“These are the words that Moshe spoke to all Israel, across the Jordan, in the wilderness, in the Plain, opposite [the Sea of] Reeds, between Paran and Tophel and Lavan, and Chatzeros and Di-Zahav.”   Devarim 1:1

Midrash Rabbah begins the 5th book of the Torah with a very unusual concept. “These are the words.” According to the chachamim, “these are the words” teaches us that one may write a Torah in any language. Rabban Gamliel limits the translation to Greek alone. In the Parashah, Rashi notes on the words “and Moshe explained the Torah” (v. 5) that he expounded the Torah in all languages, aside from the separate event in which he inscribed the entire Torah on a rock in all 70 languages (See 27:8). We see this idea as well in connection with the Sanhedrin, as they must be fluent in all 70 languages. This is indeed puzzling. Doesn’t it seem like a waste of one’s time to learn so many languages? Besides Yosef HaTzadik’s gaining favor in Pharaoh’s eyes to become a leader by knowing 70 languages (see Rashi on Bereshis 50:6), and Mordechai being able to recognize the plan to assassinate King Ahashverosh, how many times since Creation was such knowledge useful? Especially while Bnei Yisrael were in the desert, why would Moshe devote so much time to what is seemingly such wasted labor?

The Midrash continues with Hashem saying to look at how important the Torah is, for it heal the language in which it is said. The Chidushei HaRim explains that every nation serves as a threat to the Jewish people, opposing us in its own way. In exile, when we learn Torah we have the opportunity to speak about it in the language to which we are accustomed. By doing so, the Torah attaches itself to that nation’s language and serves as protection to us in that country. It “heals” the threat of that nation opposing us. Thus, Greek, stated as the primary language of the gentiles, was the language of those who opposed the essence of being a Jew. Moshe was preparing the Jewish people for thousands of years of exile, where they will have to connect the Torah to the places to which they are sent. He was constructing the foundation for Bnei Yisrael to learn amongst every nation, and by doing so have the ability to survive.

MOSHE – THE SPOKESMAN

When Moshe began to deliver his words of rebuke, the Jewish nation expressed surprise. “Previously,” they complained, “you said about yourself (Shemos 4:10), ‘I am not a man of words.’ Now, you are elaborating and speaking profusely.” To this, Moshe responded, “These are the words…” Tanchuma, Devarim 4

In Ateres Mordechai on the Torah, Rabbi Mordechai Rogow points out that the exchange between Moshe and the people is fascinating, especially in light of the people’s assertion that Moshe, who had initially declared his inability to be a spokesman, now seemed prepared to deliver an extensive and penetrating message of rebuke to them. And what did Moshe clarify when he told them, “These are the words…”?

God initially sent Moshe to deliver the Jewish nation out of Egypt, and this is when Moshe said about himself, “I am not a man of words.” What he was saying was that it is sometimes necessary for a leader to speak harsh words of rebuke and even condemnation to the nation. Yet, as a true leader, he might realize when the people are experiencing difficult circumstances and unusual challenges. Due to his sensitivities and his being alert to these situations, he might feel reluctant to criticize the people’s actions. He must know, however, that a true leader cannot exhibit weakness or reluctance to speak up when needed. It takes a spokesman who possesses resolve and vision who can stand before the people and direct them even in...
times of turbulence. This is not the time for a soft heart which distracts a leader from his mission. He cannot let some temporary challenge prevent him from providing clear and necessary guidance, even in times of duress.

Moshe had grown up in Egypt, observing and even participating in the nation’s travails. He was first-hand aware of their hardships. This was the meaning of his words of reluctance when he said that he could not be their spokesman under such conditions. The people needed direction and firm leadership, which required a firm message to have them ready themselves to abandon their slave mentality. The message that had to be delivered was one of a strong shift for them to adopt a mindset and a mode of conduct whereby they would be deserving to live up to their destiny as the nation of Hashem. Moshe felt that the people were suffering at that moment, and that he was not able to confront them with this challenge.

Hashem, however, knew that Moshe was only reluctant due to his extreme humility, and that Moshe was particularly capable to lead them. He would succeed in delivering the necessary message, even though it did contain a strong and bold element of rebuke. This is why Hashem sent him, notwithstanding his reluctance.

Eventually, the people followed Moshe’s leadership and they were redeemed. Now, years later as Moshe’s mission as leader was culminating, he delivered a strong and powerful message in which he delineated to the people their historical role in the world, and their destiny as a holy nation. This message included clear warnings regarding sin and retribution, but also promises of blessing and eternal accomplishment.

The Midrash notes that the people reacted to his words with astonishment, as they resisted his harsh message. “Before, you claimed that you were not able to be a spokesman to deliver such challenging words. You realized that it would be too difficult for us to absorb such direct and imposing messages. Now, your rebuke and your vision for our future is indeed very difficult for us to bear.”

Moshe realized that the moment was actually prime and that his farewell remarks were appropriate. It was precisely due to his love for the Jewish people and his confidence in their ability to rise to the occasion that he took control to overcome his natural tendency to speak more gently. He knew that if his message was not delivered properly, it would not serve its purpose. Although the people were in a delicate situation, if Moshe did not clearly admonish them, they would end up losing their focus and motivation. They would lose their ability to maintain their very identity as a holy nation. We understand that sometimes a father must control and limit his natural tendency to have mercy on his son, for without discipline a child can be ruined. So, too, Moshe used the opportunity during the last month of his life to address the nation and to provide them with a full perspective of their future.

The Midrash concludes that Moshe told the people that it was the same mouth that initially resisted the leadership role by claiming that he was not a spokesman, which was now forcefully delivering a powerful message of rebuke and challenge. He at first thought that due to his complete love for the people he would not be able to speak to them with a necessarily harsh tone. He was fully aware of their weaknesses and struggles, and he originally felt that they could not tolerate such words. Yet, at this advanced stage of his tenure, he knew that it was specifically due to his great love for the people that the message of rebuke was essential and in their best interests. His final words would bring about a response which was ultimately the most beneficial.

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**EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Because these are words of rebuke, and because the Torah lists here all the places in which Bnei Yisrael caused anger before God, this is why it put the “words” vaguely, and mentioned them through intimation, because of the honor of Israel. -- Rashi

It would only be prudent for a person who is delivering rebuke to measure his words and to say only what is necessary. If the listener understands with hints and indirect references, then that is all that needs to be stated. If the audience needs more clarification, with specific information, then the speaker would have to deliver a more explicit criticism. Why, then, are the short and concise words of Moshe described as being due to the “honor of the Jewish people”? Whether the nation was honorable or not, Moshe’s words would have to be measured based upon his need to communicate his message effectively. This seems to be a function of the speaker, and not necessarily based upon the honor and dignity of the listeners. How are we to understand the comment of Rashi?

Rabbi Yosef Leib Nindik notes that people remember events that they consider important. Insignificant things are easily overlooked and forgotten. If we wanted to remind someone about something that he witnessed, our need to elaborate and provide details to elicit recall would be a function of how important the event was to him. If an event was more noteworthy to him in the first place, he could be reminded with a simple hint. But if an incident was meaningless to him even as it occurred, to remind him of it we would have to totally recreate the situation and the conditions which he observed, and even then he may not remember what he saw.
The generation of the desert was a group of unique and outstanding people. This knowledgeable and God-fearing nation was alert and aware of even the smallest of their flaws. When they sinned, the trauma was powerful and shocking. When Moshe summarized the events of the forty years, he was able to refer to each of these few sins with a brief and concise hint, and the people immediately realized the episode about which he spoke. If Moshe had needed to elaborate in order to remind them, this would have indicated that the sins were insignificant and forgotten in their minds. Yet, we see that this was not the case, and, in fact, Moshe was able to suffice with the smallest of hints in reference to these sins. This is truly a tribute to the honorable status of the nation. Moshe, the speaker, was only able to express this rebuke in so few words because his audience was truly an honorable and dignified nation.

**Perfect Timing**

This teaches us that Moshe did not rebuke them except immediately before his death. From whom did he learn to do this? It was from Yaakov, for he did not rebuke his sons except immediately before his death. He said: “Reuven, my son, I am telling you why I did not rebuke you all of these years. It was so that you should not leave me and go join up with Eisav, my brother.”

Because of four things we do not rebuke a person except immediately before death: so that he should not rebuke him and then rebuke him again [for the same thing], and so that his friend whom he has rebuked should not see him and be embarrassed in front of him. (Other reasons set forth in Sifrei.) -- Rashi

In Pninei Da’as, Rabbi Elya Meir Bloch notes that there are two reasons given in our Rashi to explain why a person who speaks words of strong rebuke should deliver his message only immediately prior to his death. One reason is that such a sharp message can cause the listener to be embarrassed when he would later appear in front of the person who spoke such words. Yaakov realized that if he were to criticize Reuven immediately for his deeds, he would then be ashamed to be seen by Yaakov. Reuven would become distanced from him, and ultimately find himself associating with Eisav. However, once Yaakov was about to die, there was no longer any reason for Reuven to find haven anywhere else.

The second reason for rebuke to be delivered only when the speaker is about to die is to avoid causing the teacher to have to repeat his words whenever he sees the student. Even though it may be warranted, when directions and words of guidance are repeated over and over again, they become cheap. Their necessary impact is lessened, and the effectiveness of the teaching process is lost. However, if Yaakov would deliver his message only once, and that time would be immediately before his death, his words would be branded into the memory of his sons forever. The timing of the event and the drama surrounding it would never be dulled. It is for this additional reason that Yaakov only rebuked his sons just before his death, and this is the lesson which Moshe applied.

It is also possible that a message of rebuke delivered too early may lose its value because the one deserving of criticism may later see the speaker himself fail to act properly in that area. The one guilty of the previous sin might then be in a position to turn to his earlier critic and “come again and rebuke him”, meaning the teacher. This certainly would result in the value of the learning process being compromised. If, however, the message is delivered only immediately prior to the speaker’s death, there is no risk that the impact would be ruined by having the teacher appear to be inconsistent in his words.

**Language: Lowly or Lofty**

This God-fearing nation was alert and aware of even the smallest of their flaws.

“And you approached me, all of you, and said, ‘Let us send men ahead of us and let them delve into the land, and bring word back to us - the road on which we should ascend and the cities to which we should come.’”

Devarim 1:22

“...and bring word back to us – regarding in which language [the inhabitants of the land] speak.” -- Rashi

It may seem odd that the Jewish people were so interested in finding out the language that the seven nations spoke. What difference would this possibly have on the security situation? Why would the spies be specifically instructed to determine this information?

Maharal explains that the language of a nation is not merely incidental to a nation’s identity. In fact, we commonly find that the nations of the world are divided...
up and referred to as “the seventy languages” (Pirkei D’Rebbe Eliezer Ch. 24). The Jewish people, on the other hand, are the one nation which possesses שֵׁם יְהֹוָה – the “holy tongue”. We see that languages are assigned to each nation depending upon who they are and what their destiny is. The Jews, having a special role to fill in the history of the world, are the ones who have been exalted above all nations by means of having a language which is distinguished and more dignified than all others.

Human beings are distinct from animals specifically due to their ability to speak, as the Targum translates “Man became a living creature” (Beresish 2:7) as “Man became a speaking creature”. So, too, each nation is defined by its having a language which is refined or otherwise, thereby reflecting its true essence and true nature.

The Jewish nation in the desert was situated on a very high moral plateau. They were able to detect the core and the spirit of the occupants of Canaan via an analysis of their languages. This is why they instructed the spies to bring back this information, for it was useful in determining the strategy in dealing with them and in defeating them.

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**RELENTLESS IN PURSUIT**

 miscarries and has no need to be completed, as it is already seen as being in a state of perfection. On the other hand, something that is whole, or at least is perceived as being flawless, considers itself complete, and cannot see the ultimate benefits of the rebuilding of Yerushalayim.

Someone who feels no void cannot comprehend the need to strive for further levels of perfection. Someone who grieves over the current state of Yerushalayim thereby demonstrates that he recognizes that he feels at a loss due to its absence. The more a person appreciates the degree of loss the world suffers by not having the Beis HaMikdash, the greater is the void he feels in his life, and the more he strives to have it restored quickly.

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**TISHA B’AV**

All who grieve over the destruction of Yerushalayim merit and see its celebration. - Bava Basra 60b

Maharal explains that when something is in a state of lacking and is deficient, consideration is always given regarding what is necessary for it to become complete. On the other hand, something that is whole, or at least is perceived as being flawless, has no need to be completed, as it is already seen as being in a state of perfection.

Some people are oblivious to the influence that the Beis HaMikdash had in our lives and how devastating is its loss. To a certain extent, these individuals are living with a mind-set of everything being fine as is, and they feel no sense of lacking. Someone who feels no void cannot comprehend the need to strive for further levels of perfection, as they already see themselves as in a state of being complete. This is what the Gemara refers to when it says that such a person does not understand and cannot see the ultimate benefits of the rebuilding of Yerushalayim.

However, one who mourns over the current state of Yerushalayim thereby demonstrates that he recognizes that he feels at a loss due to its absence. The more a person appreciates the degree of loss the world suffers by not having the Beis HaMikdash, the greater is the void he feels in his life, and the more he strives to have it restored quickly.

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**Halachic Corner**

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Erev Tisha B’Av afternoon assumes some of the characteristics of Tisha B’Av.
Since Tisha B’Av is called a "נתפץ" – a holiday or designated day – no Tachanun is said on Tisha B’Av or on Erev Tisha B’Av at Minchah. The minhag is to eat the seudah hamafsekes while seated on the ground. However, if one is weak, he may sit on a pillow. There is no requirement to remove one’s shoes for the seudah hamafsekes since mourning does not begin until evening. The purpose of the seudah hamafsekes is to experience sorrow and mourning for the destruction of the Bais HaMikdash. Therefore, although the minhag is not to eat meat or drink wine all Nine Days, the halachah prohibits eating meat and drinking wine at the seudah hamafsekes. Additionally, one may eat only one type of cooked food, so that the meal should not be one of honor and pleasure. One should not drink beer or other intoxicating beverages. Even drinking coffee or tea is questionable.

Questions for Thought and Study

1. What were the three main things that Yisro advised Moshe to do? See Ramban 1:18
2. How was the קֶרֶב (desert) through which Bnei Yisrael traveled? See Sforno 1:19
3. Why does the Torah need to tell us that Calev will both “inherit” the land of Eretz Yisrael and “see it” as well? If he inherits it, won’t it be obvious that he will also see the land? See Ohr HaChaim 1:36
4. Why were Bnei Eisav considered brothers with Bnei Yisrael? See Ramban 2:4
5. What effect was on the generation of the קֶרֶב (great) that they were “confounded”? See Rashi and Ohr HaChaim to 2:15
6. How did the city of יַרְבּ (get its name)? See Ba’al HaTurim 3:1

This Week Likutei Peshatim is Sponsored

- By Hebrew Theological College wishing mazal tov to Mrs. Naomi Samber on the engagement of her granddaughter, Faigy Millen, to Aharon Anton; to Rabbi & Mrs. Yaakov Sussman on the birth of a grandson, born to Shmuel & Shulamis Sussman; to Dr. Sam & Rita Lipshitz and Moshe & Doreen Mermelstein on the birth of a grandson, born to Shimmie & Nili Lipshitz and Moshe & Doreen Mermelstein; to Rabbi & Mrs. Reuven Gross on the birth of a grandson, born to Shmuel & Shulamis Sussman; to Dr. Sam & Rita Lipshitz on the birth of a grandson, born to Rabbi & Mrs. Reuven Gross; and to HTC Board of Regents member Shmuel Brandman and his wife Rivka on the engagement of their grandson, Yonah Goldberg, to Mimi Sheinbein.
- By Fasman Yeshiva High School inviting the community to an exclusive drive-in premiere movie screening of "Names," Not Numbers – A Movie In The Making, a student-produced Holocaust documentary, on Tuesday, July 28, at Westfield Old Orchard, West Parking Lot at 8:30 PM. Please visit www.fyhs.co for reservations and sponsorship opportunities. Capacity is limited and RSVP is required.
- By JDBY-YTT is seeking an Assistant to our incoming CEO. The ideal candidate will possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, organizational and computer skills and the ability to multitask. If you would like to join the staff of a fast-growing school and assist in the chinuch habonim v’habanos of nearly 1300 children, please submit a résumé by email only to hr@jdbyytt.org with “Assistant to CEO” in the subject line. Please include several references.
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- By HTC-YTT is seeking an additional full-time School Nurse to oversee the health of our student body, overseeing and implementing the health and wellness education, and maintaining compliance with governmental medical requirements. The School Nurse will work closely with the administration of the girls’, boys’ and/or Nursery divisions. Interested candidates should email their résumé with “School Nurse” in the subject line to hr@jdbyytt.org.
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Hillel Torah is seeking a full-time qualified ELA/Science Teacher to join our middle school team for the 2020-2021 school year. Bachelor’s degree required. To apply, please email your résumé to resumes@hillettorah.org.

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Expanded Bein Hazmanim Summer Schedule at Khal Ohr Yisocher Chodorov: 6 Shacharis Minyanim- 6:45, 7:15, 7:45, 8:15, 8:45, 9:15 (M-F) and 9:45 (S). Early Mincha 1:45 PM (S-Th). Mincha/Maariv 10 minutes before shkia and late Maariv at 9:30 PM. All minyanim take place in the Main Bais Medrash and Simcha Hall to provide ample room for everyone.

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• By Miriam Harris, Daniel, Alida, and Dodi Harris; Tye & Nikki and Baer; Marmina & Eli; Benjamin, Debbie, Stone, and Truman Harris; Samantha & Jeremy, Rachel & Yousef; Eyal, Mara, Netanel, Avital, and Amichai Goldblatt; Rachel, Yitz, Talya, Shalomit, and Elyashiv Goldstein; Adina & Avraham; and Matthew, Devorah, Bentzion, Hannah Rose, Avigail and Betzalel Harris, in memory of our beloved mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, Rose Sadur, ה'תקע, on the occasion of her yahrtzeit on 4 Av.

• By the Cohen, Hartman, Chajmovicz, Tepper, Bruck, and Siegal families in loving memory of their father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Shlomo ben Pinchas, Wengrow, Meyer, and Albin families in memory of their father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Wilfred Lefkovich, ה'תקע, commemorating his twenty-third yahrtzeit on 7 Av. May his memory be for a blessing.

• By Rabbi Sidney & Sharon Pick and Jacob, in loving memory of our beloved father and grandfather,Israel Pick, in commemoration of his twenty-seventh yahrtzeit on 7 Av. May he be a meilitz yosher for his family and for all of Klal Yisrael and may his memory be for a blessing.

• By the Perman, Dennis, and Askotzky families, in loving memory of their husband, father, and grandfather, Sherwood Perman, in commemoration of his tenth yahrtzeit on 6 Menachem Av. May his memory be for a blessing. - Mark & Cathy

• By the Arnold Gassel family - Phil & Mollie, Sheryl & William, and Aryeh & Diane, and their families, in loving memory of their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents, By the Lavin, Glassenberg and Rubin families in memory of Benjamin Lavin (Uncle Ben), מ"ב, on the occasion of his twenty-second yahrtzeit on 7 Av. May his memory be for a blessing.

• By the Pinkus, Schiller, Jacobs, Gersten, Cooper, Chait, Berkowitz, Wiederman, Zuckerman, Wengrow, Meyer, and Albin families in memory of their father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Shlomo ben Pinchas, ה'תקע, on the occasion of his twenty-second yahrtzeit on 7 Av.

• By the Lavin, Glassenberg and Rubin families in memory of Benjamin Lavin (Uncle Ben), מ"ב, on the occasion of his yahrtzeit on the Tenth of Av. May his memory be for a blessing.

• By the Schiller family of the greatness of Eretz Yisrael. Ohr HaChaim says that Eisav was circumcised, so he is considered a descendant of Avraham. Although they were also circumcised, Yishmael and the Bnei Keturah are not considered descendants of Avraham as they didn’t die there but suffered and were agitated throughout the travels.

• By the Lavin, Glassenberg and Rubin families in memory of Benjamin Lavin (Uncle Ben), מ"ב, on the occasion of his yahrtzeit on 5 Av. Her warmth, dignity and love for her family remain an inspiration for all of us. - Miri and Abe Sova and family, and Ricki and Aaron Jacoby and family. (Bais Chaim Dovid, Khal Chasidim, Mikor Hachaim, KINS)

• By Elaine Stein and family in loving memory of their beloved daughter and sister, Alana Beth Stein, מק"ב, on the occasion of her 48th yahrtzeit on Tisha B’Av. (Adas Yeshurun, Kehillat Chovevei Tzion)

• We commemorate the 15th yahrtzeit of our beloved grandfather and great-grandfather, Shimon Kornbluth - מ"ב, on the 5th of Av. Your legacy inspires us every day! - By David & Karin Kaufman and family, Hindy & Moshe Goldfinger and family, Avi & Oreet Kaufman and family, and Zahava & Chaim Suss and family.

• In memory of our sweet beloved son, Eitan Hillel ben Mishael & Chanah Esther, מ"ב, on the occasion of his tenth yahrtzeit on 6 Menachem Av. May his memory be for a blessing. - Mark & Campbell

• By the Arnold Gassel family - Phil & Mollie, Sheryl & William, and Aryeh & Diane, and their families, in cherished memory of our mother and bubbie, Claire Gassel, ה'תקע, on her yahrtzeit on 7 Av. May her memory continue to inspire all who knew and loved her.

• By the Lavin, Glassenberg and Rubin families in memory of Benjamin Lavin (Uncle Ben), מ"ב, on the occasion of her yahrtzeit on 4 Av. May her memory be for a blessing.

• By the Cohen, Hartman, Chajmovicz, Tepper, Bruck, and Siegal families in loving memory of their father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Shlomo ben Pinchas, Wengrow, Meyer, and Albin families in memory of their father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Wilfred Lefkovich, ה'תקע, commemorating his twenty-seventh yahrtzeit on 7 Av. Her warmth, dignity and love for her family remain an inspiration for all of us. - Miri and Abe Sova and family, and Ricki and Aaron Jacoby and family. (Bais Chaim Dovid, Khal Chasidim, Mikor Hachaim, KINS)

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Answers:
1. Yisro advised Moshe to pray on behalf of Bnei Yisrael when they need it. He advised him to teach the Torah to Bnei Yisrael himself. The last thing was for Moshe to appoint judges to assist him.
2. This was a part of the traveled through because of the poisonous snakes and scorpions there. Hashem miraculously made it safe for Bnei Yisrael, as they would get to Eretz Yisrael faster.
3. This was to indicate that Caleb was rewarded for two things that he did. First, he did not join the evil spies in slandering Eretz Yisrael. Secondly, he denied the bad report of the spies and spoke of the greatness of Eretz Yisrael.
4. Eisav was circumcised, so he is considered a descendant of Avraham. Although they were also circumcised, Yishmael and the Bnei Keturah are not considered descendants of Avraham as they were specifically excluded in the Torah. (See Bereshis 21:12)
5. Rashi says that the term מרגיעה means that Hashem hurried to kill that generation so that the rest of Bnei Yisrael could enter Eretz Yisrael. Ohr HaChaim says that מרגיעה means to be “agitated”, as the generation of the מרגיע didn’t just die there but suffered and were agitated throughout the travels.
6. The name יאש can also mean ＿ with the tooth. This was the place where Og was killed due to the growth of his tooth. (see Berachos 54b)