

February 21, 2008

Dear Friends,

Michelangelo's well-known statue of Moses at the Church of St. Peter in Chains in Rome portrays the Israelite leader with horns on his head. It may be that the sculptor was aware that the Hebrew word "Keren" was included in verse 33 of chapter 34 of Exodus (in this week's Torah portion Ki Tisa) to indicate that Moses' face was radiant after he had been enveloped by God's presence atop Mount Sinai. Most scholars explain that Michelangelo relied on the Latin translation of the Bible which translated this verses based on the other meaning for the word "keren," meaning horn. The horns might have been intended to use something physical to show Moses' radiant face that reflected the glory of God.

In any case, Michelangelo created a great and renowned sculpture of a revered biblical figure. The radiance upon Moses' face in the sculpture, however, is in the eye of the beholder. It is the same for us when we look for radiance and spirit in the people around us. We can't rely on anything physical to indicate aspects of the character in others than can offer us inspiration and strength. We have to be willing to take time to get to know our family members, friends, colleagues and fellow community members to recognize their radiance that can enhance and combine with our own to generate wisdom and unity. May we always be open to see that light - in ourselves and in the people who touch our lives – that reflects the best of the human mind and heart. Shabbat Shalom!

**-- L'shalom,
Rabbi Larry K.**