פרשת וארא

פרק ו פסוק ב

וַיִדַבֵּר אֵ-לֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיָּאׁמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי יִ-הוָה:

- יעדייי ר

וַיּאמֶר אַלָיו אֲנִי ה'. נֶאֱמֶן לְשַׁלֵּם שָׁכָר טוֹב לַמִּתְהַלְּכִים לְפָנֵי. וְלֹא לְחִנָּם שְׁלַחְתִּיךּ כִּי אִם לְקַיֵּם דְּבָרִי שְׁדְּבַּרְתִּי לְאָבוֹת הָרִאשׁוֹנִים. וּבַלְשׁוֹן הַזֶּה מָצִינוּ שֶׁהוּא נִדְרָשׁ בְּכַמָּה מְקוֹמוֹת, "אֲנִי ה'" נְאָמֶן לְהָבִּרְתִּי לְאָבוֹת הָרִאשׁוֹנִים. וּבַלְשׁוֹן הַזֶּה מְצִינוּ שֶׁהוּא נִדְרָשׁ בְּכַמְּה מְקוֹמוֹת, "אֲנִי הי" (ויקרא יט:יב), וּכְשֶׁהוּא אוֹמֵר לְהָפָּרַע, כְּשֶׁהוּא אוֹמֵר מִצְוֹן "וִּשְׁמַרְתֵּם מִצְוֹם עִנְשִׁיתִם אוֹתַם אֵנִי ה'" (שם כב:לא) נֵאֱמֵן לְתֵּן שַׁכַר.

מושג

ּאָנִי ה': נָאֱמָן לְהַפָּרַע, כְּשֶׁהוּא אוֹמֵר אַצֶּל עוֹנֶשׁ... וּכְשֶׁהוּא אוֹמֵר אַצֶּל קיּוּם מִצְווֹת... נָאֱמָן לְתַּן שָׂכָר.

Translation:

"I am Hashem", "I am trustworthy to exact punishment", when it is said by punishment, and when it is said by fulfilling Mitzvos it means, "I am trustworthy to give reward".

Explanation:

When Hashem rewards us for our good deeds, we trust in Him to reward us in a fashion that is beneficial for us in every way. So too, when Hashem punishes us we trust in Him to punish us in a way that is beneficial for us¹. Since both are for our benefit it is appropriate to use the term אני ה', which refers to Hashem in מדת, for both.

Looking in the Pasuk:

Chazal were bothered by the fact that the Pasuk switched from וידבר to אלקים as well as from אמר. It is well known that דבר is a sterner tone than אמר, and that מדת הרחמים often refers to מדת הרחמים refers to מדת הרחמים. The Pasuk thus begins with the harsh tone of judgement and ends with the softer tone of mercy. Rashi explains that even punishment can be seen as part of G-d's mercy, for even when referring to punishment we use the name.

Musag Learning Outcomes:

<u>Know</u>: The words אני ה', tell us that Hashem is trustworthy to reward and to punish. <u>Understand</u>: All Hashem does is for the good and beneficial to man. Even Hashem's punishment is really אני ה' and can therefore be couched in the term אני ה' which is . The fact that things got worse after Moshe came to Pharoh was part of Hashem's plan and thus, in itself, was beneficial to them².

Think: Differences in choices of words, whether as synonymous verbs - such as א.מ.ר and - 7.ב. - or in names of Hashem - such as י-הוה and י-הוה - focus our attention on the drama being related in the Pasuk.

¹ See note #1

² See note #2

NOTES

1. The Rashi from which this Musag is taken is rather difficult to understand. Rashi is usually known for his brevity, and yet here Rashi spends over 50 words in saying what he could have said in 5, אני ה': נאמן ליחן שכר Also, why does Rashi deem it necessary to explain to me what the words mean when said in the context of a punishment and what they mean when said in the context of reward? All Rashi should have done is explain to me what they mean here and leave the other explanations for the appropriate Pesukim⁴. And, finally, why does Rashi first comment that Hashem gives שכר טוב to those who go before him, and then explain the words אני ה' in the context of punishment and then again explain the words?

Rashi, however, knew exactly what he was doing, and he never wastes words. If Rashi saw fit to significantly elongate his commentary there was most definitely a reason.

In order to answer all the above questions we must begin by first asking three others:

- a. How can אני ה' be used for both reward and punishment? After all, if 'ה is used in connection with מדת הרחמים how can it be used for punishment?
- b. We can easily understand the concept of נאמן לשלם. that Hashem is trustworthy to pay reward. We trust that Hashem will reward us in full for each and every Mitzvah we have done. However, how can we explain the concept of נאמן להפרע? Were we afraid that perhaps Hashem would not punish us in full? What type of trustworthiness is applicable to punishment⁵?
- c. What in the words 'אני ה' connotes that Hashem in נאמן?

טוב פעס משחוק פי־בְרעַ פָּנִים :קהלת (ז:ג). The Gemoroh comments: ייטב לב:. The Gemoroh comments: ייטב לב בעולם הזה עוב כעס משחוק, טוב כעס שכועס הקדוש ברוך הוא על הצדיקים בעולם הזה משחוק שמשחק הקדוש ברוך הוא על הרשעים בעולם הזה the Gemoroh understands משחוק שמשחק הקדוש ברוך הוא על הרשעים בעולם הזה this world he is actually doing them a favor because this will allow them to receive full reward in the next world, as the Gemoroh concludes: הבא המרא מהולל (שם ב:ב): זה שחוק שמשחק הקדוש ברוך הוא עם הצדיקים בעולם הבא המרא מהולל (שם ב:ב): זה שחוק שמשחק הקדוש ברוך הוא עם הצדיקים בעולם הבא for in every act of judgement there is an aspect of mercy, much the same way in which a doctor who operates on a sick patient is doing him a great favor. Even though, because of the sickness, the doctor has to inflict great pain now, he is doing an act of kindness that will ensure the patient's health and welfare in the future. In short, Hashem's end game is always the same: to benefit His creation in the long run. At times, due to man's actions, this is achieved through what seems like mercy, and at times through what seems like punishment.

When we say that Hashem is נאמן ליתן שכר, what we mean is that Hashem will only give us a reward that is beneficial for us. This is the idea of שכר טוב that Rashi mentions נאמן לשלם שכר טוב למתהלכים, reward that is good, that is beneficial. Giving a reward in this world which would reduce reward in the next world is not beneficial at all. In the same vein, we may now understand the concept of נאמן להפרע. We are not saying that we trust that Hashem will punish; that is obvious. What we are saying is that we trust that Hashem will punish in a fashion that is completely beneficial for us. Therefore, אני ה' can be used equally for both reward and punishment, for in both Hashem is acting in our best interest, doing the utmost to ensure our welfare.

This is Rashi's understanding of what Hashem was telling Moshe. אני ה', all that I do is truly החמים, giving שכר טוב, even when it seems that my judgement is harsh⁶. Moshe you were not sent for

³ See Rashi on ויקרא כב:לג in which Rashi writes exactly those 5 words.

⁴ Interestingly enough, on the Pasuk of (ויקרא יט:ב'" (ויקרא יט:ב'", which Rashi uses here as the example of אני ה' said by punishment, Rashi does not even comment on the words אני ה' at all! Why mention it here out of context and not mention it in ויקרא וויקרא ה' in context?

⁵ In truth we could ask even on the idea of נאמן ליתן שכר: Why would we think that Hashem would not reward in full? Hashem certainly has the ability to pay in full, why would he not do so? Why does He need נאמנות for this?

⁶ Rashi's words מדת הדין. We may assume that Rashi in his words מדת הדין is referring to the Pasuk in (א:אי) בראשית (יז:א) where Hashem tells Avrohom בראשית לפני והיה תמים. Rashi comments on the Pasuk and says: בְּלַלְ נְּסִיוֹנוֹתֵי בַּלַלְ נִסְיוֹנוֹתֵי . It is, therefore, clear that Rashi in his comments here לשלם does not refer to the מרנת שכר he talks about at the end of his words, but rather is referring to

naught, you were sent to make matters worse. All that I am doing is part of a plan that was fashioned at the time of the Avos, in which they were told that the Jewish people would suffer as slaves for 400 years and because of the suffering they would inflict, the Egyptians would be punished. But, continues Rashi, even in this seeming punishment to the people, אני הַ': נאמן להפרע, for in my punishment lie the seeds of redemption. And, concludes Rashi, this is precisely why the same אני ה' can be used by punishment as it is here, and can also be used in the context of reward as we see later in the Torah.

This entire idea is summed up beautifully by the Midrash:

כתיב טוב כעס משחוק כי ברוע פנים ייטב לב (קהלת ז ג), טוב כעס שהקב"ה כועס על הצדיקים בעולם הזה, כענין שנאמר ויחר אף ה' במשה ויאמר הלא אהרן אחיך הלוי (שמות ד יד), משחוק ששוחקים הרשעים בעולם הזה, שמאריך אפו והם פרים ורבים, כענין שנאמר ואולם בעבור זאת העמדתיך בעבור הראותך את כחי (שם ט טז), ואומר בפרוח רשעים כמו עשב ויציצו כל פועלי און (תהלים צב ח), בוא וראה משעה שדבר הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה בסנה, שנאמר ויאמר משה לפני משה (שמות ג ד), ששה עשר אמירות של גבורה, ובכולם לא נאמר דיבור, אלא ויאמר ויאמר, וכיון שאמר משה לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא והצל לא הצלת את עמך (שם ה כג), מיד התחילה מדת הדין לקטרג עליו, שנאמר וידבר אלהים אל משה (להלן פסוק ב), אין דבור אלא לשון קשה, שנאמר דבר האיש אדוני הארץ אתנו קשות (בראשית מב ל), אלהים זו מדת הדין, עד שלימדה מדת רחמים סניגוריא עליו, שנאמר ויאמר אליו אני ה', זו מדת רחמים, אני ה', אני הוא עד שלא נברא העולם, אני ה' שנגליתי לאברהם, אני ה' שעתיד ליפרע מפרעה ומעבדיו, אני ה' שמשלם שכר טוב לצדיקים לעתיד לבוא, אני הוא ולא אחר: (פסיקתא זוטרתא (לקח טוב) פרק ו סימו א)

2. It is rather surprising that Moshe was stunned by Pharoh's negative reaction to his mission. After all, Hashem had told Moshe at the out that is exactly what would happen:

וַאֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי כִּי לֹאֹ־יִתֵּן אֶתְכֶם מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם לַהֲלֹךְ וְלֹא בְּיָד חֲזָקָה: (שמות ג:יט)

The Midrash picks up on this and writes:

לפי שכבר הודיע הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה שלא יניח אותם פרעה לילך, שנאמר ואני ידעתי כי לא יתן אתכם מלך מצרים להלוך ואני אחזק את לבו, ומשה לא שמר את הדבר הזה אלא בא להתחכם על גזירתו של הקדוש ברוך הוא והתחיל אומר ה' למה הרעות לעם הזה התחיל לדון לפניו (כמו שכתוב למעלה), וע"ז נאמר שאותה חכמה ודעת של משה של הוללות וסכלות היו⁷, כי מה האדם שיבא אחרי המלך, וכי מה היה לו להרהר אחר מדותיו של הקדוש ברוך הוא את אשר כבר עשוהו, מה שכבר גילה לו שהוא עתיד לחזק את לבו בעבור לעשות לו דין תחת אשר העבידם בעבודה קשה, ועל דבר זה בקשה מדת הדין לפגוע במשה, היינו הא דכתיב וידבר א-להים אל משה, ולפי שנסתכל הקדוש ב"ה שבשביל צער ישראל

(שמות רבה (וילנא) פרשת וארא פרשה ו) דבר כן חזר ונהג עמו במדת רחמים, היינו הא דכתיב ויאמר אליו אני ה'. (שמות רבה (וילנא) פרשת וארא פרשה ווער might answer that Moshe did intellectually comprehend that this is what would happen, however, his love for כלל ישראל was so great that he had to express his distress when he saw the suffering actually happen. As the Midrash itself writes Moshe reacted only due to the tremendous pain the people were experiencing.

- 3. Questions for further discussion:
 - a. Rashi mentions two examples of when אני ה' means that I am trustworthy to reward or punish. However, there are many instances in the Torah where the term Hashem does not mean this. What is different in these instances?
 - b. Can you think of other answers to the question we asked in note #2?
 - c. The Midrash quoted above (in note #2) tells us that the מדת הדין wanted to punish Moshe, but Hashem realized that Moshe reacted strongly only out of love for the Jewish people and therefore Hashem acted with מדת רחמים. But, the Midrash teaches us that Moshe was not allowed to enter ארץ ישראל because of his critical words. How can that punishment be considered רחמים?

Moshe's complaint about Hashem's מדת הדין. Hashem is telling Moshe that those who are able to truly understand the purpose of Hashem's tests, will see even punishment as beneficial, שכר טוב.

וּפָנִיתִי אֲנִי לְרָאוֹת חָכְמָה וְהוֹלֵלוֹת וְסְכְלוּת כִּי מֶה הָאָדָם שֶׁיָבוֹא אַחֲרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־כְּבֶר עֲשׂוּהוּ:

- 8 A similar idea is found in the Gemoroh (מסכת יומא פט:) which relates that דניאל upon experiencing the חורבן had stopped saying ברכות אבות וה הגבור והנורא. Even though they could see that Hashem was still concerned for the good of His people, their intellectual realization could not overcome their emotional reaction. In the words of the Gemoroh מתוך שיודעין בהקדוש ברוך הוא שאמתי הוא, לפיכך לא כיזבו בו, since they knew that Hashem was a G-d of truth, they simply could not lie to him.
- 9 (בפסוק א קאָביאַם לָאָרַץ (פַרָעה תַרְאָה", הֶעָשׁוּי לְפַרְעה תָרְאָה", הָעָשׁוּי לְפַרְעה תָרְאָה") (See Rashi above on א פָסוק א

⁷ The Midrash is relating the Pasuk in Koheles (פרק ב פסוק יב) which teaches: