**PARASHAT HASHAVUA**

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**PARASHAT VAETCHANAN**

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**“The Revelation at Mount Sinai and its Significance in the Book of Devarim**

**By Prof. Yonatan Grossman[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**Introduction**

Moshe opens his grand oration regarding the *mitzvot* with a lengthy description of the revelation at Mount Sinai.[[2]](#footnote-2) This lengthy account of the revelation is very significant because Moshe could just as well have described the event in a few sentences, but nevertheless decided to relate the story extensively.[[3]](#footnote-3)

In this *shiur*, we fill focuson the fact that the revelation at Mount Sinai opens Moshe's oration concerning the *mitzvot* and the fact that the revelation is described at such great length.

**The Ten Commandments as the Root of All 613 Mitzvot**

Moshe describes the revelation at Mount Sinai in great detail. He begins with the general background (*Devarim* 5:1-5) and then describes the Ten Commandments themselves (6-18). He continues with a description of Israel's response after the revelation (19-24) and the Divine response that followed that (25-30). After this broad description, Moshe begins his lengthy oration concerning the *mitzvot*:

Now this is the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you… (*Devarim* 6:1)

The conventional explanation for Moshe’s choice to begin the oration concerning the *mitzvot* with the Ten Commandments is that the Ten Commandments are the root of all of the *mitzvot*. Indeed, in the prayer rite followed by the Sefardic communities, there is a *piyyut* for Shavuot known as "*Azharot*" that expounds all of the *mitzvot* from the Ten Commandments.[[4]](#footnote-4)

This approach is very tempting, but upon closer examination, the argument seems to be lacking. R. Yuval Cherlow has noted that if we examine the six orders of the Mishna and compare them to the Ten Commandments, we find to our surprise no mention whatsoever in the Ten Commandments of any of the laws connected to three entire orders: *Zera'im*, *Kodshim* and *Taharot*. In light of this insight, it is difficult to say that all of the *mitzvot* are included in the Ten Commandments.

**Who Heard the Ten Commandments?**

The argument that the revelation at Mount Sinai is the foundation of all the *mitzvot* is correct, but it is quite clear from the long and winding account that Moshe presents the broad story in order to achieve an additional goal. Let us examine the verses that serve as the background for the revelation at Mount Sinai:

(1) And Moshe called unto all Israel, and said unto them: Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I speak in your ears this day, that you may learn them, and observe to do them. (2) The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Chorev. (3) The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day. (4) The Lord spoke with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire. (5) I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to declare unto you the word of the Lord; for you were afraid because of the fire, and went not up into the mount, saying. (*Devarim* 5:1-5)

Moshe describes what happened at Mount Sinai as if all of the people standing before him now had also been present at the revelation, despite the fact that the great majority of the people of Israel had not even been alive at the time of that foundational event. This formulation helps Moshe emphasize that the covenant that had been made over forty years ago is not a covenant connected only to the people who had stood around Mount Sinai at that time. Rather, it is a covenant that is valid for all generations. Even those who are alive today but had not existed at the time of the revelation are still under obligation by force of that covenant, and so too in the future regarding the coming generations.

There is a great tension that arises from verses that appear to stand in direct contradiction to each other. From verse 4 it seems that God spoke to the people of Israel "face to face": "The Lord spoke with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire." From verse 5, in contrast, it appears that Moshe served as an intermediary: "I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to declare unto you the word of the Lord."

The well-known resolution of this contradiction is that at the beginning the people received God's words "face to face," but afterwards Moshe mediated between God and the people. *Chazal* propose that the division is between the first two commandments and the last eight commandments.[[5]](#footnote-5) This argument is supported by the wording of the text, which presents the first two commandment in first person, while the rest of the commandments are in second person. Although this is a good argument, we wish to follow a different approach.

The contradiction between verses 4 and 5 leaves the event in a sort of haze. Verse 4 implies that the entire event involved a public revelation, whereas verse 5 suggests that the entire event was conducted through an intermediary. The tension between the two verses prevents us from understanding exactly what took place at the revelation at Mount Sinai, and this appears to be the author's intention!

Note the last word at the end of verse 5: "I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to declare unto you the word of the Lord; for you were afraid because of the fire, and went not up into the mount, **saying**." To what does the word "saying" relate? At first glance, it seems that this word is not connected to the verse.

We will propose an explanation that was suggested by both traditional and modern commentators – namely, that the word relates to the end of verse 4: "The Lord spoke with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire… saying." This word adds to the reader's confusion. In verse 4, the people are described as having personally experienced the revelation at Mount Sinai; in verse 5, Moshe is presented as mediating between God and the people, and now at the end of verse 5 the people are once again described as having personally experienced the revelation. Indeed, it was precisely Moshe's intention that we be confused and not know precisely what happened. What might be the purpose of this vagueness?

**Who Will Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?**

As we know from the accounts in the book of *Shemot*, the revelation at Mount Sinai did not end with the Ten Commandments, but rather continued for forty days. In our verses, Scripture tries to describe two different things at one and the same time. On the one hand, it wishes to portray the great fear and dread experienced by Israel, to the point that they were in need of an intermediary; on the other hand, the intent is describe the revelation itself before the people of Israel. If we remain true to verse 4, we can understand that the people of Israel stood before God in an unmediated manner for all of the Ten Commandments, but at the end of those commandments, when the people understood that the revelation had not yet finished, they broke and asked Moshe to serve as an intermediary between them and God.

We wish to propose an even more daring idea. Moshe went up by himself to encounter God at the top of the mountain as an emissary of the people of Israel, but according to the original plan, all of Israel were supposed to go up with him. If we take the end of verse 5 in our *parasha*, "for you were afraid because of the fire, and went not up into the mount," and join it to what is stated in the book of *Shemot* (19:13): "when the ram's horn [*yovel*][[6]](#footnote-6) sounds long, they shall come up to the mount," we see that the expectation from the people of Israel was that at the revelation itself the people would ascend Mount Sinai in order to experience cleaving to and connecting with God.

The assembly at Mount Sinai was an assembly of a covenant. At that assembly all of Israel stood directly before God without intermediaries. The giving of the Torah on the mountain itself over the course of forty days was supposed to take place before all of Israel, but at this point the people of Israel withdrew and relied on the mediation of Moshe.

In light of this insight, we can propose a rather novel understanding of the structure of Moshe's oration concerning the *mitzvot*. The structure of a covenantal assembly, upon which was founded the receiving of the *mitzvot*, is precisely the structure according to which Moshe constructs his oration concerning the *mitzvot*. The introduction describes the covenantal assembly, and it is by force of this covenant that the *mitzvot* were given.

This receives additional significance in the book of *Devarim* and in the oration concerning the *mitzvot* because Moshe is aware of the fact that in his oration that will begin in chapter 6 there are many *halakhot* that the people of Israel had never yet encountered (e.g., *egla arufa*, sending away a mother bird, the laws of kings, and many other matters). Moshe reminds the people of his authority and his ability to speak to them as one who bears the word of God.

In short, through his account of the revelation at Mount Sinai, Moshe explains to the people from where he has derived the power and authority to introduce new *halakhot* into his oration concerning the *mitzvot*, which he is about to deliver.

**Between Speech and Hearing**

The guide words in the chapter are "speech/words" and "hearing." Thus, we find in the concluding section of the account of the revelation at Mount Sinai:

And the Lord **heard** the voice of your **words**, when you **spoke** unto me; and the Lord said unto me: “I have **heard** the voice of the **words** of this people, which they have **spoken** unto you; they have well said all that they have **spoken**.” (*Devarim* 5:24)

There is an alternation here between the speech and hearing of the words of God on the part of Israel and the speech and hearing of the words of Israel on the part of God. Scripture attributes to God the very same terms of speech and hearing that are used with regard to Israel – the people hear the words of God and then God hears the words of the people:

“Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear Me and keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! Go say to them: Return you to your tents. But as for you, stand you here by Me, and I will speak unto you all the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which you shall teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess it. You shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the way which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.” (*Devarim* 5:25-29)

These verses contain God's explanation as to why He chooses now to bring the *mitzvot* by way of Moshe, as the people had requested. The revelation at Mount Sinai began in the presence of all of Israel, but according to the original plan all of the people were supposed to be on the mountain all forty days.

According to this approach, the division is not between the first two commandments, which were delivered directly to the people of Israel, and the next eight commandments, but rather between all of the Ten Commandments and the *mitzvot* that would be given over the course of the next forty days.

**The Minor Differences Between the Two Accounts of the Ten Commandments**

The *Rishonim* disagree about the significance of the linguistic differences between the accounts of the Ten Commandments in the book of *Shemot* and the book of *Devarim*. The Ibn Ezra, Chizkuni, and Radak belong to one school. Thus writes the Ibn Ezra (v. 5):

Also do not pay attention to the words, for they are like bodies and the meanings are like spirits. One who chops with two tools, the one like the other, it is one action. Therefore, "vain" and "false" are brothers, as every false oath is vain. And I have already explained that "remember” is like "keep." And it adds: "as the Lord your God has commanded you" – i.e., at the revelation at Mount Sinai.

According to the Ibn Ezra and those who follow in his path, the linguistic differences between the book of *Devarim* and the book of *Shemot* are insignificant. The words are like bodies, and the meaning is the spirit. The word serves as a tool to express meaning, and several different words can serve the same purpose. According to their approach, there is no reason to explore the linguistic differences between "vain" and "false," or even between "remember" and "keep."

The approach of *Chazal* runs counter to that of these *Rishonim. Chazal* learn mounds of *halakhot* from each and every linguistic difference. The modern literary approach follows in the path of *Chazal*, but it must contend with all of the differences between the two accounts. However, this approach recognizes the position of the Ibn Ezra and his company and does not always assign significant meaning to every little change.

There are a considerable number of differences between the way in which the Ten Commandments are presented in the book of *Shemot* and the way in which they are presented in the book of *Devarim*. We will focus on several "minor" differences, and later we will relate to some of the "major" differences.

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make unto you a graven image, even any manner of likeness, of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down unto them, nor serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto the thousandth generation of them that love Me and keep My commandments. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain. Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. (*Devarim* 5:6-10)

There are almost no differences regarding the first two commandments, "I am the Lord" and "You shall have no other gods." The same is true regarding "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain," regarding which there is also no major difference. Regarding Shabbat, the difference between *shamor* ("keep") and *zakhor* ("remember") is not that significant, because *shamor* can bear the sense of *zakhor*, as in "and his father kept/remembered (*shamar*) the matter" (*Bereishit* 37:11). Even this linguistic difference does not involve a significant substantive difference. However, the continuation of the commandment regarding Shabbat significantly changes the mitzva, as we will see below.

Keep the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. (*Devarim* 5:12)

Why was it necessary to say: "as the Lord your God commanded you"? When did God have a chance to command about the Sabbath? Similarly, regarding honoring's one's parents, the verse says: "as the Lord your God commanded you":

Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you; that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you, upon the land which the Lord your God gives you. (*Devarim* 5:16)

Are we dealing with collections of *halakhot* that were given to the people of Israel prior to the revelation at Mount Sinai? Rashi is brave enough to say that everything that is now being related in the book of *Devarim* regarding the Ten Commandments had already been said at the revelation at Mount Sinai. According to Rashi, Moshe says "as He commanded you" in reference to *halakhot* that were given prior to the revelation at Mount Sinai. Rashi maintains that these *halakhot* were given at Mara, as it is stated there: "There He made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He proved them" (*Shemot* 15:25). In my opinion the plain meaning of the text is as it was understood by the Rashbam. According to the Rashbam, the reason for "as He commanded you" is that both the Sabbath and honoring one's parents, as opposed to the rest of the Ten Commandments, are positive commandments.

You shall not murder. Neither shall you commit adultery. Neither shall you steal. Neither shall you bear false witness against your neighbor. Neither shall you covet your neighbor's wife; neither shall you desire your neighbor's house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's. (*Devarim* 5:17-18)

In the book of *Shemot*,these commands appear without the conjunctional *vav.* The addition of the *vav* changes the rhythm of the commandments. Instead of seeing each unit independently, all the commandments are connected one to the other.

**The Ten Commandments Serving as a Structure for the Entire Oration Concerning the Mitzvot.**

Apart from these minor differences, there are also major differences to which we will relate in detail below. Following the approach of R. Mordechai Breuer, the Ten Commandments in the book of *Devarim* have broader significance also with respect to the structure of Moshe's grand oration concerning the *mitzvot*.

R. Breuer and R. Yoel Bin-Nun often describe how all of the *mitzvot* appearing in the oration concerning the *mitzvot* are presented in the format of the Ten Commandments. This argument, despite certain very minor difficulties, is certainly reasonable. It seems then that the very location of the Ten Commandments at the beginning of the oration concerning the *mitzvot* bears significance. The story of the revelation thus has a double role. On the one hand, the story validates Moshe for the rest of the oration concerning the *mitzvot*; on the other hand, it is the basis for the manner in which the *mitzvot* will be presented later in the book.

**Major Differences – The Sabbath and “You Shall Not Covet”**

**The Sabbath**

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| ***Shemot***20:7-10 | ***Devarim***5:12-15 |
| **Remember** the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.  Six days shall you labor and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath unto the Lord your God, in it you shall not do any manner of work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your man-servant, nor your maid-servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates;  for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day; **therefore** the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it. | **Keep** the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, **as the Lord your God commanded you**.  Six days shall you labor and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath unto the Lord your God, in it you shall not do any manner of work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor you man-servant, nor your maid-servant, **nor your ox, nor your ass**, nor any of your cattle,[[7]](#footnote-7) nor your stranger that is within your gates;  that your man-servant and your maid-servant may rest as well as you. And you shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; **therefore** the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. |

Moshe transforms the whole concept of the Sabbath with which we were familiar from the book of *Shemot*. The term "therefore" appears in both passages, and with it we can track the reason for the command of the Sabbath. In the book of *Shemot*,the Sabbath is described by way of the word "therefore" as testimony to the creation of the world: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day; **therefore** the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." The Sabbath in the book of *Devarim* is a day of rest for the entire world in order to remind a person that he had been a servant in Egypt: "That your man-servant and your maid-servant may rest as well as you; and you shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; **therefore** the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day." The cancelation of servitude not just for the master but also for the servants and the animals on the Sabbath day is itself a lesson – not a lesson about the creation of the world, but rather a lesson about the exodus from Egypt.

What then is the reason for the commandment of the Sabbath – testimony to the creation of the world or a reminder of the exodus from Egypt? The Ramban relates to this question and rejects the possibility that there are two reasons for observing the Sabbath:

Regarding the Sabbath in general there are two reasons, to believe in the creation of the world that there is a Creator and also to remember the great lovingkindness that He did for us, that we are His servants, after He acquired us to be His servants. **This too is not clear to me,** for when we rest and refrain from work on the seventh day, there is no remembrance of the exodus from Egypt, and one who observes us idling from work has no knowledge of this…

**But there is a remembrance of the creation of the world** in that we rest on the day upon which God rested. It is more fitting to say that since the exodus from Egypt points to an eternal and omnipotent God, as I explained with respect to the first commandment, it therefore says here: Should a doubt arise in your heart about the Sabbath which points to the creation and the will and the power [of God], remember what your eyes saw at the exodus from Egypt, which is for you proof and a reminder. Thus, the Sabbath is a remembrance of the exodus from Egypt, and the exodus from Egypt is a remembrance of the Sabbath, because people will say on it that God creates with all the signs and wonders and does everything in accordance with His will, because it was He who created everything at the time of the creation of the world. This is the meaning of "Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day." He does not explain here the reason for the resting, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth," as this was already mentioned many times in the Torah. But he says in brief, "But the seventh day is a Sabbath unto the Lord your God," for He rested on that day, and he explained to them that from the exodus from Egypt they know that it is He who spoke and the world came into existence, and He rested on it.

The Ramban argues that there is really only one reason for Shabbat – namely, that it serves as testimony to the creation of the world. But he adds a fascinating point. According to the Ramban, Moshe adds the reason of the exodus from Egypt, not as an independent reason, but as a reason that comes to strengthen the primary reason that it is serves as a remembrance of the creation of the world. When a person feels that he is not strengthened by the Sabbath because the memory of the creation of the world is perceived by him as a distant memory, he can take for himself as an example the exodus from Egypt, when God demonstrated His ability to introduce new things (ex nihilo) in the world, and based on that he can internalize for himself that God has the power to do anything, including to create the world.

The Ramban's argument is a good one, but it seems that he must contend with several difficulties. The words, "that your man-servant and your maid-servant may rest" indicate that resting is significant in itself, and not only in relation to the story of the creation. Strong proof for the Ramban may be brought from the words, "by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm." What reason is there to mention God's mighty hand if not to allude to God's mastery over the world, similar to that which He demonstrated at the time of the creation?

We wish to suggest an approach that is different from that of the Ramban. To do so, we must formulate the question differently: How could Moshe have changed the Sabbath? *Chazal* were sensitive to this question, and they answered that "keep" and "remember" were spoken together. However, the innocent reader is certain that Moshe changed the Sabbath.

*Chazal* were correct in their approach, for already in the book of *Shemot* we read of another Sabbath:

Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your ass may have rest, and the son of your handmaid and the stranger may be refreshed. And in all things that I have said unto you take you heed (*tishameru*); and make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of your mouth. (*Shemot* 23:12-13)

Keeping or taking heed of the Sabbath appears already in the book of *Shemot* and did not wait until we reached the book of *Devarim.* We must keep in mind that at this point in the book of *Shemot* it is still not known that the people of Israel would spend forty years wandering in the wilderness.

It may be suggested that the two Sabbaths, the one of keeping and the other of remembering, represent a theological Sabbath according to which the Sabbath is presented as a remembrance of creation and a sociological Sabbath that is more concerned with the social plane and emphasizes the rest of the entire human expanse. Moshe commands about the sociological Sabbath, both in *Shemot* and in *Devarim* shortly before Israel's entry into the Promised Land.

We have already noted that R. Breuer identifies the Ten Commandments in the book of *Devarim* as representing the structure of the entire oration concerning the *mitzvot*. Let us examine the verses that correspond to the Sabbath (14:23-16:17). We can see how the festivals in these chapters are greatly concerned with the sociological element:

And you shall keep the feast of Shavuot unto the Lord your God after the measure of the freewill-offering of your hand, which you shall give, according as the Lord your God blesses you. And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you, and your son, and your daughter, and your man-servant, and your maid-servant, and the Levite that is within your gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are in the midst of you, in the place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there. And you shall remember that you were a bondman in Egypt; and you shall observe and do these statutes.

You shall keep the feast of Sukkot for seven days, after that you have gathered in from your threshing-floor and from your winepress. And you shall rejoice in your feast, you, and your son, and your daughter, and your man-servant, and your maid-servant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within your gates. Seven days shall you keep a feast unto the Lord your God in the place which the Lord shall choose; because the Lord your God shall bless you in all your increase, and in all the work of your hands, and you shall be altogether joyful. (*Devarim* 16:10-15)

On the eve of Israel's entry into the Promised Land, it is important to Moshe to emphasize the sociological element.

**You Shall Not Covet and You Shall Not Desire**

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| ***Shemot* 20:13** | ***Devarim* 5:18** |
| You shall not **covet** your neighbor's house; you shall not **covet** your neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is your neighbor's. | Neither shall you **covet** your neighbor's wife; neither shall you **desire** your neighbor's house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is your neighbor's. |

Both in the book of *Shemot* and in the book of *Devarim*,there is a twofold appearance of "You shall not covet," but in *Devarim* the word changes from "covet" to "desire." In the book of *Shemot* the structure is clear; the verse first speaks of a "house" and then it spells out what is in the house: wife, man-servant, maid-servant, ox, ass, and anything that is your neighbor's. In *Parashat Vaetchanan*,there is a change in the order: the wife is pushed to the front of the stage. The status of women did not change over the course of the forty years in the wilderness. It seems them that what changed is the objective.

Coveting one's neighbor's wife becomes a matter in itself in the book of *Devarim*, and it seems that we are dealing here with an independent prohibition that is not connected to the prohibitions of desire. Here we must agree with the Ibn Ezra’s comment in the book of *Shemot*, where he writes that the first commandment, "I am the Lord your God," is not an independent commandment, but rather an introduction to the commandments that follow, and that "You shall have no other gods" is in fact the first commandment. Accordingly, the Ibn Ezra says that "you shall not covet" and "you shall not desire" are two different matters.

A brief examination of the wording of the Ten Commandments in the book of *Shemot* shows that it is not at all a simple task to reach ten commandments. Moreover, there does not appear to be any importance attached to the number of commandments in the book of *Shemot*, where the primary emphasis is on the very fact of revelation.

In the book of *Devarim*, on the other hand, Moshe attaches significance to the number of commandments:

And He wrote on the tables according to the first writing, the ten words, which the Lord spoke unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly; and the Lord gave them unto me. (*Devarim* 10:4)

In the book of *Devarim* it is important to Moshe that there be ten commandments, because this serves Moshe's purpose to tell the people of Israel that God gave them a perfect gift, a gift that Moshe develops over the course of his oration concerning the *mitzvot*.

(Translated by David Strauss)

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1. Based upon an oral presentation by Prof. Grossman, transcribed and edited by VBM staff. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In the book of *Devarim*, the mountain is referred to as Mount Chorev, butI have chosen to use the term Mount Sinai, the more common term and the one that appears in the book of *Shemot*. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Compare the account of the revelation to the story of the spies that we studied in the previous *shiur*, which was greatly abridged, with many significant details omitted. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See, for example, the beginning of the *piyyut* in the *siddur* of R. Saadya Gaon: "In my wisdom, I included in my Ten Commandments six hundred and thirteen commandments, to teach the words of Gods, pure words." [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *Makkot* 24a. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The word *yovel* means *shofar*. It would appear that the blasting of the *shofar* at the beginning of the revelation at Sinai was meant to serve as a call to the people of Israel to go up the mountain. According to Rashi, the *yovel* mentioned here is a second *shofar* that was to be blasted at the end of the assembly. However, there is no hint in the text that there was another *shofar* in addition to the *shofar* that was sounded at the time of the revelation itself. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The cattle mentioned in the book of *Shemot* is greatly expanded upon here. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)