

Ki Sisa 2016

1.

Extra ink and radiating faces

“When the children of Israel saw Moshe’s face, that Moshe’s face had become radiant, Moshe put the mask back on his face, until he came to speak with Him.” (34, 35)

"וראו בני ישראל את פני משה כי קרן עור פני משה והשיב משה את המסוה על פניו עד באו לדבר אתו."

The Shemos Raba (47, 6) quotes Rabbi Yehuda bar Nachmani who says that **after Moshe wrote the Torah, there was a little bit of ink that remained in the writing utensil that Moshe used to write the Torah. That leftover ink was subsequently placed on Moshe’s head. Consequently, his head radiantly shined.** The question on this Midrash is; **since Hashem knew the exact amount of ink that was needed, how could there be any leftover ink?**

A) The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh (34, 29) answers the Torah is informing us that Moshe was very humble as stated in Bamidbar (12, 3). **Hashem commanded Moshe to write in the Torah that he is an עניו, humble. Moshe wrote the word עניו without a י (עניו). Out of his humility he didn’t want to write the word עניו fully. Moshe attempted to prevent the Torah and people from praising him. This is where the leftover ink came from. This ink was then passed onto Moshe’s face. Moshe merited a shining face due to his sincere humility.** (According to my humble opinion the concept of measure for measure is applied. (Sota 8b) Meaning, since Moshe wanted to remain unknown out of humility, he was therefore publicized. This shtims (coincides) with the Gemara in Eruvin (13b) that says anyone who runs away from respect, respect will run after him. Anyone who runs after respect, respect will run away from him.)

B) Another beautiful answer is offered by the Shemen Hatov (Rabbi Binyamin Weinberger from Brooklyn, chalek alef page 157 and chalek gimal page 116). He says Chazal is coming to teach us that **there is a portion of the Torah that isn’t written, but is given over from Rabbi to talmid. We need to act in certain ways even though it doesn’t say so in the Shulchan Aruch. This he says was the extra glow on Moshe’s face. Where does it say this? The ink on Moshe’s face says this. Even if something isn’t written we can sense when something is right or wrong. The mishna in Avos (perik hay) states delve into it (the Torah) and (continue to) delve in it, for everything is in it. Even if you can’t find it, but you sense it’s wrong, then it’s wrong. Although there are technically only four sections to the Shulchan Aruch, there is a popular adage – attributed by some to Rabbi Yisroel Salanter – that there is actually an unwritten ‘fifth volume’ of the Shulchan Aruch. It is that of common sense. Without it, even if one has mastered the other four volumes, his knowledge is sorely lacking. (Great Jewish classics page 98.)**

C) Rabbi Ephraim Greenblatt zasa”l (Rivivos Ephraim chelek aleph pages 46-48) suggests another fundamental answer. **Every Jew has a drop from the ink that remained in Moshe’s writing utensil. When we learn Torah this light shines out from within us. When we**

verbally enunciate that which we are learning, we shine even more. That's how we have a connection to Moshe and Hashem. Every Jew has this potential to shine within him. We see people who repent and return to Torah, and they start shining and passionately serving Hashem. It was in them the entire time. Moshe needed to toil to receive and understand the second luchos. Through this toil Moshe's face shone. Baruch Hashem we have chachamim (wise people) who are toiling and writing sefarim and are producing this light. They are the Moshe Rabbeinu in our times. This is how we can merit this light. Those who are zocheh to learn and have this shine need to transfer it and share it with others.

Let's elaborate on this answer. The yerushalmi in Shecalim (3, 2) says there was a non-Jewish woman who saw the face of Rabbi Yonah shining. She said what's going on with your face? He responded, I learned Torah recently as the pasuk states in Koheles (8, 1), "the wisdom will illuminate his face." "הכמת אדם תאיר פניו." When Rabbi Avahu came to tiveria the talmidim (students) of Rabbi Yochanan saw his face shining. They asked Rabbi Yochanan did Rabbi Avahu just find a lost item. When Rabbi Yochanan came to Rabbi Avahu he asked him what chidush (insight) he recently learnt. (Rabbi Yochanan knew that's why his face was shining.) Rabbi Avahu answered I learned an old Tosefta. Rabbi Yochanan said, regarding Rabbi Avahu, this is what the pasuk in Koheles "the wisdom will illuminate his face" means. The Taklin Chadotin explains that Rabbi Avahu never knew this Tosefta existed; therefore Rabbi Avahu was so happy that he found and learned it. The Ikvei Aharon has a different explanation; he says that Rabbi Avahu knew about the Tosefta but he didn't know where it was located.

What are the mechanics of how this shining works? The Metsudas Dovid (Koheles (8, 1)) explains when someone has chachma everyone will go to him and listen to him. This will cause a person's heart to broaden, and his face to smile and shine.

2.

Which Luchos are better first or second?

Which Luchos were better; the first or second?

Iben Ezra (34, 1) comments on the pasuk "Hashem said to Moshe carve for yourself two luchos like the first ones." He quotes a Gaon (**the Rasag who says the second Luchos were better and more important for seven reasons.** A) An Aron (ark) was made for the second luchos to be placed and stored in. B) Additionally, the second set had written in them "so that it will be good for you" "למען יטיב לך." (Devarim 5, 16) referring to Olam Haba (the next world), unlike the first ones which did not say this. C) Additionally, the second Luchos were given with three covenants between Hashem and the Jews (as stated in pasuk 10 and pasuk 27 and pasuk 28). Conversely the first luchos have merely one covenant (as stated (19, 5)). D) Moshe made the second luchos and brought them to Har Sinai. Since Moshe made them, there was a combination of spiritual and physical matter, similar to the composition of the human body and neshamah (soul). Conversely, the first luchos were all ruchniyos (spiritual) since they came from heaven. E) They were given on Yom Kippur (the tenth of Tishrei)! Dissimilarly, the first luchos were given on the seventeenth of Tammuz, an ordinary weekday. F) Additionally, only by the second luchos did Moshe's face shine. G) Furthermore, the Jews actually received the second luchos. The second ones weren't broken. Therefore the second luchos are better.

The Shemos Raba (46, 1) supports the opinion of the Rasag who says the second luchos were better. The Midrash states that Moshe regretted breaking the luchos. Hashem told him don't worry about it, it was only Ten Commandments. The second luchos I will give you will have many more Halachos, Medrash, and Agadata.

Then Iben Ezra vehemently argues on the Rasag and says the first luchos were better and more important because they were fashioned by Hashem. Conversely, the second luchos were fashioned by Moshe! Rabbi Yisroel Riesman (the pathways to the prophet's page 81) asks, how could anyone suggest that the luchos chiseled by Moshe could be superior to those produced by Hashem?

How would the Rasag answer the question of the Iben Ezra? The Beis HaLevi (Shu"t Beis HaLevi end of chelek beis derashos 18) says that once the second luchos were given; the new concept of toiling in Torah resulted. The Gemara relates that **if the first luchos wouldn't have been broken, we would have remembered everything we learned without even reviewing once! Once the luchos were broken the concept of forgetting came into existence. Furthermore, the second luchos are better because now more tests, pain and effort is required for learning.** Meaning, when we start learning, the yeitzer does everything possible to get us to stop learning. If we have a set time to learn every day, we must make sure this time is fixed and we won't be disturbed by anything! The second luchos are therefore better because due to the extra necessary effort and tests, we will be given much more reward.

The Steipler Gaon (Birchas Peretz pages 35-36) quotes a Yalkut Shemoni (end of sefer Yehoshua) that says Moshe broke the luchos. Moshe saw that the letters on the luchos fly off. The luchos subsequently became very heavy. Moshe therefore couldn't carry them anymore and needed to throw them down. It was as if the luchos were carrying themselves prior to the letters flying off. At that time there was a decree that we would need to painfully learn Torah, and learn while being subservient to others, learn in galus (exile), learn when our minds aren't settled and when we are pressured with financial strains. Through this pain and toil, Hashem will pay us back with great reward. We can explain this Yalkut Shemoni based on a Rambam. The Rambam (hilchos talmud Torah 3, 12) says the Torah won't endure with one who learns amidst comfort or among those who learn while eating and drinking. Rather the Torah will endure within one who kills himself over it. As Reish Lakish says, the Torah will only endure amongst someone who kills himself over it. (Berachos 63b and Shabbos 83b) The Rambam says you won't become a talmid chacham by sleeping ten hours a day. The Torah will only endure by toiling. Why is it that only by painfully learning will the Torah endure? The Steipler explains it's for two reasons; one natural and one above nature (segula). **Something that comes easy typically isn't appreciated and therefore will not be remembered as much.** However, when we toil, it's as if we are chiseling on a rock and we will remember it. In terms of the segulah (omen) of remembering Torah, **every drop of effort a person puts in is calculated and counts. We will merit acquiring siyata dishmaya (heavenly assistance). The more effort we put in, the more help from heaven we will receive.** This is the explanation of the Mishna in Avos (perik hay) according to the exertion will be the reward (לפום צערא אגרא). Through the effort we will remember the Torah. This was only necessary after the luchos were broken. The Gemara says in Berachos (8b) be careful with an older person who forgot his learning because both luchos,

broken and second were placed in the aron (ark). Forgetting our learning is in the category of broken luchos. The Gemara in Eruvin (54a) states that had the luchos not been broken we would never forget our learning. Meaning, if the luchos weren't broken, there wouldn't be a concept of forgetting our learning. Since the luchos were broken we need to painfully learn. We're not losing out on anything because of the effort and pain that is currently required to be put in. Every drop of effort will be rewarded tremendously. For every step in the direction of Hashem, we will receive tremendous reward!

Based on the aforementioned information it seems like the second luchos are better. Firstly, there are many reasons why the second luchos would be better. Secondly, the reason of; the first luchos were destroyed, dissimilarly the second luchos endured, is a very strong reason. The Iben Ezra essentially has one question on the Rasag 'proving' that the first are better, which the Beis Halevi answers anyways. Regardless, both luchos, the first and second are incredibly important, as stated in the Gemara in Brachos (8b) be careful with an older person who forgot his learning, because both luchos were placed in the aron, the new luchos and the broken luchos.

Thank you Yair Moshe Ausabel for typing this up.