

## Insights from the Meshech Chochma

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אֶذ יֹשֵׁר מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לְהָלֶל... (פרק טו' א')

*Then, Moshe and the Children of Israel chose to sing this song to Hashem...*

Interestingly, Rav Meir Simcha uses our pasuk as a platform for an essentially unrelated and more general topic.

He begins with the words of Chazal in Chazal: "Does this mean to say that every use of the word speaking (דיבור) denotes firm language?" The Gemara answers: "Yes, as it is written with regard to Yosef's brothers, **דִּבֶּר הָאִישׁ אֲדֹנֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲפָנָנוּ קָשָׁוֹת** / *The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly to us.*" In Midrash Toras Kohanim, is also described as a **לְשׂוֹן עֲזָה** strong speech, as we read in **בְּמִדְבָּר בְּאֵל הָעָם בְּאַלְקִים וּבְמֹשֶׁה...**, **בְּמִדְבָּר בְּאֵל מֹשֶׁה** is **קָשָׁה** and **עֲזָה** and therefore, continues Rav Meir Simcha, we find that when Hashem commands Moshe to do something, He wants it done with alacrity, and so it is preceded with **וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֱלֹהִים וְיֹאמֶר הָאֱלֹהִים**; similarly with all the prophets in **תְּנַגֵּן גַּעַל**. It would follow then that **וַיֹּאמֶר** is not the type of speech that would be used when speaking to the **מֶלֶךְ**, as no human being would dare to confront Hashem in such a way. And yet there are exceptions to this rule and Rav Meir Simcha proceeds to explain each of them.

**וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים** Moshe addresses Hashem: **וְיִקְרַב הָאֱלֹהִים הַרְוֹתֹת לְכָל** In **בְּמִדְבָּר בְּצֵדְקָה** Moshe spoke to Hashem, saying, "May Hashem, G-d of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly." How can he speak with **עֲזָה** and **קָשָׁה**? Rav Meir Simcha tells us to look at the Yalkut Shimoni on this pasuk which elaborates as follows: "Nowhere else in the Torah do we find Moshe talking this way." **וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים** (Using here) is only to inform us of how praiseworthy our righteous (leaders) are. When they are ready to leave this world, they are not pre-occupied with personal needs but rather are concerned with the welfare of the *Tzibur*." Moshe was demanding Hashem to inform him as to who will lead the Nation after he is gone. And he did not stop pressing Him until He told Moshe: **קְחַלְךָ אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן נֹנֵן אֲשֶׁר רָוחַ בָּו** / *Take to yourself Yehoshua, son of Nun, a man in whom there is spirit.* Moshe was allowed to use **וַיֹּאמֶר** because there was no "me" in his request of Hashem.

He continues and says **וַיֹּאמֶר יִפְתַּח אֶת** which says: **שׁוֹפְטִים יָא' יָא' וּבְנֵי בַּיִת** and cites the pasuk in **וּבְנֵי בַּיִת** which says: **יִפְתַּח** and **יְהִי** and **יִתְבָּרֵךְ** all his words before Hashem. How does he have the impudence to speak with **וַיֹּאמֶר**? As Rav Meir Simcha just explained with regards to Moshe, so too was Yiftach asking Hashem to help the *Tzibur*. As he was accepting his role as the Bnei Yisrael's new leader, He was forcefully asking Hashem to show the people compassion and help them. Nothing personal here either. And perhaps Rav Meir Simcha saw this because instead of the pasuk writing **וַיֹּאמֶר יִפְתַּח אֶת** it writes the more *tefillah*-like, **לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים**.

ובבא מעשה אל אקהל מועד **לדבר** אותו, במדבר ז' פט **לדבר** אתו, *When Moshe arrived at the Ohel Moaid to speak with (Hashem)...* and tells us that this should not be understood as Moshe speaking with **לך** and **קנעה** to Hashem but rather, as he puts it, **שידבר**, *the pasuk in fact means that when Hashem would speak to him in the Ohel Moaid, Moshe would spiritually prepare himself for such an awesome and lofty meeting!*

Lastly, following Dovid Hamelech's Divinely orchestrated victories over his enemies, the *Navi* tells us in *בב' א/וידבר* *דָּבָר קָדֵם לְהָ אֶת דְּבָרַי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת...*, *Shmuel in chapter 11/Dovid spoke to Hashem the words of his song...* and similarly, in *תהלים יח' א/אשער דבר לה' את דברי השירה הזאת...*, *(Dovid,) who spoke to Hashem the words of this song...* Rav Meir Simcha explains that these should also not be understood as Dovid speaking to Hashem but rather, **לכבוד ה' as לה'**, a song composed as praise and thanks for all that He did. (Perhaps Rav Meir Simcha attached his piece to the opening of our **שירה** for exactly this purpose i.e., to show us the **לכבוד ה' לה'** expansion with regards to a **קנעה מעשה ובני ישראל את השירה הזאת לה'** *Shirah*!

He concludes with **נפלא** i.e., are not the words of the Mechilta amazing, when it tells us that there were ten great *Sheirutot* in Jewish history and the fifth was composed by Yehoshua: *אחד ידבר יהושע לה', ביום נתת ה' את האמרי לפנינו בני ישראל. ויאמר לעיניישראל: שמש בגבעון דם, וירם* *Then Yehoshua spoke to Hashem on the day Hashem delivered the Amorites before the Children of Israel, and he said before the eyes of the Israel: "Sun, stand still at Gibeon, and Moon, in the Valley of Ayalon."* How did the Mechilta know that this was in fact a **שירה**? According to Rav Meir Simcha, it is "pretty obvious." First, **ידבר** *cannot* be Yehoshua speaking to Hashem, as no person would speak with **ך** and **קנעה**. So **לה'** must then be **'ה'**, as part of a **שירה**. And that would also explain why the pasuk begins with **אחד**. Now, Yehoshua's "speech" can take its rightful place with the other nine **Sheirutot**. And Yehoshua's intention? As Rav Meir Simcha puts it, **לזהಗיל תפארתנו ותהלהתנו** -to augment and enhance *His* splendor and *His* praise! No me at all. And with this, Rav Meir Simcha ends with a very emphatic **ויברור!**

לזכר נשמת אבי מורי ר' ישראל מנחים בן ר' שלום ז"ל  
לזכר נשמתAMI מורה רחל בת ר' אלחנן אביגדור ע"ה  
לזכר נשמת חממי מורי ר' יעקב נתן בן ר' ישראל שלמה ז"ל  
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