our souls, hardness guards the light.

The First and Second Temples were built with gold and silver and copper. No iron tool was permitted to touch the Altar, because what shortens life (metal) has no right to shape what lengthens it (the Altar). The Third Temple, the eternal one, will include iron. The very metal once banned from the Altar, the metal that forged the weapons that devastated Jerusalem, will be set into the walls of the rebuilt Temple. The lowest force will become the building blocks of redemption.

So look at your own iron traits. The stubbornness people warn you about. The intensity that sometimes presses too hard. You may have spent years apologizing for it. Stop. That iron was placed in you deliberately. It is waiting for its assignment. The same inflexibility that dug in against change can dig in for your observance of the Torah's commandments. The same combativeness that argued for the sake of arguing can now defend someone who has no one to speak on their behalf.

This week, give your most stubborn trait a holy job. Point it at one commitment and refuse to let go of it. Og's iron bed is a relic of a defeated past. Your iron is destined to build the Temple.

The Strength to Bow

By: Reb Yacov Aboudi



Moshe Rabbeinu says:

אֵיכָה אֶשָּׂא לְבַדִּי שְׂאֵת אֲתֶכֶם
"I cannot carry you alone."

He then pauses to bless the Jewish people:

ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הִרְבָּה אֶתְכֶם, וְהִנֵּה הַיּוֹם כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם
לְרֹב
"Hashem your G-d has multiplied you, and today you are as numerous as the stars of heaven."

Immediately afterward, Moshe returns to the challenge:

אֵיכָה אֶשָּׂא לְבַדִּי טַרְחֶיכֶם וּמִשְׁאָלֶיכֶם וְרִיבֵיכֶם
"How can I alone carry your burdens, your loads, and your disputes?"

The Zera Shimshon asks: Why is this beautiful blessing placed in the middle of Moshe's rebuke? Moshe is speaking about burdens, complaints, and arguments. Why, at that very moment, does he remind the Jewish people that they have been blessed beyond measure?

The Zera Shimshon explains that blessing and abundance flow from holiness. Where there is kedushah, blessing can enter the world. Where there is spiritual blockage, that flow becomes constricted.

But what creates holiness?

The Zera Shimshon connects this idea to the

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verse:

וְאֲנִי בָּרַב חֶסֶדְךָ אָבֹא בֵּיתְךָ, אֲשַׁתְּחֶנָּה אֶל הַיֵּכָל קֹדֶשְׁךָ
בִּירְאָתְךָ
"Through Your abundant kindness I enter Your house; I bow toward Your holy sanctuary in awe of You."

The key is the ability to bow before Hashem.

Bowing is more than a physical act. It is an act of surrender. It is the moment a person recognizes that Hashem is at the centre of the universe, not himself. That humility creates holiness, and holiness creates the conditions for blessing to flow.

The Arizal teaches that tefillah begins with an awakening from below. We raise our longing, our need, and our hearts toward Hashem, and that elevation creates the possibility for a higher flow to descend. In the language of Kabbalah, what rises from below awakens what comes from Above.

Perhaps that is precisely why the blessing appears in the middle of the rebuke.

The blessing was already there.

The abundance was already there.

The shefa was already waiting to flow.

Hashem's desire is always to give.

The question was never whether Heaven was open, but whether we were creating the vessels capable of receiving what was already waiting to descend.

Prayer opens that vessel.

Humility enlarges it.

Trust strengthens it.

Complaint constricts it.

Not because Hashem becomes less willing to give, but because complaint can become a declaration that we know better than the One Who is giving.

Tefillah says:
"Ribbono Shel Olam, this is what I hope for, this is what I need, and this is what I ask of You."

Telunah begins when we move from asking Hashem for blessing to judging the way He has chosen to distribute it.

This speaks directly to the time of year in which we read Parashat Devarim.

The Gemara teaches that the Second Beit Ha-Mikdash was destroyed because of sinat chinam. That generation had Torah, mitzvot, and acts of kindness, but they could not make room for one another.

Everyone had to be right.

Everyone had to win.

No one was willing to bend.

And when nobody bends, eventually everything breaks.

Perhaps this is also the difference between tefill-

ah and telunah.

Both can begin with pain.

Both can begin with disappointment.

Tefillah turns toward Hashem and says:
"Ribbono Shel Olam, I do not understand. Please help me understand, or help me carry this."

Telunah says:

"Ribbono Shel Olam, You should have done this differently."

The Torah never criticizes the Jewish people for praying. It criticizes them for complaints that reflected a lack of trust in the One guiding them through the wilderness.

One bows before Hashem.

The other asks Hashem to bow before us.

In the spirit of Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, the Jewish response to suffering is not silence, denial, or pretending that everything is fine. It is deeper conversation with Hashem.

A Jew does not stop speaking to Hashem when life hurts.

A Jew speaks to Hashem even more.

If your heart is broken, bring the broken pieces to Hashem.

Just do not walk away from the conversation.

Sometimes the blessing is not absent.

Sometimes it is waiting just beyond our willingness to bow.

So perhaps the question for each of us this Shabbat is:

When life does not go according to my plan, do I pull away from Hashem, argue with Hashem, or turn toward Hashem?

Where in my life do I need to stop insisting, begin bending, and make room for something greater than myself?

May we merit the humility to pray without entitlement, to ask without demanding, and to trust even when we do not understand.

Through that humility, may blessing once again flow into our lives, our homes, and all of Klal Yisrael, and may we merit to see the rebuilding of the Beit HaMikdash **במהרה בימינו**.

Shabbat Shalom.



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