

## Another Torah from HaShem?

Yonason Noach Ben Avraham

[www.tumms.org](http://www.tumms.org)

The phrase, “*Nor will another Torah ever come forth from the Almighty besides this one,*” in the Rambam’s Ninth Principle has been challenged by a Sage who lived subsequent to the Rambam. It has been suggested by Rav Yosef Albo (*Sefer HaIkkarim*) that it is “possible” that HaShem could convene a “Sinai II” where He might change His Torah. This author offers the following to dispute this challenge to the Rambam’s 9<sup>th</sup> Principle:

*Devarim* 5:19 reads, “These words the Lord spoke to all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice which was not heard again. And He wrote them in two tablets of stone, and delivered them to me.”

Rashi, *Devarim* 5:19 reads, “**which did not cease** Heb. וְלֹא יָסַף, interpreted by the *Targum Onkelos*: וְלֹא פָסַק “*and it did not cease.*” [Because it is human nature that one is unable to utter all his words in one breath, but he must pause, whereas the characteristic of the Holy One, blessed is He, is not so. God did not pause, and since He did not pause, He did not have to resume,] for His voice is strong and exists continuously (*Sanhedrin 17a*). Another explanation of וְלֹא יָסַף: He never again revealed Himself so publicly [as He did on Mount Sinai]. Accordingly, we render: and He did not continue].

ArtScroll Note (*paraphrase*): In his comment, Rashi appears to say that *Targum Onkelos*’ translation of (וְלֹא יָסַף) “*which did not continue*” as “*which did not stop*” is not literal. The literal meaning (even according to the *Targum*) is “*which did not continue,*” but in context means [the *p’shat* is] “*which did not stop.*”

With the above pieces of Torah in hand, we will examine a possible challenge to the Rambam’s Principle regarding the Eternality of HaShem’s Torah. Rav Yosef Albo asks whether this Principle of the Rambam’s is truly a Torah bound principle, or whether the Rambam came to a logical conclusion based on the Torah, but not necessarily represented in the Torah. Rav Albo writes: “[H]is [the Rambam’s] ideas on this point require careful consideration in respect to their source. The dogma is surely of great importance, nevertheless we must know whether Maimonides derives it from tradition or from his own ratiocination. If the former, we must gracefully accept it, but if it is the latter, we have something to say about it....

“*The Tanakh merely warns us not to add or to take away from the commandments on our own account. But what can there be to prevent G-d Himself from adding or diminishing as His wisdom decrees?*” Rav Albo goes on to make a case for a repeat of the National Revelation at Sinai: “As to the question whether there will ever be in the future such a great publicity as the first, when all Israel will hear the voice of the Lord G-d speaking to them out of the midst of the fire, the opinion of our Rabbis is that there will be such an event. Thus we read in *Midrash Hazit*, on the *passuk* (*Shir HaShiurim* 1:2), ‘*Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth,*’ Said Rabbi Judah, “When the Israelites heard the first two commandments, the Torah was impressed upon their minds and they learned without forgetting. Then they came to Moses and said, ‘Moses our teacher, you will be the messenger between us, as it is said (*Shemos* 20:19), “*You speak with us and we will hear.*” There upon they learned and later forgot. They said then, as Moses who is made of flesh and blood is temporary, so is his teaching temporary, i.e., it is forgotten. Hence they went back to Moses and said, ‘We should wish that G-d would reveal Himself to us again, “*Let Him kiss me with kisses of His Mouth.*” Said Moses in reply, ‘Not now, but in the future He will, as it is written (*Yirmiyahu* 31:33), “*I will put My law in their inward parts.*”’ **It is clear (writes Rav Albo) from this that the Rabbis are of the opinion that in the future all Israel will experience a second revelation like the first, which will come from G-d without any mediation.**”

We see that Rav Albo seems to suggest the possibility of a *Har Sinai II*, so we offered the above Rashi as evidence that such a scenario will not take place, and that the Rambam’s 9<sup>th</sup> Principle stands

firm. We would suggest a synthesis of the “literal” and the “*p’shat*” from Rashi, *Devarim* 5:19, in order to put aside for all time any suggestion that HaShem’s Torah – specifically the 613 Commandments – will EVER change, and offer an understanding of Rashi as teaching us that when HaShem spoke at Sinai “***His voice was strong and continuous,***” (“*which did not stop*”) in that the Revelation at Sinai continues for all time, but also that the Voice that we heard “***was never to be repeated,***” (“*which did not continue*”) meaning that a Sinai II is not in the realm of possibility.