

## פרשת ואתחנן / Parashat Vaetchanan

Shabbat Av 15, 5768, August 16, 2008  
MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d  
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### The uniqueness of our G-d!

#### השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11  
הפטרה: Isaiah 40:1-26  
הברית: Matthew 23:31-39; Mark 12:28-34  
החדשה

10 A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun to indicate someone or something that has been already mentioned or known. In this week's parsha I would like to talk a little bit about what a difference a pronoun makes in our understanding of the scriptures. The pronoun in addition to functioning as the subject of a non-verbal sentence, the independent personal pronoun can be used with (finite) verbs for a number of reasons; one such reason is to emphasize the subject. For example, if an author places no particular stress on the subject he would simply state ישב בעיר (He lived in the city). But if the author wanted to indicate that it was he and not someone else who lived in the city, the third person masculine singular independent personal pronoun could be added to be ישב הוא

15 ישב בעיר or הוא ישב בעיר (He or He himself lived in the city). This particular use of the independent personal pronoun is referred to as the "emphatic use." This may seem to be a minor grammatical point; however, the authors of the Tanach at various points have used this emphatic use to make important theological statements.

25 We can find such use of the personal pronoun throughout the Torah but I thought it was important to point it out in this week's parsha. In this week's parsha we find one such emphatic use of the word הוא (he/himself). For example, in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:35* Moshe says "*HaShem he is G-d; there is none beside him.*" G-d is unique because he is the creator; he is the only one who ever took a nation like Yisrael out of another nation like Egypt. HaShem in fact is absolutely unique in these two activities. This should tell us something very important in that the Hebrew Scriptures define G-d in terms of "functionality." What does that mean? It means what you do defines who you are! If we are to define G-d we define him by what He has done and by what he is doing in our lives today. If you want to define a person, who he is, the kind of person he is, you define him by what he has done in life, not by other kinds of things. Interestingly in this section of verses we also find the source passage for the Hagbahah. When the Torah reading is over the Torah is raised so that it can be viewed by the entire congregation and the following is recited:

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**"This is the Torah that Moshe placed before the Children of Israel, upon the command of HaShem, through Moshe's hand."**

הַשָּׁמַיִם וְעַד־קֶצֶה הַשָּׁמַיִם הִנְהִיחַ בְּדַבַּר הַגְּדוּלָּה הַזֶּה אִי  
 הַנִּשְׁמָע כְּמֹהוּ: הַשְּׁמַע עִם קוֹל אֱלֹהִים מְדַבֵּר מִתּוֹךְ־הָאֵשׁ 33  
 כְּאִשְׁר־שָׁמַעְתָּ אֹתָהּ וַיְחִי: אִו הִנֵּסָה אֱלֹהִים לָבוֹא לִקְחַת 34  
 לּוֹ גּוֹי מִקֶּרֶב גּוֹי בְּמִסַּת בְּאֵתֶת וּבְמוֹפְתִים וּבְמִלְחָמָה וּבְיָד  
 חֹזֶקָה וּבְזִרוּעַ נְטוּיָה וּבְמוֹרָאִים גְּדֹלִים כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה לָכֶם  
 אֵיזָה אֶלְחִיכֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֶיךָ: אֹתָהּ הִרְאֵתָ לְדַעַת בְּיַד יְהוָה 35  
 הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים אֵין עוֹד מִלְּבָדוֹ: מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם הַשְּׁמִיעַךְ אֶת־קוֹלֹ 36

Use of the personal pronoun

לְיִסְרָךְ וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ הָרִאֵל אֶת־אִשׁוֹ הַגְּדוּלָּה וּדְבַרְיוֹ שָׁמַעְתָּ  
 מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ: וְתַחַת כִּי אֶהֱבֶ אֶת־אֲבֹתֶיךָ וַיִּבְחַר בְּזִרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו 37  
 וַיּוֹצֵאֲךָ בְּפָנָיו בְּכַחוֹ הַגְּדֹל מִמִּצְרַיִם: לְהוֹרִישׁ גּוֹיִם גְּדֹלִים 38  
 וְעַצְמוֹת מִמֶּךָ מִפְּנֵיךָ לְהַבְיֹאֵךְ לְתַת־לֶךְ אֶת־אֶרֶץ־מִנְחָלָה בְּיוֹם  
 הַזֶּה: וַיִּדְעַתָּ הַיּוֹם וְהַשַּׁבָּת אֶל־לִבְכֶךָ כִּי יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים 39  
 בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת אֵין עוֹד: וְשִׁמְרַתְּ אֶת־חֻקֵּי  
 וְאֶת־מִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר יֵשֵׁב לְךָ וּלְבָנֶיךָ  
 אַחֲרָיֶךָ וּלְמַעַן תֵּאָרֶיךָ יָמִים עַל־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן  
 לְךָ כְּלֵי־יָמִים:

אִו יְבַדִּיל מֹשֶׁה שְׁלֹשׁ עָרִים בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן מִזְרַחָה שְׁמֹשׁ: לָנֶס 41, 42  
 שְׁמֹה רוֹצֵחַ אֲשֶׁר יִרְצַח אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ בְּכַל־יְדֹעַת וְהוּא לֹא־שָׂנֵא  
 לוֹ מִתַּמַּל שְׁלֹשָׁם וְנֶס אֶל־אֶחָת מִן־הָעָרִים הָאֵל וְחִי: אֶת־בְּצֹר  
 בְּמִדְבַר בְּאֶרֶץ הַמִּישֹׁר לְרֹאשֵׁי וְאֶת־רֵאמֹת בְּגִלְעָד לְגִדֵי 43

Hagbahah

This is the Torah that Moshe placed before the children of Yisrael.

וְאֶת־גּוֹלָן בְּבָשָׁן לְמִנְשֵׁי: וְזֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם מֹשֶׁה לְפָנָי 44  
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: אֱלֹהֵי הַעֲדוּת וְהַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר 45  
 מֹשֶׁה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם: בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן בְּגֵיא  
 מוֹל בֵּית פְּעוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב בְּחִשְׁבוֹן  
 אֲשֶׁר הִבֵּה מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם: וַיִּירָשׁוּ 47  
 אֶת־אֶרְצוֹ וְאֶת־אֶרֶץ עוֹג מֶלֶךְ־הַבָּשָׁן שְׁנֵי מַלְכֵי הָאֱמֹרִי אֲשֶׁר

בְּעֵבֶר  
 v.33 v. ס"א אלהים תיים וכן ח"ש ות"ע: עיין לאיל ה' כ"ג. v.34 כן בהלל ירושלמי לבא חסר.  
 v.42 v. סביר האלה בח"ש האלה כתיב וקרי.

45 The sages of Israel singled out this verse (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:44*) because Yisrael is, was, and will be a nation only by virtue of the Torah. It is the Torah what separates Yisrael from the nations. Now the *Talmud Bavli Megillah 32a* views the call to do Hagbahah and glilah as the most distinguished and honourable positions.

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to see. The purpose of this is to enable the entire congregation to see the Torah script.

65 Now you may be wondering why I have given all of this information. We find the emphatic use of the personal pronoun declaring that we know HaShem by what he has done delivering Yisrael from out of Egypt. I find it even more interesting when during the Hagbahah one takes hold of the etz khayim handles which translates as the tree of life handles. Here we find the etz khayim is what supports the scroll of the Torah and it is lifted up for all to see. What does this  
70 remind you of?

### **Yeshua, the Torah, and the Tree of Life**

75 The Torah is called the Tree of Life because it points us to HaShem as He reveals Himself to us and His salvation. The Torah states that HaShem's Torah is the way of "life."

#### ***Vayikra / Leviticus 18:4-5***

80 *18:4 'You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes, to live in accord with them; I am the Lord your God. 18:5 'So you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the Lord. (NASB)*

#### ***Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:6***

85 *30:6 'Moreover the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live. (NASB)*

#### ***Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:19***

90 *30:19 'I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, (NASB)*

95 The book of *Mishley / Proverbs*, chapter three, talks about the Torah in terms of "Wisdom and Understanding" calling it a "Tree of Life." The Torah is this "Tree of Life" that founded the earth and established the heavens.

#### ***Mishley / Proverbs 3:13-19***

100 *3:13 How blessed is the man who finds wisdom And the man who gains understanding. 3:14 For her profit is better than the profit of silver And her gain better than fine gold. 3:15 She is more precious than jewels; And nothing you desire compares with her. 3:16 Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honor. 3:17 Her ways are pleasant ways And all her paths are peace. 3:18 She is **a tree of life** to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who hold her fast. 3:19 The Lord by wisdom founded the earth, By understanding He established the heavens. (NASB)*  
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110 The Torah being known as the Tree of Life is also attested to in the Siddur in the prayer that is recited when the Torah scrolls are placed back into the ark for the synagogue service called the Etz Khayim He (it is a Tree of Life)

115 *It is a tree of life to those who take hold of it, an those who support it are praiseworthy. Its ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace. Bring us back Lord to You, and we shall come, renew our days of old.*

120 Notice how the call to bring us back to you Lord is a petition for Teshuva! All the more clearly we see to follow Yeshua is to follow the Torah. The Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) equates Yeshua with the Torah and the Tree of Life mentioned in *Mishley / Proverbs* by saying He (Yeshua) was behind the creation of the heavens and the earth.

125 ***Colossians 1:16***  
*1:16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities all things have been created through Him and for Him. (NASB)*

130 With the image of the Hagbahah and the lifting of the Torah scroll along with the Etz Khayim being lifted high for the entire congregation to see, what better picture is there than that of what Yeshua was destined to do on our behalf.

135 ***John 12:32***  
*12:32 'And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.' (NASB)*

140 Did you know that it is a mitzvah (command) for all to look upon the Torah scroll during the Hagbahah? Can it be any clearer that the Torah is meant to point to the Messiah and His teaching?

145 Yeshua said that Moshe wrote of him. He also said "If you don't believe Moshe, you won't believe me." (See *John5:46*) So if you ask me who is the True Messiah? I have to say He is Yeshua, the Living Torah. If you want to know Yeshua, get to know the Torah. HaShem did not change after Yeshua came. Yeshua is the Tree of Life; He is the Seed, Root, Trunk, and Bread that comes from Heaven. Yeshua reclaimed our access by means of His obedience, resisting the power of evil even to the point of death. How unique is our G-d indeed!

150 Finally I want to say please consider these things. Don't just dismiss them from your mind but think about them. Your top priority at this very moment should be to believe upon Yeshua for salvation. You can't afford to throw away the gift of eternal life HaShem offers to you today. If you want to be a part of the family of G-d, believe today upon the Messiah Yeshua.

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**Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!**

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הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,

“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever

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