



# Likkutei Sichos

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## The Death That Couldn't Be Stopped

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A note on the translation: Bracketed numbers refer to endnotes. Considerable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the translation, while at the same time maintaining readability. The translation, however, carries no official authority. As in all translations, the possibility of inadvertent errors exists. **Your feedback is needed — please send all comments to: [info@projectlikkuteisichos.org](mailto:info@projectlikkuteisichos.org)**

## 1.

### RASHI'S INTERPRETATION OF "IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT DAY"

At the end of the *parsha*, it says:[1] “Hashem spoke to Moshe in the middle of that day saying, ‘Ascend this mount of Abarim, Mount Nebo... and die on the mountain...’” Citing the words, “Hashem spoke to Moshe in the middle of that day,” Rashi comments, “In three places the phrase ‘in the middle of that day’ is used.” Rashi then mentions the two other places:[2] when Noach entered the ark (“...in the middle of that day, Noach entered...”[3]), and when the Jews departed Egypt (“...in the middle of that day, Hashem took out...”[4]). In those two places, the phrase is used because Noach’s contemporaries had sworn to prevent Noach from entering the ark; and in the generation of the Exodus, the Egyptians had sworn to prevent the Jews from leaving Egypt. As Rashi elucidates, Noach’s contemporaries and the Egyptians had declared, “By such and such we swear, if we see... not only that, but we will take...,” preparing to prevent Noach from entering the ark, and the Jews from leaving Egypt. So “Hashem said, ‘Behold... at midday, and whoever has the power to dissent, let them come and try.’” Similarly, prior to the death of Moshe, the Jewish people declared, “...we will not let him (and then Rashi lists the favors that Moshe performed for the Jewish people); Hashem said, ‘I will take him at midday, etc.’”

The need for Rashi to explain the phrase “in the middle of that day” is obvious, as the phrase appears to be redundant:[5] At the beginning of the narrative (in *parshat Vayelech*[6]) Moshe already declared, “I am one hundred and twenty years old today,” and as we know, Moshe died on that same day. It is understood, therefore, that all the events recorded afterwards had occurred on that day. As such, what do the words “in the middle of that day ” tell us that is new?

Consequently, Rashi explains that these words allude to the plan of the Jewish people not to acquiesce to the death of Moshe. Hashem answered, “I will take him at midday....”

Still, we need to clarify:

1. To be sure, Noach's contemporaries might have believed that they possessed the ability to prevent Noach's *entry* into the ark. Likewise, the Egyptians might have deluded themselves into thinking that given their superior numbers, they could succeed in stopping the Jewish people from *leaving*. But how could the Jewish people have imagined that they had the power to prevent the death of Moshe, a feat that is humanly impossible?[7]

2. Why does Rashi comment *here* on our verse that "in *three* places, the phrase 'in the middle of that day' is used"? Moreover, he identifies and describes each of the other two occurrences. Rashi ought to have clarified the *simple* meaning of only *our* verse, explaining that the Jews had decided to prevent Moshe's death and so then "Hashem said..."! This is especially puzzling given that such is precisely Rashi's approach in his commentary on these words in *parshat Noach*. Over there Rashi writes: "This teaches us that the people of his generation... Hashem said, 'I will take him in front of everyone....'" Over there, Rashi cites no other examples to support this interpretation of the expression. "in the middle of that day"?

This discrepancy is even more confusing: Since the first time that Rashi interprets the phrase this way, he feels no need to cite examples or proofs, how much more so then should Rashi feel no need to do so the third time that he comments on this phrase.

Furthermore, in *parshat Bo*, Rashi makes no comment on the verse,[8] "in the middle of that day, Hashem took..."[9] Apparently the simple reason is because Rashi relies on his earlier explanation in *parshat Noach*. Why then does Rashi still need to explain here the intent of the Torah's phrase, "in the middle of that day," doing so at length, providing examples and proofs?

Perforce, we must say that in our verse this interpretation of the phrase is not so simple,[10] but since such is the meaning of the phrase in other places, this corroborates that such is also the interpretation here.

[Therefore, after citing the examples with Noach and Egypt, Rashi says specifically, "Also, here..." deviating from the wording of the *Sifri*, the source for Rashi's interpretation. The *Sifri* asks only why Scripture uses this particular phrase here, as it asks about Scriptures' use of the phrase in the context of the

exodus from Egypt. Rashi revises the *Sifri's* wording to emphasize that only *after* determining that this is the interpretation of the phrase as used in the case of Noach and Egypt, can we impute this interpretation to the phrase “*also here.*”]

## 2.

### OTHER NOTABLE NUANCES AND DIFFICULTIES IN RASHI'S WORDING

There are a number of other notable nuances and difficulties in the wording of Rashi's commentary. Some of them are as follows:

1. Rashi doesn't spell out the reasons why Noach's generation and the Egyptians were determined to thwart G-d's plan because their reasons are obvious. In contrast, concerning the death of Moshe, in order to explain why the Jewish people insisted, “We will not let him go,” Rashi lists various favors that Moshe had performed for the Jewish people. Why is it not also self-understood and obvious here why the Jewish people did not want Moshe to die?

2. In the case of Noach and Egypt, why is Rashi not satisfied by just explaining that the people declared, “We will not let...,” as Rashi does over here? In those cases, Rashi *adds* more information. In the case of Noach, Rashi goes on to say – “*moreover*, we will take clubs and axes and wreck the ark.” In the case of the Egyptians, Rashi goes on to say – “*moreover*, we will take swords and weaponry and kill some of them.” In other words, the people of those generations were determined not only to prevent Noach's entrance into the ark and the departure of the Jewish people from Egypt, but also to eliminate any possibility of Noach entering the ark, and any possibility of the Jewish people leaving Egypt (“wreck the ark,” “kill some of them”)?

3. For what reason, when including this additional information, “*moreover*, we will take...,” both in the account regarding Noach and in the account regarding Egypt, does Rashi mention specifically *two* implements: Regarding Noach, Rashi says, “clubs and axes,” and regarding Egypt, “swords and weaponry.”

4. In the case of Noach and Egypt, Rashi quotes Hashem's complete retort: "Hashem said, '...and whoever has the power to dissent, let them come and try.'" In the case of our verse, however, Rashi writes, "Hashem said, 'I will take him at midday, *etc.*,'" and does not mention the continuation. This is perplexing: If in the case of the Egyptians, Rashi records Hashem's entire response, not relying on what he writes in his commentary regarding Noach, why does Rashi here merely allude to the continuation of Hashem's response, by using the word *etcetera*? For consistency's sake, in *both* the cases of Egypt and of Moshe, Rashi either ought to have alluded to the rest of Hashem's reply with the word *etcetera*, or have written out Hashem's complete reply.

5. Why does Rashi choose specifically *these* favors which Moshe performed for the Jewish people: "who took us out of Egypt; and parted the sea for us; and brought down manna for us; and made the pheasants fly to us; and brought up the well for us; and gave the Torah to us"?[11] Over the course of their 40 year trek through the desert, Moshe performed numerous favors for the Jews besides the ones listed. For example: he sweetened the bitter waters in Mara; he conquered the land of Og and Sichon; *and others*.

6. Moreover, the *Sifri* also adds, "and he performed miracles and wonders." [12] Why does Rashi omit this clause? [13]

[To understand these peculiarities, we must posit that although Rashi's phraseology is borrowed from the *Sifri*, nonetheless, since Rashi commentary aims to explain the simple sense of Scripture, all of the noted nuances are used by Rashi for the purpose of clarifying the *simple sense* of Scripture. In particular, since Rashi here does not attribute his interpretation to the *Sifri*, we are compelled to say that all of the aforementioned peculiarities serve to explicate the *simple meaning* of the passage.]

7. In his comments, Rashi explains only the phrase "in the middle of that day." Why then, in the caption to this commentary, does Rashi also cite the words, "Hashem spoke to Moshe"?

### 3.

THE DISSENTERS WERE NOT INTENDING TO DEFY HASHEM

The explanation:

The obvious difference between our situation and the cases of Noach and Egypt is the following: Noach's contemporaries, who intended to wreck the ark, and the Egyptians, who had intended to prevent the exodus of the Jewish people, were all wicked. Therefore, it is obvious why they wanted to prevent Noach's entry into the ark and the Jewish people's departure from Egypt, in opposition to Hashem's will.

In our situation, though, something seems to be amiss: How can we suggest that the Jewish people plotted to defy Hashem (Heaven forbid), and to act against His will? We are not speaking about the generation of Jews who had left Egypt, the Generation of the Desert, concerning whom we do find a number of instances when they were rebellious. Rather, we are speaking about the generation of Jews poised to enter into the Land of Israel, concerning whom it says,<sup>[14]</sup> "You who *cleave* to Hashem your Lord." We are hard-pressed to suggest that this generation would stand defiantly against Hashem and His plan for the demise of Moshe.

Consequently, and for this reason, without Rashi's prior substantiation, "In three places the phrase 'in the middle of that day' is used," this interpretation of the phrase (i.e., that Hashem was responding to the Jewish people's plan, "we will not let him") would seem objectionable. However, once Rashi first establishes that this phrase is found in three places, and in two of those places the import of the phrase is unambiguous without any questions, this proves that in this third case, too, "*also here*," this is the proper interpretation of the phrase.

### 4.

IN ALL THREE PLACES THE INTENT WAS TO PREVENT MOVEMENT

But how did the Jewish people intend to prevent the death of Moshe? Rashi alludes to the answer – after first describing the two earlier cases involving

Noach and Egypt – by saying “also here,” emphasizing that in all three cases, the strategy as to how to thwart Hashem’s plan was similar.

Just as Noach’s contemporaries and the Egyptians had plotted to preempt Hashem’s plan by preventing people moving from one place to another (i.e., prevent Noach from entering the ark, and the Jewish people from leaving Egypt), the Jewish people had a similar method in mind. They also sought to prevent Moshe from going from one place to another – from leaving them and ascending the mountain. Since Hashem had told Moshe – “and die on the mountain,”[15] the Jewish people believed that by forestalling Moshe’s ascent onto the mountain, they could thereby prevent his demise.[16]

## 5.

### THE KEY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE THREE CASES AND THE PARTIES INVOLVED

On this basis it is understood why in our case, Rashi suffices with just saying, “...we will not let him,” whereas in the two earlier cases, Rashi needs to add, “moreover...”:

The contemporaries of Noach, and the Egyptians, were wicked. As such, they were uncertain whether Hashem’s plan (as related to Noach, “for in another seven days...,”[17] and as related by Moshe to Pharaoh, “at about midnight... and afterwards I will go out”[18]) would materialize precisely as foretold. Therefore, they couldn’t reassure themselves by just preventing the unwanted event from happening on the designated day. Because of their uncertainty, they would feel apprehensive even in the days and weeks that followed, always on the alert to prevent Noach from entering the ark and the Jewish people from leaving Egypt. As such, they needed a plan to altogether eliminate any *possibility* of Noach entering the ark, and of the Jewish people leaving Egypt. So Noach’s contemporaries decided to preemptively “wreck the ark”; and the Egyptians, to “kill” some Jews.

In our case such a lack of faith was not evident. The Jewish people of this generation were righteous. They realized that without a doubt, it was Hashem’s decree behind Moshe’s announcement,[19] “*Today*, my days and years have

become complete.” When Moshe said he would die *today*, they knew that he actually meant *today*. As such, the Jewish people believed that if on that *exact* day Moshe were not to ascend the mountain where his death was fated to occur, Hashem’s decree would be rescinded. [Their reasoning was *similar* to that of Moshe’, as Rashi explained *earlier*:<sup>[20]</sup> After vanquishing Sichon and Og, Moshe had hoped that their defeat under his leadership meant that Hashem’s earlier vow barring him from entering the Land of Israel had been rescinded.

Therefore, the Jewish people were content just to prevent Moshe from ascending the mountain on the *appointed* day in order to nullify the divine *decree* concerning Moshe’s demise.

## 6.

THE WOULD-BE OBSTRUCTERS WERE NOT INTENDING TO DEFY HASHEM

The reason why Rashi notes two details of the measures that the people planned to take in order to undermine Hashem’s plan, “moreover, we will take...,” is as follows:

Noach’s contemporaries realized that Hashem intended to save Noach from the impending flood by means of the ark. Consequently, they believed that by wrecking the ark, Noach’s intended refuge, Hashem would be unable to bring the flood.

Consequently, since they understood that Noach would try to stop them from wrecking the ark, they needed to come up with a way to wreck the ark but to do so while still being careful not to kill Noach. For if Noach were killed, there would be nothing to deter Hashem from bringing the flood.

That’s why Rashi says that in addition to equipping themselves with axes to wreck the ark, there also took clubs.<sup>[21]</sup>

In *parshat Shoftim*,<sup>[22]</sup> Rashi already remarked that the Jewish military officers yielded clubs which they could use at their discretion “to beat<sup>[23]</sup> the thighs’ ’ of any soldier attempting to desert. Thus, clubs are non-lethal weapons.



[The non-lethal nature of this instrument is alluded to by its name in Hebrew, כישילין, cognate with the word, כשלוך; an item that incapacitates and deters, but does not kill.[24]] Similarly, in our situation, Noach's adversaries equipped themselves also with clubs in order to prevent Noach's interference with destroying the ark.

Likewise, this was what happened with the Egyptians: They realized that if they inflicted casualties on the Jewish people as they were trying to leave, the Jews would be provoked into combat. Accordingly, the Egyptians armed themselves not only with *swords*[25] (lethal instruments) but with *weaponry* which also included protective gear,

## 7.

### EXPRESSING GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION

The following, however, remains baffling: In the final analysis, how could the Jewish people contemplate carrying out a ploy to prevent the death of Moshe – against Hashem's will?

To address this problem, Rashi goes on to explain that the Jewish people reasoned, "...the man who took us out of Egypt...": In *parshat Tavo*,[26] the Torah teaches us that when Hashem blesses a Jew with a fertile field producing bountiful yields, he should not be an ingrate. Rather, he must show his appreciation by bringing the first fruit of his fields to the priests in Jerusalem,[27] and by articulating his thanks to Hashem.

The Jewish people rationalized: Moshe had performed countless favors for them, and so it was *incumbent* upon them not to behave ungratefully. As such, they needed to do whatever possible in order to prevent Moshe's death, even if doing so ran contrary to the Divine command to Moshe,<sup>1</sup> "Ascend this mount of Abarim."

Consequently, Rashi is not content to bring just one example of the favors that Moshe did for them and to just allude to the others by writing, *etcetera*. Rashi instead lists *all* the benefits that the Jewish people received from Moshe,

thereby illustrating the great duty incumbent upon them not to act ungratefully towards him. On this basis, we can now better appreciate the undertaking of the Jewish people to prevent Moshe from ascending the mountain.

## 8.

ON THE DAY OF MOSHE'S ASCENT, THE PEOPLE BENEFITED FROM THESE FAVORS

In light of the above, we understand why, from all the favors that Moshe did for the Jewish people, Rashi chooses these examples and not others:

For the favors they received in the *past*, the Jewish people certainly already expressed their appreciation to Moshe, as they were not ingrates.

Therefore, Rashi lists only those favors that the people enjoyed (also) “on this day,” *the day of Moshe’s ascent on the mountain*, as those favors were the ones *presently* obligating them to show their appreciation and not to deny their gratitude.

As to why Rashi also mentions that Moshe had also led the Jewish people out of Egypt, split the sea for them, and gave them the Torah – this is not difficult. Even though these favors were done in the past (and associated with the Generation of the Desert), these favors continued to benefit all the Jewish people for all generations in all eras. Regarding the departure from Egypt and the splitting of the sea – the finale of the exodus – the verse already says,[28] “When your child will ask you *tomorrow*...” Rashi interprets the word *tomorrow* as meaning “after a long time,” an unbounded period of time. Scripture instructs us to answer the child, “And He took *us* out of there.” Similarly, the giving of the Torah was is a benefit confined to just the people of that era; rather, it is a gift to all the Jewish people of every generation.[29]

[Accordingly, Rashi omits the clause in the *Sifri*, “and performed for us miracles and wonders.” Rashi lists only those favors that the people benefited from on the day that Moshe was to ascend the mountain – and not just ordinary past “miracles and wonders.”].

## 9.

THE COMMAND TO ASCEND THE MOUNTAIN WAS DIRECTED TO MOSHE – NOT TO THE JEWS

Notwithstanding the explanation above, the matter still does not seem entirely smooth: In the end, Hashem explicitly commanded Moshe to ascend the mountain, so how could the Jewish people have imagined that their moral obligation to be grateful to Moshe permitted them to prevent his death?

In order to forestall this puzzling question, Rashi cites also the words, “And Hashem spoke to *Moshe*” – pointing out that the Divine imperative to ascend the mountain was directed only to *Moshe*, and not to the Jewish people.

Hashem had not commanded<sup>[30]</sup> the people to do anything regarding Moshe’s ascent on the mountain, and Moshe himself was coerced {and thus not accountable for acquiescing} as it says,<sup>[31]</sup> “but you shall do nothing to the girl.” So if they could succeed in preventing Moshe from ascending, they would only be indirectly *causing* Moshe not to fulfil Hashem’s command *to him*. On this basis, the people reasoned that *their own* obligation to be grateful to Moshe superseded any incidental effect that arose as a result.

In light of all the above, we understand why Rashi does not write out the entirety of Hashem’s reply, i.e., “and whoever has the power to dissent, let him come and do so.” Instead, Rashi only alludes to this continuation (with use of the word *etcetera*): The Jewish people had no intention of opposing Hashem (Heaven forbid). On the contrary, they strove to fulfil what they believed to be their Torah obligation to be grateful. Consequently, if Rashi wrote out the continuation, “and whoever has the power to dissent, let him come and do so,” the reader might have interpreted Rashi’s remark as lumping together the Jewish people with Noach’s contemporaries and the Egyptians, in that the Jewish people also rebelled (“dissent”) against Hashem.<sup>[32]</sup> For this reason, Rashi only alludes to this remainder of Hashem’s retort by using the word *etcetera*.

## 10.

### JUST TAKING THE HINT

Still, the answer needs elucidation: Ultimately, Hashem had commanded Moshe to ascend the mountain, so how could the Jewish people have planned to obstruct Moshe from obeying Hashem?

The explanation: The Jewish people reasoned that the very fact Hashem had spoken only to Moshe and had created a stipulation for his demise (his ascent up the mountain) proved that the Divine plan was contingent on the “forced compliance”[33] of the Jewish people, as what happened in the case of their war against Midian. In addition, over here, the people believed that Hashem was ‘opening a door for them, informing them that this matter depended on them’[34] (by preventing Moshe’s ascent) – just as He did with Moshe concerning the annulment of His decree in the case the Golden Calf.[35] And in this situation, Moshe would be blameless as he was prevented from ascending against his will.

## 11.

### A MATTER OF JEWISH SURVIVAL

For a deeper and more penetrating insight, consider the following: Although Hashem had decreed the death of Moshe, in theory, this decree could be annulled. Since the community as a whole was affected by the decree, then if the community repented, the decree could be rescinded, as communal repentance has the power to nullify a divine decree “even if sealed.”[36]

This is also why Rashi doesn’t continue, “and whoever has the power to dissent...,” because in truth, the people *did* have the power to dissent, as it were, and to nullify the decree. [In *three* instances, we find that Moshe’s own prayer was able to nullify a decree.[37] And just as his prayer was effective in nullifying half of the divine decree against Aaron[38] – “Hashem was angry with Aaron” – so, too, could the prayer of the community and its deeds also nullify the decree against Moshe – “also with me was Hashem angry,” and “Hashem was angry

with me.” We find a similar idea expressed about a Torah dispute with Hashem, concerning which Hashem conceded,[39] “You have vanquished Me, my sons; you have vanquished Me.”]

In light of the above, why then were the Jewish people unable to nullify the decree against Moshe? Scripture alludes to the answer by writing, “in the middle,[40] *בְּתוֹכָא*, of that day.” Meaning “that day” on which Moshe’s demise was to occur would have a profound effect on the “essence” of the Jewish people, their very survival. For had Moshe brought the Jewish people into the land of Israel, they could never have been exiled from the land, despite any transgressions – since Moshe’s accomplishments were everlasting.[41] Had that happened, then no longer could it be said, “Hashem poured out His wrath on the trees and the rocks,”[42] but only on the Jews themselves, Heaven forbid. Consequently, fulfillment of Hashem’s command, “Ascend this mount of Abarim,” and all that this entailed, was crucial.

## 12.

### THE TAKEAWAY

The lesson that we can all glean and apply when serving Hashem:

In the soul of every Jew, there exists an aspect of Moshe, as the Alter Rebbe elucidates in *Tanya*.<sup>[43]</sup> As such, a Jew might be inclined to rationalize: “If Hashem truly wants me to learn Torah and to observe its commands, why did Hashem obscure the quality of ‘Moshe’ within me so that it appears to be virtually non-existent and only our ‘animal soul’ is perceptible”?

The answer: This concealment is for our own benefit because it leads to a revelation of the *essence*, as alluded to by the verse, “in the middle, *בְּתוֹכָא*, of that day.” Only when we invest our hard work, struggling to remove the concealment within us and within the world – only then is our essence revealed – the core of a Jew. Then we will see how the cover-up and concealment exists only to groom us for the elevation that follows, readying us for redemption via the “Moshe” within our souls. From our own individual redemption, we then proceed to our

collective redemption, for Moshe was the first savior and Moshe will be the last.[44]

-Based on a talk delivered on Shabbos *parshas Haazinu*, 5727 (1966)

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[1] Deuteronomy 32:48, *et passim*.

[2] What Scripture writes regarding Abraham (Gen. 17:23), “Abraham circumcised himself *in the middle of the day...*,” on which *Rashi* comments, “He was not afraid...,” is not germane to the present discussion. Over there, Scripture is addressing (the exalted stature of) Abraham (i.e., “the same day on which he was commanded to circumcise himself..., and he was unafraid...”). In contrast, here Scripture used the phrase “in the middle of the day” as *Hashem’s retort* to the professed resolution, “we will not allow.” See the super-commentaries on *Rashi* here who elaborate. Perhaps, for this reason, *Rashi* specifies a number – “in three places,” to exclude the usage of the phrase with Abraham.

[3] Genesis 7:13.

[4] Exodus 12:51.

[5] To suggest that *Rashi* is bothered by the addition of the phrase “in the *middle* (of that day),” however, is untenable – because Scripture uses this phrase, or the like, in several places, yet in these places, *Rashi* makes no comment. (See Ex. 12:17, Lev. 23:14, 21, 28, 29, 30.) Also, in his commentary on *parshat Noach* (Gen. 7:13), *Lecha* (Gen. 17:23, 26), *Bo* (Gen. 12:41), *Rashi* offers no comments on the word “middle.”

[6] Deuteronomy 31:2, and *Rashi*, *ad loc*.

[7] See *Siftei Chachamim*, *ad loc*.

[8] Exodus 12:51.

[9] On the earlier verse, “in the middle of that day, all the legions of Hashem left (Ex. 12:41),” Rashi comments, “implying that as soon as the appointed time came, Hashem did not delay them for the blink of an eye.” Rashi does not explain there that the Egyptians resolved to prevent the Jews from leaving because the event of this verse happened immediately after the death of the first born Egyptians. Scripture relates there, just before, how Pharaoh urged the Jews to leave at once, and also the Egyptian population urged the Jews to go. Thus, it would be difficult to posit that in a matter of a few hours the Egyptians had a change of heart, and resolved to prevent the Jews from leaving (although a *few days* later, they did come to deeply regret their earlier decision). Accordingly, the first time in the narrative that Scripture says, “in the middle of that day,” Rashi interprets the phrase as intimating that Hashem did not delay the departure for even a blink of an eye. Only the second time in the narrative that Scripture uses the phrase, “in the middle of that day,” which is seemingly redundant, does Rashi explain it as intimating that since the Egyptians had resolved to forcefully prevent the Jewish exodus, etc.

[10] It is not possible to say that the difficulty is the question asked above (in this situation, how could the Jewish people possibly postpone...), because Rashi’s listing of three places where the phrase is used in no way resolves this difficulty

[11] Rashi changes the sequence of the favors listed from the sequence found in the *Sifri* (where the giving of the Torah is mentioned *before* the giving of the manna), because the *Sifri* enumerates the favors according to their importance, whereas Rashi does so chronologically, according to *pshat*.

[12] {Cf. Rashi on Numbers. 10:31.}

[13] On the other hand, Rashi includes, “brought up the well for us,” which is not found in the *Sifri*.

[14] Deuteronomy 4:4.

[15] {Deuteronomy 32:50.}

[16] Similar to the solution offered by the commentary *Sifri Debay Rav* on the *Sifri*, ad loc.

[17] Genesis 7:4.

[18] Exodus 11:4, 8.

[19] Rashi on Deut. 31:2.

[20] Rashi on Deut. 3:23; similarly, Rashi on Num. 27:12.

[21] [In the Hebrew, כִּישִׁילִין, a non-lethal instrument. Possibly, a spade, or a small hatchet. See footnote 23.]

[22] Deut. 20:9.

[23] {In the Hebrew original, לִקְפֹּחַ, which *Aruch* interprets as smiting.}

[24] See Rashi on Sotah 44a, s.v. “לשמור”; but see Rashi on Psalms 74:6; *Aruch*, entry, “כשיל”.

[25] Rashi alters the wording of the *Sifri* – “(swords) and *sabers*.”

[26] Deut. 26:2, et passim; Rashi, *ibid.*, on v. 3.

[27] {In the succinct Hebrew original, בִּיכּוּרִים.}

[28] Deuteronomy 6:20, et passim.

[29] Interestingly, Rashi revises the wording of the *Sifri* which says, “he *brought* the Torah *down* to us.” In contrast, Rashi writes, “he *gave* us...”

[30] In contrast, had Hashem commanded the people explicitly, we can posit that they would not have objected.

[31] {I.e., a girl who was forcefully violated is not responsible.}

[32] Although the Jewish people declared, “we will not let him,” *him* refers to Moshe. In contrast, “whoever has the power to dissent,” refers to dissenting against Hashem.



[33] Rashi on Num. 31:5.

[34] Numbers 32:10, and *Rashi's commentary*, ad loc.

[35]

[36] Rosh Hashanah 18a.

[37] Numbers 16:4.

[38] *Rashi* on Lev. 10:12.

[39] Bava Metziah 59b.

[40] {Literally, “in the essence of that day.”}

[41] Sotah 9a.

[42] See *Eicha Rabba* ch. 4, par. 14; *Midrash Tehillim*, sec. 79; Kiddushin 31b, Rashi, s.v. “*Istaya*.”

[43] Beginning of chapter 42.

[44] See *Shmot Rabba* ch. 2, par. 4; *Zohar* vol. 1, p. 253a.