



## Parshas Ki Tsavo 2023, illuminate our path

*The Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Refuah Shlema of Harav Amitai Ben Shoshana and Ruchma Leah Bas Sarah. And in loving memory of Leah Mintche Bas Ya'akov Yosef, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia.*

Our Parsha continues with Moshe's final address to the Jewish people. He begins by teaching the laws applicable once the Jewish nation settles in Israel. The first commandment is Bikurim, the Mitzvah of bringing the first fruits of each year's harvest to the Beis Hamikdash. This commandment specifically pertains to seven fruits: wheat, barley, dates, figs, grapes, pomegranates, and olives.

Each year, people from across Israel would join the procession of farmers bringing their fruits to G-d. They would sing, dance, play musical instruments and accompany the farmers as they performed this special Mitzvah.

Moshe then reminds the Jewish nation of the blessings they will receive for following G-d's commandments or the opposite, heaven forbid. He points out that we were selected by G-d to be His nation, and therefore, it is incumbent upon us to act like we are G-d's chosen people.

However, a question comes to mind: Before Moshe proclaimed the blessings and curses on Mt. Grizzim and Eval, he had the nation write the entire Torah on a set of stones. The Pasuk writes *"You shall inscribe every word of this Torah on these stones with explained greatly."* What do the words **"explained greatly"** imply?

Why did Moshe Rabbeinu include that stipulation when commanding to write the Torah on stones?

Rashi, Rav Shlomo Yitzchaki, the leading Torah commentator, provides a simple explanation. He quotes the Talmud in Sotah (32a) that "**explained greatly**" implies that the Torah should be written in all seventy languages. Moshe Rabbeinu wanted it to be clear and explicit to the world whom G-d chose to be His people, His representatives here on earth.

Earlier this week, on the 12th of Elul, was the Ramban - Rav Moshe Ben Nachman's birthday; in honor, we will delve into his profound explanation.

The Ramban agrees with Rashi's interpretation that Moshe wanted the Torah written in all seventy languages. However, he takes it a step further. He adds that the Torah was not only written in seventy languages but also included many details about the traditions that Moshe instructed. Not only was the text of the Torah inscribed on the stones, but also the practices that bring the Torah to life.

The Ramban explains that even the crowns on top of each letter were inscribed on the stones. The crowns are not just decorative; they have a mystical significance, they animate the words and ignite our soul. Every unique custom maintains the character of each community and the beauty of our united nation as a whole.

This is why Moshe wanted these inscribed in stone and cemented for eternity, to sear in our memory that our differences do not divide us. To encode in our DNA the singularity of our soul and its divine and distinct purpose in G-d's plan for our world. As the Pasuk writes (27:2-3) *"As soon as you have crossed the Jordan river into the land that the Lord, your G-d, has given you, you shall set up large stones. **Coat them with plaster and inscribe upon them all the words of this Torah.** so you stay in the land the Lord, your G-d, is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, like He has promised our forefathers."*

This profound lesson is especially relevant as the preparations ramp up for Rosh Hashanah and our day of judgment. The purpose of Elul is to look inward rather than outward, to define your personal and unique relationship with our King and Father in heaven.

Over the course of our lifetime, we will ask ourselves this question: What is our purpose and mission? How do we contribute to the refinement of this physical world? How does our individual story intertwine with the greater narrative of life?

Asking ourselves these questions and going through this experience of profound introspection can be extremely overwhelming and even unsettling. It can feel like anything is meaningless and meaningful simultaneously, highlighting the complexity of our journey in decoding our purpose within this vast universe.

Moshe's response to this crucial and vital question is to look at the essence of ourselves. What unique and singular light do we possess that the world desperately needs? What perspective, understanding, and vision do we have to enlighten the world and bring ultimate redemption?

**"Define your role by the legacy you build,  
not by the limitations others perceive."**

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,  
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*