

to stand ABOVE, i.e. upon Mount Gerizim. ¹⁵¹ "לְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - LIKEWISE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY THAT THEY WERE

STATED ABOVE, ¹⁵² "לְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - FOR IT HAS ALREADY BEEN

POSSIBLE TO RECONCILE THESE TWO VERSES? ¹⁵³ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - HOW IS IT

THE ELDERS OF THE KOHANIM AND LEVITIM STOOD BELOW WITH THE

Ark, ¹⁵⁴ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - WHILE THE REMAINDER OF THE TRIBE OF LEVI

STOOD ABOVE, upon Mount Gerizim. Thus, the verse in the Torah

refers to the majority of the tribe, whereas the description in

¹⁵⁵ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - R' YOSHUYAH says: The division of Levi was accomplished in a different manner:

¹⁵⁶ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - ALL THOSE WHO WERE FIT TO SERVE, i.e. to

carry the Holy Ark, ¹⁵⁷ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" remained BELOW with the Ark; ¹⁵⁸ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ

¹⁵⁹ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - WHILE THE REST OF THE TRIBE STOOD ABOVE.

The Baraita continues with a second opinion that depicts the

tableau at Mount Gerizim and Mount Eival in a completely novel

¹⁶⁰ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - REBBISAYS: ¹⁶¹ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - BOTH THESE

AND THOSE, i.e. both the Israelites of all the tribes and the Levitim,

WERE STANDING BELOW between the mountains. That is, no one

STOOD ON the mountains themselves. ¹⁶² "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - THEY ALL TURNED THEIR FACES TOWARD MOUNT GERIZIM

¹⁶³ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - AND BEGAN WITH THE BLESSING. ¹⁶⁴ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" -

THEY THEN TURNED THEIR FACES TOWARD MOUNT EIVAL, ¹⁶⁵ "וְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" -

AND BEGAN WITH THE CURSE. "לְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" - NOW, IF IT IS

TRUE THAT NO ONE STOOD ON A MOUNTAIN, WHAT DOES THE TORAH MEAN

WHEN IT SAYS THAT THE TRIBES ARE TO STAND "AL" (UPON) THE MOUNTAINS? ¹⁶⁶ "לְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים" -

THEY ARE TO STAND NEAR THE TORAH MEANS THAT THE TRIBES ARE TO

stand near the mountains but not on them.

NOTES

15. Moses wrote in the Torah (Deuteronomy 27:12): *These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the nation... Shim'on, Levi, Judah, etc.* (Rashi). Clearly, the tribe of Levi is supposed to stand together with the other tribes on top of the mountain during the blessings!

[Rashi's language, *לְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים*, seems a bit odd since Rashi could have simply said that "it is written in the Torah" or "the Torah says," which are the common expressions. However, the verse under discussion appears in Deuteronomy, which is the Book that Moses wrote himself (see Megillah 31b) [with Divine prophetic inspiration, of course] (see Tosafos and Maharsha ad loc.). Deuteronomy is elsewhere called the Book of Moses (see Nechemiah 13:1 and 25:4; see also in regard to the Blessings and the Curses, Joshua 8:32). Thus, the phrase *לְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים* is particularly apt when speaking of a verse in Deuteronomy (which the passage in Joshua itself refers back to). See discussion of this general topic in *Emes LeYachkov* to Deuteronomy 31:11.]

17. When they put these instructions into practice: *And all Israel and its elders... stood on this [side] and that of the Ark, opposite the Kohanim, the Levitim, bearers of the Ark, etc.* Thus, the Kohanim and Levitim stood below beside the Ark (Rashi).

18. A Levi participates in the Temple service from the age of thirty until the age of fifty (Numbers 4:23). Thus, those who were fit to bear the Ark remained below with the Ark, while all other Levites stood above upon the mountain.

19. For further discussion regarding the placement of the Levites, see Choshen VeYephod pp. 68-74.

20. See *Maharsha*.

21. The words *לְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ מִן הַר גֵּרִיצִים* which we translated above as "on the slope of" could also be translated as "in the direction of." According to a plain reading of the words of this verse (and all Israel and its elders... stood on this [side] and that of the Ark, opposite the Kohanim, the Levitim, bearers of the Ark of the Covenant of Hashem, proselyte and native alike, half of them in the direction of Mount Gerizim and half of them in the direction of Mount Eival) would lead one to believe that the entire Jewish people stood with the Ark below, albeit from different sides (see Rashi).

22. Deuteronomy 27:12. [The literal translation of *לְעַלְיוֹתָיִךְ* is upon, but it can be used to mean near, as the Gemara will proceed to explain.]

23. See Tosafos, who cite another parallel teaching from a Mishnah in Menachos 96a.

24. Leviticus 24:7.

25. [The verse refers to the twelve loaves of bread (*lechem hapanim*) that were placed in the two stacks on the Table in the Sanctuary. The verse states that the Kohan should place pure frankincense "al" each stack, which Rebbi interprets as near the two stacks, i.e. between them (see Rashi).]

26. Exodus 40:3.

27. I.e. all the Blessings and Curses that were pronounced at Mount Gerizim and Mount Eival were said both in a general form as well as in a specific form. The general form refers to the verse at the conclusion of the Curses (Deuteronomy 27:26): *מְבָרְכִים אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ כְּכָל הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר יָצְאוּ מִפִּי ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ*. Afterward it was declared as it is written in the verse, "Cursed is one who will not uphold the words of this Torah." All the other curses related in the passage (verses 15-25) refer to specific transgressions and were also proclaimed both as blessings and as curses, e.g. "Blessed is the man who will not make a graven or molten image," "Cursed is the man who will make a graven or molten image" (ibid. v. 15). In this manner were all the Blessings and Curses pronounced (Rashi).

28. I.e. regarding the mitzvos in general it is stated: *and you shall learn them and you shall guard to do them* (ibid. 5:1). It is also stated: *And you shall teach them to your sons* (ibid. 11:19). Thus, each and every mitzvah actually entails four obligations — to learn that mitzvah, to guard it, to perform it and to teach it (Rashi).

In various places in the Torah, Moses admonishes the Jews concerning the mitzvos in general, using a variety of exhortations. Analysis of these exhortations reveals that, taken together, four main points are stressed: an obligation to learn the mitzvos, to guard them, to fulfill them and to teach them. These four commandments, then, are considered to be inherent in each and every mitzvah.]

"To guard" in this context is explained by *Maharsha* to mean an obligation to constantly review one's learning to ensure that he does not forget (see *Maharsha*).

