

Insights from the Meshech Chochma

רְבָמָאִיר שְׁמַחָה הַבָּהָן מְדוֹוִינְסָק זֶלֶת

פָּרָשָׁת בְּשָׁלֹחַ תְּשֵׁפַב

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עַדְיִ זְמַרְתִּי וְהִי וְהִי לִי לִישְׁוֹעָה... (פרק טו' ב)

The might and vengeance of Hashem was a salvation for me...

This translation is based on Rashi. Targum Onkelos' understanding of **עַדְיִ זְמַרְתִּי וְהִי וְהִי לִי לִישְׁוֹעָה** is that *Hashem is my might and my praise*. The Mechilta's explanation is similar to Onkolos and Rav Meir Simcha appears enamored with its alternative exegesis on our pasuk: "עַדְיִ i.e., You, Hashem, are a trust, a help, and a support to all the world-but especially to me. **זְמַרְתִּי וְהִי** i.e., You, Hashem, are a source of praise to all the world-but my accolades are more pleasing than theirs; as King David stated, **וְגַעֲנִים זָמָרָת וִישְׁרָאֵל/the sweetest are the praises of Yisrael.**" The Mechilta continues with these reciprocal assertions: "(Hashem) made me distinct and I made Him distinct. He made me distinct-**הָאָמְרָת**/Hashem made you distinct unto Him and I, **הָאָמְרָת**/You (Yisrael), likewise, made Him distinct. Yisrael declared Hashem's singularity when it said, "...הָאָלָקִינו ה' אֶחָד/**Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is one**' and He proclaimed in return, **וּמַי בְּעֵמֶךְ וִישְׁרָאֵל גַּוְעַד בְּאָרֶץ/And who is like Your people Yisrael, a unique nation on earth!**" Yisrael says "Who among the heavenly powers is like You, Hashem and He replies, **כִּי מַי... בָּהּ אֱלֹהִינוּ/Fortunate are you, Yisrael! Who is like you?**" Yisrael says, **כִּי מַי... בָּהּ אֱלֹהִינוּ ה' אֶחָד בְּכָל קָרָאָנוּ אֲלֹהִים/Who is... like Hashem, our G-d, in all our calling unto Him?**" and Hashem responds, **כִּי מַי גַּדְול אֲנָשָׁר לוֹ אֱלֹקִים קָרְבִּים אֲלֹהִים.../For what great nation is there that has a G-d so close at hand...?**" Yisrael says, **כִּי תִּפְאַרְתָּה עָצָמוֹ אַתָּה/For You (Hashem) are the glory of their strength,** and Hashem answers, **וִישְׁרָאֵל אֲנָשָׁר בְּךָ אַתִּפְאָר/Israel, in you, I glory!**" Consistent with this approach, Mechilta concludes this piece with, **וְהִי וְהִי לִי לִישְׁוֹעָה/And Hashem was a salvation for me**-You are a salvation to all the world, but for me, more so!"

Rav Meir Simcha boldly proposes that this Mechilta is revealing the **סוד התפילין** i.e., both Klal Yisrael and HKBH "wear" tefillin and that these Parshiyos were contained in them. He begins his support of this proposal with the following: In we read that Rabbi Avin said... "From where is it derived that HKBH wears tefillin? As it is stated in **בְּנֵשֶׁבֶת הָבָטִימָנוּ וּבְחֶרְעָן נָזָן**, **וְשֻׁעָה** /**Hashem has sworn by His right hand, and by the arm of His strength**' ...and **עַדְיִ** refers to tefillin as we read **הָנָדָע לְעַמּוֹ וְתַקְנָה** /**Hashem gave strength to His nation** in the form of tefillin." In addition, using this Mechilta, Rav Meir Simcha feels that our verse, **זְמַרְתִּי וְהִי** is hinting to these tefillin: **זְמַרְתִּי וְהִי** refers to our tefillin and i.e., the praises that Hashem heaps on Klal Yisrael which conclude with, as the Mechilta told us, **וִישְׁרָאֵל אֲנָשָׁר בְּךָ** and **פָּאָר**, as we are told in, **בְּרָכוֹת יְאָהָר**. **בְּרָכוֹת יְאָהָר** is also a reference to tefillin. But clearly, the Parshiyos in **our** tefillin changed i.e., except for **אֱלֹהִינוּ ה' אֶחָד**, **שְׁמָעֵנוּ וִישְׁרָאֵל**, the other listed Parshiyos are not as the Mechilta. Why the change?

Continues Rav Meir Simcha: When did Klal Yisrael merit the mitzva of tefillin? When it left Mitzraim and went into the wilderness with total trust in Hashem. As is written in **זָכַרְתִּי לְךָ חֶסֶד יְ�רֵמִיה בְּנֵי עֲזֹרְיוֹן/remember for your sake the kindness of your youth, ...your following after me**

in the wilderness... What was their reward? על זרעך כחותם... Place me... like a seal to dedicate Your strength for me and as quoted in Midrash, “R’ Berechiah said: ‘This refers to... (the mitzva of tefillin.)”

He next takes us to a topic that is very dear to him, Rambam’s explanation of the absolute faith Klal Yisrael has in the prophecy of Moshe Rabbeinu and why it is included in his list of the thirteen אבני מאמון. “Moshe was not believed in by the בני ישראל because he delivered signs, for whoever bases his belief contingent upon signs retains suspicion in his heart, for it is possible that the sign was delivered by means of enchantment and witchcraft... When then, did they believe in him (with an *everlasting trust*)? When all of them were present at Sinai and with their own eyes saw..., and with their own ears heard, the flame, the thunder and lightning, and Moshe drew near the thick cloud and the Voice of Hashem spoke to him...” Notice, the powerful vision of Hashem that the בני ישראל experienced at the splitting of the Sea-so intensely visual and penetrating that, as R’ Meir says in סוטה ל: “Even fetuses in their mother’s womb recited Shira,” was but a dramatic which was not passed on in a real sense to future generations-for even the greatest nature-altering-acts can leave doubts. The revelation at Sinai though, left an impression, as Rav Meir Simcha puts it, a *חיקיקה*, on all future generations, and as we are told in ואות אשר אין פה עטנו היום, שבוטות ל: i.e., for all the subsequent generations, and the converts who will convert in the future, were included in the vision at Sinai. What was “seen” by all these נשמות could never be denied.

He continues with another favorite topic, one which is not quite possible to fully grasp: Hashem’s foreknowledge of a future event, if it is not revealed to מלאך ואדם, does not impact its outcome. בחרה is maintained. When the בני ישראל left Mitzraim, a lot of decisions needed to be made. And although Hashem knew that they would choose correctly, in no way could this be revealed. As noted earlier, upon leaving Mitzraim, they merited tefillin and Hashem “received” his own pair. The original Parshiyos in these “sets” were as per the Mechilta. However, since they did not make those important decisions yet, i.e., willingly jumping into the raging Sea and later saying נעשה ונשמע at Sinai, when their אמונה in Hashem, His Torah and Moshe Rabbeinu would be concretized, their tefillin would be an abstract mitzva. Rav Meir Simcha points out that when tefillin are mentioned earlier in Parshas בא, there is no reference to the *מעשה המצווה* i.e., the actual as to how to make the knots of the tefillin and how to wear them. That had to be shown to Moshe by Hashem and would wait till after the Torah was given, for had it been shown before, Moshe’s knowledge of the mitzva would have eliminated the בחרה! And that is also why the final version of our Tefillin’s Parshiyos were changed to include the Parshiyos which include the *מעשה המצווה*, as described later in Chumash דברים where the Torah tells us, וקנערתם!

לזכר נשמה אבי מורי ישראל מנחם בן ר' שלום ז"ל
לזכר נשמה אמי מורת רחל בת ר' אלחנן אביגדור ז"ל
לזכר נשמה חמי מורי יעקב נתן בן ר' ישראל שלמה ז"ל
ולזכר נשמת הרב יהודה בן ר' אברהם שמחה (קופרמן) זצ"ל
מחבר הגהות על ספר משך חכמה