



Parshas Yisro 2020, a father's listening ear

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, the wife of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, whose Yahrzeit is the 22nd of Shevet.

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Refuah Shlema of HaRav Amitai Ben Shoshanna, Shaul Ben Berta and Lior Gabay Ben Michal.

This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Leah Mintche Bas Ya'akov Yosef, Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

Our Parsha has the Aseres Hadibros, the Ten Commandments, making it one of the most significant Torah portions. G-d, Himself came down to the mountain to give us the Ten Commandments and confirmed that we are His chosen nation.

We begin with Yisro, Moshe's father-in-law hearing all miracles that G-d did for the Our Parsha has the Aseres Hadibros, the Ten Commandments, making it one of the most significant portions of the Torah. G-d, Himself came down to the mountain and said the Ten Commandments and confirmed that we are His chosen nation.

Just six weeks after leaving Egypt, the Jewish nation arrived at the foot of Mt. Sinai. Moshe instructs them to purify themselves for three days in preparation for the giving of the Torah. They must not approach or touch the mountain, for it is holy and pure; only Moshe and Aaron were allowed to be on it.

Heavy thunder and lightning appeared on the third morning as G-d descended the mountain. G-d said the Ten Commandments to the frightened and terrified Jewish nation.

They turned to Moshe and begged him to act as an intermediary, for G-d's holy and divine words were more than they could physically handle. Moshe responded (20:17), "don't fear G-d, for He has shown Himself to you so that you fear Him and not sin."

However, a question comes to mind: After G-d finished giving the Ten Commandments, He gave Moshe a few more Mitzvahs, amongst them were the prohibitions against making images of G-d and idols out of silver and gold. As the Pasuk says (20:20), "*You shall not make images of anything that is with Me. Idols of silver and of gold you shall not make.*" Why does G-d say to Moshe these specific commandments after He already gave them within the Ten Commandments? As the Pasuk says (20:4), "*You shall not make for yourself an idol or image of that which is in the heavens or on the earth.*" Why does G-d repeat to Moshe these particular commandments?

One of the many answers that are given is that G-d was trying to negate and prevent one of the gravest sins of the Jewish people, the sin of the golden calf. G-d repeated these specific Mitzvahs to Moshe so that he would reiterate them to the Jewish people and hopefully preclude them from occurring.

However, a deeper and more profound explanation is that G-d told Moshe to repeat these specific Mitzvahs to teach us that there is no need to have an intermediary between G-d and us.

Every Jewish person has a piece of G-d within them, so they can and should call out to G-d at any time. Just as a parent will always be a listening ear for their children, G-d always keeps the gate of Teshuva wide open.

As we see the story of Elazar ben Durdayya in the Talmud *Avodah Zarah* (17A). Eliezer ben Durdayya was a person who was sinful and promiscuous his entire life.

He would sin to anger G-d. Once while committing a sin, he was told that he could never repent to G-d because of his wickedness. This statement deeply saddened Elazar ben Durdayya, so he placed his head between his knees and cried until his soul left his body. A heavenly Voice said: *Elazar ben Durdayya is destined for a life in the World-to-Come.*

The Gemora continues that when the great Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi heard this story, he said some people acquire their World-to-Come after many years of hard work. And some acquire it in one moment, like Elazar ben Durdayya.

As G-d is giving us the Torah with many rules and regulations, He is telling us that not only is He our master and king, but rather, our father as well. Therefore, we can turn and call out to Him at any given moment, for we are his treasured children.

In our daily life, it is imperative that we understand that we must lend a listening ear to those in need, even to those who are not deserving of such kindness. Because all of our successes are a blessing from G-d and an opportunity to share his goodness with the world.

***“Listening is an art that requires attention over talent,
spirit over ego, others over self.”***

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*