

שבועות

The Gemarah in Shabbat Daf 88 describes what took place when Moshe Rabeinu went up to the Shamayim to bring down the Torah for the Jews. R' Yehoshua Ben Levi says that when the angels in heaven saw Moshe Rabeinu they said to Hashem: "what is this human, born from a woman, doing here"? Hashem answered that he was here to receive the Torah. The angels protested; the coveted treasure (Torah) that has been stored with you for nine hundred and seventy four generations before the creation of the world, you intend to give to flesh and blood?! "מה אנוש כי" "What is man that you remember him, and the son of man that you think of him"? Hashem said to Moshe; answer them! Moshe replied; "I am afraid that they will burn me with the breath of their mouth! Hashem instructed Moshe to hold on to his throne and answer them. Commencing his argument, Moshe said; "master of the universe, the Torah you are giving me, does it not say "I am Hashem your G-d who took you out of Egypt"? Moshe turned to the angels and asked; did you go down to Egypt? Were you enslaved by Pharaoh? Obviously not, so why should the Torah be yours?! It also says you shall not worship other G-ds. Do you live amongst the nations who worship idols? It says to keep Shabbat. Do you work during the week that you need to rest on Shabbat?! It says "do not swear falsely". Do you engage in business that would lead you to oaths taken in vain?! It says respect your parents. Do you have parents?! Don't kill, steal, or commit adultery. Is there any jealousy among you that would cause you to do these things?! Do you even have an evil inclination among you?! Immediately the angels conceded to Hashem that the Torah is rightfully Moshe's and should be given to the people.

This is what took place when Moshe went up to retrieve the Torah. We need to analyze this debate in light of who it was between: Moshe Rabeinu and the angels of Hashem! At first glance, the argument of Moshe seems fairly obvious! The Torah simply does not apply to the angels! What were the angels thinking when they challenged Moshe?! Did they not realize that they did not have parents or go down to Egypt etc.?? What exactly did Moshe clarify for them that made them suddenly agree that the Torah was rightfully his?? The first Pasuk in the Torah begins with the word **בשביל התורה שנקראת ראשית ובשביל ישראל שנקראו ראשית** and Rashi explains:

The world was created for the Torah and the Jews. How could the angels object to the Jews receiving the Torah if this was the purpose of creation?!

There are an additional nine questions in regards to the Jews receiving of the Torah and there is one answer that answers them all!

- 1) Why is there a double terminology in the Pasuk that the angels quoted to Hashem (כי תפקדנו- כי תזכרנו- what is man to *remember* him and what is man to *think* of him)?
- 2) Why is Shavuot celebrated on the sixth of Sivan? The Gemarah explains that Moshe added a day to the three day waiting period that Hashem required. This results in the Torah being given on the *seventh* of Sivan, not the sixth??
- 3) In the Hagadah that we recite on the night of Pesach, we read Dayenu-“it would have been enough”. One of the statements of Dayenu is “if we had only been at Har Sinai and *not* received the Torah it would have been enough”. Why is this so? Imagine taking your children into the parking lot of Toys R Us only to find out that the store was closed, would your kids be o.k. with that?! Why would it have been enough to get to the mountain *without* receiving the Torah??
- 4) We call the holiday of Shavuot "זמן מתן תורתנו"-“the time that the Torah was given”. The word מתן is similar to the word מתנה (gift). This implies that just as a gift is given and the giver does not retain it for himself, so too the Torah was given to us by Hashem but was not retained by him. Why is this so? Shouldn't the Torah be like a sefer that I can give as a gift to someone and still retain a copy for myself?! As a matter of fact there is a Gemarah that says that a non Jew that studies the Torah is חייב מיתה for stealing (some explain that this is because they will think of the Chidushim that the Jews were supposed to bring to light and this is like stealing from us). The Rambam however, says that a non Jew is exempt if he studies the Torah, because the Torah can't be stolen. It is like someone that reads from a book that you are in midst of reading, he does not take anything away from you. It is the same with the Torah, just because the Goyim read from it does not make it as if they are actually taking anything from us. We see from here that when we received the Torah from Hashem, we did not *take it* from him; it is only as if we received a copy of the Torah that he still retains, it should be as if Hashem “shares” the Torah with us. If so, why is it called “the holiday that Hashem gave us the Torah??

- 5) The לוחות-tablets that the Torah was inscribed into were given to us on Yom Kippur. That is when we received all the laws as we know it. Why isn't Yom Kippur celebrated as the day we received the Torah?
- 6) It says that Hashem had asked the other nations if they wanted the Torah before he approached the Jews, but they refused. If so, why do we say in the Birkat Hatorah;"אשר בחר בנו מכל העמים"-“he chose us from amongst the nations”? We were “last on the list” to be asked, why is this called Hashem choosing us from the other nations?!
- 7) It says in the Birkat Hatorah "ונתן תורה את תורתנו"-“he gave us his Torah”. What is the meaning of the words *his* Torah, is there a different Torah that is *not* Hashem's ח"ו?! It should have said את התורה-he gave us *the* Torah?
- 8) It also says in Birkat Hatorah "את תורתו תורת אמת"-“his Torah the true Torah”. Why does it say the *true* Torah, is there a Torah that is not true ח"ו??
- 9) Why did the angels complain only when Moshe came to get the Torah for the Jews, why didn't they complain while Hashem was offering it to the other nations before Moshe (see question six)??

There is one explanation that clarifies everything.

On the sixth of Sivan, Hashem gave us the “keys” to the Torah. He gave us the total ownership and control over the Torah. On Shavuot, Hashem relinquished the Torah to the Jews in regards to having the final say in how it is to be understood. The Rabbis are the ones to decide the final Halacha even if Hashem “disagrees”!!

There are many examples in which this concept is seen.

- 1) The Gemarah says that once there was a Rabbi who met Eliyahu Hanavi and asked him; what is Hashem doing now? Eliyahu Hanavi answered that Hashem was learning Torah and quoting his children by saying “my son Elazar says this” etc... Hashem quoted all the Rabbis except for R' Meir. This is because R' Meir had learnt Torah from Elisha who became a Heretic. Rabbah heard this and argued; why doesn't Hashem quote R' Meir? Just like when a person eats a pomegranate he eats the good part and discards the bad part, so too R' Meir kept the good teachings of Elisha and disregarded the bad teachings?! He is pure and deserves mention by Hashem! As soon as Rabbah had said this, Eliyahu reported that Hashem started to quote R' Meir. This was a difference of opinion between Rabbah and the almighty himself! Even so, Hashem had acquiesced to the argument of Rabbah because it is the *Rabbis*- not Hashem, who decide what is correct and incorrect in Torah matters.

- 2) The famous Gemarah of עכנאי של תנור describes the argument in Halacha between the Rabbis and R' Eliezer if a certain oven was pure or impure. The Rabbis said it was impure and R' Eliezer said it was pure. The Rabbis were the majority so their opinion became Halacha. R' Eliezer insisted that he was right and that the walls of the Midrash should prove it. Sure enough the walls started to cave in until R' Yehoshua demanded that they stop. R' Eliezer said; "if I am right the stream of water should flow upstream instead of downstream". The water immediately began flowing upstream. The Rabbis said to R' Eliezer, we do not bring proofs from streams. R' Eliezer pointed to a tree and said; "if I am right then the tree should be uprooted! Immediately the tree uprooted itself. The Rabbis said we do not bring proofs from a tree. Finally R' Eliezer declared;"if I am right, let Hashem prove it". A voice from heaven was heard that said "why do you argue with Eliezer? The Halacha is like him in every place!" The Rabbis turned to the heavens and responded "תורה לא בשמים היא"- "Torah is not in the heavens!" It is *our* decision who the Halacha accords with!! Hashem answered נצחוני בני "נצחוני בני" - "my sons have defeated me!"
- 3) The Gemarah contrasts Hashem with mankind and comments; look how different Hashem is from man, for when a person sells something the seller is sad (because he parted with his object) and the buyer is happy to obtain it. Hashem however, gave us the Torah and is happy about it, as it says כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם "I gave you a good item, do not leave my Torah"! Hashem is making sure we understand how valuable the Torah is so that we should appreciate it. He is happy about giving it to us. If we analyze the comparison of the Gemarah it doesn't seem like a valid comparison. When a person sells something, it leaves his possession. Hashem gave us the Torah, but doesn't he still have it in Shamayim with him as well? How can this be compared to a seller that completely relinquishes his item?! We now understand the Gemarah to be referring to this specific point of Hashem relinquishing control over the final say in the Torah, something that truly "left his possession" but Hashem still rejoiced in giving it to us! This is also why the Pasuk ends תורתִי אל תעזבו *my Torah* do not forsake. My Torah, meaning; my power to have the final decision in Halacha that I have given to you - is what you should appreciate.
- 4) The new month used to be determined by the Beit Din based upon the testimony of witnesses that witnessed the new moon. The Gemarah tells of an incident in which Raban Gamliel ruled that it was Rosh Hodesh based upon certain witnesses. Later on, other Rabbis interrogated these witnesses and found that they were fabricating their story and were false witnesses. In their opinion Raban

Gamliel erred and therefore it really was *not* Rosh Hodesh. Raban Gamliel however, remained with his opinion that it was Rosh Hodesh and ruled that Rabbi Yehoshua (one of the Rabbis who argued with Raban Gamliel) appear before him on the day after Yom Kippur with his walking stick and his wallet. Raban Gamliel wanted to show R' Yehoshua that even though in his opinion this day was actually Yom Kippur (since if these witnesses were false- like R' Yehoshua held- then Rosh Hodesh was a day later, resulting in Yom Kippur being a day later. This means that the day *after* Yom Kippur according to Raban Gamliel, was the day of Yom Kippur itself according to R' Yehoshua) . He still insisted that R' Yehoshua appear before him in order to show that since R' Gamliel was the leader, the Halacha was in accordance with him and therefore the Shamayim also had to abide by the day in which R' Gamliel felt should be Yom Kippur. Amazingly, although in reality it was not yet Yom Kippur, all the forgiveness and holiness that go on during Yom Kippur had to be “transferred” to the previous day since R' Gamliel decided it should be that way (even though he was seemingly mistaken according to all the other Rabbis!).

- 5) The Halacha says that if the virginity of a girl under 3 years old is broken it will grow back and therefore a man who is with a girl under the age of 3 illegally, is not subject to a penalty. The question arises during a leap year in which there is an extra month added to the calendar and a girl is under 3 only because of the extra month added (for example if a girls birthday is on the first of Nissan and the month prior to Nissan [Adar] is doubled that the girl is really 36 months old on Rosh Hodesh Adar 2, and when her birthday arrives on Rosh Hodesh Nissan she will be 37 months old). Does her virginity grow back if it is broken during the time just before her birthday? After all, she is already 36 months old and is physically the same as a girl in a regular situation in which there is no leap year! Still the Halacha is that her virginity *will* grow back if she did not have her third birthday and even though she is older than 36 months. How is this possible?? How could the physical make up of a girl's body change based on if it is a leap year or not?? It is from the Rabbis. When the Rabbis proclaim a leap year they actually change the physical functions of the body!! Not only do the Rabbis decide what goes on in the heavens, they even affect the “nature” of this world!
- 6) We also find that in a leap year, we still read the portion of Amalek at the same time of year. This is very significant, since the reason why we read Parashat Zachor (the portion when we remember what Amalek did to us) every year is because a person forgets something after 12 months. Similarly, concerning a mourner, the laws change after 12 months because they forget (to a certain

degree) the deceased. So too we need to remind ourselves once a year about Amalek, so that we will not come to forget what they tried to do to us. In a leap year however, there are 13 months, this means that 13 months will have elapsed since we last read about Amalek. Why aren't we concerned that after 12 months Amalek will be forgotten and we should therefore be required to read it sooner?? Again, the answer is that since the Rabbis declared a leap year, the laws of "nature" are changed and a person will *not* forget Amalek, even though almost 13 months have elapsed since the last Parashat Zachor.

Rosh Hodesh represents the power of the Rabbis to affect the way the world is run and this is the reason that in the times of the miracle of Hanukah, the Greeks tried to stop the Jews from performing three Misvot (שבת, מילה, ראש חודש) and one of the Misvot the Greeks tried to prevent the Jews from performing was Rosh Hodesh, this was because even the Greeks realized what it represented!

- 7) In the Niddah cycle of a woman there are various laws of separation at specific intervals. For example a woman must observe certain laws on the day of the month she expects her period to begin. If she experienced her period on a certain day of the month, for three consecutive months, she must observe these laws on the same day the following month. Why is this so? Aren't the lengths of the days of the month decided by the Rabbis based on when Rosh Hodesh falls out?! If so, then why do we put so much significance on the specific day of the month if that day is liable to be influenced based on the Rabbis decision of Rosh Hodesh?! That should not be a factor in figuring a pattern for her cycle?! This is another example of the Rabbis having an effect on even the physical bodily functions. The woman's cycle will indeed be determined based on the decisions of the Rabbis.
- 8) There is a story in the Gemarah of a man called Nechanya the ditch digger, who used to dig pits and fill them with water so that the people coming up to Jerusalem for the holidays would have water to drink. One day his daughter fell into one of the deep pits and they could not reach her. The people hurriedly reported this to the Sadik R' Chanina Ben Dosa. In the first hour he told the people "Shalom, all is well". In the second hour he again said "Shalom, all is well". In the third hour he told them "she is out of the well". Sure enough when they came back to the well they found the daughter safely out of the well. They asked her; "who saved you?" "An old man leading a ram" she answered. (this was Avraham Avinu with the ram from Akeidat Yishak) They went back to R' Chanina and asked him; "are you a prophet?" "I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet", he answered. "It is just that it is not possible that the same item that a

righteous person occupies himself with come back to hurt him. This man dug wells and it is not possible that his own daughter should die in one.

This was the story, however the Gemarah continues that even so, Nechanya's son died afterwards of thirst.

How is this possible? Didn't R' Chanina say that someone who does good will not suffer from that item?! How could someone who provided water for people have his son die of thirst?! This is because the son had died *after* R' Chanina passed away, and as long as R' Chanina was alive the son was protected. In reality, in the story of the Gemarah the daughter was *supposed* to die in the well, but R' Chanina voiced his opinion that he disagreed, and he felt that the father did not deserve this punishment. Once he said that, Hashem acquiesced and saved the daughter. When R' Chanina passed away, Hashem was "free" to do as he pleased and a גזירה was decreed upon the son, however as long as R' Chanina was alive, Hashem would not do anything to Nechanya's children because R' Chanina did not approve!!

9) The Rabbis forbade reading by the light of a candle on Shabbat because of the fear that a person may accidentally come to tilt the candle, thereby violating the Shabbat. Once, R' Yishmael decided to read by the light of a candle on Shabbat, confident that he surely will not come to accidentally tilt the candle. Sure enough, he forgot and moved the candle, after which he exclaimed: "how great are the words of the Rabbis?!" R' Yishmael realized that in reality was not going to touch the candle, but since the Rabbis declared that a person should not read by the candle because it may lead to tilting it, they put this *into the nature* of reading by the candle! Now, reading by a candle WILL lead to tilting it! This is what R' Yishmael meant when he said "how great are the words of the Rabbis"! How powerful are their words that they affect the nature of my actions even against my will?!

10) There was once a woman who had arranged for false witnesses to claim that her husband, who had been missing for some time, had died thereby permitting her to get remarried. The witnesses came before the Ramah and tricked him into granting the woman permission to remarry based upon the death of her husband. As soon as this happened the husband actually died. Once the Ramah's verdict was that this man was dead, the man died. In שמ"ט, the Rabbis word caused immediate results.

11) There was once a man who approached the Chazon Ish to get advice on where he should receive a certain medical procedure. The Chazon Ish advised him to do the procedure in Israel and to be careful not to have it done outside of Israel. "Why specifically in Israel?" asked the man. The Chazon Ish explained that his symptom was similar to one that is discussed in Halacha regarding an animal. The Rama and Bet

Yosef disagree in a case of an animal with the same disease that this man had. Maran's opinion was that the animal is kosher since the animal will continue to live (an animal is kosher only if at the time it was slaughtered it was healthy enough to live). The Rama said the animal is not kosher since it has a *דין נפל* and is due to die. The Chazon Ish explained to the man based on this Machloket, that Israel was the city of Bet Yosef (whose opinion was that the animal with a similar problem *would* live) but the Rama was from outside of Israel and his opinion was that an animal with a similar problem will *not* live. Based on this Machloket, depending on where you are will determine the Halacha, and the way that this man is judged in the heaven!! Therefore the Chazon Ish advised the man to stay in Israel when the Halacha was that he would live!!

12) This concept is also seen as far back as Avraham Avinu. There were 3 angels that came to visit Avraham. One was there to heal him, one was there to let him know that he was going to have a son; the third was there to destroy Sedom. The question is asked; why did the third angel have to first stop by Avraham on his way to destroy Sedom? The reason is that the angel first needed to clarify something from Avraham before going to destroy Sedom. The angel רפאל (the angel who came to heal Avraham) also went on to save לוט from Sedom, however whether or not Lot deserved to be saved needed to be determined. Lot was saved on account of his descendents; David Hamelech and Mashiach. David Hamelech was originally thought to be unfitting to marry into the Jewish people since he was a grandson of רות המואביה (Ruth the Moabite). The Torah says that someone from Moab is banned from marrying a Jew. It was later clarified that the Torah was referring only to a *מואבי-man*, not a *מואביה-a woman* (מואבי ולא מואביה) and therefore David was permitted to be a part of the Jewish nation even though his grandmother was from Moab. What is the reason that the Torah forbade Moab men? This was because they did not greet the Jews with bread and water and thus caused the Jews to suffer. The question is regarding woman. Are woman expected to come out and greet their fellow woman to serve them? If yes, then the *מואביה-woman* were at fault for not coming out to greet the Jewish women, but if not, if the way of the women is to stay inside, than the *מואבית-woman* are not at fault and would therefore be permitted to marry into the Jewish nation. The direct result of this question is if King David would be permitted or not into the Jewish nation (since he had a Moabite grandmother) and the direct result of that, is if Lot (David's grandfather) would be saved since Lot was only saved on account of David Hamelech and Mashiach, but if they would not be a part of the Jewish nation, Lot had no reason to be saved!

This was the query of the angels. How did they determine the answer? They approached Avraham, and immediately asked "אייה שרה אשתך?"-"where is your wife Sarah?" One may wonder; is that a proper question for someone to ask so demandingly? Where is your wife?! We now understand, that the angels were asking about Sarah to determine if she would come out to serve or not! Avraham answered "הנה באהל"- "she is in her tent", meaning it is *not* proper for a woman to leave her tent and go out to serve. This means that the Moabite woman are not to blame for not coming out to serve, therefore King David *is* permitted into the Jewish nation and therefore Lot, his ancestor *does* deserve to be saved! Only after the angles heard Avraham's answer did they know how to proceed in that now the angel had to "wait" for מלאך רפאל to heal Avraham so that he may save Lot! This explains why the third angel stopped by Avraham before going to destroy Sedom. The Messianic dynasty and our future with משיח בן דוד hinged on a few words uttered by Avraham Avinu!!

All of these examples show us the power that was invested in the Rabbis to determine how Hashem runs the world. This power was given to the Jews on the day of Shavuot. That was the day that Hashem gave us, not just Torah, but the *keys* to the Torah, meaning; the ultimate say in how the Torah is to be understood and therefore the ultimate say in how the world is run, because Hashem runs the world based on the Torah. This answers all of the questions.

It explains the original question of why the angels tried to stop Moshe (even though they knew the Torah didn't apply to them) because the angels were o.k. with the fact that the Jews would get the Torah, but they protested to the fact that the Jews would get *control* over the Torah! They wanted that control to remain with Hashem in the heaven.

It answers question number 1 (see page 2). The reason the Pasuk uses a double terminology is because the 2nd term כי תפקדנו hints to the Jews being rulers of the Torah. The word פקיד- means to control or rule. The angels were saying; why remember man, and why *let him rule* over the Torah!?

It answers why Shavuot is celebrated on the sixth day of Sivan (question #2) because that was the day that we were given control of the Torah even though the actual text of the Torah was given to us on the Seventh. The fact that Moshe pushed it off for an extra day was an even greater reason to celebrate, because Moshe's

determining when the holiday should be established was an instant display of just how much control was given to our Rabbis!

It answers why we say Dayenu-“if we had only been at Har Sinai and *not* received the Torah it would have been enough” (question #3) because at Har Sinai (even *before* we received the text of the Torah) we received this control over the Torah and that is truly a great gift and would have been enough, דינו.

It answers why it is called זמן מתן תורתנו (question #4) since Hashem actually *did* give the “keys” and control of the Torah to us and did not retain it for himself!

It answers why we celebrated now instead of Yom Kippur (question #5) because now is when we got this power over the Torah, not on Yom Kippur.

It answers why we say אשר בחר בנו (question #6) since Hashem was not offering the keys to the Torah to the Goyim, he was just offering them to observe the laws of the Torah, and we were the only nation that he offered the “keys” to.

It answers why we say "את תורתנו תורת אמת" (question #7 and #8) because Hashem did give us *his* Torah. Meaning his control of having the final say on it, which is called תורת אמת -the Torah that is true, meaning that ability to decide what is considered אמת true in the Torah.

It answers why the angels protested only when they saw Moshe (question #9) because only to Moshe- and not to the others- was the final say in the Torah offered.

Ten questions, one answer. How amazing is the Torah?!

There are other approaches to answer the question we started with, namely, how the angels could possibly protest to Moshe Rabeinu’s taking the Torah when it could not realistically apply to them.

The Pasuk says "ונתתי לכם מהלכים בין העומדים" -"I will place you as ones who move amongst those who stand". It is explained that עומדים-those who stand still, refer to the angels and מהלכים-those that move about, as people. An angel remains on his level and is unable to grow to a higher level. An angel cannot become a “better” angel.

People however can grow and become better people and there are no limits to how high we can climb. We can even soar to levels of holiness *beyond* the level of angels!!

The angels wanted the Torah to remain in the Shamayim with them on a very high level. "Why give the Torah to man who is liable to fall from his level"? They argued. Moshe answered them "יצר הרע יש לכם?"-"do you have an evil inclination?" Do you have an inclination that you have to overcome and when you do so, you will climb to a higher level?! No! It is only the Jewish people that must overcome the Yetser Hara and when they do so, they can grow to reach a level even higher than yours! This is necessary for accepting the Torah since the Torah is endless. The levels that a Torah observing Jew can attain are limitless. The Torah was given by Hashem and therefore just as Hashem has no limits, so too the Torah given by him must have no limits! This is why a Torah that contains vowels of טעמים-cantorial notes is Pasul-invalid. The notes "limit" the Torah to a certain degree in how it is to be understood and read. A kosher Torah must only contain the letters of the Torah with nothing else. In this way the endless secrets it contains are still preserved. The depths of the Torah are like endless waters. There are novel interpretations of the Torah that are being discussed today, that all of the great Tsadikim over the last 3,500 years did not uncover! There are wonderful concepts of Torah that are just waiting to be discovered and everyone- *even people like us*- are capable of bringing them to light!!

When the angels realized that man can attain greater heights than they can, they agreed that the Jews should receive the Torah.

Another interpretation of why the angels opposed to Moshe's receiving the Torah is that the Torah is comprised entirely of names of Hashem. Originally this was in a straight form where the names of Hashem were clear. When Hashem gave the Jews the Torah he reconfigured the letters of the Torah to spell the words that they now spell. The Torah is still full of names of Hashem it's just that now it's reconfigured so that we don't recognize all of them. This explains why the angels were surprised when they heard the laws of the Torah such as honoring parents and keeping Shabbat laws, laws that do not apply to them. They only knew the Torah in its pre configured state, when it was clearly totally comprised of the names of Hashem. When Moshe showed them the laws that the letters of the Torah now spell, they were indeed surprised and they responded; "you are right, this truly does not apply to us!"

In addition, the angels only saw the letters of the Torah that were written, however there is also "יש אם למסורת"- "words of tradition"; words that even though they are not clearly spelled in the Torah- we read in a certain manner. This results in a

different understanding of the Torah. This is the Torah as we know of it today, and this Torah was not known to the angels. For this reason they originally objected to Moshe taking it, thinking that it possibly may apply to them.

We see this idea in the word **ישראל**, which stands for: **יש שישים ריבוי אותיות**: "לתורה" – "there are 600,000 letters in the Torah" and there are 600,000 **נשמות** that the Jewish nation is comprised of (נשמות are mostly divided amongst many different people) each one of the 600,000 **נשמות** correspond to one of the 600,000 letters of the Torah. This statement is hard to understand because if we count the letters of the Torah they only total a little more than 300,000? The explanation is, that when it says 600,000 letters it includes all the ways the words are pronounced and understood (for example the Pasuk says **"בסכת תשבו"** and we read it as if it says **בסוכות** – pronouncing extra letters) we see that the way we read and understand the words of the Torah is different than if we were to only analyze the letters and words as they appear. It was this point that Moshe explained to the angels. The Torah was more than what the angels had seen written, and was truly fitting for the Jews – not the angels.

This is hinted in the fact that Hashem told Moshe to grab onto his throne and answer the angels.

One may ask: why did Hashem leave it to Moshe to answer the angels? Why didn't Hashem simply answer the angels himself? Also, why did Hashem instruct Moshe to hold on to his throne in order to be protected from the angels? Couldn't Hashem have protected Moshe even *without* holding onto the **כסא הכבוד**? We now understand that Hashem instructed Moshe to hold onto the throne *in order to show him the answer* to the angels claim. How does the throne of Hashem hint to the answer that Moshe needed?

It says that the origin of each Jewish **נשמה** is from the **כסא הכבוד** and from there they came down into this world. When Hashem instructed Moshe to grasp onto his **כסא הכבוד** he was alluding to the 600,000 **נשמות** of the Jews, since that is where they emanate from. These Neshamot correspond to the 600,000 letters in the Torah and as explained, the only way to come up with 600,000 letters is if we add all the ways to read the Torah. That sometimes results in a different understanding than just analyzing the way the letters were written themselves. Upon hearing Hashem's command to grab onto his throne, Moshe realized how to answer the angels.

Another possible understanding of why Hashem instructed Moshe to hold onto his **כסא הכבוד** is to hint to Moshe another answer to the angels claim. One of the answers mentioned was that a human being can attain a higher level of holiness than even the angels (see top of page 11). On Hashem's **כסא הכבוד** was an image of

Yaakov Avinu. It says in Parashat Vayetzeh that Yaakov dreamt of a ladder that reached the heavens and the angels were "עולים ויורדים בו"-“ascending and descending it”. It is written that the angels were going up and down to compare the face of Yaakov on earth, with the image on Hashem’s throne and the angels were amazed to see that it was one and the same! The angels were amazed to see how high a human being was able to reach! When Hashem instructed Moshe to hold onto the כסא הכבוד he was alluding to the image of Yaakov that was engraved on it, for Moshe to show the angels that man can grow to Kedusha even higher than them!

One final thought on this topic is from the Tosher Rebbe. The Tosher Rebbe asks; we know that Avot kept all the Misvot of the Torah (it says "עקב אשר שמע אברהם" and is explained that Avraham kept all the laws of the Torah even the laws of "בקי" (ערובי תחומין). If so, why is it that the angels only objected to Moshe taking the Torah for the Jews? Why didn't the angels also object to the Avot keeping the laws of the Torah and claim that Hashem should keep it up in the Shamayim with them, as opposed to allowing human beings (the Avot) to observe the Torah?? It seems that this did not bother the angels. Only when Moshe came on behalf of the entire nation did the angels protest. What is the meaning of this??

The Avot observed the laws of the Torah, even though it was not formally given to them because they perfected their bodies. They were so refined in every single limb of their bodies that automatically, on their own they bodies did exactly as the Torah instructed. אברהם is numerically 248 and that is the amount of limbs we have which correspond to the 248 מצות עשה. The Avot perfected themselves to such a degree that they instinctively observed every law in the Torah. When the Jews were at Har Sinai they were momentarily on a similar level. They experienced a total cleansing of their Neshamot. פסקה זוהמתן the effects of the original sin of Adam was nullified and they reached a level of purity as a nation, that was never reached before. This resulted in the Jews knowing what the Torah would instruct even before they actually received it! Their Neshamot became perfect, and- like the Avot- they too automatically knew what they had to do. This explains how the Jews were able to say "נעשה ונשמע"-“we will do and we will listen”. How can we do something before we are told what to do?! We now understand; they already knew what to do because of the purity that their Neshamot experienced! That is why, unlike the other nations who asked Hashem what is written in the Torah, the Jews did not ask. They did not need to, since they *already knew!* (this is another answer to the question mentioned earlier [see page 2 question #3] why do we say in the Hagadah דינו-it would have been enough had Hashem brought us to Har

Sinai and not given us the Torah? The answer is that when the Jews were at Har Sinai, even *before* they received the Torah their Neshamot were totally cleansed!).

The angles were fine with people who are perfectly pure and refined to receive and observe the Torah. However a regular man, who has sinned and does not have limbs that “instinctively keep the laws of the Torah” should have no part of it! “מה ילוד” “what is this human-born from a woman doing here?” they asked. How can a human with physical desires and needs who acts like a human by making mistakes and falling to his evil inclination, how can *he* have a part in the Torah?! This they could not understand! It’s one thing for perfect people like the Avot to have the Torah, but it is another thing to give the Torah to regular people!! Not only that, but this was where the torah was to remain, with these regular people, and not with the perfect ones and the angels! Moshe explained to the angels that indeed the Torah was given to *us* and it is fitting for us exclusively, that we should bring the Torah into all of our actions- even the mundane things that we do!! Hashem told the people “שובו לכם לאהליכם”-“go back to you tents (wives)”. Hashem was instructing the people to go with the Torah and *be normal!* Go to your normal routines and bring the Torah *with you!* Elevate all your deeds through the Torah, and the purpose of the Torah is to continue with your lives and act normally while sanctifying all your activities for the service of Hashem.

Apply the Torah to your every situation. David Hamelech said“לכו בנים שמעו לי”-“go my children and listen to me”. He seemingly should have said “*come* my children and listen”- come close so that I may teach you! Why did he tell his students *go* and listen? This was to give this message to his students. Go on your way and apply all that you’ve learnt in your daily affairs. This is what Moshe meant when he asked the angels “יצר הרע יש בכם”-“do you have an evil inclination?” Meaning, can you be like a “normal” Jew who has a normal life to apply the Torah to?? Even if he falls to his inclination- he gets up. A regular Jew who has his ups and downs is who the Torah was made for! You angels are perfect, and the Torah was not meant for you.

We are *expected* to have our highs and lows. We must always remember that this is exactly why we were chosen to receive the greatest gift ever given; the holy Torah. We are not expected to be perfect like the angels, nor to live our lives like them. Even when we fail, we should not be discouraged! No matter how many times we fall, we must pick ourselves up and start anew. A Jew may *never* give up hope!! Hashem is waiting for us and is there to help us. All we have to do it try!

May the Zechut of Moshe Rabeinu and the holy angels of Hashem, to whom we have devoted so much discussion, stand for us that we should always be strong and

may we merit the sweetness of the Torah and be able to fulfill it in tranquility with the coming of Mashiach. Amen.