

Moshe's Beracha upon the Completion of the Mishkan

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Moshe blesses the people once the fabrication of the Mishkan is completed.

When the manufacture of the Mishkan and the priestly clothing is finished (Shemot 39:32),¹ prior to the setting up and proper arranging of the various objects within the Tabernacle (Ibid. 40:1-33), and eventually followed by the Divine Presence Descending upon and Inhabiting the completed structure (Ibid. 40:34),³ Moshe blesses the people:

Shemot 39:43

And Moshe saw all the work, and, behold, they had done it; as the LORD had Commanded, even so had they done it. And Moshe blessed them.

What did Moshe's blessing consist of?

But the Tora intriguingly does not spell out what the contents of this blessing was.⁴ Naturally one could say that it really doesn't matter; Moshe simply expressed his good wishes to the people, i.e., gave them a "Yeyasher Kochachem",⁵ after they had so carefully and devotedly

¹ Thus was finished all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting; and the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD Commanded Mosese, so did they.

² A calculation using the Creation of the Universe as the starting point, results in concluding that the Mishkan was completed in the year 2449. (<http://www.hidabroot.org/ARDetail.asp?BlogID=8463>)
The first Temple constructed by Shlomo was begun 480 years after the Exodus from Egypt, during the second year of Shlomo's reign (2928) (I Melachim 6:1) and was completed in the eleventh year of his reign (2939) (Ibid. 6:38).

³ Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the Glory of the LORD Filled the tabernacle.

⁴ A similar problem arises with respect to VaYikra 9:22:

"And Aharon lifted up his hands toward the people, and blessed them; and he came down from offering the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and the peace-offerings."

While it is possible that he invoked the Priestly blessing:

BaMidbar 6:23-7

'Speak unto Aharon and unto his sons, saying: On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel; ye shall say unto them: The Lord Bless thee, and Keep thee; The Lord Make His Face to Shine upon thee, and be Gracious unto thee; The Lord Lift up His Countenance upon thee, and Give thee peace. So shall they put My Name upon the children of Israel, and I will Bless them.'

yet some other blessing may have been pronounced at this point by Aharon, particularly in light of Birchot Kohanim appearing in the later book of BaMidbar. See

<http://rayanotyaakov.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/5766-shmini.pdf>

⁵ A Rabbinic source for this expression is Shabbat 87a, where the superfluous phrase in Shemot 34:1, "Asher Shibarta" ([the Luchot] that you broke), is interpreted by Reish Lakish, "Yeyasher Kochacha

brought into existence the various artifacts that God had Told Moshe He Wanted the people to construct.

One commentator makes the intriguing claim that what is important with respect to this verse is not so much what Moshe said, but rather the specific fact that he blessed other human beings.

Ohr HaChayim d.h. “VaYevarech Otam Moshe”

The reason why it was necessary to state the name “Moshe” (the verse could very well have simply concluded with “And he blessed them”, without mentioning Moshe’s name a second time since his name was already stated at the beginning of 39:43) and did not depend upon the nearby reference (at the beginning of the verse) is to thereby say: This blessing should not be insignificant in your eyes, because Moshe, the man of God, blessed them, and a great thing was disclosed by the verse in this matter. For this reason the verse makes this known to us and says “And he blessed them”, for had this not been Moshe, the Tora would not have mentioned that one person blesses the next.

While it is possible that the Ohr HaChayim feels that a blessing specifically from Moshe is much more important than a blessing from anyone else due to Moshe’s unmatched spiritual standing, and it is for this reason that this event is recorded in the Tora, the commentator’s words could also be understood as viewing this verse as a precedent for one person blessing another, i.e., just as Moshe blessed other people, we should do the same on our own respective levels. Usually blessings transpire when God Blesses a person or a person blesses God. However, with regard to “Bein Adam LeChaveiro” blessings, while the Tora records any number of instances where a parent blesses a child,⁶ e.g., Beraishit 9:27;⁷ 24:60;⁸ 27:4 ff.;⁹ 28:1;¹⁰ 32:1,¹¹

SheShibarta” (your strength should endure/be reinforced in that you broke; i.e., I Approve of what you did).

⁶ One could claim that the blessing that a person gives to a child does not constitute blessing another person per se, but rather a form of someone blessing himself, i.e., since the child is perceived as the spiritual continuation and biological extension of the parent, the parent expresses hopes that the child will meet with success and happiness, things that the parent certainly has always wished for himself. In contrast, blessing someone outside one’s family circle represents an act of Chesed, empathy and caring for someone towards whom one otherwise might not have natural feelings and concerns. Although it is sometimes said that one feels closer to his spiritual children than his biological offspring, the natural tendency in the overwhelming majority of cases is to be more favorably predisposed to literal offspring than those with whom one develops social and intellectual relationships.

⁷ (Noach to his sons Yafet and Shem): God Enlarge Yaphet, and He shall Dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be their servant.

48:9 ff.;¹² 48:15 ff.;¹³ 49:28 ff.,¹⁴ Shemot 39:43 is almost¹⁵ the first instance when one person blesses another to whom he is unrelated. Perhaps the idea that we should more frequently bless one another trumps the actual content of this particular blessing.

Shouldn't it be considered important to inform us of Moshe's exact words in his blessing?

Yet one might nevertheless claim that "Halkar Chaser Min HaSefer" (the essential thing is missing from the written account)—what after all did Moshe say to the people at this propitious moment? Knowing what Moshe included in his blessing on this occasion could serve as a precedent for imparting a specific form of good wishes¹⁶ whenever something of

⁸ (Rivka's family blessing her before her departure with Eliezer in order to marry Yitzchak) And they blessed Rivka, and said unto her: "Our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and let thy seed possess the gate of those that hate them."

⁹ (Yitzchak to Eisav) And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.'

¹⁰ And Yitzchak called Yaakov, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him: 'Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

¹¹ And early in the morning Lavan rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them. And Lavan departed, and returned unto his place.

¹² And Yoseph said unto his father (Yaakov): "They are my sons, whom God hath Given me here." And he said: "Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them."

¹³ And he (Yaakov) blessed Yoseph, and said: "The God before Whom my fathers Avraham and Yizchak did walk, the God Who hath Been my Shepherd all my life long unto this day,"

¹⁴ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is it that their father (Yaakov) spoke unto them and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

¹⁵ The apparent exceptions to the rule that Ohr HaChayim suggests are:

- a) Malki Tzedek blessing Avraham: Beraishit 14:19;
- b) The mysterious man/Angel blessing Yaakov Ibid. 32:27, 30;
- and c) Yaakov blessing Pharaoh: Ibid. 47:10.

Case b) can be dismissed if we assume that Yaakov's adversary was not an ordinary man but rather some sort of Divine entity. Yaakov's demanding a blessing from this individual can then be understood as comparable to a human being desiring to be the recipient of HaShem's Blessing.

As for a) and c), in both instances a king is either the bestower or the recipient of another's blessing. One might attribute these actions to protocols between Kings and common men rather than a person taking the initiative to bless another.

¹⁶ The Talmud learns such an important precedent from the manner in which Boaz greeted his reapers:

Rut 2:4

And, behold, Boaz came from Beit-Lechem, and said unto the reapers: 'The Lord Be with you.'

And they answered him: 'The Lord Bless thee.'

Rut Rabba

From here we derive that Boaz instituted that exchanged greetings include the Name of God.

(See Berachot 54a.)

Perhaps a comparable precedent could have been derived from Moshe's blessing of the people upon the completion of the components of the Mishkan.

consequence is completed.¹⁷ Just as we channel the blessing pronounced by Yaakov to his grandsons,

Beraishit 48:20

And he (Yaakov) blessed them (Ephraim and Menashe) that day, saying: 'By thee shall Israel bless, saying: God make thee as Ephraim and as Menashe'...

to our own children on Shabbat and Yom Tov evenings, Moshe's language could similarly have been memorialized and then repeated down through the ages.¹⁸

Perhaps we could identify the content of Moshe's blessing of the people in Shemot with what he says when he blesses them on another occasion.

A Midrashic source presents a Rabbinic dispute concerning the content of Moshe's blessing:

Yalkut Shimoni, Parashat Pekudei, #418

What is the blessing with which he blessed them?

(Tanna Kamma)¹⁹ He said to them: "Let it be His Will that the Divine Presence will inhabit the work of your hands."

R. Meir says that he blessed them as follows: (Devarim 1:11) "LORD, the God of your fathers, Make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and Bless you, as He hath Promised you!"

It would appear that each position constitutes little more than speculation. Tanna Kamma makes the blessing very specific to the situation—the work is completed and everyone is waiting with baited breath to see if the Divine Presence will Descend. There was no way to tell whether the work had been done correctly, and given its infinite detail, so much could have gone wrong, precluding Divine Approval. Moshe by blessing the people at this point is encouraging them to be optimistic that all of their efforts will be rewarded by HaShem when He Shows that the work

¹⁷ The importance attributed by Jewish tradition to marking the completion of a major project is reflected in the institution of Simchat Tora which celebrates the completion of the annual Tora reading cycle, as well as various types of Siyumim that are made upon the completion of study of a significant primary text such as completing the Daf Yomi cycle once in 7 ½ years, a Tractate of the Talmud or a Seder of the Mishna.

¹⁸ Then again, could that be the point, i.e., the completion of the Mishkan was so significant and unique that nothing should be compared to it, and therefore blessings associated with it should remain beyond our ken?

¹⁹ The anonymous first point of view of the Tannaim, i.e., the Rabbinic personalities cited in the Mishna (Midrashim are thought to be relatively contemporaneous with the composition of the Mishna and therefore share the personalities) which is usually thought to represent the majority position.

of the Mishkan was just as He had Commanded. RaShI in his commentary, supports the Tanna Kamma by citing an additional verse from Tehillim 90:17 :

And let the Graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us; Establish Thou also upon us the work of our hands; yea, the work of our hands Establish Thou it.²⁰

Although there is nothing intrinsic to this verse that would suggest that it was formulated as the basis for the blessing that Moshe gives the people just prior to the descent of the Shechina, RaShI derives justification for interpreting Tehillim 90:17 in this manner from the introductory verse of Tehillim 90:

Tehillim 90:1

A Prayer of Moshe the man of God. Lord, Thou hast Been our dwelling-place in all generations.²¹

R. Meir, on the other hand, looks for a precedent in the Tora itself, although in this case it is backwards chronologically. The verse from Devarim, while constituting a blessing of the people by Moshe, was pronounced approximately forty years after the blessing articulated by Moshe in Shemot. Furthermore, the verse in Devarim appears to be contextually circumscribed in the sense that in Devarim, Moshe was in the middle of explaining why he delegated judging to

²⁰ R. Shimshon Rephael Hirsch presents a profound perspective regarding the serious religious life based upon Tanna Kamma's and RaShI's interpretations:

Moshe looked over the whole completed work, and lo! on the work two things were imprinted: "They had made it", in every part, in the smallest and the greatest, the whole personality, the devotion, the voluntary enthusiasm, the power of accomplishment of the nation was expressed; and secondly, "as God had Commanded, exactly, so they had made it." This whole energetic zeal and enthusiasm had nevertheless in part and in whole restricted itself meticulously to the Divine Command. Nowhere could be detected an effort by adding or leaving out to carry out any idea of improvement, to leave some impression of the artist's own personality on the work. Each and every workman accepted as his highest aim the careful and precise carrying out, not of his own ideas, but the ideas and thoughts which were embodied in the Commands of God. This free joyful obedience, this freedom in obedience and obedience in freedom, which fills one with the happy consciousness of one's own powers just by sinking one's own personality in complete subordination to God's Will is what forms the most essential sign that characterizes a human being as Eved HaShem—the highest moral perfection that can be attained. That this might remain forever the character of Jewish life and actions is the final sentence of the great prayer of Moshe (Tehillim 90:17) as his deepest wish for the future of his people. Our sages accordingly, take this to be the blessing here where it says "And Moshe blessed them"...

²¹ Even the Talmud does not attribute the entire contents of Tehillim to David:

Bava Batra 14b-15a

Tehillim (was written) by ten wise men: Adam HaRishon, MalkiTzedek, Avraham, Moshe, Heiman, Yedoton, Asaf and the three sons of Korach.

others, in effect complaining that the Jewish people were too numerous for him to be able to lead them without assistance;²² yet he immediately catches himself lest his words be interpreted as expressing a desire for the numbers of Jews to contract, and he quickly declares that there being so many of them is a good thing and that they should continue to increase. So while we see that this is indeed a blessing that Moshe uses for the Jewish people as a whole, it is not clear that it is a “stand-alone” blessing that he would spontaneously invoke on other occasions. And even if the blessing would not depend upon what Moshe says previously and afterwards, what is the relevance at the dedication of the Mishkan for Moshe to be discussing the population numbers of the Jewish people?

Could Moshe’s blessing have been a reference to future constructions to be inhabited by the Divine Presence?

After quoting the Tanna Kamma in an identical fashion to the version in Yalkut Shimoni, a variation on R. Meir’s view appears in the Tosefta:

Tosefta Menachot 7:8

... R. Meir said: “This is the manner in which he blessed them—‘Lord, the God of your fathers, Make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and Bless you, as He hath Promised you!’ Just as you have engaged in the creation of the Mishkan and the Shechina has Descended on the works of your hands, so too you should merit and build before Him the Chosen House (the Temple) and the Shechina should Descend on the works of your hands.

The Tosefta therefore attributes to R. Meir an understanding of Moshe’s action that entails prophecy regarding the future. While it was clear that the Tabernacle had a temporary quality to it, no Divine Mention had been made regarding its eventually being replaced by a more permanent structure. Although Devarim 12:9 is usually interpreted as a reference to the Temple,

“For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God Giveth thee.”

RaShi

²² Devarim 1:9-14

And I spoke unto you at that time, saying: 'I am not able to bear you myself alone; the Lord your God hath Multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.-- The Lord, the God of your fathers, Make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and Bless you, as He hath Promised you!-- How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife? Get you, from each one of your tribes, wise men, and understanding, and full of knowledge, and I will make them heads over you.' And ye answered me, and said: 'The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do.'

“The rest”—this is Shiloh.²³

“The inheritance”—this is Yerushalayim.

it would appear that the meanings of “rest” and “inheritance” were identified only “after the fact”, i.e., after these places were designated as either the long-term location of the Mishkan or the site of the Mikdash. But more questionably, the Shechina only descends after Moshe’s blessing. How could Moshe reference a future indication of Divine Approval when the present one has not even taken place as yet?

Perhaps Moshe’s Beracha had to do with the proper intention that he recognized accompanied all of the donations.

HaKetav VeHaKabbala suggests that Moshe was complimenting the people with regard to the motivation which brought them to make their considerable donations towards the construction of the Mishkan. The commentator distinguishes between those who donate in order to gain for themselves honor and praise, as opposed to donors who simply wish to do the right thing, in this case for the sake of HaShem and having His Presence Dwell among the people, without considering how their contributions will gain for themselves acclaim. While such action is indeed worthy of special praise and acknowledgement on the part of Moshe, it is unclear how he was supposed to discern why a particular person does what he does. While HaShem may be the Bochein Levavot (the Discerner of what someone has in his heart), why should Moshe be able to make such a determination. Once again, perhaps once the Divine Presence Descends upon the Mishkan, in retrospect it could be said that this could only have occurred due to the proper intention of the givers. However Moshe’s blessing precedes the Coming of the Divine Presence.

Could we equate Moshe’s blessing and therefore its content with the later one uttered by Shlomo at a similar event?

While the Tora omits Moshe’s words re his blessing, Shlomo HaMelech, in a parallel circumstance—the ceremony marking the completion of the First Temple, the permanent structure intended to replace the portable Mishkan—also blesses the Jewish people. I Melachim 8 recounts the king’s blessing the people two separate times during the course of the Temple’s

²³ Shiloh was an ancient city mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. Its site is at modern Khirbet Seilun, south of ancient Tirzah and 10 miles (16 km) north of the Israeli settlement of Beth El in the West Bank. It was the capital of Israel before the first Temple was built in Jerusalem... According to Talmudic sources (Zevachim 118b), the tent sanctuary remained at Shiloh for 369 years until the Ark of the Covenant was taken into the battle camp (1 Samuel 4:3–5) at Eben-Ezer and captured by the Philistines at Aphek (probably Antipatris). At some point during its long stay at Shiloh, the portable tent seems to have been enclosed within a compound or replaced with a standing structure that had "doors" (1 Samuel 3:15) a precursor to the Temple. The Mishkan left Shiloh when Eli HaCohen died... [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shiloh_\(biblical_city\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shiloh_(biblical_city))

dedication. In the first instance, the words of the blessing are omitted, paralleling Moshe's blessing in Shemot, in our Parasha:

I Melachim 8:14

And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel;
and all the congregation of Israel stood.²⁴

Yet when Shlomo, approximately forty verses later, blesses the people a second time, the biblical text provides an apparently verbatim transcript:

Ibid. 55-61

And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice,
saying:

Introduction: 'Blessed be the Lord, that hath Given Rest unto His people Israel,
according to all that He Promised; there hath not failed one word

²⁴ Although the continuation of the text could be understood at first glance as if it related the content of the blessing of the people just enunciated, a more careful reading reveals that it is discussing God rather than the Jewish people themselves:

I Melachim 8:15-21

And he said: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who Spoke with His Mouth unto David my father, and hath with His Hand fulfilled it, saying: "Since the day that I Brought forth My People Israel out of Egypt, I Chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house, that My Name might Be there; but I Chose David to be over My people Israel." Now it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel. But the Lord Said unto David my father: "Whereas it was in thy heart to build a house for My Name, thou didst well that it was in thy heart; nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for My Name." And the Lord hath Established His Word that He Spoke; for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord Promised, and have built the house for the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel. And there have I set a place for the Ark, wherein is the Covenant of the Lord, which He Made with our fathers, when He Brought them out of the land of Egypt.

Both RaDaK and RaLBaG note that these verses are offering praise to HaShem rather than some sort of supplication that related to what should happen to the people going forward. If that is the case, then it is possible that what Shlomo said paralleled the introduction to the second prayer in verses 55-56, that I refer to as the "Introduction". Perhaps a paradigm is the Silent Devotion that makes up part of each traditional weekday Jewish prayer service—the central blessings that are requests of God are "bookended" by first three blessings of praising HaShem, and the prayer concludes with three blessings of thanking HaShem. However, the fact that Shlomo, according to this hypothesis, praises HaShem twice, is difficult to understand.

of all His good Promise, which He Promised by the hand of Moshe His servant.²⁵

1) The Lord our God Be with us, as He Was with our fathers; let Him not Leave us, nor Forsake us; 2) that He may Incline our hearts unto Him, 3) to walk in all His Ways, 4) and to keep His Commandments, and His Statutes, and His Ordinances, which He Commanded our fathers. 5) And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God day and night, 6) that He Maintain the cause of His Servant (Shlomo), and the cause of His People Israel, as every day shall require; 7) that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord, He is God; there is none else. 8) Let your heart therefore be whole with the Lord our God, 3) to walk in His Statutes, and 4) to keep His Commandments, as at this day.'

Summarizing this second blessing uttered by Shlomo, one sees that the following elements are included:

- 1) Prayers that God should always Be Close to the Jewish people;
- 2) That He Be favorably disposed to them;²⁶
- 3) That they will emulate HaShem's Attributes;²⁷ (2x)
- 4) That should observe all of the Tora's laws:²⁸ (2x)

²⁵ This initial section parallels the verses that immediately follow the original blessing about whose contents we are not informed. (See the previous footnote.)

²⁶ Such a sentiment is reminiscent of one of the Priestly Blessings:

Bamidbar 6:26

The LORD Lift up His Countenance upon thee, and Give thee peace.

²⁷ The Thirteen Divine Attributes are articulated to Moshe by HaShem on Sinai:

Shemot 34:6-7

And the LORD Passed by before him, and Proclaimed: 'The LORD, the LORD, God, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth; Keeping mercy unto the thousandth generation, Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means Clear the guilty; Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and unto the fourth generation.'

The aspiration to emulate HaShem's Attributes lies at the heart of the following Talmudic passage:

Sota 14a

R. Chama son of R. Chanina further said: What means the text: "Ye shall walk after the Lord your God?" Is it, then, possible for a human being to walk after the *Shechinah*; for has it not been said: "For the Lord thy God is a Devouring Fire?" But [the meaning is] to walk after the Attributes of the Holy One, Blessed Be He. As He Clothes the naked, for it is written: "And the Lord God Made for Adam and for his wife coats of skin, and clothed them," so do thou also clothe the naked. The Holy One, Blessed Be He, Visited the sick, for it is written: "And the Lord Appeared unto him by the oaks of Mamre," so do thou also visit the sick. The Holy One, Blessed Be He, Comforted mourners, for it is written: "And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God Blessed Isaac his son," so do thou also comfort mourners. The Holy one, Blessed Be He, Buried the dead, for it is written: "And He buried him in the valley," so do thou also bury the dead.

- 5) That these considerations should inform God's "Consciousness", leading Him to Treat His People in a particularly positive manner on an ongoing basis;
- 6) That HaShem will Take up the Jewish people's cause whenever necessary;
- 7) That monotheism will be the belief system for all of the nations of the world;²⁹
- and 8) That the Jewish people maintain a "whole-hearted" approach towards HaShem.³⁰

The fact that numbers 3) and 4) are each repeated at the end of the blessing suggests special emphasis is being placed upon the importance of these two elements in particular, i.e., acting in a Godly manner and carrying out specific Divine Directives. Perhaps this reflects the idea that while it certainly would be desirable for HaShem to be positively Disposed towards the Jewish people as described in 1), 2), 5) and 6), this is not necessarily under their control. Similarly whether other nations will become monotheists, while the Jews could set good examples and even engage in proselytization in the spirit of Avraham, nevertheless to assure that their own actions are correct is clearly their first and foremost responsibility. The extent to which they will act in accordance with God's Example and Commandments depends upon them alone.

Does comparing Shlomo's detailed blessing with Moshe's laconic one result in any important conclusions?

Should we assume that a comparison of Moshe and Shlomo's blessings is an exercise in the principle "Nitma'atu HaDorot" (the progression of generations are in decline)? Although Moshe is dealing with people who recently were slaves, they had become deeply chastened by their sin with the Golden Calf and the subsequent Divine Rebuke. Their recent experiences did not require Moshe to say very much when it came to imparting a blessing to them; they understood all too clearly what Moshe's and their own earnest desires were vis-à-vis HaShem. But by the time that Shlomo was ruler and the Temple built, even though initially, Shlomo tried to emulate Moshe and not be specific with regard to the implications of blessing the people and hoping that they could act in their spiritual best interests, the king recognized that the people gathered for the investiture of the Temple simply lacked the sophistication and spiritual

²⁸ The differences between the various terminologies for the Commandments:

"Commandments"—Laws that are rational and usually delineate interpersonal relationships.

"Statutes"—Laws whose rationales are obscure at the very least. The term describes for the most part rules that define the relationship between man and God.

"Ordinances"—Laws that commemorate particular historical events, e.g., the Exodus from Egypt, the receiving of the Tora, etc.

²⁹ It seems initially curious why the beliefs of other nations should be considered worthy of inclusion within a blessing of the Jewish people. Perhaps it could be suggested that a monotheistic belief system usually entails adopting HaShem's Middot, and were all of the nations of the world to adhere to such a code, everyone would be better off, particularly those who traditionally have suffered persecutions from other nations and ethnic cultures, as have the Jews for so long.

³⁰ This usually connotes that the belief in HaShem should be exclusive rather than shared with other objects of belief and/or worship.

appreciation to understand what Shlomo was implying and alluding to. When he saw the “blank stares” on the people’s faces, he backtracked and articulated exactly what he was thinking of when offering the people his blessing.

Conclusion

Most times, we ponder the meaning of what the Tora actually says. But there are instances where what the Tora chooses not to say can not only generate an interesting set of ideas, but bring out the true creativity in the Rabbinic mind. What Moshe said when he blessed the people is one of those instances.