

הקדמה לספר שמות הרב עזרא נוברגר

The Ramban, in the beginning of *Sefer Shemos*, describes the difference between it and *Sefer Bereishis*. He first defines what *Sefer Bereishis* is, how it is the Book of Creation for the universe and everything in it; as well as being the *sefer* of the *Avos* and their histories. He calls this latter aspect as the *sefer yetzirah* for their descendants, the creation of Klal Yisroel. All that will happen to Klal Yisroel is *nichlal* in the events which happened to the *Avos*, as we know מעשה אבות סימן לבנים.

He then goes on to describe how *Sefer Shemos* is a new *sefer* which describes the *toldos* and extends the *Avos* by showing the follow-through of that which they created— how Bnei Yisroel developed into what the *Avos* led them to be.

While Ramban focuses *b'ikur* on the *chiluk* between *Sifrei Bereishis* and *Shemos*, it seems to me that if we really hear his *yesod* well, it is really the *chiluk* between *Sefer Bereishis* and the subsequent four *seforim* of the Torah, *Sefer Shemos* all the way through *Sefer Devorim*. *Sefer Bereishis* is the *sefer hayetzirah*, the *sefer ha'avos*, and *sefer ma'aseh avos siman l'bonim*, the DNA of Klal Yisroel. *Sefer Shemos* through *Sefer Devorim* is the “*sefer*” of Klal Yisroel, where the *toldos* and *zar'om* of the *Avos* develop and evolve.

There is an interesting parallel in that *Sefer Bereishis* ends with *Birchas Yaakov* followed by *Misas Yaakov Avinu*, and *Sefer Devorim* ends with *Birchas Moshe*, which itself mirrors *Birchas Yaakov*, and Moshe's *petirah*. I think this reflects the truth which the Ramban describes.

Another facet to this is that “*Sefer Klal Yisroel*,” the last four *seforim*, is really the *sefer* of Moshe Rabbeinu. This is why *Sefer Shemos* begins with *Leidas Moshe* and *Sefer Devorim* ends with *Misas Moshe*. These four *seforim* are all the lifetime of Moshe Rabbeinu. He is the vehicle through which the development of Klal Yisroel, the children of the *Avos*, takes place.

I believe these two realities which divide חמשי חומשי תורה between *Bereishis* and the rest, between *Sefer haAvos* and *Sefer Klal Yisroel*, reflects two realities that are mutually essential to the *metzius* of what Klal Yisroel is. On the one hand, we are from the *Avos* and on the other hand, the lives we lead are totally that of Moshe Rabbeinu, of Torah. Moshe Rabbeinu is the vehicle with which the Torah comes to Klal Yisroel. Torah defines every aspect of our lives: what we do, what we don't do, and לימוד התורה which is the greatest דביקות we have with קודשא בריך הוא. Living with the Torah which קודש ברוך הוא gave us through Moshe Rabbeinu is the experience of Klal Yisroel itself.

We stand in front of the עולם של רבונו and talk to Him *b'lashon nochach*, as we say, "אתה" and "אלקינו," and continue with, יצחק ויעקב, אלקי אבותינו אלקי אברהם יצחק ויעקב. At the same time, everything we do follows the dictates of the Torah which we received exclusively as Klal Yisroel through Moshe Rabbeinu.

I feel that this dichotomy is eloquently expressed in the גמי פסחים נ. on the *inyan* of "ברוך" שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד. The גמי discusses how the *halacha* of reciting it quietly came to be. It describes the dilemma as follows: How can we say the *posuk* if Moshe Rabbeinu did not say it in שמע? On the other hand, how can we not say it when Yaakov Avinu did say it when he gathered the *Shevatim* to his bed when he was *karov lamus*? The solution in the גמי is it to say it quietly, which is our way of being *mekayem* this dichotomy.

I think this also reflects the lives of the *Avos* as having lived with the *Shechinah* in their *ohel, mamash*. This is a דרגא which we have no שייכות to. We have aspiration for it, but we cannot really achieve it. This is articulated by "לעולם חייב אדם לומר: as תנא דבי אליהו (אליהו רבא פרק כ"ה) מתי יגיעו מעשי למעשה אברהם יצחק ויעקב" A *Yid* should always look at the מעשה אבות as something he aspires to. But the life which we actually lead follows the Torah and *mitzvos* which Moshe presented to us from הקדוש ברוך הוא.

I think we also say these two ideas in the ברכת "אהבה רבה". We start by invoking the *Avos*, "ותלמדם חוקי חיים", and we want to be *zoche* to that *hasogot* "וכן תחנונו ותלמדנו". Then we switch to asking "את כל דברי תלמוד תורתך" for complete understanding and subservience to "אבינו אב הרחמן" the Torah which Moshe Rabbeinu taught. Our *shaychis* to the עולם של רבונו is built upon His relationship to the *Avos*, however, our lives are defined and shaped by the Torah given through Moshe Rabbeinu.

To frame this dual relationship, I would like to say that the *Avos* give us our *metzius*. We are "בני בכורי ישראל" and "בנים אתם לה' אלקיכם". The עולם של רבונו will be *go'el* us because of "זוכר חסדי אבות ומביא גואל לבני בניהם". We are *einkelech* of the *Avos* and we stand in front of הקדוש ברוך הוא as such. However, the lives we lead is within the framework of the Torah given to us from the עולם של רבונו through Moshe Rabbeinu.

The Rambam articulates this *yesod* in פירוש המשניות חולין at the end of הנשה. In the *Mishnah* which discusses the *gid hanosheh*, he says to pay attention to the fact that all of the *mitzvos* we keep, every aspect of our lives, are purely because of the *mitzvos* which Hashem gave Moshe Rabbeinu. This includes *bris milah*. We do not perform *bris milah* because Avrohom Avinu gave himself and his entire household *milah*, rather we do it because הוא, הקדוש ברוך הוא, through Moshe Rabbeinu, commanded us to at Har Sinai. Yet, the command is to perform the *milah* of Avrohom Avinu. We recite the *bracha*, "להכניסו בבריתו של אברהם אבינו". We enter into the *bris* of Avrohom Avinu based upon the *tzivuy* of Moshe Rabbeinu.

"תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהילת יעקב" (דברים לג:ד) Moshe gives us the Torah, but it is the *morasha* for *Kehilas Yaakov*. Both are simultaneously true. We are the inheritors of the *Avos* and therefore are *zoche* to the תורה צויה delivered through Moshe Rabbeinu.