

## בעמוד ענן

אבנר רמו

We read in the Book of Exodus:

וידבר יהוה אל-משה, לך עלה מזה-אתה והעם אשר העלית מארץ מצרים: אל-הארץ אשר  
נשבעתי לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב לאמר, לזרעך אתננה.

“And *YHWH* spoke to Moses: Go up from here, you and the people that you brought up  
out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob,  
saying: To your seed I will give it” (Ex 33:1).

ויאמר משה אל-יהוה, ראה אתה אמר אלי העל את-העם הזה, ואתה לא הודעתני את אשר-  
תשלח עמי;

“And Moses said to *YHWH*: See, You say to me: Bring up this people; and You did not tell  
me whom You will send with me” (Ex 33:12).

ועתה אם-נא מצאתי חן בעיניך, הודעני נא את-דרךך ואדעך

“And now please, if I have found grace in Your sight, please show me Your ways, that I  
may know You” (Ex 33:13).

However, the reading of: הראני נא את-כבודך - “please show me Your glory” (Ex 33:18), and  
the logic of these verses suggest that here הודעני נא את-דרךך is a letter and word substitution,  
and order-type error of: הראני נא את-כבודך - “please show me Your honor.”

This understanding is supported by the reading in the Book of Psalms:

הגידו השמים צדקו; וראו כל-העמים כבודו.

“The heavens declared His righteousness, and all the peoples saw His glory” (Ps 97:6; see  
also: Is 59:19; Ps 102: 16, 17).

God’s answer was: לא תוכל לראת את-פני: כי לא-יראני האדם וחי - “You will not be able to  
see My face, for man shall not see Me and remain alive” (Ex 33:20).

In his frustration Moses says: ויאמר אליו: אם-אין פניך הלכים [], אל-תעלנו מזה. - “And he  
said to Him: If Your face is not going [with me], do not carry us from here” (Ex 33:15).

The English (but not the Greek) translator assumed that here the word אתי - “with me” is  
erroneously missing, but it appears more likely that here the missing word is: אתנו - “with us.”



Twenty chapters earlier we read: **“And YHWH is going before them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them the way”** (Ex 13:21; see also: Neh 9:12, 19).

Similarly, we read in the Book of Numbers:

**ואמרו אל-יושב הארץ הזאת, שמעו כי-אתה יהוה בקרב העם הזה: אשר-עין בעין נראה אתה יהוה ועננך עמד עליהם, ובעמד ענן אתה הלך לפניהם יומם,**

**“And they will say to the inhabitants of this land, [who] have heard that You *YHWH* in the midst of this people; inasmuch as you *YHWH* have been seen eye to eye, and Your cloud stands over them, and by day in a pillar of cloud You are going before them”** (Num 14:14).

These readings suggest that the answer of God to Moses’ words of verse Ex 33:15, which was:

**ויאמר: פני ילכו [], והנחתי לך.**

**“And He said: My face shall go [with you], and I will lead you”** (Ex 33:14), is a word deletion error of: **“And He said: My face shall go in a pillar of cloud, and I will lead you.”**