

# Zera Shimshon

by Rabbi Shimshon Chaim Nachmani zt"l

Published Mantua 1778\*

## Chapter XXI: Ki Tisa (Ex. 30:11–34:35)

### Essay 9. The gift of Torah

**פסוק** "וניתן אל-משה ככלתו לדבר אתו בהר סיני". פירש רש"י ז"ל "ככלתו" כתיב חסר שנמסרה לו תורה במתנה ככלה לתתן וכו'. קושה וכי הכלה ניתנה במתנה לתתן, ועוד אמרו ז"ל בפירק ד' דנדרים בתחלה היה משה לומד תורה ומשכחה עד שניתנה לו במתנה. וקושה למה היה שוכחה מתחלה, ומה ענין ליתנה לו במתנה עם הזכרון.

There is a verse: **“He gave Moses—when He finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai—two tablets of the Covenant, tablets of stone inscribed with the finger of G-d”** (Ex. 31:18). **Rashi of blessed memory explains: “[The word] כָּכַלְתּוּ (*ce’chaloto*) (when He finished) is written defectively [without a *vav* after the *lamed*] for the Torah was delivered to [Moses] as a gift, as the bride (*כלה*) (*kallah*) to the groom, for [Moses] wasn’t able to learn all of it in such a short time.”** There is a question: **Is a bride given to a groom?** The custom is that he “acquires” her by giving her a gift. **Also, [the rabbis] of blessed memory said in the fourth chapter of tractate Nedarim (38a): “Rabbi Yochanan said: Initially, Moses would study Torah and forget it, until it was given to him as a gift.” It is difficult to understand why he was forgetting it in the beginning, and what connection there is to giving it to him as a gift with [his] memory.**

ויש לומר דבפירק ד' דכתובות תנו לעולם היא ברשות האב עד שתפגס לרשות הבעל. מסר האב לשלוחי הבעל, הרי היא ברשות הבעל. הלה האב עם שלוחי הבעל, הרי היא ברשות האב. מסרו שלוחי האב לשלוחי הבעל, הרי היא ברשות הבעל.

**One can say as in the fourth chapter of tractate Ketubot (page 48a), where we learned in a Mishnah:**

[Even after she is betrothed, a daughter] **is always under her father’s authority until she enters [her] husband’s authority in marriage** [via the wedding canopy]. [If the father] **delivered [her] to the husband’s messengers** [to bring her to her husband and the wedding canopy], **she is under the husband’s authority.** [If] **the father went with the husband’s messengers** or if the father’s messengers went with the husband’s messengers, **she is [still] under the father’s authority** [as he has not fully delivered her to the husband’s messengers]. [If her

---

\* English translation: Copyright © 2021 by Charles S. Stein.

father sent her with his own messengers] **and the father's messengers delivered [her] to the husband's messengers, she is under the husband's authority.**

- Mishnah Ketubot 4:5; Ketubot 48a-b

ופסק הטור אכן העזר (סימן נ"ז) שאם מתה אחר שמסרה האב לשלוחי הבעל, יורש הבעל כל הנדונגא שלה וכו' ועיי"ש. ואם כן נמצא שבמסירת הכלה, הבעל זוכה בנדונגא שלה הבאה לידו כמו מתנה, ומעתה התורה היא בתו של הקב"ה, כמו שאמרו בשמות רבה על פסוק "ויקחו-לי תרומה", משל למלך שהיה לו בת יחידה ועיי"ש.

**The Tur ruled in Even haEzer (siman 57), that if she died after the father delivered her to messengers of the husband, the husband inherits her entire dowry etc., and see there. If so, it's found that in the delivery of the bride, the groom merits her dowry coming to him as a gift.** So when Rashi referred to a bride being given to the groom as a gift, he was referring to the bride's father's surrender of his authority over her. **From here**, we should consider that **the Torah is like a daughter of the Holy One, Blessed be He**, as it says in Midrash Ex. Rabbah on the verse, "Tell the Israelite people **they will take for Me offerings**" (Ex. 25:2):

**There is a parable about a king who only had one daughter.** One of the [other] kings came and took her and sought to go back to his land to marry her. [The first king] said to [the husband], "My daughter whom I have given to you is my only one. I can't bear to separate from her, but to tell you that you can't take her is also impossible, as she is your wife. Rather, do me this favor, that everywhere you go, make me a small room, so that I can live with you, for I can't leave my daughter." So said G-d to Israel: "I have given you the Torah. I can't bear to separate from her, but to tell you not to take her is also impossible. Rather, everywhere you go, make me one house so that I can live within it, as it is said 'And make me a sanctuary' (Ex. 25:8)."

- Midrash Ex. Rabbah 33:1

וכל עוד שהיה משה במרום, שנקרא רשות האב, לא היה יכול לזכות בה. אמנם מיד שמסרה לו הקב"ה נקראת שלו לזכות בה ובעושר שלה, ומשום הכי אז נתקיימה התורה בזכרונו ולא קודם, ושפיר קאמר שנמסרה לו במתנה ככלה לתתו.

**As long as Moses was in a high place, upon Mount Sinai, which is called "the domain of the Father" (i.e., the domain of G-d), [Moses] was not able to merit [the Torah]. Indeed, immediately upon [the Torah's] delivery to him by the Holy One, Blessed be He, [the Torah] is called "his," to merit [the Torah] and its riches, and for this reason the Torah was then fixed in his memory and not before, and it is fine that it says that [the Torah] was delivered to him as a gift, as a bride to her groom.**

\* \* \*