

Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

Parshas Vaera 5785

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The instructions to Moshe are clarified.

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה לְפָנָיו הֲיֵן אֲנִי עֲרַל שְׂפָתַיִם וְאֵיךְ יִשְׁמַע אֵלַי פְּרָעָה: {פ}

“And Moshe said before Hashem, ‘Lo! I have covered language, and how can Pharaoh listen to me?’” (Shmos 6:30).

Why is this repeated from ibid 6:12? Also, is this different than “I have a heavy mouth and heavy tongue?” of ibid 4:10? What is the “Lo” surprise here?

The Torah gives a lot of information of the conversation between Hashem and Moshe. However, it does not give it in a linear fashion. It is best to understand the chronology in order to understand the context. Otherwise, parukim 4, 5, and 6 seem to repeat the same information multiple times. For example, the bris between Hashem and the Avos is mentioned in ibid 2:24 and 6:4. The Avos are mentioned in ibid 3:6 and again in ibid 6:3. Moshe complains about not being a good speaker in ibid 4:10, and then again in ibid 6:12 and now again in ibid 6:30. This is just some examples. Why the repeats?

Through a Malakh, Hashem talked to Moshe on Har Sinai by the burning thornbush. (Ibid 3:1-4). From this point until ibid 3:22 is the initial conversation that Hashem had with Moshe. They talked about the Avos, the bris, the Name Hashem will use to take out Bnei Yisroel and all the way until just before Mokos Bechoros – when Bnei Yisroel will get the Egyptian valuables. (Ibid 3:22 and 12:35). The Torah then gives the remainder of that conversation in ibid 6:3 - 6:8. Then “Moshe told this as such to Bnei Yisroel and they did not listen to him because of their shortened spirits on account of their hard labors.” (Ibid 6:9). Moshe explained why they did not want to listen to him. He returned to Hashem on Har Sinai, and “Moshe answers and says, ‘Lo! They do not believe in me. They do not listen to my voice. Because they say, “No, Hashem appeared to you.”’” (Ibid 4:1). “Answered” means Moshe left and then came back to respond to the previous conversation. Otherwise, the Torah would just keep saying “and he said.” Bnei Yisroel could not believe in someone that did not have their faith. Moshe actually talked to Hashem, so there was no belief. It was knowledge, but not faith. Hashem then gave Moshe signs to show that even though Moshe was a prophet, he was performing signs for Hashem so it really was Hashem taking them out. (Ibid 4:2 - 4:17).

Meanwhile, Hashem told Aharon to meet Moshe at Har Sinai. (Ibid 4:27). After hashem gave Moshe the signs, Moshe objected saying he is not a man of substance, and :אֲנִי כִּי כִבְד־לִּי וְכִבְד לְשׁוֹן אֲנִי: “Because “Anoichi” has heavy mouth and heavy language.” (Ibid 4:10). Moshe was complaining that his first language may have been Loshon Kodesh for his first few years, but once he returned to Pharaoh’s palace, his education and language has been Egyptian. Even years later, when he met Yisro’s household, they call him an Egyptian. He is not someone to readily translate Hashem’s holy tongue into a convincing

conversation with Pharaoh. Hashem then told Moshe that Aharon is on his way and he will help Moshe. (Ibid 4:16). Hashem further tells him how Hashem will perform signs and wonders through them. (Ibid 7:1-7).

Moshe told Aharon all that Hashem said. (Ibid 4:28). They gathered the elders and told them what Hashem said. (Ibid 4:29). Then they gathered the people and performed the signs. (Ibid 4:30). Now the people believe and bowed. (Ibid 4:31). In the meantime, having heard that Moshe returned, Pharaoh moved his seat of government to the Goshen area. Then, when Moshe and Aharon seek the King of Egypt (local nomarch of Goshen) they met with Pharaoh, too. (Ibid 5:1). Pharaoh did not recognize Hashem. (Ibid 5:2). That is when Moshe and Aharon performed the wonder with the transforming staff. (Ibid 7:10). Pharaoh remained suborn. (Ibid 7:13). Pharaoh then added the obligation for Bnei Yisroel to gather their own straw. (Ibid 5:18). “And Moshe returned to Hashem” – a third time on Har Sinai – “and he said, ‘Why did you bring out further harm upon the people, why did you send me?’” (Ibid 5:22). Moshe then returned to Midian.

וַיֵּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה וַיָּשָׁב וְאֶל-יִתְרֵי הַתְּנֻזִי וַיֹּאמֶר לֹד אֶלְכֶּה זֶה וְאִשׁוּבָה אֶל-אֶתִי אֲשֶׁר-בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאַרְאֶה הַעֲוֹנוֹת הַגִּיד וַיֹּאמֶר: וַיֵּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה וַיָּשָׁב וַיֵּרָא לְיִתְרוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לֹד אֶלְכֶּה זֶה וְאִשׁוּבָה אֶל-אֶתִי אֲשֶׁר-בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאַרְאֶה הַעֲוֹנוֹת הַגִּיד וַיֹּאמֶר: “And Moshe went. And then he returned to Yesser, his father-in-law, and he said to him, ‘I have to return to my brothers that are in Egypt. And I have to see how their lives are faring.’ And Yisro said to Moshe, ‘Go in peace.’” (Ibid 4:18). The pasuk means that Moshe went to Mitzrayim with Aharon and he came back. Moshe stayed in Midian for a while. Hashem then spoke to Moshe, in Midian, and told him to return. (Ibid 4:19). Hence the time for Yesser to change his name to Yisro. Moshe took his family this time, and the staff that Hashem asked him to perform miracles with. (Ibid 4:20). (The transforming staff wonder was performed with Aharon’s staff). Hashem gave Moshe final instructions through Makos Bechoros. (Ibid 4:23).

The order of events his hinted at in the pasuk we quoted, ibid 4:18. It is further indicated by the breaks between the following pesukim. Hashem spoke to Moshe...go to Pharaoh and tell him to send the people. (Ibid 6:10-11). “And Moshe said before Hashem, saying, ‘Lo! Bnei Yisroel did not hear me, how will Pharaoh hear me? And I am with covered language.’” (Ibid 6:12). These few pesukim recap the first appearance at Har Sinai up until Moshe went himself to Egypt and the people did not listen to him. Next pasuk, after a break, says, “And Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aharon” (now speaking to both during Moshe’s second conversation on Har Sinai, when Aharon met him) “and he instructed them regarding ...Pharaoh [who became acting King of Egypt district, too]” (taking over the duties of the local nomarch) “to take Bnei Yisroel out of Mitzrayim.” (Ibid 6:14).

The Torah reminds us again, that Moshe complained about his speech ability, and that is why Aharon is with him, after giving the lineage and why Moshe and Aharon were chosen. (Ibid 6:30). Moshe’s main objection was that growing up Egyptian, he perhaps could not understand Hashem’s divine voice in the Holy Tongue as well as another messenger should. Hashem was angered by Moshe’s lack of faith in Hashem providing Moshe with the clear message and talents he required for the job, and then sent his brother. The surprise was that while at first blush an Egyptian raised would be the best messenger, the people nor Pharaoh seemed to believe in Moshe.