

בס"ד

# THE RASHI OF THE WEEK

Week of

# Parshas Tzav

14 Nissan, 5785 – April 12, 2025

Compiled from the works of  
**Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson**  
**The Lubavitcher Rebbe**

by  
Rabbi Shmuel Mendelsohn  
North Miami Beach, FL

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**An Outline of the Rebbe's Explanation of Rashi  
Parshas Tzav**

**Likkutei Sichos Volume 7, Pages 30 – 38**

**Rashi in His Own Words**

ויקרא ו', ב': צו את־אהרן ואת־בניו לאמר זאת תורת העלה הוא העלה על מוקדה על־המזבח כל־הלילה עד־הבקר ואש המזבח תוקד בו:  
רש"י ד"ה צו את אהרן: אין צו אלא לשון זרוז מיד ולדורות. אמר ר' שמעון ביותר צריך הכתוב לזרוז במקום שיש בו חסרון כיס:

**Vayikroh 6:2:** Command Aharon and his sons, saying, "This is the law of the burnt offering. That is the burnt offering which burns on the altar all night until morning; and the fire of the altar shall burn with it.

**Rashi Heading – Command Aaron:** The expression "צו – Command" always denotes urging to promptly and meticulously fulfill a particular commandment for the present and future generations. Rabbi Shimon taught that the Torah needs to encourage people to fulfill commandments where monetary loss is involved.

**Synopsis**

There are three expressions with which the Torah expresses that Moshe is to deliver a command to the Jewish people (or to a group of Jews). One is "Say - Emor – אמור," a second is "Speak - Dabair – דבר," and the third is "Command - Tzav – צו." The Hebrew word Mitzvah, meaning a commandment, comes from the word "Tzav."

This week's Torah portion, Tzav, tells us Hashem spoke to Moshe. Hashem told Moshe to "command" Aharon and his sons (the Kohanim) the laws of the burnt offering. Regardless of which word the Torah uses to express a Mitzvah, all 613 are Divine commandments<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, in those instances (such as here) where the Torah uses the word Tzav, the Mitzvah aspect of the commandment is more clearly emphasized. Therefore, Rashi comments that whenever the word "Tzav – Command" is used to designate how Moshe is to transmit a particular Mitzvah to the Jews, the Jews must fulfill the commandment with specific alacrity, both now and in the future. Rashi goes on to quote Rabbi Shimon, who says there is a particular need to urge people when a loss of money is involved.

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1. This is clear from the fact that before performing all Mitzvos (with several exceptions) one recites a blessing "Blessed are You Hashem, King of the world, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us ..."

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### Rashi's Explanation<sup>2</sup>

This week's Torah portion, Tzav, begins by telling us,<sup>3</sup> "Hashem spoke to Moshe saying, command Aharon and his sons saying, 'This is the law of the burnt offering. That is the burnt offering that burns on the altar all night until morning. The altar's fire shall burn with it.'" Rashi cites the words from the verse "command Aharon" and says that the word 'צו - Tzav - Command' always denotes urging to fulfill a particular commandment with care, both for the present and in future generations. Rabbi Shimon taught that the Torah needs to encourage people to fulfill commandments where monetary loss is involved."

There are three expressions with which Hashem tells Moshe to deliver a commandment to the Jewish people (or to a group of Jews). One is "Say - Emor - אמור," a second is "Speak - Dabair – דבר," and the third is "Command - Tzav - צו." The Hebrew word Mitzvah comes from the word "Tzav," which explicitly implies a commandment.

Regardless of which word Hashem uses to tell Moshe to command the Jews, whatever He tells the Jewish Nation has a commandment status. However, since G-d tells Moshe to "Tzav – Command" Aharon and his sons, meaning the Kohanim, we see the emphasis on the "Mitzvah" aspect. Therefore, Rashi tells us here of the necessity of care. Emphasizing that this is Hashem's command makes it that much more important to be meticulous.

Works of Chassidic Philosophy explain that in addition to "command" being the definition of Mitzvah, it also has an additional meaning. Aside from being derived from the Hebrew word for commandment, it also comes from the Aramaic word<sup>4</sup> "Connection - Tzavsoh V'Chibur - צוותא וחיבור."

As we see here, all interpretations of the same word in the Torah are related. A Mitzvah is both a commandment and a means for connecting ourselves to Hashem. What is the connection between the two meanings of the word?

When can a Mitzvah serve to connect one to G-d? It can do so when he performs the Mitzvah because Hashem told him to. If a Jew fulfills a Mitzvah because it makes sense to him or he is used to doing so, it does not connect him to Hashem, and the Mitzvah only connects him when he performs it as Hashem's commandment<sup>5</sup>. From this, we can understand that the connection is stronger with a commandment introduced with the word "Tzav – Command."

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2. Please note that this explanation of Rashi is quite unusual. Generally, the Rebbe highlights the explanation that Rashi is teaching to a student who is beginning to learn Torah. In addition to this he often points out a deeper explanation is alluded to in Rashi's words. Here the Rebbe is focusing on the deeper explanation.

3. Our Parshah, Vayikroh 6:1-2.

4. See Likkutei Torah Parshas Bechukosai Page 45, Column 3. See also the Maamor Rebbe Omair 5700 (1940), beginning with the end of Chapter 1. See the beginning of the Maamor Bayom Hashemini 5710 (1950). See also Hatomim Volume 1 beginning with Page 25.

5. Please note that there is a benefit to performing a Mitzvah for any reason.

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### Difficulties in Understanding Rashi

Why does Rashi need to add that "Rabbi Shimon taught that the Torah especially needs to urge people to fulfill commandments where monetary loss is involved?" It does not seem to add anything to what he said earlier. Additionally, Rashi generally does not cite the source of his statements, and the only exception is when the basis of the teaching adds something to our understanding of his explanation. What additional insight do we gain from the knowledge that Rabbi Shimon made the statement?

### A Deeper Lesson from Rashi

We can only find any relationship between Hashem and ourselves, His creations, through His commandments. Relative to the existence of the Creator, creation does not exist. One cannot even say that the world of the Creator negates the world of the creation. Instead, from the perspective of G-dliness, creation is simply a non-entity.

An analogy explains this concept in Chassidic works—extraordinary intellectual life is in the world of intellect. A simple person who lacks understanding does not exist in this world and has no relation to it. From the intellectual's perspective, it is as if he does not live.

This is similar to how a concept exists in the world of intellect. It has no relation to the sense of touch. This is not because the sense of touch is too coarse to grasp an idea. Instead, it exists on a different plane, in a completely different world; concerning the sense of touch, ideas do not exist. Touch is purely physical, and one can only touch things bound by time and space. A concept exists within the spiritual realm of intellect and thought. This is in keeping with what the Alter Rebbe writes in Tanya<sup>6</sup>, that if someone says that a very refined concept is impossible to touch with one's hands because it is too deep, whoever hears him will laugh.

That is the difference between an idea that is not tangible and exists within the world of intellect. It is a spiritual aspect of something physical. What do we mean by that? For example, spices are something physical. The fragrance which emanates from spices is the spiritual aspect of the material. A drum is a physical object. The sound of the drum's beating is a spiritual aspect bound by time and space. Neither a sound nor a fragrance can be felt or touched. However, both are related to the physical world. Hence, they do have a connection to the sense of touch. It is possible to say that one cannot touch them because they are too spiritual. However, as stated above, an idea, that is purely spiritual, has no relation to the sense of touch.

We see that the physical does not exist vis-à-vis the world of intellect. So, the world of concepts and ideas does not exist relative to the world of touch. From this, it is apparent how the very simple person does not exist

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6. See Shaar Hayichud Vehoemunah Chapter 9.

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in the intellectual world, and vice versa. This is true even though we are discussing two creations. The intelligent and the simple are humans that G-d Almighty created.

Nevertheless, they exist within very different worlds. This is undoubtedly true of the Creator and creation. Even the greatest, highest, and most intelligent creation does not exist relative to the Creator's existence. This is not because the Creator's understanding is not refined enough to comprehend the Creator. Instead, a chasm between Creator and creation cannot be bridged naturally.

The span between the Creator and creation is infinite. However, Hashem chose to connect Himself with us. The means via which this connection takes place is Mitzvos. As we said earlier, the word Mitzvah itself is derived (in part) from the Aramaic "Tzavsah V'Chibur," meaning connection. This connection exists even when one is not fulfilling a commandment. Instead, the moment that G-d issues the command, the bond is immediately formed<sup>7</sup>.

Based on the above, we can understand the special connection between Creator and creation due to performing Mitzvos, commanded with the word "Tzav – Command." Some Mitzvos originate from the "right side." There are those whose source is the "left side." There are also Mitzvos, which are derived from the "center." What is the difference between the three? The "right side" refers to the Divine attribute of kindness. These Mitzvos were given with the word "Emor – Say." The Sages tell us that the word "Emor" is mild language<sup>8</sup>. The "left side" symbolizes the G-dly attribute of severity. These Mitzvos were given with the phrase "Dabair – Speak," which our Sages tell us refers to harsh talk<sup>9</sup>.

Unlike the other two, the "center" is something different. It symbolizes the perfect synthesis of both extremes; it is the level of beauty. Nevertheless, it does not contain the "right" or "left." Instead, it is something different that surpasses both. Because it is not a mixture of both, it is not expressed by a name that would combine both kindness and severity. It is also not defined by a name representing the halfway point between both. Instead, those Mitzvos derived from the "center" were given with the word "Tzav – Command." This is the ultimate "Tzavsah V'Chibur" connection with Hashem. There is a difference between those commandments from the "right" or the "left." Some reflect kindness, and those that reflect severity. This difference exists from Hashem's perspective, Who commanded the Mitzvah, and from the standpoint of His creations, which He commanded to follow the Mitzvah. The "center," however, is quite different. These commandments span from the innermost

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7. See the Maamor Shofar 5698 (1937) regarding the analogy of the intellectual and the simpleton. The moment the intellectual gives an instruction to the simple person a bond between the two is *immediately* formed. When the simple person carries out the intellectual's instruction, he becomes special in the intellectual's eyes. Obviously the same is true in the analog.

8. See Rashi's commentary to Parshas Yisro, Shemos 19:3.

9. See the Talmud Makkos 11, a and Rashi's comments to Parshas Beha'aloscho, Bamidbar 12:1.

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heights of G-d's Will to the innermost depths of man's soul. Therefore, these are the ultimate Mitzvos. When something touches the depths of my soul, I will fulfill it promptly and meticulously. I will also fulfill it in all times and places, present and all future generations. Because it is Hashem's Will from the highest of levels to the lowest, I will not allow anything to hinder my fulfillment of these Mitzvos.

That also explains why Rabbi Shimon adds that "the Torah especially needs to urge people to fulfill commandments where monetary loss is involved." To which Mitzvah does that refer? Monetary loss is involved with the Mitzvah of Tzedokoh. The Alter Rebbe explains that Tzedokoh is the greatest Mitzvah<sup>10</sup>. It is the one Mitzvah that affects the entire animal soul. It is giving money to G-d, which one could have used to nourish oneself. Not only does it affect one's entire animal soul, but it also impacts his portion in this world. The money which he gives away is something that is outside of himself. To refine something shallow, one must have something very high. The way to purify one's animal soul and portion in the world is extremely high. That is why a particular need exists to urge one to fulfill this great Mitzvah.

This also explains why Rashi mentions Rabbi Shimon by name. Whenever the Talmud says "Rabbi Shimon" without any other description, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, the Rashbi<sup>11</sup>, is meant. It is known that the Rashbi reached the highest level; "with one knot, I am bound with Him<sup>12</sup>." He had the unique ability to take this bond with Hashem and draw it down to the lowest levels.

*(Adapted from a talk given on Shabbos Parshas Tzav, 5725)*

**I hope you gained as much by reading this as I did by translating and adapting it.**

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10. See Tanya Chapter 37.

11. There are a number of sources for this. Among others see Rashi's commentary to Talmud Shavuos 2, b and the Rashbam's commentary to Talmud Bava Basra 102, a.

12. See Idra Zuta to Zohar Section 3, Page 288, a.

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The Soldiers of Tzivos Hashem **Chaim, Aiden Oded, and Zacharya Matan** שיחיו Morris  
May they merit to be a source of Chassidic pride  
to their family and a Torah light to their community

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May she go from strength to strength  
In health, happiness, Torah, and mitzvot

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